



with the Father as the pattern He desires His disciples to follow (John 17:11, 21-22). In this, once again Jesus proclaims, **“You, Father, are in Me, and I in You”** (John 17:21). After the horror of His trial and crucifixion, Jesus demonstrated His Deity in His resurrection (John 20:1-8) and in His ability to appear in the midst of the disciples inside a locked house (John 20:19). When Thomas, one of the disciples who did not see this ap-

toward God the Father (cf. John 8:29).

In the last pages of John’s gospel the Holy Spirit continues to assert plainly the Deity of Christ. In the extended prayer Jesus offers just before going into Gethsemane He claims to have shared glory with God the Father **“before the world was”** (John 17:5). In His prayer for the unity of His disciples He repeatedly appeals to His own oneness

pearance, saw Him and believed in His resurrection He proclaimed, **“My Lord and my God!”** (John 20:28). If Jesus was not God in the flesh this would have been the perfect occasion for Him to clarify a false perception. That’s what Paul and Barnabas did—they said, **“We also are men with the same nature as you”** (Acts 14:14-15). Jesus didn’t say that, even though one of His disciples called Him **“my God.”** In the verses that follow this Jesus praised Thomas’ belief (John 20:29) and John affirmed that his gospel was written to motivate this same kind of belief (John 20:30-31). What is this belief that was praised and the gospel was intended to motivate? The firm belief that can move one to speak of Jesus Christ of Nazareth as **“My Lord”** and **“My God.”**



4700 Andrews Ave.
Amarillo TX 79106
806-352-2809
www.olsenpark.com

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ISSUE

22.33

August 16, 2020

Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
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10:00 AM
11:00 AM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

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Kyle Pope

Jesus Is My Lord and My God

By Kyle Pope

There is perhaps no other biblical book that places more emphasis on the picture of Jesus as God in the flesh than the gospel of John. In its opening words John affirms boldly what he calls **“the Word”** that was **“in the beginning”**—**“with God”** and **“was God”** (John 1:1). We are not left to wonder for long the identity of that which is called **“the Word.”** Only a few verses into the text John explains through the Holy Spirit, **“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”** (John 1:14, NKJV). The rest of the gospel tells the story of this personified **“Word”** of God—Jesus Christ.

Before we leave the opening chapter we have already learned a number of things about Jesus as the **“Word of God.”** First, He is the Creator. **“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made”** (John 1:3). The Bible begins with the declaration, **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”** (Gen. 1:1). If Jesus (as the **“Word of God”**) is said to have made **“all things,”** the clear assertion is that Jesus is God. Next, Jesus is described as existing within **“the bosom”** of God the Father. John explains, **“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him”** (John 1:18). Some translations have taken this figuratively in just the sense **“at the Father’s side”** (NIV, ESV, HCSB), but that may miss the point. In Scripture to speak of something *in the bosom* of another person is a way of describing something as belonging to the person or sharing a unique intimacy with him

or her (cf. Gen. 16:5; Exod. 4:6; Deut. 13:6; 28:56; Ruth 4:16; 2 Sam. 12:3; Job 31:33; Psa. 35:13; Prov. 6:27; Luke 6:38). While it can refer to those maintaining separate identity (cf. Luke 16:22; John 13:23), in the context this is likely an affirmation of Jesus' unity with God the Father. Jesus would say later, **"I am in the Father, and the Father in Me"** (John 14:10). While Jesus may be described as **"standing at the right hand of God"** (Acts 7:55-56), the Bible also clearly describes the Deity of Christ.

This is clear in other statements Jesus makes throughout the gospel. He affirmed to Nicodemus while on the earth that although He **"came down from heaven,"** He was also **"in heaven"** (John 3:13). On a separate occasion when speaking to the Jews in Jerusalem He de-

clared **"I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me"** (John 8:16; cf. 16:32). Only God may be said to **"fill heaven and earth"** (Jer. 23:24).

