

Answering the Right Question – Is Jesus God?
Pastor Ty Blackburn
John 10:30-39
August 25, 2013

Please turn with me in your Bibles to the tenth chapter of John, John 10. We'll be looking this morning at Verses 30-39. We will be looking at this passage for, I think at least one more time. We heard a sermon three weeks ago today by one of our missionaries, Kris Brackett, who is a missionary to Croatia. Those who were here were blessed that day to hear Kris bring a message about the Trinity, and the Doctrine of the Trinity, and how important it is that we understand that, and we worship God as Trinity, as a triune God. All too often, we don't hear messages about that and I was blessed by that message that day, and reminded of that, but I was encouraged this week while preparing for the sermon because the Gospel of John is one of the passages that if you go verse-by-verse through the Gospel of John, you confront the Doctrine of the Trinity again and again.

So we come today to a passage that really lays before us the deity of Jesus Christ, the fact that Jesus is not merely a great man, He's not merely the Son of God as a human Messiah. There was an understanding of that term that could just mean the Messiah, the Son of God, the man that God has chosen. He was that, but He was more than that. He was the eternal God. He is God Himself. We see this in the passage before us.

Driving to church this morning I came down Sugarloaf Parkway, and those of you who came that way, came west down Sugarloaf Parkway, if you pass the Gwinnett Arena, you may have noticed there were a lot of cars there today. Several Sundays during the years, you'll see it is just packed out and I think that I know why it is packed out. The Sundays it is packed out is almost always the gathering of Jehovah's Witnesses. I was in the grocery store the other day, and saw some of them on Friday evening. So there are thousands of people packing the Gwinnett Arena for a regional meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses. Some of the most enthusiastic, hard-working, religious people around, and yet they have a very serious problem, they hold to a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof because they deny Jesus Christ His glory. They deny that He is eternally God, that He is truly God, and to deny Christ is to lose everything. We come to a passage of Scripture which is one which speaks directly to that issue. The question, the most important question in the world is: Who is Jesus of Nazareth? And that is the question about which John's Gospel is dealing, from Chapter 1 to Chapter 21. Who is Jesus?

He is writing about this to convince His audience, which is predominantly Jewish in nature. John is writing about 85 or 90 A.D., almost 60 years after the resurrection, the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is writing to a group of people, the Jewish people throughout the Mediterranean area, who have rejected Jesus. They have rejected Him en masse, denying Him to be the Messiah, and John is writing to them, trying to prove to them, to save their souls by proving to them that Jesus is Messiah. When we say He is Messiah, we also mean He is the Son of God. When we say He is the Son of God, we mean He is God. He tips his hand very early in the letter. This is one of the things that helps us interpret this passage. He begins His epistle with the words: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” And the Word is Jesus Christ. That is his point, he wants us to consider that. He wants his original audience, and everyone since then, to consider that. That is the most important question in the world, and it is the one that the masses are still denying, rejecting the claims of Jesus.

Sometimes you hear people say, “You know, Jesus wasn’t really that clear about who He was.” I had a conversation with a gentleman who seemed to have some understanding of the Scriptures. He was a New Age guy though, and he made the claim: Jesus never claimed to be God. He said it with such emphasis, and such force, and such conviction. Jesus never claimed to be God. I thought, “How many people could that guy convince with that kind of force, and that kind of emphasis that he was right, when he was totally wrong? Well let me just show you where Jesus claims to be God. He does again, and again, and again, and again, and John’s Gospel is the place where John zeros in on that particular aspect of our Savior, His deity. Again and again, he highlights for us by reminding his readers, sharing with them the words of Jesus, and the works of Jesus. That question is still the most important question in the world: Who are You Jesus? Who is Jesus? It’s not just theoretically important, it’s not just culturally important, it is personally, and individually the most important question in the world. That is: Who do you personally, and individually believe that Jesus is? What do you believe about Him? Not what do others believe, but what do you believe? That is the question. That is the passage before us this morning. As we read it, behold what Jesus says about who He is. We’ll begin reading in, let’s begin reading at Verse 29 just to get the context. We are focusing on Verses 30-39 though.

John 10:29-39 ~ My Father, who has given them to Me, (That is My sheep.) is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. 30 I and the Father are one.”

31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. 32 Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” 33 The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.” 34 Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I SAID, YOU ARE GODS’? 35 If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? 37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.” 39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

Let’s pray together.

