

- ***READ John 20:30,31*** A few weeks back, we began a series of lessons based within John's Gospel concerning the proposed bold claim that Jesus is the Son of God. We noted that John's Gospel is a great place to start with teaching about the deity of Jesus because it states plainly from our opening text that the things recorded within this book were written for the purpose of people believing in Jesus as the Son of God and being able to find life in His name. Before we get into the meat of this third lesson, let's take a few minutes to remind ourselves of where we have been in this study concerning why we can have faith that Jesus is truly the Son of God who came in the flesh.

I. Quick Review

A. A Claim That Matters!

1. Defines Jesus, who He was, and what He did. The claims found in the Bible concerning Jesus would either confirm Him as a liar, lunatic, or the Lord based upon whether or not the claims could be substantiated.
2. Determines the validity of our faith and hope. If Jesus is not the Lord then those of this world who have put all of their faith in Him are most to be pitied because we have believed in either a liar or a lunatic.
3. Demands our acknowledgement of His deity in order to have fellowship with the Father. If the evidence does point to Jesus as the Lord then we would have to accept and act accordingly to this finding. Failure to acknowledge Jesus when the evidence points to Him being Lord will only leave us at odds with the God who inspired this book that we hold that contains the confirming evidence. We cannot fail to acknowledge Jesus and at the same time expect God to accept us.

B. A Claim Jesus Himself Made!

1. **John 5:17-23** "Jesus responded to them, *"My Father is still working, and I am working also." This is why the Jews began trying all the more to kill him: Not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God... Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him."*
2. **John 8:48-59** "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad." The Jews replied, "You aren't fifty years old yet, and you've seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, **"Truly I tell you, before Abraham was, I am."** So they picked up stones to throw at him."
3. **John 14:1-7** **"If you know me, you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him."**
4. **John 19:6,7** "We have a law," the Jews replied to him, "and according to that law he ought to die, because **he made himself the Son of God.**"

We noted that Jesus didn't only make this bold claim, but He was willing to support such claims by asking the hearers to weigh the evidence based upon the testimony and witness of four different sources that can be found in **John 5:31-47**. The first of which was John the Baptist who we considered in our first study this past Sunday night from **John 1:19-34**. As you recall...

C. A Claim John The Baptist Made! (John 1:19-34)

1. He repeatedly stated that he was not the Son of God.
2. While speaking humbly of himself, he sought to speak very highly of the one who was going to be coming after him.
3. Upon seeing Jesus, John proclaimed that He was truly the Lamb of God who had come to take away the sins of the world.
4. John the Gospel writer records John being told that he would know who the Son of God was based upon who the Spirit descended and rested upon.

In addition to the claims of John the Baptist, the miraculous signs that were recorded by John the Gospel writer were given as a means of showing that these signs of Jesus were clearly an indication of Him being someone extremely special. When Nicodemus came to Jesus in **John 3**, he freely admitted that someone could not do what Jesus was doing unless he was from God. So what was it about these signs that helped to support the claim that Jesus was the Son of God?...

D. A Claim Supported By Jesus's Miracles!

1. The signs highlighted by John in his Gospel account were given to show and emphasize the glory of God that dwelt in Jesus while He was here on the earth.
2. The signs of John's Gospel showed that Jesus's power was endless in scope. John's Gospel records seven incredible miraculous signs that begins with turning water into wine and ends with Jesus raising his friend Lazarus from the dead after he had been in the grave for four days.
3. These signs, and in fact the entire Gospel account, were recorded for the purpose of giving every reader the opportunity to believe in Jesus as the Son of God and have life through Him and His sacrifice.

The third witness mentioned in **John 5** is the witness of the Father himself. This witness seems to be very much tied together with the second witness of Jesus's miracles. I say this based upon the fact that Jesus's miraculous abilities were understood by many to be a sign that God was with Him. This was Nicodemus's conclusion in **John 3:2** and Jesus Himself plainly states that the works He has been doing were from His Father. (**John 10:31-33**) The Father's witness could also be tied together with the Old Testament Scriptures, but we will leave that for our final study of this series in a couple of weeks. Therefore, since we focused on the miracles that were specific to John's Gospel in our last lesson in this series, tonight we are going to go outside of the Gospel of John to two specific instances where the Father was very explicit to the fact of Jesus's deity and His being His Son. Before we get to those two instances where the Father does this, we'll begin by establishing that Jesus fully believed that He was doing the will of His Father with everything He was doing while on earth.

II. God The Father Testifies To The Deity Of Jesus:

A. Jesus believed that His work was to fulfill all of the righteous plans of God.

1. In this text of **Matthew 3:13-17**, we read of Jesus going to John for the purpose of Him being baptized. John is very much taken aback by this request being made by Jesus because he recognized Jesus as being the One that he was preparing people for, and yet here He was requesting to be baptized. He tries to talk Jesus out of being baptized, but Jesus is adamant that this was something that He need to do. *"Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness."* (**Matthew 3:15**)
2. Jesus was very much concerned with making sure that He was doing everything He could to fulfill the righteous desires of His Father who was in heaven. Even from a very young age, Jesus was very much concerned with making sure that He knew His Father's will and that He was being obedient to it. In **Luke 2:31-52**, we read of Jesus's family's tradition of going to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. Upon their visit when Jesus was twelve, we read of the young Messiah failing to join His family on the return trip home. His parents were not aware of this to begin with, and upon learning that Jesus was not with them, they quickly hurried back to Jerusalem. *"After three days, they found Him in the temple sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions."* Those who were present for this occasion were amazed by the wisdom He was displaying in the answers that He was offering.

