

FOUNDATION OF FAITH!
CHRISTOLOGY: JESUS CHRIST
PART 7

This morning we are continuing our study of Jesus Christ in our series on Foundation of Faith and we are in part 7 of this study on Jesus. Last time we looked at a section regarding the deity of Jesus and we were focusing on Jesus and His claim of being God. And I know you have heard people say that Jesus never claimed to be God, but that is just plain foolish. The Scriptures are very clear and as we said last time, the whole Gospel of John is focused on the fact of showing that Jesus is God!

How often Satan loves to get us distracted from the main thing and the main thing is Jesus. Listen to what A. B. Simpson (1843-1919), who was the founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance movement said. And keep in mind that Simpson was well known for his missionary zeal to spread the gospel to the world. And listen to what the focus of his life was and may that be our focus also. He said,

I wish to speak to you about Jesus, and Jesus only. I often hear people say, "I wish I could get hold of Divine Healing, but I cannot." Sometimes they say, "I have got it." If I ask them, "What have you got?" the answer is sometimes, "I have got the blessing", sometimes it is, "I have got the theory"; sometimes it is, "I have got the healing"; sometimes, "I have got the sanctification."

But I thank God we have been taught that it is not the blessing, it is not the healing, it is not the sanctification, it is not the thing, it is not the it that you want, but “it” is something better. It is “the Christ”; it is Himself. How often that comes out in His Word - “Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses”, Himself “bare our sins in his own body on the tree”!

It is the person of Jesus Christ we want. Plenty of people get the idea and do not get anything out of IT. They get IT into their head, and IT into their conscience, and IT into their will; but somehow they do not get Him into their life and spirit, because they have only that which is the outward expression and symbol of the spiritual reality.

- A. B. Simpson

We must keep the main thing the main thing and the main thing is Jesus! And we have looked at His Godly attributes that show us He is God. We have looked at His humanity that shows us that God became flesh and dwelt among us. We saw how there are extra Biblical accounts that speak of Jesus. And this morning we will continue looking at the deity of Jesus, that He did in fact claim to be God, equal with the Father!

And my prayer as we look at these Scriptures, these truths is that you would see Jesus for who He really is, the second Person of the Godhead, Almighty **GOD!** So let’s continue looking at this subject this morning and see what we can learn about Jesus, about His deity, what He had to say!

4. THE DEITY OF JESUS

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE GOD

Now here's the thing. Whatever we may think about Jesus, we cannot divorce His identity from what He said. In fact, F. J. A. Hort makes that point as he wrote, "His words were so completely parts and utterances of Himself, that they had no meaning as abstract statements of truth uttered by Him as a Divine oracle or prophet. Take away Himself as the primary (though not the ultimate) subject of every statement and they all fall to pieces." (F. J. A. Hort, *Way, Truth and the Life*, 207).

This is so important for us to understand. It is not just His teachings but it is who He is and it is not just who He is but it is also His teachings; they go hand-in-hand! The late great historian of Christianity at Yale University, Kenneth Scott Latourette continues with this thought as he said, "It is not His teachings which make Jesus so remarkable, although these would be enough to give Him distinction. It is a combination of the teachings with the man Himself. The two cannot be separated." (Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, p. 44)

So we need to listen carefully to what Jesus is saying and keep in mind He is not speaking abstract, but very clearly about who He is. And you can't take His teachings without taking Him because they go hand-in-hand. He is the Word and we will deal with that statement in a few minutes but it is the Word, Jesus who became flesh and dwelt among us, God Almighty!

Now there are several ***I AM*** statements that Jesus makes here in the Gospel's and they are important as you will see and we will look at those statements next time. But before we look at them I want to focus on what we are told in John chapter 8. And keep in mind that the whole focus of the Gospel of John is to bring people to Jesus Christ so that they might believe! That is why so many of these statements about the deity of Jesus come out of the Gospel of John for John is showing us who Jesus is, God Almighty!