Our Father, we come to You this morning as always in need of grace, in need of Your unmerited favor, Your loving kindness to be bestowed to those who are completely unworthy. We come rejoicing that You are the God of all grace, that You are disposed to compassion and mercy, and that when someone comes to You, asking for wisdom, You grant that liberally and generously. We ask You to give us wisdom as we look at this important passage, this eternally important teaching. Be with us, guide us, lead us into truth. We pray in Jesus’ name, Amen

Several weeks back in preaching the passage just before this, John 10:22-29, I titled one of the messages ‘Asking the Wrong Question’. It related to the question that is asked in Verse 24 when they say:

John 10:24 ~ The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, “How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

They are basically saying, “Won’t You tell us if You are the Christ, and tell us plainly.” We called that ‘Asking the Wrong Question’ because of the word ‘plainly’. They were asking Jesus to be more open about who He was. “If You are the Christ, if You are the Messiah, please tell us openly. Be more open with us,” is essentially what they were asking Him, and I pointed out that really in reality they should have been turning that around. They were asking the wrong question. They were saying, “Why won’t You be more open with us?” They should have

understood that the problem was they weren't open. The real question is: Why aren't we more open to God? That is the real question, so they are asking the wrong question. It was the wrong question because of the word '*plainly*'. It was actually close to the right question because they were asking, though not genuinely, they were asking the question, "Who are You, Jesus?"

So today, what we find in the passage before us this morning is He really fully answers that question. They are basically saying, "Why aren't You more open with us," and His answer remember in that passage was, "Hey, I told you and I showed you who I am. I told you who I am, I showed you who I am. I've been open with you." But then in His amazing, condescending grace in Verses 30-39, He goes even deeper in telling them who He is. So the title of this message is not 'Asking the Wrong Question', but it is 'Answering the Right Question: Is Jesus God?' That is the subject to which we turn today in these verses and particularly in the first statement of Jesus in our passage this morning, Verse 30:

John 10:30 ~ I and the Father are one."

Now we're going to gather our thoughts around three points this morning. The first is *Framing the Question*. The second is going to be *Following the Dialogue*, and the third is *Forging the Verdict*. *Framing the Question*, *Following the Dialogue*, *Forging the Verdict*. Then next week I hope to consider the implications and really focus in more expressly on what this means about the Doctrine of God, and the Doctrine of the Trinity.

1) Framing the Question:

The question at hand was posed by the Jews when they said, "If You are the Christ, are You the Christ?" is what they are asking Him, or they are saying, "Who are You?" Jesus said, "I told You I'm the Christ, I showed You I'm the Christ," back in Verse 25. "I told you and you do not believe. The works I that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. I told you and I showed you. My works testify of Me, that is showing you, and I told you plainly." But now He says, "I want to tell you even more. I'm not just the Messiah, I'm not just the Christ, I am one with the Father." Jesus unveils His glory in the presence of this crowd, again calling them to Himself, graciously revealing His glory. So the question though is: Is Jesus God? And framing the question properly, we understand that Verse 30 is our focus, ***I and the Father are one.***" What we need to ask, under this first point is: What does Jesus mean when He says, ***I and the Father are one.***"? ***I and the Father are one.***"

Now there are a couple of possibilities and this is a passage about which there is great debate. I mentioned those people that are gathered at the Gwinnett Arena today, they have a way of interpreting this verse to explain it away. They say that when Jesus says, “***I and the Father are one,***” He is talking merely, don’t miss that word ‘*merely*’, about functional oneness. But Orthodox theologians, and interpreters of Scripture, understand that He is talking about functional oneness, but He is not talking merely about functional oneness. He is talking about functional oneness and oneness of being. Ontological oneness, metaphysical oneness you can call it, but oneness of being. It is not just oneness of function, but also oneness of being, both are here.

Now it is clearly oneness of function, and that is in reality what called this point up in the flow of the argument, and we need to understand that. When we come to issues like this, it is so important that we know how to approach a question like this. Does Jesus claim to be God? What does this verse say? How do you answer that? Well, we have to be careful to come with our minds ready to interact with the Scripture, but we have to come with humble hearts and be ready to be taught. We have to be ready to hear what the text says clearly and not jump to conclusions. I think that is what so many have fallen prey to through the centuries is jumping to conclusions, and actually making reason the final arbiter, rather than Scripture the final arbiter. Reason is important but it must bow to Scripture because there are some things about God we just cannot measure with our minds. Doesn’t that make perfect sense that that would be that way? Wouldn’t it be ridiculous if everything made sense? I mean, if it all made sense. The fact that God is a Trinity, the fact that Jesus is fully God and fully man, how can that be? His Father is God, His mother is a woman. How can He be fully God and fully man? Well, He is. It doesn’t make sense to us, but it is what the Bible clearly teaches. How can the Bible be, how can the word of God, the living word be fully God, fully man? How can the written word be fully human and fully divine? Because that is really what we believe about the Bible. Orthodox believers believe the Bible is fully human and fully divine, that it is the word of God, breathed out by the Spirit of God, and yet, when you read the books of the Bible you see human style, you see the particular ways of speech and argument. Paul is very different from Peter. Peter is very different from Amos. So it is a human book and it is a divine book, and it is 100% both, and to see that gives even more glory to God.