3. When His parents finally found Him, His mother asked why He had caused them to worry so much. Jesus answered with, *"Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know that it was necessary for me to be in my Father's house?"* Of course, they had no idea what He meant by this, but His mother Mary kept this occasion within her heart as she watched her Son as *"He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people."* It is plain to see that Jesus, even from a young age, was very concerned with His Father's desires and fulfilling that which was righteous.
 4. Going back to the original statement by Jesus at His baptism with John, I am also convinced that He didn't want to do anything that might hinder the influence of John's work. What would people think if they knew that Jesus wasn't willing to submit Himself to the baptism of John? They might begin to think that Jesus didn't approve of John's work, and Jesus certainly didn't want that to be thought by anyone because John was doing exactly what God was wanting for him to be doing. This baptism also stood as the point when Jesus and His ministry were identified with the ministry that John had been doing. Regardless of the exact reason for Jesus's baptism, we can rest assured that God was pleased with Jesus submitting to the baptism of John based upon the response of God within this text and the other synoptic Gospel accounts.
- B. God testified to the faithfulness & obedience of Jesus at His baptism.**
1. After Jesus is baptized and as He is coming up out of the water, the three synoptic Gospel accounts record basically the exact same occurrence.
 - a) *"When Jesus was baptized, He went up immediately from the water. The heavens opened for Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on Him. And A voice from heaven said: 'This is My Beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased.'" (Matthew 3:17)*
 - b) *"In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. As soon as he came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased." (Mark 1:9-11)*
 - c) *"When all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. As he was praying, heaven opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in a physical appearance like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased." (Luke 3:21,22)*
 2. It was at this point that there is no doubt that Jesus knew of His mission and that God was going to be with Him in the work that He desired for Him to do. It seems to me that this event wasn't something that everyone present saw or heard except for John (**John 1:33**), but Jesus knew what had taken place. This occasion gave Him every confirmation that was needed in order for Him to go from this place fulfilling the ministry that had been set before Him to do.
 3. Those who read these Gospel accounts would hopefully be familiar with this language and be reminded of what is said in **Psalm 2:7**, *"I will declare the Lord's decree. He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."* This Psalm was read at the coronation of kings, and the Father alluding to this text was surely an allusion to Jesus being crowned the King over His kingdom that was shortly to be established. The use of the word "beloved" would also have alluded to Abraham's love for Isaac (**Genesis 22:2,12,16**) who we know were shown to be shadows of God & Jesus in the way that the Father gave up Jesus to die.
 4. Lastly, God's words of being well pleased with Jesus can first be found in **Isaiah 42:1** where it is written, *"This is my servant; I strengthen him, this is my chosen one, I delight in him. I have put my Spirit on him; he will bring justice to the nations."* These verses and this particular section of Isaiah is focusing on the great servant of God who would give His life and restore God's Israel through His sacrifice. Those reading this would hopefully make the connection.

C. God further testified to His approval of Jesus during the transfiguration.

1. After Jesus's personal declaration of His being the Messiah who would be betrayed and eventually killed, we find Jesus talking His closest companions of Peter, James, and John up on the mountain to pray. As they are praying, the text tells us that Jesus's true nature as deity was unveiled before them as He is changed and His clothes begin to glow a dazzling white. Moses (representing the Law) and Elijah (representing the Prophets) appear with Jesus in a similar glorious fashion. When the Apostles wake up, they are astonished by what they are saying, and the ever quick to speak up Peter states that they should build three shelters or tabernacles for the three glorified men. I doubt Peter meant any disrespect towards Jesus by doing this, but from our perspective it could be concluded that Peter was seeing all three men as being equally worthy of praise and reverence from the three Apostles that were present. I love how Luke records that Peter did this, *"not knowing what he was saying."* **(Luke 9:33)** Mark records something similar, *"because he did not know what to say, since they were terrified."* **(Mark 9:6)**
2. However, we very quickly see a very strong response from heaven to this statement as the three synoptic Gospels record the words of the Father to these three Apostles.
 - a) *"While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased. Listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown and were terrified."* **(Matthew 17:5,6)**
 - b) *"A cloud appeared, overshadowing them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my beloved Son; listen to him!""* **(Mark 9:7)**
 - c) *"While he was saying this, a cloud appeared and overshadowed them. They became afraid as they entered the cloud. Then a voice came from the cloud, saying: "This is my Son, the Chosen One; listen to him!"* **(Luke 9:34,35)**
3. With these statements, it cannot be argued at all that the Father was not with His Son for He clearly shows Him as ranking higher than even the most revered men of faith that had come before Him. He has a place above all others. Through the words of the Father and Moses and Elijah disappearing and only leaving Jesus alone, these men must have understood the superiority of Christ in this moment.

Through His miraculous deeds, the Old Testament Scriptures, and these two events...it should be abundantly evident that Jesus was truly the Son of God and God approved of everything He was doing while on earth. We can have confidence in this witness of the Father for we know that He cannot lie because He is the very embodiment of truth. May the witness of the Father and these other witnesses we have seen over the last few weeks continue to impress upon us the reality that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God and that He is most deserving of our fully devotion. May we live for Him in everything that we do and honor Him as Lord within our lives.