You see, as I have said, the main purpose that John wrote his Gospel is so that you would **BELIEVE** that Jesus is the Son of God, the Anointed one, so that you may have that abundant life that is only found in Him. In fact, the word **"believe"** ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ in the Greek, is used by John some 98 times in this Gospel! What a great book for someone who is searching for God because John paints that picture for us so that we would believe! I tell new believers to start in the Gospel of John because of that fact, that it shows us the deity of Jesus Christ, that He is God Almighty!

In fact, Charles R. Erdman said that this fourth Gospel "has introduced more persons to follow Christ, it has inspired more believers to loyal service, it has presented to scholars more difficult problems, than any other book that could be named."

Now here in John chapter 8 Jesus just finished up forgiving the woman caught in adultery and condemning those who were going to put her to death. And there were the Pharisees and many Jews around Jesus and for the Jews that didn't believe, including these Pharisees, they were putting Jesus down.

And Jesus spoke to them of being in bondage to sin and how the truth of God will set them free from that bondage. Well, that made them a little irritated and they told Jesus that they are descendants of Abraham and have **NEVER** been in bondage to **ANYONE!** How foolish that was. They were at one time under the bondage of Babylon and now they were under the bondage of Rome. But when you are arguing, when you don't have a leg to stand on, the truth is not important.

And this argument goes on as they said that Jesus was born out of fornication and does not even know who His father is and yet they knew that their father was God. Sounds good but Jesus nails them on this one because He tells them that if that were true then they would obey what God has said but since they are not obeying what God has said, they are then not the children of God but of the **DEVIL!** Jesus just tells it like it is and He does not pull any punches, He lets them have it because they truly were not interested in the truth even though it was right before them! They had their own pre-conceived ideas about the Messiah and no one was going to change their minds, not even God Himself!

And I guess you can say that this was a heated exchange, at least on their part because Jesus was just speaking the truth and it rubbed them the wrong way! And we are going to pick up this story starting in verse 51 of John chapter 8, where we are told, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.’** **Then the Jews said to Him, ‘Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, “If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.” Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?’** **Jesus answered, ‘If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, “I do not know Him,” I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.’** **Then the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?’** **Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’**” John 8:51-58.

Now there is a lot going on here and let's first look at verses 54 and 55. People today like to receive honor, recognition for what they have done but here in these verses the honor that Jesus receives comes from above and not from below, not from man and not from Himself. You see, this honor that Jesus received was not His own but comes from the Father who they do not know. Now there are two different Greek words that are used here for **“know.”**

The first one is that Jesus knows the Father, and the Greek word is OIDA and it speaks of “to know inherently or intuitively.” The only way Jesus can know the Father like that is that He was with the Father and He was! Thus, if Jesus was with the Father and no man has seen the Father. What does that mean to us? It means that Jesus is God!

The other word we see here is related to these religious leaders, as Jesus says, **“Yet you have not known Him.”** It is the Greek word GINOSKO which means “to come to know by experience or observation.” They had all the information, the words of God, they had their experiences to go along with the Word of God, but they refused to see, they refused to know the truth! And yet, when they spoke they spoke with pride and arrogance, they looked down upon Jesus the One who came to lift them up!

Now verse 56 is interesting and it stirs the people. You see, Jesus said that when Abraham saw Jesus’ day he rejoiced over it, he was glad. Now here is the big question, “When did Abraham see Jesus?” It could be in Genesis chapter 12 when God promised to bless the nations of the world through the seed of Abraham and in Galatians 3:16 Paul picked up on this when he said, **“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ.”**

Or it could be from Genesis chapter 14 after Abraham rescued Lot and the King of Salem, Melchizedek went out to meet him and Abraham honored the King who was a type of Christ – Salem meaning peace and Melchizedek meaning righteousness, he was the King of Peace and Righteousness! I truly believe that Melchizedek was a type of Christ and not the pre-incarnate Christ that met Abraham, but many feel it was the pre-incarnate Christ.

