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On the Divinity of Jesus

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I love talking about God. Yes, I try to be careful of that peculiar hubris that comes with placing him under a microscope, as it were, and delineating or categorizing so strictly lest I limit his *unlimited* nature – but I love talking about him. I love trying to understand the Creator.

Many were encouraged a couple Sundays ago when we took an in-depth look at one of the major theophanies in the Bible: Moses encountering God at the burning bush. It's an unbelievably sophisticated view of the creator, and our focus specifically was on understanding what the covenant name of God revealed about the nature of God (see **Exodus 3.1-14, 33.17-20**).

In a word, when we read "LORD" in our Bibles, we're following the tradition started by the Masoretes to replace God's name with the title *adonai*, which is Hebrew for "Lord". But the actual name God revealed to Moses is the tetragrammaton YHWH or *Yahweh* which means I Am or He Is. We concluded the lesson with the significance of Jesus taking on that covenant name for himself in **John 8.51-59**.

In this article, I want to jump off that discussion of Jesus' divinity by sharing an acronym I learned from Michael Bird that helps us understand the various dimensions of his divinity: H.A.N.D.S.

The question: what do we mean when we say that Jesus is divine, that he is God the Son?

H: Jesus shares the honors due to God. Obviously, God is the Most High and all honor and glory are due him and no other. Yet in John's gospel, we're told that the Father entrusts judgment to the Son so that "all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father," and "whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him" (John 5.23).

A: Jesus shares the attributes of God. Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1.15). God's glory is displayed in his very face (2 Corinthians 4.6). The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being (Hebrews 1.3).

N: Jesus shares the names of God. Bird writes, "The designations for Jesus in the New Testament indicate that his origins and authority are bound up with the God of Israel." Jesus himself takes the names "God," "Lord," and "Savior" (John 20.28; Titus 2.13; 2 Peter 1.1, 11). Even his own name is revered and is efficacious to the same degree as God's (Acts 2.38; John 14.13-14; Acts 4.12).

D: Jesus shares the deeds of God. That is, the work originally attributed to YHWH is now spoken of as occurring specifically *through Jesus*. We're told that "the world was made through him" (John 1.10), the one "through whom all things came and through whom we live" (1 Corinthians 8.6); "all things have been created through him and for him" (Colossians 1.16). Not only creation occurs through the Son, but even redemption, originally the work of YHWH, occurs through Jesus (John 4.42; Titus 3.4-6).

S: Jesus shares the seat of God's throne. In fulfillment of the prophetic promises that there would come a messiah, the son of man, to be enthroned at the right hand of God (Psalm 110.1, Daniel 7.13), Jesus is spoken of as residing at the throne of God or at his right hand in various passages (Ephesians 1.20-21; Hebrews 1.3; 1 Peter 3.22).

Jesus, the hands of God.

