

The Deity of Jesus

Ken Birks, Pastor/Teacher

I. Introductory Remarks.

In this message I want to too address the issue of the Deity of Jesus from the perspective of John's gospel. The other books of the gospel tell the story of Jesus. but we find John focusing on distinct theological themes, which contrast such terms as life and death, light and darkness, belief and unbelief, truth and falsehood, love and hate.

In this gospel we have the deepest spiritual and theological teachings of Jesus.

- John's gospel emphasizes Christ's deity to a greater extent than the others.
- John began not with Jesus' birth, but with a statement of Christ's pre-existence as God.
- John's purpose in writing this book was to unveil the Man, Jesus, and to reveal Him as God.

John 20:31 ...but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

This is the purpose of this message as well -- that we may come to a greater level of faith and belief in who Jesus Christ is so that we may experience more of the abundant life He has to offer us.

II. Special Marks of Jesus' Divinity - John 1:1-18.

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

John starts out by showing and proclaiming that Jesus was God from the beginning. He then goes on to show us how to respond, from the heart, to Jesus as Lord and Savior.

The other Gospels begin with the birth of Jesus or with an account of His human ancestry. Matthew and Luke emphasized that a man, a human being, was actually born in the normal way to a young woman named Mary. John, on the

other hand, tells us immediately that the Child born was the eternal God! He begins to point us very vividly to special marks of His deity. In these first few verses we have some powerful statements as to who Christ is.

1. Jesus Is Revealed as Being Pre-existent with the Father.

The first mark of divinity that John draws us to is the fact that Jesus was eternally existent with the Father. John takes us back to eternity by identifying Jesus as "The Word" who was in the beginning.

John 1:1-2 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.*

There are other passages of scripture throughout the Bible that identify Jesus as being pre-existent with the Father as well.

Micah 5:2 *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be ruler in Israel, **Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.**"*

Hebrews 7:1 *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him... without father, without mother, without genealogy, **having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God**, remains a priest continually.*

John 8:58 *Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."*

Revelation 22:13 *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."*

2. He Is Shown and Revealed as the Creator of the Universe.

John 1:3 *All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

Again, we see this in other passages of Scripture as well. It is not an isolated thought. It is in agreement with what other writers of the New Testament had to say as well.

Colossians 1:16 *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that*

are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

Hebrews 1:8-10 *But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions." And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands;*

3. He Is Proclaimed As Life.

John 1:4 *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

No one but God the Father, unbegotten and uncreated, inherently possesses life-in-himself. He is in His very being 'the living God'. Human beings, in common with all other living things, do not possess life-in-themselves; their life is derived from God, the source and stay of all life. To the Son alone, begotten but not created, has the Father imparted His own prerogative to have life-in-Himself. – F.F. Bruce.

This was not something that began with the incarnation; but is an eternal act, part and parcel of the unique Father – Son relationship which existed already in the beginning.

John 5:26-27 *"For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.*

In the eternal order of the Father, as Father, imparts to the Son, as Son, that life-in-himself, the Son reveals that life to men and women.

Jesus has come to impart His life giving spirit into each of our lives through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Because He is the resurrection of Life He imparts the eternal spirit of life into our beings.

John 11:25-26 *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*

4. Jesus Is Proclaimed as the Light of the World.

Another term that is used to describe Jesus' deity is that of light. Light and darkness are often moral terms. Light represents moral purity, holiness, righteousness, and goodness. In contrast, darkness as a moral term represents evil, all those warped and twisted ways in which sin had perverted the good in man, and brought pain to individuals and society.

The moral light is one of the most powerful and pervasive evidences of God's existence. eg. of Peter after catching the fish.

Luke 5:8 *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"*

The deep-seated conviction that there is a moral order to things is present in every human society. But society is in darkness; even though some sense of moral order and rightness exists. People in every society choose to do what they themselves believe is wrong.

This moral awareness in a world running madly after darkness is another testimony to us that light comes from the pre-existent Word. Light, like creation and life itself, shouts out the presence of God behind the world we see.

– Lawrence O. Richards.

John 8:12 *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

5. Jesus Was Also Proclaimed As Being Full Of Grace And Truth.

Finally we see Jesus portrayed as the Word becoming flesh being full of grace and truth

John 1:14 *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.*

When the Word became flesh we were given new light – a revelation that the divine morality is "grace and truth". In Jesus we see a morality that goes beyond law and can only be identified as grace.

In verses 9-13 we see grace portrayed when the Creator entered the world He had made. He came to His own people, to whom He had given life. But His own people would not receive Him. He was rejected, scorned, and ultimately crucified. In spite of this, He reached out to individuals who would receive Him and He gave the right to become children of God.

III. Concluding Remarks.

As you will see, as you begin to study and meditate in the Gospel of John, the theme of Jesus, the Living Word, dominates the Gospel of John. Jesus, full of grace and truth, revealed to us the relationship which God the Father had always yearned to have with humankind. As His sons and daughters, a way of life is revealed to us by the splendor of grace rather than by human devices.

We must see Jesus as He is, God's ultimate Word of revelation. We must hear His Word, come to understand and believe in Him. When we trust ourselves to Jesus, forever, and daily, we will learn what it means to "have eternal life in Him."