Or it could be when Abraham went to offer Isaac on Mount Moriah as a sacrifice in Genesis chapter 22, playing out what God the Father would do some 1,000 years later on that same spot by sacrificing His only begotten Son to pay the penalty for the sins of the world! And there are others and the thing is, we are not sure, it could be all of these or others, but whatever the case, Abraham saw this day and rejoiced! Don't miss that point, the Jewish religious leaders did not miss it!

How can Abraham see Jesus' day when Jesus was less than fifty years old, in fact, at this time He was only around thirty, which tells me He looked a lot older than He was, ministry was tough on His physical body. And these guys are trying to figure this out and they are mocking Him, saying basically, "You are a liar; you were not around during Abraham's day so how could you know him or how could he know you?"

And then the one that really got to them is found in verse 58 where Jesus said to them, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.**" Now I know that many of the cults just disregard this statement as meaningless, but it is not! This "***I AM***" statement, this EGO AMI in the Greek is making a strong statement. Jesus is claiming to be Almighty God, the voice from the burning the bush from Exodus chapter 3! We are told in Exodus 3:14, "**And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"**" The New Living Translation puts this verse like this, "**God replied to Moses, 'I AM Who I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you.'**" You see, He is the All-Becoming One! Stauffer said, "The phrase harbours within itself the most authentic, the most audacious, and the most profound affirmation by Jesus of who He was." I totally agree!

Now again, some may say I am going too far with this statement but believe me, the Jews knew exactly what He was saying. You see, in verse 59 we are told, **“Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”** John 8:59.

Why did the Jews want to kill Him, to kill Jesus? Because He being a man claimed to be God and that was blasphemy and punishable by stoning, which they wanted to do! The only problem was that they were wrong and Jesus was totally correct in what He said to them. He was not lying, He is God! Tragically, the light, the *SHEKINAH* glory that had been absent from the temple for some several hundred years had returned in Jesus but now He departs once again from the temple leaving them in spiritual darkness once again because they refused to come to the light, come to Jesus!

You see, the **“I AM”** statement made by Jesus rocked them and to try to deny the fact that Jesus was claiming to be God here you have to twist the Scriptures, you have to ignore what they are saying. And thus, if you are willing to do that, guess what, you are wrong and dead in your trespasses and sins apart from Christ! It is as Henry Alford wrote, “All unbiased exegesis of these words must recognize in them a declaration of the essential pre-existence of Christ.” Absolutely but you can suppress the truth to believe a lie, but how foolish that would be!

This is so important for us to understand. I am going to share with you a couple of quotes from some scholars, godly men to drive this point home because if you miss this, you have missed everything. You are not keeping the main thing the main thing, and as I have said, it is Jesus!

A. G. Campbell has this to say regarding this ***I AM*** statement by Jesus and how that it is referring to the name of God Himself, Yahweh. He wrote, “From such Old Testament references as Exodus 3:14, Deuteronomy 32:39, and Isaiah 43:10 it is clear that this is no new idea which Jesus is presenting. The Jews were quite familiar with the idea that the Jehovah of the Old Testament is the eternally existent One. That which is new to the Jews is the identification of this designation with Jesus.” (A. G. Campbell, *The Greek Terminology for the Deity of Christ*, p. 12). That is why it blew their minds, they just did not see it, they did not get it, they did not see the Incarnation that was spoken of from Genesis chapter 3 on!

Now please understand that the words of Jesus were not empty words, He backed them up with His life, showing that He is the fulfillment of what the Old Testament prophets spoke regarding the Messiah. Peter Lewis makes these remarks about what Jesus said, which does show us why the Jews were so upset. He wrote, “In one single statement the supreme truth about the supreme Man is made known – His pre-existence, His absolute existence.” (Peter Lewis, *The Glory of Christ*, p. 92).

It is hard to argue that point. Jesus made a definitive statement here and you could accept what He said or reject it but you cannot deny what He has said, that He is the great ***I AM***, He is Almighty God! This is one of those in your face statements that show us the deity of Jesus Christ!

Now let's look at another statement that John wrote in his Gospel in John chapter 1, starting in verse 1 and see once again how John shows us that Jesus is God. He wrote, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”** John 1:1-3.

