

Eschatological terms, like protological ones, function to express what is *source* of authority, but not in the same sense merely *an* authority. Thus whether one speaks of *primal* source of authority or rather *final* source of authority, the referent is the same.

It seems clear that "Christ" (= "Messiah") is an eschatological term designating the final, overriding source of authority—the *last* word, if you will. By contrast, "Word" (= "Logos"), or "Wisdom," or "Spirit," or "image," or "first-born of all creation" are all protological terms designating in some way the primal originating source of authority, and thus the *first* word. In either case, the terms function to designate, not merely *an* authority, not even the highest, but rather the *source* of authority (i.e., *the* source of authority). For this reason, they are all functionally equivalent and interchangeable, any of them serving more or less as well as any other to designate one and the same thing.

1 January 1991; rev. 26 August 2003