

# JESUS IS GOD

This is a sacred topic, something we must consider holy, not intruding upon with our earthly imaginations. There is a lot of controversy over who God is; and, for the sake of meeting lies that are coming into the Church, I write this article.

## Who Is God?

Deuteronomy gives us a specific statement about God:

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.”—Deuteronomy 6:4.

This verse is the basis of the doctrine of the Godhead. To understand its meaning, we must look at the Hebrew: *Yehôvâh*, ‘*Elôhiym*, ‘*Echâd Yehôvâh*.

*Yehôvâh* means self-existent one, God; ‘*Elôhiym* (the *Elohim*) is the plural form of *Eloah* (a singular word for God); and ‘*Echâd* is “number one” in Hebrew, as in ‘*Echâd Yehôvâh*. It is also specifically used to describe unity, such as the unity between a man and a woman in marriage. So the proper reading of this verse is “The Self-Existent Gods united Self-Existent.” Or we can understand it as “The Self-Existent Gods are united in self-existence.” This verse tells us that the God of Israel is more than one Being that is self-existent. The term, “self-existent,” should be literally understood as “eternal,” with no beginning and no end; and this existence is derived from self, not from another. Jesus quotes Mark 12:29 from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the original Hebrew Bible. The original Hebrew would hold supremacy for proper understanding. The Greek word, *Kurios*, is used when Jesus quotes this verse, it generally means “Lord” or “Master.” In the New Testament, it’s frequently applied to Jesus as Lord and Master. Christ uses this word to describe the Father (Matthew 11:25); and it is used to describe Christ (Acts 2:36).

Returning to the Hebrew to recognize the power of the *Elohim*, we look no further than Genesis 1, when He created everything with His words. It is abundantly evident that all members of the godhead took part in the creation; since the plural form of God is used in the creation account. Interesting enough, when God created fish and birds, He spoke to the “waters (verses 20-21). When He created cattle and beasts and creeping things, He spoke to the earth (verses 24-25); and when He created man in Genesis 1:26, He said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” The “us” refers to the Godhead—the Father, the Son (Jesus), and

the Holy Spirit. These three persons of the godhead talked together when creating humanity.

## Jesus as God

The Bible plainly teaches that Jesus is God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”—John 1:1.

God the Father gives testimony to this:

“But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God [Greek: *Theos*], is forever and ever: a sceptre [British spelling of scepter, a decorated stick carried by kings or queens] of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God [*Theos*], even Thy God [*Theos*], hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord [*Kurios*], in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands: They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.”—Hebrews 1:8-12.

Here we recognize the Father clearly calling the Son God. Additionally, many do not know the statement, “Son of God,” is one that places Christ on equality with God:

“And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”—John 5:16-18.

Here, Jesus had not broken the Sabbath because it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath. He had broken the traditions of man and fell under the condemnation of man, but not God. Christ’s statement may be confusing to some because Jesus clearly says, “My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28). This is because Christ is not only the Son of God but also the Son of man. It really has to do with the question of authority.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore

God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [*Kurios*], to the glory of God the Father.”—Philippians 2:5-11.

Jesus humbled Himself and became submissive to the Father. He took the place of a servant and truthfully made that statement because He willingly placed Himself under the authority of God the Father. Please note that God is making us His sons and daughters; and yet He already calls us His sons and daughters.

“(As it is written, I have made thee [Abraham] a father of many nations,) before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.”—Romans 4:17.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”—1 John 3:1-3.

Jesus was not being made a Son of God; He was the Son of God because His works were those of God, and He placed Himself under the authority of God. The Father was in Him. Jesus actually used this defense when He was accused of blasphemy.

“Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If He called them gods, unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.”—John 10:34-38.

If we look at the verses He is quoting, we find a rather startling message to those who say they are sons of God, but they are not in Christ and do not have God dwelling in them and working through them.

“I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.”—Psalm 82:6-7.

Christ was fully human and fully divine. He alone could claim equality with God and yet also claim equality with man. He was the Son of God and the Son of man. An incorrect understanding of this can create confusion with some of His statements. How Christ can be both man and God is a mystery; it is also a mystery how God can take a human and

restore the image of God in him. If we could understand God, He wouldn't be God. All we can know of Him is what He has revealed in His Word. What other claims did Jesus make about being God?

“I and My Father are one.” John 10:30.

This statement also had the Jews picking up stones. This is no surprise; since it directly echoes Deuteronomy 6:4. The self-existent Gods are united (literally one) in self-existence; Christ claimed unity and, by extension, self-existence.

“Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.”—John 10:17-18.

This power He did not receive. It was not given to Him; it came from Himself. Yet here we see His submission to the Father's authority; He does it according to His Father's commandment. Among one of the most outspoken statements of divinity is John 8:58:

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

Here Jesus claimed to be the Great I AM. He was the same God who spoke to Moses from the burning bush and the same God who spoke to Moses, at other times, face to face!