We have talked about this before but it is very important that we understand what John is saying here about Jesus because there are many cults and people who love to downplay or misquote these verses to show that it does not speak of Jesus being God. The problem with that is you can take away these verses here in John that speak of the deity of Jesus Christ but then what are you going to do with the volumes of other verses that speak of His deity? You see, you have opened up a can of worms and you have to completely alter what the Scriptures are saying to show that Jesus is not God! You have to, in a sense, put the worms back in the can, which is impossible to do! And here we see John open up his Gospel with a bang and he just says, like it or not, Jesus is God!

First of all think about how we speak of our own lives. Let me show you what I mean by telling you about me. I was born on October 31st in 1958 at a Chicago hospital, which truly is my starting point you might say. But for Jesus, John tells us something vastly different!

You see, as John opens up his Gospel he does so by speaking of Jesus' eternal existence. No matter how far back in time you go, Jesus was there, He was there before time began! That goes along with what Micah 5:2 says as he speaks of the birth of the Messiah, "**But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The one to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.**" That phrase, "**from everlasting**" speaks of being beyond the vanishing point or that He is eternal!

And again, Jesus, before the Incarnation was called the Word and thus, the Word existed as far back as you can go, before time ever began, before the heavens and the earth were created! Yes, Matthew and Luke give us the genealogy of Jesus regarding His Incarnation, but John gives us also His genealogy and that is He has always existed, He is the eternal God!

How can I be so sure? Because John tells us that the Word, Jesus has always been with God the Father. You see, there is only one God who is manifested in three distinct persons; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Also, not only is Jesus eternal, not only has He always been with the Father, but He is also God. Now the Jehovah Witnesses try to negate this fact by translating the last part of John 1:1 like this, "**And the Word was a god.**" You see, they don't believe in the Trinity, they don't believe Jesus is God, but just a god, and thus the reason for their translating this verse like this.

The only problem with that is there is no Greek scholar who would agree with the way they translated this verse, Christian or non-Christian. Now to try and make their point they quote Dr. Mantey, a Greek Scholar, but he wrote them a letter back in 1974, which I have a copy of, saying that he requests not only their apology for misquoting him for the past 40 years or so, but to remove this from their material!

Also, to say that Jesus is just a god and not Jehovah God is ridiculous for in Isaiah 42:8 we are told, **“I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.”** And, of course in Deuteronomy 5:7 we are told, **“You shall have no other gods before Me.”** I think those two verses we just read and what John says in the first two verses of his Gospel are very clear, the Son is distinct from the Father and the Father from the Son, and yet they are equally God, one God manifested in three distinct persons!

You see, when John says that **“the Word was with God”** the Greek implies that they were face-to-face or on equal ground, the Father and the Son! You see, you can misquote John 1:1 and try to say that Jesus was “a” God but John won’t let you do that because he now tells us that the Father and the Son are both God; one God but manifested in three distinct persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as I have said. Do you see how the Holy Spirit anticipated these issues that would come up regarding Jesus and thus, He has given to us these words so clearly that the only way to come to the conclusion that Jesus is not God is to suppress the truth that is before you and tragically many do!

Not only that, as if we needed more, John tells us that everything was made through Him, and John makes that point very clear as he says that **“all things were made through Him”** and then he says that **“without Him nothing was made that was made”** or as The Amplified Bible puts it, **“without Him was not even one thing made that has come into being.”**

These are remarkable statements that John is making for us, showing us the deity of Jesus Christ. Listen to what R. C. Sproul said regarding John 1:1 and specifically this idea of the “Word” which comes from the Greek word LOGOS. He wrote, “In this remarkable passage the Logos is both distinguished from God (‘was with God’) and identified with God (‘was God’). This paradox had great influence in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity, whereby the Logos is seen as the Second person of the Trinity. He differs in person from the Father, but is one in essence with the Father.” (R. C. Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, p. 105).

And Dr. Daniel B. Wallace, a Greek scholar made these comments regarding what John wrote here, “The construction the evangelist chose to express this idea was the most concise way he could have stated that the Word was God and yet was distinct from the Father.” (Dr. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, p. 269).