I remember hearing this for the first time when I was a young man because I had kind of a mystical view of the inerrancy of Scripture, that when God inspired the word that it was like dictation. They just sat down and they prayed, and then they just started writing without thinking almost. Did you ever think that when you

were younger? This is what it must be for the Bible to be breathed, but in reality they are using their minds, they are looking at real life circumstances. They obviously feel compelled by God to do it, but they are using their minds, they are arguing, they are entreating. I heard this man say this years ago, he was talking about, he said, "If God wanted a series of Psalms like David wrote, He created a David to write them." That is, He forged everything about David's character, and his life experiences, the fact that his dad always sent him down to care for the sheep even though he was the youngest brother, the littlest guy. Remember when Samuel comes to anoint David? He comes to anoint one of Jesse's sons, he doesn't know which one. He thinks he knows when he sees the big guy. You know, the muscular fellow, the oldest. I forget his name, but anyway, he thinks he is the one. "Surely the Lord's anointed is before me," and God says, "No, he's not the one. I don't look on the outer man, I look on the heart." He keeps going down the line all the way down, and finally gets to the end and he runs out of sons. "I know the Lord told me to come to Jesse's house. Do you have any more sons?" "Oh yeah, but I didn't think you'd want to see this guy. He's the little scrawny kid that is out taking care of the sheep." They call him in and he anoints him King of Israel because he is the man, because God looks on the heart.

Well all of those factors, David growing up shepherding sheep, is a part of what he brings when he writes Psalm 23, *The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want*. God is so great, and so awesome that He is governing every detail of every human being's life, and He is superintending all of the thought processes, even as free agents are actively working cooperating. It is a human book, it is a divine book. That is a miracle. It is not like God said, "I'll write the first verse, you write the second verse, Peter." No, it is all God's and it is all Peter's, and that is the mystery of the way God has revealed Himself. When we come to the Doctrine of the Trinity, we come again to this kind of a mind-blowing, mind-stretching, mind-enlarging concept. There is nothing that enlarges the mind, and that humbles the mind more than the contemplation of the Godhead. We see this in the words *I and the Father are one.*"

We have here functional oneness because Jesus is talking about what led up to Him saying that. He said, "Look, I'm taking care of My sheep. No one will snatch them out of My hand, and My Father who is greater than all, no one will snatch them out of My Father's hand. *I and the Father are one.*" So the immediate context is saying, "Yeah, we are committed to the same purpose, and the same action." So that is functional oneness, but it's not merely functional oneness. It is more than that, and we see it as we read the rest of this passage, when He explains it, and

expounds it. Particularly in Verse 38 when He restates it by saying, “The Father is in Me, and I am in the Father.”

We see it further when we spread out from just this passage and we look at John’s Gospel, and we see Jesus saying, “I am.” “I am.” “I am.” Over, and over, and over, 20 times in the Gospel using the name of God that the Lord gave to Moses when Moses said, “What is Your name?” at the burning bush. God says, “My name is I am that I am. So tell them I am sent you. That is My name.” That is Yahweh, closely related to the name Yahweh, the same form. So when Jesus comes saying, “I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world.” When He says even more clearly and gloriously in John 8:58, “Before Abraham was, I am.” He’s claiming to be God and the Jews understood it because they picked up stones to stone Him then too.

So here, our contention is, the question is: What does He mean by this? And our contention is that it is not merely functional oneness. It is that, but it is something far greater. Now that is the question though, what does Jesus mean when He says, ***I and the Father are one.***”? I began to answer that but we are going to unpack it a little more in a moment.

2) Following the Dialogue:

The second point this morning, after *Framing the Question*, we want to be about following the dialogue. Because as we read through the passage in John 10, we need to understand the flow of thought, and we need to understand that at first glance, if we don’t see it within the context of the whole, we could be confused by Jesus’ words a little bit later in the passage.

Now what happens is, He makes the statement, ***I and the Father are one.***”, Verse 30. ***The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.*** They seem to understand what He meant. He didn’t just mean, “I’m about My Father’s business,” at this point. He meant something more, and that’s why they picked up stones. But anyway, then He says:

John 10:32-33 ~ Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” 33 The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.”

Then Jesus says something that is quite puzzling at first. He quotes an Old Testament passage, Psalm 82:6, when He asks them this:

John 10:34 ~ Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I SAID, YOU ARE GODS’? 35 If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),

Incidentally, Jesus was an inerrantist. The Scripture cannot be broken. He believed in the inerrancy of the Bible.

John 10:35 ~ do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?

