

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## Theology Bites—The Trinity, Pt 2

### Selected Passages

**PowerPoint Presentation: None**

**Keywords: Orthodoxy, Sound Doctrine, Trinity, Deity of Christ, Deity of Holy Spirit**

**SermonAudio blurb:**

#### I. Introduction.

- A. We continue in this series on small bites of key theology. (**Show slides**)
  - 1. Last week I introduced you to the doctrine of the Trinity. I showed you how the bible clearly speaks of the oneness of God as well as the plurality of the Godhead.
  - 2. Today we will consider the two persons of the Trinity that are usually considered less than God— The Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ.
- B. With Jesus so often simply understanding who He is as stated in the bible is enough to then reject most religions as being something other than Christian. Certainly they fail at orthodoxy or right thinking, which is what it means.
  - 1. The JW will teach and believe that Jesus was a creature and formerly Michael the Archangel.
  - 2. The Mormon teaches that Jesus was a spirit person who was made by God.
  - 3. In Islam he was only a prophet. Sura 43:59 “Jesus was no more than a mortal whom Allah favored and made an example to the Israelites. They are unbelievers who say God is Messiah, Mary’s son.”
  - 4. Christian Science: Jesus is the name of the man who, more than all other men, has presented Christ, the true idea of God. . . . Jesus is the human man, and Christ is the divine idea; hence the duality of Jesus the Christ. (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health and Key to the Scriptures The First Church of Christ Scientist 1934, p. 361.)
- C. So today we will look very carefully at the person of Jesus with one simple goal — to show that the bible unabashedly portrays Him as God.

#### II. The Bible and The Son.

- A. The N.T. is replete with references to the deity of Jesus Christ.
  - 1. “God.”

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a. Matthew 1:23.

- (1) To the Jew, names were much more than a way to identify (e.g. 1:21).
- (2) It spoke a story and often it involved God.
- (3) Jesus had many names or titles, Jesus (Savior), Christ (Messiah), Son of God, Son of Man, and this one, Immanuel (God with us).
- (4) So at the very beginning of Jesus' time on earth was this clear declaration that God had come to visit man.

b. John 1:1, 14.

- (1) I have taken you to this passage many times so most of you should know it well. However it is such a key passage that it bears repeating and should be of help to those who are new.
- (2) Most religious Jews would also perk up when they heard the term "the Word."
- (3) By the time John wrote the gospel there had been much study and discussion about the concepts of "the Word of God" and "Wisdom" in the Bible as being personal.
- (4) An example of this is found in Genesis 1:3, where the Bible says, "then God said." The Jews saw that God's word was the agent by which God created the universe.
  - (a) Another passage would be Psalm 33:6, "By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host."
  - (b) In fact, over 100 times the phrase "the word of the Lord came . . ." in reference to the prophets.
  - (c) Many of the Jews believed that this Word, although not actually a person, was given in the Bible an almost personal presence.
- (5) Here we have three basic truths about the Word, who we know from John 1:14, was Jesus Christ.
  - (a) First, the Word is eternal (1a).

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- i) This verse points us back the before Genesis 1:1.
- ii) The verb “was” is important to note here because it does not give any sense of origin or beginning.
  - a) It simply means a continuous existence.
  - b) The Word always was.
  - c) “In the beginning” is being emphasized in this sentence.
  - d) Genesis 1:1 looks at the beginning of Creation, while this verse looks past that to the when time did not exist, eternity past.
    - 1) In the beginning God created, assumes the pre-existence of God. Or He would not have been there to create.
    - 2) John 1:1 says that in that time before time, the Word simply “was.”
  - e) A Jew would expect that the next words to follow “in the beginning” would be “God,” but John surprises them by saying “the word” instead.
  - f) **Micah 5:2** is a prophecy of the Messiah, notice how it also speaks of Christ’s eternity, “But as for you, Bethlehem . . . From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”
    - 1) The Christ would come out from the realm of eternity to rule Israel.

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- g) **Isaiah 9:6** “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.”
    - 1) Notice how the Christ was called “mighty God”, but also “eternal Father.”
    - 2) A more literal translation would be “father of eternity.”
  - h) All John is doing is affirming that this thing called the “word:” has always existed and has no beginning whatsoever.
  - i) The Word did not begin to be/to exist, rather, at the point in eternity that all other things began to exist He already was!
- (b) Secondly, the Word had an intimate relationship with the God the Father.
- i) Notice that in this verse we don’t see the word “father.” That doesn’t come out until verse fourteen, when John writes, “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
  - ii) This part of the verse is hard to translate and still bring out the richness of what is said.
    - a) A literal translation would be, “the Word was toward God.”
    - b) But that still does not convey the unique relationship between the Word and God.