So why do so many people try to deny the deity of Jesus Christ? It is not because the evidence is not there, but they refuse to believe it because then they are accountable to Him. You see, if He was just a man, just a prophet, just a teacher of things, man is not accountable to him. But if Jesus is Almighty God, and He is, then we are accountable to Him and folk’s, we all are!

And listen to what John says in John 1:14 regarding what happened with the Word, **“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”** The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us; and we [actually] saw His glory (His honor, His majesty), such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favor, loving-kindness) and truth. [Isa 40:5.]”**

Who became flesh and dwelt among us? We are told it was the Word that became flesh and dwelt or tabernacled among us. Who is the Word? It is Almighty God, it is Jesus Christ! We saw that as we looked at the opening verses of John chapter 1 and we came to the conclusion that the Word has to be God. And now we see this in the Incarnation and thus, God became flesh and dwelt among us!

This is not a stretch, not at all! In Matthew 1:23 we are told, **“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which is translated, ‘God with us.’”** You don’t need to understand Greek or Hebrew to figure this one out! Who is going to be with us? Very simply, ***GOD!*** Now how is God going to be with us? In this child who was to be born in Bethlehem, in Jesus, the Word and we see this in the Incarnation. It does not say “a God” but it is God who will inhabit flesh and dwell among us! So I think it is very clear from what we have seen that Jesus is the eternal God who became flesh and tabernacled among us!

Another Scripture to look at is found in John 17:1-5 as Jesus is praying for Himself and listen to what is said here. We are told, **“Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.’”**

I realize that this may not mean too much to you in regards to the deity of Jesus Christ, but there is a lot here that shows us Jesus is God. Let me just take you through these verses because they are leading up to the fact that Jesus Himself speaks to the fact that He is God. Jesus is speaking of the cross here, that is what He is praying about. And keep in mind that the cross was a symbol of humiliation to the world but by it the Son was glorified! And the idea here is that this is all tied to His obedience to the Father and through that obedience the Father is glorified as well as the Son. Folk’s, as we live out our faith, as we walk in obedience to the Lord, we will glorify the Father. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, where we are told, **“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”** You see, as we serve the Lord the world may shake their heads at us, they may see our work as unbecoming, but through it the Father is glorified as we walk in obedience to Him!

And then Jesus speaks of the life that the Son gives to people and that life is found not only in the Father but also in the Son! Make no mistake about it, this eternal life that has been given to us is a gift from God, it is grace, we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and Jesus said that this work is finished. How can that be? Because He completed it on the cross of Calvary for us and all we must do is receive that free gift by faith. Paul put it like this in Romans 6:23, **“For the wages of sin is death, but the [free] gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** We don’t need to finish the work, add to the work, help with the work, *IT IS FINISHED!* Thus, we are secure in Christ; it is that eternal life that He has given to us!

Now how can the work be completely finished if Jesus has not gone to the cross yet, at least here in John 17? Here’s the thing, Jesus speaks as if the cross was a past event because nothing is going to stop Him from completing the work that is before Him.

And here is the point that all this is leading up to. This is interesting to me because Jesus speaks of receiving the glory that He once had with the Father and yet Isaiah 42:8 says, **“I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.”** And in Isaiah 48:11 we are told, **“For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.”**

Now let’s think about this for a minute. If Jesus was not God then He could not ask for this glory, but since He is, He is just going to receive back that which He had before the Incarnation! You see, if the Father and the Son share this glory, they must be *GOD*, they must be *YAHWEH!*

Also, in John 1:18 we are told, **“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”** Listen to how The Amplified Bible puts this verse, **“No man has ever seen God at any time; the only unique Son, or the only begotten God, Who is in the bosom.”** The Living Bible says, **“No one has ever actually seen God, but, of course, his only Son has, for he is the companion of the Father and has told us all about him.”** And lastly, the New Living Translation puts it like this, **“No one has ever seen God. But the one and only Son is himself God and is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.”**

You see, I don't want you to miss this point, it is important!