I remember when I first read this passage some years ago that I was struggling with it. It seems like, at first glance, that Jesus says, ***I and the Father are one.***” That sounds like a claim to deity. They say, ***‘You are blaspheming,’*** or they pick up stones first, which is implicitly saying, ***‘You are blaspheming,’***. He says, “Which of My works do you stone Me for?” They say, “Not for one of Your works, but because of blasphemy. He says basically, “You don’t understand what blasphemy is because just to say someone is a god is not blasphemy.” That is what He is arguing here because in Psalm 82:6, if you look at that passage, the Lord, in speaking to a group of people says, “You are gods.” I think in the context, the way I interpret that Psalm, there are a couple different ways of seeing it. Some people see that God is speaking to Jewish rulers and leaders. He’s speaking to the Jewish rulers and leaders. I think He is speaking actually to world rulers and leaders, and He says, “I said you were gods,” and what He’s doing is He is condemning them for being so selfish and ungodly in the way they perform their office of ruling. He said, “I said you were gods.” God calls them gods. Now that is interesting, isn’t it?

The Lord always has a way of saying things that confound us, and confound our expectations, and what He is saying is, the reason God calls them gods is because they are representing Him. The president of any country represents God. Romans 13 makes this clear, “Obey every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake. Don’t resist the authorities because they are appointed by God, Paul says in Romans 13. So that even the ungodly rulers of America, or other countries, no matter who they are, at whatever time, they are appointed by God. And the Lord, in speaking to them says, “You are gods.” Why? “Because you’ve been appointed by Me to rule, to extend My rule.” There is something going on that is similar to why He calls man, created in the image of God. Remember Genesis 1 when He says, “Let’s make man in our image,” and He makes man in His image? Then He says, “Let them rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air.” That there is something about man that is supposed to be ruling. Well, when He elevates men above the

normal station, when He takes men from among men and puts them up as kings, as magistrates, He is saying, “You represent Me.” This is what Psalm 82 is saying. “You represent Me and you are accountable, and in some sense you are like Me to the other people. You are like gods.” God says that about human beings, so if God doesn’t have a problem with saying that to human beings, Jesus says, “Why do you Jews have a problem with Me saying what I said?” He’s arguing from the lesser to the greater. If God would say that about Nero, Nero wasn’t king when Jesus is talking. It would have been Claudius, but anyway, it would have been one of those Roman guys. Whoever is ruling in Rome, Pontius Pilate, the governor over Judea, Herod, the Tetrarch. Any of these guys, Jesus says, “God has placed them in position and calls them gods.” If He would call a human, a fallible, sinful, human god, how much more would it be right for Me who am the Son of God to call myself God? You don’t understand what you are saying. You guys are being inconsistent. The Bible itself used it that way. You are making a kneejerk reaction and you are not thinking.” I think the reason He hits them with these questions, remember they picked up stones. They are ready to kill Him. The moment is urgent. Usually at this point, God, like in John 8:58, they picked up stones. Remember I said, He said, “Before Abraham was, I am.” They picked stones to stone Him, and the Bible says that the Lord hid Him from them, that He escaped from them, just like it says at the end of this passage when they are trying to seize Him a second time, He eludes their grasp. Supernaturally the Lord protects Him. This time He doesn’t immediately elude their grasp, He is graciously continuing to preach the truth to them. In a sense, what He is doing is gaining more hearing by asking a provocative question. Which in itself is interesting.

One of the best things you can do to diffuse somebody who is angry is ask a question. Don’t make a declaration immediately. You know, He could have said, “You’re wrong. You don’t understand the Bible.” He didn’t do that. He says first, “For which good work are you stoning Me?” They say, “Not for good work but for blasphemy.” Okay, well, has it not been written in your law?” And He asked a question to get them thinking so that they would then, basically have a moment of breathing room so that He could then reassert what He said, and call them to look at what He’s done, His works. Now the reason we know that He’s not backing off of His claim is because He doubles down on it in Verse 38. He’s not backing away from His claim to deity, He is just reminding them, “You guys don’t know what you are talking about when it comes to blasphemy. You are over-reaching your own understanding.” But He makes clear in Verse 38, “No, I’ve claimed to be God. In fact, I’m claiming that the Father is completely in Me, and I am completely in the Father.” The very fact that He had used, *I and the Father are one.*”, in Verse 30, I think the reason they picked up stones is because that

word 'one', ***I and the Father are one.***”, was filled with a resonance in the Jewish mind.