When Jesus was criticized for healing on the Sabbath He declared, **"My Father has been working until now and I have been working"** (John 5:17). The clear inference of this statement was that Jesus had been working from the beginning, just as God the Father had. John explains that the Jews understood that by saying God was His Father they considered Him to be **"making Himself equal to God"** (John 5:18). How interesting that John felt no compulsion to explain that Jesus was *not equal to God!* Why? Because John understood their conclusion to be correct!

In the same context Jesus affirmed His power to call forth the resurrection on the last day (John 5:21, 25-26) and proclaim judgment (John 5:22). Later, Jesus would declare that His words would judge all people on the **"last day"** (John 12:48). In fact in this gospel, Jesus was said to **"know what was in man"** (John 2:25). Only God knows the thoughts of man (Acts 15:8), and the Bible teaches that only God is the **"judge of all the earth"** (Gen. 18:25). If Jesus is the Judge, Jesus is God!

Jesus claimed to be **"from above"** (John 8:23) and on another occasion **"from the Father"** as One who had **"seen the Father"**—yet in the same verse He declared that no one else had **"seen the Father"** (John 6:46). In this He claimed a status for Himself different from all other human beings.

Perhaps one of the most striking declarations Jesus made came in a discussion with the Jews about Abraham. As Jesus affirmed

that they did not display the character and attitude of Abraham they questioned His claim to know Abraham's attributes. Jesus declared, **"before Abraham was, I AM"** (John 8:58). With this statement, Jesus used the very words by which God had told Moses to identify Him to the children of Israel—**"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''"** (Exod. 3:14). By identifying Himself as **"I AM"** Jesus deliberately demonstrated His Deity. This was clear to the Jewish leaders. They picked up stones to stone Him (John 8:59).

Jesus declared His power to resurrect Himself after His death (John 10:17-18), and yet the Bible teaches it is **"God who raises the dead"** (2 Cor. 1:9) and even concerning Jesus that **"God raised Him from the dead"** (Acts 13:30). Clearly, Jesus and New Testament writers are affirming Christ's Deity.

Jesus said it quite simply in His declaration, **"I and My Father are one"** (John 10:30). The Bible doesn't teach three Gods, but Jesus is a part (or person) of the One God of the Bible. While He possesses distinct will (cf. Matt. 26:39), as do all persons of the godhead (cf. John 16:13), He is One God with the Father, and Holy Spirit. When Jesus said this, once again they tried to stone Him, **"because You, being a Man make Yourself God"** (John 10:33). Isn't it interesting that once again, neither John (nor Jesus) feel compelled to explain—*No, Jesus isn't God!* What Jesus did was refer them to the scriptural use of the word for God in application to human judges (John 10:34-35; cf. Psa. 82:6). Why wouldn't Jesus rebuke them for accusing Him of something that He was not claiming? Because He was affirming His Deity! In asserting that He was **"one"** with the Father He was declaring Himself to be God manifested in the flesh.

During the final Passover meal Jesus ate with His disciples He taught them that reception of Him is equal to reception of the God the Father (John 13:20) and hatred of Him is equal to hatred of God the Father (John 15:24). During the same lesson, when Philipp asked Him **"Lord, show**

us the Father" (John 14:8), Jesus declared plainly, **"He who has seen Me has seen the Father"** (John 14:9). Think of it—how arrogant this would have been, how blasphemous this would have been if Jesus was not God in the flesh! Can you imagine Moses, Elijah, Peter, or Paul saying such words—**"If you have seen Me you have seen the Father"**? Jesus' Deity is the only explanation by which these words are not an act of sin. Because Jesus is God could it be true that one who had seen Him could be said to have seen God the Father—not in the fullness of His glory (cf. 1 John 4:12), but in the Divine image of Jesus as God in the flesh.

Jesus asserted Himself as the only way to a relationship with God the Father (John 14:6). Jesus claimed that knowledge of Him is equivalent to knowledge of God the Father (John 14:7). Jesus claimed that in loving Jesus and keeping His commands both He and God the Father would make their **"home with"** such a person (John 14:23). While Jesus did declare, **"My Father is greater than I"** (John 14:28), this probably referred to Jesus' fleshly state, or was said as a demonstration of Jesus' submission