But even in these translations, we may miss the point. I think the New American Standard Bible has the correct translation as it says, **“No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”**

You see, the **“only begotten God”** not **“Son”** as God became flesh and dwelt among us as we have studied so far!

First of all no man has ever seen God the Father and that is important for us to understand. You see, Jesus is a perfect representation of the Father and thus, to know Jesus is to know the Father! In Exodus 33:20 we are told as God is speaking to Moses, **“But He said, ‘You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.’”** Also, in John 6:46 Jesus tells us, **“Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.”** The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“Which does not imply that anyone has seen the Father [not that anyone has ever seen Him] except He [Who was with the Father] Who comes from God; He [alone] has seen the Father.”** And The Living Bible says, **“(Not that anyone actually sees the Father, for only I have seen him.)”**

Thus, as you read this through it is very clear that no man has seen the face of God the Father and lived because God is holy and cannot look upon sinful man apart from Christ. Thus, Jesus, who is God, who is holy and there is no darkness in Him at all, no sin has seen the Father. In fact, in John 1:1 we are told that He is face-to-face with the Father, they are equal, they are God! And thus, if we want to see God the Father all we have to do is look at His Son, look at Jesus for He is an exact representation of the Father.

That is what Philip was told in John 14:8-11, **“Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.”**”

You see, Jesus is an exact representation of the Father as I have said and if you want to know what the Father is about, look to Jesus, that is what Jesus said to Philip! And if you don’t believe the Words that He says, that He is God sent from the Father, then let the works He did, the miracles He did testify of who He is!

Now here in John 1:18 it says that Jesus **“declared”** the Father to us and He uses the Greek word EXEGEOMAI, (ex-ayg-eh’-om-ahee) and from this word we get our English word, “exegesis” from and this word means “to expound.” Thus, Jesus was able to expound upon the Father because Jesus has seen the Father, it is as simple as that. And the reason Jesus saw the Father and can declare Him to us is that He is God, the second person of the Holy Trinity!

Now let’s look at what John has said in John 1:1, John 1:14, and here in John 1:18 and as we put the first verse in each of these three groups together and notice what we come up with:

“In the beginning was the Word,”
 “And the Word was made flesh,”
 “No man hath seen God at any time.”

You could not see God - God is spirit. He had to become flesh; He had to become one of us in order for us to know Him. We could not go up there to understand Him; He had to come down here and bring God down where we are.

Now let's put the second statements together from each of the three groups:

“The Word was with God,”

“And dwelt among us,”

“The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father.”

Consider this One for a moment—the angels bowed before Him, He was with God, on an equality with God. The apostle Paul wrote of Him, He “. . . thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Phil. 2:6). That is, He did not go to school to become God; it was not something He worked overtime to attain. It was not a degree that He earned. He did not *try* to be God; He *was* God. I do not mean to be irreverent, but He did not say to the Father when He came to this earth, “Keep your eye on Gabriel; he is after My job; watch him while I’m gone.” He did not have to do that—nobody could take His place. He was God. Here He comes: born in Bethlehem, a few little shepherds there, not many; He goes up to Nazareth, thirty years hidden away in Nazareth. God, out of eternity coming down and going to Nazareth, working in a carpenter shop. Why? So you can know God. The only way you will ever know Him, my friend, is to know this One. “The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father” is the only One who can reveal God to us.

Now notice the third statement in each group:

“The Word was God,”

“And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,”

“He hath declared him.”

When He was down here, He was still God, full of grace and truth. And He declared Him; He is the only one who can lead Him out in the open where we can get acquainted with Him.