One of the most important passages that little Jewish boys learn from the earliest time, little Jewish children learn from the earliest time was the verse called 'The Shema'. It is called the 'Shema' because the first word in Hebrew is 'Shema Yisrael, Adonai eloheinu, Adonai echad.' In English it means 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.' Right after that it says, ***And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*** So those two verses together were something that every little Jewish child was schooled in. So that was the *Shema*, the passage that spoke of the oneness of God, and when Jesus says, ***I and the Father are one.***”, that resonance is there. That is why they pick up the stones. There is no misunderstanding on their part. He is claiming to be God, but He continues to want to offer life to them. Though they are offering death to Him, He offers life to them. He asks the questions and basically, I think His goal in the rest of the argument, He first says, "I've showed you many good works, for which of these are you stoning Me?" He says, "Look, stop for a moment. Pause and contemplate, think about all of the works that I have done. Stop and reflect on them." All the works, He had just recently healed a blind man just six weeks before. The town is still abuzz about that; a man born blind. "Consider My works and listen to Me clarify who I am, and don't rush to assume that I'm committing blasphemy. If I was merely a man saying I'm God, I would be committing blasphemy, but if I am God and man saying I'm God, I'm speaking the truth." So that's the dialogue. That's the reason he takes this side road asking the question, so that He can then restate in Verse 38: ***...the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.***

3) Forging the Verdict:

There are three sub-points under this third point. What He's done is He's gotten time basically for them to consider and weigh the question. "Don't jump to conclusions about who I am. Weigh it carefully." That's one of the things that is something about the fallenness of man is our willingness to jump to conclusions about the things of God. I was talking to Patti not too long ago. I talk to her actually every day. But we were talking about a discussion that we had had in the family, and a bit more extended family, not folks that attend here, and I was sharing with her. I said, "You know, it's amazing to me how if I were a landscaper and we had that conversation, and somebody brought up something about landscaping, they would say, 'Ty, what do you do about this? When do you plant this plant?'" and they would assume that I knew more about it than they did,

because I'd do landscaping every day if I was a landscaper." Or if I was a doctor, "Hey, I have this pain. Why is that?" They wouldn't assume they know, although some people have maybe been reading up too much on the internet and they assume they know more than the doctors, right? But in general, there's a difference, right? The doctor knows more about medicine than I do. But it's amazing when it comes to pastoring—I mean, in the body of Christ where people are humble and teachable, this is not the case, but out in the world, I get amazed.

Everybody's an expert. They're an expert on scripture. They don't need any help. It doesn't matter that I'm their cousin, or whatever. I love you. I care about you. I want to share something with you, and I've been studying the scriptures for years, for decades, and that's irrelevant. Anyway, that's what we were talking about and I was just marveling at that, and it hit me again that the chief problem of fallen man is that every man is an idolater, that is, he worships God as he chooses and as he pleases, so his number one priority is what he wants. He doesn't want to hear from God, and even as Christians, if we're not humbling ourselves regularly before the word of God, we have a disposition to be very opinionated and very proud about these things.

This is exactly what the Jews are doing. They're jumping to conclusions. Here they are, and Jesus says, "I and the Father are One," and they ought to say, "Look, that's very troubling at first glance. Explain that. Would You please explain that? We look at Your works, and You've gained the right to a hearing." Any reasonable person would say that, wouldn't they? But the problem is sinners are not reasonable. They immediately decide, "We know what the problem is. You are not of God," because they really in their hearts, they don't even understand. They don't want God and they really do recognize Him as God, but they're self-deceived to think that they're siding with God against him, but in reality they're siding with Satan against God.

So Jesus is trying to gain a moment of pause for rational clarity of thought to reason with them. The Lord, though He sovereignly saves in His grace, He must cause someone to be born again, yet He works through the means of the preached word, the reasoning, the pleading with someone to come to faith, and Jesus is doing that. He's beckoning them to come to Him, and I think we need to consider three things as we forge the verdict.

A) The Words of Jesus:

John 10:30 ~ I and the Father are one."

People say that's just functional oneness, not metaphysical oneness. Well, what do the rest of the words of Jesus say about that? In Verse 36, He says:

John 10:36 ~ ... 'I am the Son of God'...

Some people say He's never said, "I'm the Son of God." He just said it right there. "I am the Son of God." But when you put Verse 30, Verse 36, and Verse 38 together, when He says, "Do you understand that the Father is in Me and I in the Father, that as you see Me, the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father?" then there's a reciprocal in hearing. This is actually the doctrine of co-inherence, perichoresis, which we'll talk about much more next time. I want to unpack this and really explore what this means, but the idea is that the Father and the Son and the Spirit, that the relationship of oneness, that they are One to the point that whenever you encounter one Person of the Trinity, the others are there.