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- c) The idea here is an intimacy between the two, there was a genuine fellowship. But not fellowship between a greater and a lesser being, but between equals.
  - 1) ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν “He was face to face with God.”
- d) The Word wasn't subordinate to God, this phrase says that He is equal to Him. He existed as closely with God as is possible, without being mixed in with God.
  - 1) What this is, is the start of John's great revelation of the Trinity; he shows that there was God, and someone called the Word who was with Him in an equal sense.
- iii) Notice the flow again.
  - a) First John tells us that the Word was eternal, having always existed.
  - b) Now he broadens that to say that the Word is not only eternal, but he is on an equal basis with God.
  - c) Before going on to the last part, notice that in verse 2 he repeats these first two points. By doing this he reemphasizes the truth of what He has just said.
  - d) John now gives the final, crowning statement about our Lord, Jesus Christ.
- (c) The Word is God.
  - i) Not only is He having an intimate, equal relationship with God, but He himself is God.

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- ii) Once again we see the two parts of the Trinity come into view.
- iii) To the Jew, who was the primary reader of this gospel, this is an earth-shattering statement.
  - a) Israel believed in one God, but failed to see the great mysteriousness of who God actually was.
  - b) The way John writes this leaves no room for debate. You cannot try to say, as the Jehovah Witnesses say, “the Word was a god.” That is improper grammatically and is only done by them because they already deny that Jesus is God.
  - c) Make no mistake about it, John is telling us right up front that when we view Jesus Christ, we must view Him as God, nothing less will do, nothing less is acceptable.
- c. John 1:18.
  - (1) If you have the KJV you will notice that it use the word “son” rather than God. That is based off of a poor reading from the Greek manuscripts.
- d. John 20:28.
  - (1) Note the response by Jesus.
- e. Romans 9:5.
- f. Heb. 1:8.
- 2. We see also that the bible shows him to be equal with God.
  - a. 2 Cor. 4:4.
    - (1) εἰκὼν (image) we get the word ‘icon’ from it.
    - (2) It is a visible representation or manifestation of a heavenly form or reality.

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- (3) We have Satan being called “god” for he is the false god of this world. Behind every idol, every false religion, every bit of worldly philosophy lies Satan and his deceptions.
  - (4) And what is it that he is seeking to obscure? (The glory of Christ, who is the true God). He desires man to worship him, not the true God.
- b. Col. 1:15.
- (1) Same Greek word.
  - (2) This is telling us that Christ shares with His Father the essence, the nature, of being God. And therefore, He alone is able to display and reveal God to man.
  - (3) John 1:18 No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.
  - (4) Exodus 33:20 is where God tells Moses that no one can see Him and live. So how do we see God? We see Him only through His Son.
  - (5) We see this another way in Heb. 1:3 where there are two truths about Christ.
    - (a) He is the radiance of the Father’s glory.
      - i) John 12:41 These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.
      - ii) The word ‘radiance’ means “effulgence.”
        - a) Now that is a helpful word isn’t it?
        - b) Simply put, it means, a flashing for of light. Or here, better, a flashing forth of glory.
      - iii) No prophet would ever would ever say that out from his being comes the very glory of God. A prophet was a moon, a reflector of glory. Christ is the sun itself.
    - (b) χαρακτήρ (exact representation, a precise reproduction).
      - i) What was the second commandment?

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- ii) **Exodus 20:4** "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.
  - a) "Make an idol" notice how it is said in the KJV, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any **graven** image . . . ."
- iii) χαρακτήρ came from a tool for engraving. To make anything as a representation of God was forbidden. For nothing could do so. All things fall short.
  - a) But not with Christ.
  - b) He alone is the truth "graven image" of God. He alone can display to the world the person and nature of God.
  - c) Because He is God.
- c. Col. 2:8-14.
  - (1) "fulness of deity"
  - (2) Point out how it is necessary for Christ to be God for him to be able to make us "complete (10).
- 3. John 8:38-59.

### **III. Conclusion.**

- A. Understand that God the Father is a glorious, eternal Father who loves us.
- B. Understand the God the Son is a glorious savior, who died and rose again for the forgiveness of our sin.
- C. But unless God the Spirit works we would all still be dead in our sins.
- D. Next week we will consider the massive ways the Holy Spirit works that we might know Him better.

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### **Community Group Questions**

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- **Encourage the group members to transfer these passage and some crib notes into the bible they would most likely have if they came in contact with someone who denies Jesus' deity.**
- **Why is the fact that Jesus is God so important to our salvation and life in Him?**
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