- J. Vernon McGee, *Thru The Bible Vol. IV*, pp. 370-371

You can't help but see that Jesus is God, the second person of the Holy Trinity. And I know, people like to try to deny it but who are you going to believe, the words of men or the Word of **GOD!** You see, it is really that easy. Listen to the words of the fifth-century church father Cyril of Alexandria,

We do not . . . assert that there was any change in the nature of the Word when it became flesh, or that it was transformed into an entire man, consisting of soul and body; but we say that the Word, in a manner indescribable and inconceivable, united personally . . . to himself flesh animated with a reasonable soul, and thus became man and was called the Son of man. . . . The natures which were brought together to form a true unity were different; but out of both is one Christ and one Son. We do not mean that the difference of the natures is annihilated by reason of this union; but rather that the Deity and Manhood, by their inexpressible and inexplicable concurrence into unity, have produced for us the one Lord and Son Jesus Christ. (Cited in Bettenson, *Documents*, 47).

In other words, we are speaking of the Incarnation, that God became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus was fully God and fully man in the Incarnation, make no mistake about that. And today, He inhabits a resurrected body and He remains fully God in glory! Listen carefully to what theologian Bernard Ramm wrote in his classic approach to the union of Christ's deity and humanity in his Protestant Christian Evidences. He wrote,

“If God became a man we would expect His human life to be sinless.” Jesus was.

“If God were to become a man we would expect Him to be holy.” Jesus was.

“If God were a man we would expect His words to be the greatest words ever spoken.” Jesus' words were.

“If God were a man we would expect Him to exert a profound power over human personality.” Jesus did.

“If God were a man we would expect supernatural doings.” And Jesus did just that.

“If God were to become a man we would expect Him to manifest the love of God.” And Jesus did by dying on the cross.

- Bernard Ramm, Protestant Christian Evidences, pp. 166-183

What a powerful statement and thus, as I begin to close this morning, what do you think of Jesus, who is He? You see, if He is not Almighty God, then you have a problem, you are dead in your trespasses and sins. You need to come to Him and ask Him to be Lord and Savior of your life and as soon as you do, as soon as you receive that free gift into your life, your sins are forgiven and you are a child of God!

Next week we will be looking at the seven ***I AM*** statements made by Jesus, again showing us that He is God. But let me close this morning with these words from Donald Grey Barnhouse and I think you will be pondering these for a while. He wrote,

Christ asked men questions about Himself. Of unbelievers He asked, "What think ye of Christ; whose Son is he?" Of His own He asked, "Whom say men that I, the son of man, am?" and again, "Whom say ye that I am?" Yet it was not from men that the true answer first came, though the Pharisees answered well that Messiah was David's Son. When Peter came out with his great confession, Christ declared it to be supernatural revelation and not the result of man's mental processes.

The reason the true answer concerning the person of Christ did not come first from man is easily understood by the reaction to Peter's confession. It was to be expected that the unbelieving Pharisees would not own Him, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned" (1Cor. 2:14). But from those that followed Jesus we would have expected more. Nevertheless, the answer is the same, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee." Man's deductive or intuitive faculties are incapable of spiritual discovery, even if one is a follower of Christ. Even the Christian is dependent upon God for spiritual revelation by the Holy Spirit.

Who then was the very first to proclaim His deity after His ministry began? Not man, unsaved or saved – but two demons. “They cried out, saying, “What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?” (Matt. 8:29). Of course they knew this through God’s permission; it is clearly indicated in Scripture that Satan and his host are aware that judgment is awaiting them because of Jesus Christ. The whole of Satan’s force was alive to the attack upon Christ from the time of His birth. “Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” we hear them screech. And though it was wrung from them, it was nevertheless a confession.

Yet there are men today – men of blinded eyes and blinded hearts – who dare deny the Deity that not even demons could deny. All who deny that Deity will one day be forced to bow the knee before it – but they will then be in the lake of fire. All Unitarian tongues, though today they may be satisfied with calling Him the wayshower, the great example, or the perfect man, must one day confess, though too late, that He, Jesus Christ, is Lord Jehovah of all.

But now, today, “If thou shalt confess with they mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him form the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. 10:9).

- Donald Grey Barnhous, Timeless
Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching,
pp. 330-331

Folk's, we should be a people who give praise and glory to Jesus Christ, Almighty God. We should not let the words of men persuade us against what God's Word has to say for the words of men will fall by the wayside but the Words of God will last forever! He is the Great I AM and I pray that you have seen that!