Now, this is really what makes sense of so much of the New Testament. I'll give you an example. In John 14:23, Jesus says, "If you obey Me and if you love Me, then My Father and I will come to you and make Our abode in you." Now think about that for a moment. This means that for the Christian, the person who humbles himself before the gospel, repents and believes on Jesus Christ that He died for their sins, that the Father and the Son come live inside of you, but isn't it the normal teaching in the New Testament that when you get saved the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you? Yes. Well, who comes to live inside of you? Is it the Spirit or is it the Father and the Son? Yes, it's the Spirit, and if you have the Spirit, you have the Father and the Son. If you have the Son, you have the Father and the Spirit. That's what's being taught here, and in fact, this is emphasized throughout John's Gospel. I just mentioned John 14. Turn over there for a moment. Right before the passage I alluded to, Verse 23, when He says: ... ***will come to him and make Our abode with him...*** if you go back a little bit to Verse 8, after Jesus had said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," Philip says to Him:

John 14:8 ~ ... "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

He said, "I'm the way to the Father," and Philip says, "Show us the Father, and it is enough for us. We just want to see the Father," and Jesus looks at Philip and says:

John 14:9 ~ ... "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip?"

"Do you not know Me?"

John 14:9 ~ ... He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

“If you see Me, you see the Father.” And look what He says next:

John 14:10 ~ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?...

There it is again, perichoresis, co-inherence, that if I am present, the Father is present, that if the Father is somewhere, I am with Him. He goes on to say:

...The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

Then in Verse 11:

John 14:11 ~ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me;

He said it twice in that passage, and then you also have in John 17, His high priestly prayer in Verse 21. He prays:

John 17:21 ~ that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us,...

Somehow we come to share in this glorious communion of love. Those are the words of Jesus. I mentioned the *I am* sayings. When you put all of it together, it's clear He's claiming to be God. He's claiming fullness of deity. He's claiming equality with the Father. So those were the words of Jesus. Now secondly, if you consider the response of the Jews to the words of Jesus, this really settles this too. I pointed out the Jews weren't confused. If the Jews had been Jehovah's Witnesses, they would not have had a problem with what Jesus said in Verse 30. When He said in John 10:30, "I and the Father are one," they would have said, "Oh, we understand what You mean. You're just saying that You have a functional oneness with the Father," and Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus is the greatest created being. They basically are modern day Arians.

Our Sunday morning Bible study this morning taught by one of our elders, Assistant Pastor Steven Gaines, was about the Council of Nicaea, which dealt with Arianism. Arias was a heretic who said there was a time when the Son was not, that is, that because He's begotten of God, because He is begotten of the Father, there must have been a time when He was not. Here he puts reason above the

scripture. *If He means begotten there must have been a time when He wasn't.* You see, he infers something rather than keep on reading his Bible. If you keep on reading your Bible, you have to come to understand that Jesus is eternally begotten, that there was never a time when He wasn't, that He's the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. What does the Bible say? ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***

So had the Jews been Jehovah's Witnesses, they would not have picked up stones, but the Jews understood their Bibles better than Jehovah's Witnesses do, and they understood that when He said, "I and the Father are one," He was claiming to be one with the Father, equal to Him as God, and they picked up stones. And when He restates it, after His sidebar with them, to gain a moment of clarity, when He says in Verse 38, "So that you may understand that the Father is in Me and I in the Father," they try to kill Him again. It's clear they understand He's claiming to be God. So that's the response. The second point was: Consider the response of the Jews to the words of Jesus, and finally:

3) Consider the works of Jesus:

This is actually what is being emphasized in Jesus' approach to those unbelievers. He is trying to get them to look at His works. He says, "I know you're having a difficult time understanding the doctrine of the Trinity." This is essentially what I think what He's doing. I know in the Old Testament we made clear again and again and again that God is one. The Lord your God, the Lord is One. Why? Because of the polytheists around. To reveal the doctrine of the Trinity, initially you would have been tri-theists. *We had to make sure that you understood.* This is why I think the Bible unfolds the way it does – that God is One, and then later the oneness is a plural oneness, that there are three Persons in one God, that they are three in Person and One in essence. So He understands it's difficult for them, and so He's graciously saying, "For you to understand who I am, you need to look at My works. Stop where you are and consider My works." Look how He emphasizes this. The first thing He says when they pick up stones is this:

John 10:32 ~ Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?"

He could have slipped away from them at that point but He didn't. He gives them an opportunity to look at His works.

In fact, there are several words that are important here in what He says. *I showed you many good works...* The first important word is the word showed. *I showed you many good works...* This word *showed* means to be put on display, to exhibit. He says, “Listen, My ministry has been about setting on display many good works.” *Good works* is the word καλός (kalos). There are two words for *good* in the New Testament. This particular one means not so much good in benefit as good in beauty or good in character, which speaks of more of its source being God. And then of course He makes it emphatic by saying, “I showed you many good works from the Father. The works that I have done are from the Father.” What He’s saying is, “If you look at Me do works and you examine the character of My works, what you see is God.”

He’s basically applying the principle that He’s taught us earlier in His ministry when He said, “Hey, how will you know false teachers from true teachers? You will know them by their fruits.” Remember that in Matthew 7? A good tree produces good fruit. Good are their fruits. That is how you know who is of God and who is not of God. The men that are true teachers will have good fruit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness—those things will be there. Love for the gospel, humility, those things will be there, and you’ll see ungodly wicked things. You’ll know them by their fruits. If that is true that you can know a child of God from a child of the devil by their fruits, how much more is it that you can know the One eternal Son of God by His fruits, by His works? So He says, “Look at the works that I do and ask yourself: Who does works like that?”

In John’s Gospel, he records—most theologians say there are seven signs. They’re not all articulated as signs. Some people make the numbering a little differently. Really if you just add them up there are eight plus the cross and resurrection. There are eight before that. There are four that are done in Galilee and four that are done in Jerusalem and the surrounding area, and I think what He’s doing and what John is doing by recording these words of Jesus, remember, John is inspired by the Spirit to write these words of Jesus to a particular group of people 60 years after Jesus said them, so that they would consider these things. They’re the guys that are reading this Gospel, and they’re looking at these works side by side as they read the Gospel, they’re hearing the same words that Jesus said to those Jews. “Look at My works.” He’s inviting you to look back at all of the works in the Gospel of John and say, “What do these works say about Me?” And I think particularly for the people He’s talking to in the text at the moment that Jesus is speaking, he’s talking to them about the works in Judea, in Jerusalem. But for the reader of the Gospel, all of these need to be considered. Let’s talk about these eight works.

The first miracle or sign that Jesus does in John 2:11 and following is He cleanses the temple. Now, this is not regarded by some as a sign, because He doesn't call it a sign, and when we preached through it, we talked about the fact that it was really miraculous, because we're talking about scores of money changers. I mean, we're talking about dozens and dozens of businessmen with lots of flocks that have filled this huge area. Herod's temple was huge when you consider the temple as it was understood to be, the outer courts, and Jesus cleanses the temple. He, a Galilean and a band of Galileans who don't know what's going on just watching Him, He grabs a cord and He runs them all out. It was a miracle in itself.

Who has zeal for the temple of God? And this is amazing too when you think about remember what time it is that He says this? Do you remember the setting of these words of Jesus? "Consider My works. Think about the things I've done." He's at the Feast of Dedication, it says in John 10:22. The Feast of Dedication was the Jewish celebration of the cleansing of the temple, what they call today Hanukkah. When after the temple had been defiled by the pagans under Antiochus Epiphanes, when they had set up the abomination of desolation in the temple, had offered a pig on the holy altar of God and had defiled the holy of holies, and for three years it had remained defiled, three years to the day after that abomination was offered, they consecrated the temple. The Jews had won independence through the Maccabean revolt through Judas Maccabeus, they had regained the temple and they were still fighting the battle just outside of Jerusalem.

The warriors are fighting but the first thing they do after they've gained the temple grounds is they consecrate to make holy the place of worship. Their priorities are right in this sense. Their zeal is correct. What matters more than anything else is that the place of worship be holy, and so they consecrate the temple. Even as the warriors keep fighting, they consecrate the temple and for the eight days of this celebration, they only have one day's worth of oil, but it lasts for eight days until new oil can be consecrated, a miracle of God. The day that commemorates God cleansing His temple, Jesus is here speaking to them, and He says, "Remember My works," and if they were thinking back to what they had seen, He cleansed the temple.

After He cleansed the temple, what did He say in John 2:18? They said, "By what authority do You do this? What's Your authority to do something like this?" and Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it." John said they didn't understand that He was speaking of the temple of His body.

There's tremendous irony going on in this passage. They're celebrating the celebration of making holy the temple and at the same time here they are picking up rocks to defile the true Temple. Such is the foolishness of wickedness. The real Temple is right before them, Jesus the Son of God in whom dwells the Father, and in whom dwells the Spirit, right there in their presence, and here they are seeking to defile Him.

The other miracles in Judea, the second that happens in Judea is the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda, a man who had been lame for 38 years. Jesus heals him and the text is emphatic to say He healed him on the Sabbath. He could have come through on Friday but He came through on Saturday, because He wanted to show them not only that He could heal somebody like that—who is it that takes a lame man that's been lame for 38 years and heals him? God. Who is it that works on the Sabbath? That's really what you see in John 5. Jesus says in John 5:17, "My Father is working and I also am working." Basically He's saying, "Your rules about the Sabbath don't apply to Me, because God always works on the Sabbath. If He were to quit working on the Sabbath, the world would fall out of the sky. You would stop breathing. My Father is working and I am working. Consider these works." He claimed to be Lord of the temple. He claimed to be Lord of the Sabbath.

The next miracle that He works in Judea is He heals a man born blind. It had never happened in all the history of the Old Testament that anyone blind had been healed, and it was clear that that would be done by God and by His Messiah. "Look at the works that I've done, the works that I've done just now." That they even mentioned the passage immediately preceding this, it stayed with them, and they mention it again in John 11. Remember when He goes to the tomb of Lazarus? Lazarus is in the ground and they say even a couple months after this, "Could not a man who opened the eyes of the blind have saved Lazarus from dying?" That miracle stayed with them. He's saying, "Think about that. Who opens the eyes of the blind?"

The fourth miracle that He's going to do in the vicinity of Jerusalem is He's going to raise Lazarus from the dead. He's basically saying to them, "You're having trouble understanding My words how I could be one with the Father. Look at My works and contemplate and consider." Who is it that does these things? Who is it that can say, 'Lazarus, come forth'? There is no other person that has ever lived that rose from the dead. Jesus is the only one that lives forever, and He's the only one that could call somebody back from the dead by the power of His word. "Lazarus, come forth."

The fifth miracle they're going to see is they're going to see the cross and the resurrection. If they keep their eyes open and look at His works, who is it that can take our sins away? Who is it that could possibly take away the sins of everyone who would ever believe? And imagine how much wickedness that is, how much sin you and I have. I love that Jerry Bridges book *The Discipline of Grace*, where he talks about this prayer that he prayed. The guy is praying and he says, "Lord, today I haven't had angry words. I haven't sinned in my heart, had lustful thoughts, or greedy thoughts. I haven't done etc... and in a minute I'm going to roll over and get out of bed."

The reality is we sin, and we sin, and we sin, and we sin every day. After we've been born again we sin. We struggle with sin, and Jesus has paid for every one of those, and every one of those is enough to damn us for eternity. Who can take the wrath, and the punishment, and the guilt, and the pollution for all those sins upon Himself? Only God can. He's taken them out of the way, nailing them to the cross. He's made it so that our sins are as far removed from us as the east is from the west. Only God can do that. And who after doing that can walk out of the tomb? Who can conquer death Himself, not with somebody else's help but Himself? Only God the Author of life can.

So He says, "Consider My works. If you want to know who I am, look at My works. Consider My works and consider your own soul. Why remain in unbelief? There's no one like Me." Jesus makes that audacious claim and He does so with absolute justification. There is no one like Him. There are lots of religious rulers and leaders, men of ability who could gain a following. You can go to places and find their tombs. You can go and visit the tomb of Mohammad and Buddha, but if you go to the tomb of Jesus, it's empty, because He is reigning and governing over all the universe even now at the right hand of God, and the eternal Son of God is now eternally, from the point of the moment of His conception, He's eternally Man. When we get to Heaven, we find a friend. We find bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh. We find one who understands what we're going through. We have His presence within us right now, His Spirit within us, one who knows what it is to be a man, who knows what it is to feel the anguish and the loneliness and the pain that sin has caused, who understands and sympathizes with us. That is the Messiah. That is the Good Shepherd who calls even now, saying, "Come and believe that I am one." And then He says there at the end of that passage, "If you don't believe Me, if you don't believe My words, believe the works," in Verse 38, and then He says:

John 10:38 ~ ...so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.

I love that. He doesn't say, "Believe because you understand." Do you see that? He says, "Believe so that you may understand." That is the way of the gospel. Believe before you understand. Know what He says and believe it, and then you will understand it. If you insist on understanding it, you won't believe it and you will perish, but if you humble yourself before God and knowing this is His word, this is His perfect word, and Jesus is His perfect revelation, if you will take Him at His word, then you will come to see that yes, it is absolutely true. It is more glorious and wonderful than my mind could ever imagine. Worthy is the Lamb. Worthy is the One who sits on the throne.

Let's go to Him in prayer...

Our Father, we come to You and we marvel at who You are. We marvel, eternal Son of God. Holy Spirit of God, we come worshiping You, glorious Trinity, marveling that You are so far above us, that You don't need us. You have existed eternally in a communion of love and bliss and joy, and we who spurned You and dishonored You and hated You, You have chosen and You have reached down to love, and You invite people in this room today even now, though their hearts have been hardened, their wills have been brazen against You, Lord Jesus, You are inviting them right now to humble themselves and become Your child. You have done everything necessary to save them. Your arm is not too short. You do not lack in any power necessary to save and to cleanse the sinner. You're just inviting them to come even now and to experience what they long to experience, to be truly loved and to be truly known and valued and treasured for what we will be, not what we are. You wash our sins and You make us clean. Father, grant eyes to see and ears to hear, and Lord, help us to be a people who are every day more in awe of the glory of our God and Savior. May we be filled with contentment, overflowing with joy, and shining with the radiance of Your beauty. May our hearts speak to those around us that He is good, and all His ways are delightful. We pray these things in Jesus' Name, Amen.

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