“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”—Exodus 3:14.

In Exodus 19 and 20, this same God spoke the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai:

“And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”—Exodus 20:1-3.

The use of the word, *Elohim*, in verse 1 of the above text, in the Hebrew Bible, tells us that the Lord God Jesus Christ was not the only member of the godhead on Mount Sinai. But we also know from this that Jesus Christ was the member of the Godhead that Israel worshiped and obeyed:

“Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in His clearness.”—Exodus 24:9-10.

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared [Him].”—John 1:18.

“No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.”—1 John 4:12.

Christ claimed to be that I AM. He also rose

from the dead which means He wasn't lying and He never sinned. Blasphemy is a sin worthy of stoning, so He didn't blaspheme.

Christ came to reveal the Father to mankind. He was the member of the godhead that physically came to earth as a part of mankind. He was the member of the godhead who revealed the Father to us:

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Corinthians 4:6-7.

"God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature."—*Desire of Ages*, 25.

### The Term, Father

This term is often used to stress the relationship between Jesus and God the Father. Our first verse is found in Philippians 2:9-11:

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

One might say, "Aha, see, Jesus is worshiped in the glory of God the Father." Yes, that is correct.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah 9:6.

Jesus is the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace. This means that He is a Father and a Son. Since this godhead is united, any worship one member receives is also received by the other members.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Ephesians 4:4-6.

There is one body, the church of Christ; there is one Spirit, the representative of Christ; there is one hope, Christ in you; there is one Lord, Jesus Christ; there is one faith, having faith in Christ; there is one baptism, into Christ; there is one God and Father of all. This last phrase is an interesting statement because the word, "and," does not specify God the Father, but gives His position. This statement cannot be construed to discount Christ as being lesser than God the Father; rather, it points to Him as God and Father of all. Contextually, it is speaking of Christ, and one of His titles is everlasting Father. The term, Father, stresses authority, not creation. Christ says:

"I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive

Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."—John 5:43.

Christ laid aside His authority and made Himself subject to God like a son is subject to his father. He did not come in His own name but in the name of His Father and under His authority.

"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered."—Hebrews 5:8.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Philippians 2:5-8.

Christ learned obedience; this means that He was not under the authority of the Father when in heaven. They were equals, in unity with one another's plans. Part of the cost of salvation was the humbling of Christ when He set aside His authority and became a servant. Paul points to Christ:

"For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son? And again, when He bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom."—Hebrews 1:5-8.

Here Paul speaks of the incarnate [having a human body and nature] Christ, saying God commanded the angels to worship Him, called Him God, and used a title that placed Him on equality with God that He never used for the angels. This is a plain "Thus saith the Lord," that Jesus is God and we should worship Him. I find it unreasonable that people recognize the humility of Christ and despise Him for it when that very humility saved mankind.

### A Lesson on Humility

The Bible records that God is high and lofty (supreme); yet His wisdom includes humility. When God came veiled in the flesh, the world did not recognize Him as God. Why? Because they exercised the wisdom of the world.

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."—1 Corinthians 1:21.

"The only wise God, our Saviour," practiced what can only be termed absolute humility. And the world could not recognize Him as God because they

4 had the pride of the world. Even now, His humility is despised, and the worship that is His right is denied Him by some who flatter themselves that they are Christian but cannot recognize their own Saviour. God does not bear witness of Himself; He does not seek His own glory (though He deserves it), or else He would be boastful and proud. Each member of the Godhead bears witness of one another, glorifying each other. God the Father and the Holy Spirit bear witness of Jesus as God, glorifying Him as God.

“But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.”—Hebrews 1:8.

“He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew [show] it unto you.”—John 16:14.

Here is plainly revealed the fact that those who discredit the glory that rightfully belongs to Christ are not speaking by the Spirit of God. This idea is also seen in Christ’s description of the Holy Spirit:

“Howbeit [however] when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself.”—John 16:13.

The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself beyond what’s necessary for us to know, such as its work as Christ’s representative. These things are plainly revealed in Scripture, mostly by Christ Himself. Those who create ideas about the Holy Spirit are guided by only opinions; God has not seen fit to reveal these things to us.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”—John 14:26.

The Holy Spirit comes in the authority of Christ and is sent by the Father; hence, there are two witnesses—Father and Son. To say otherwise is to call God a liar and to commit the unpardonable sin, which is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

God is misunderstood and dishonored by the proud who think God is such an one as themselves. They have the wisdom of the world and cannot understand what God has revealed of Himself because they cannot meet His mind.

The purpose of this newsletter is not to convince people that they are wrong. The sin of denying the divinity of Christ is nearly impossible to convince people of; and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the unpardonable sin. Those who deny that Christ is God and worthy of worship strongly dislike the Bible; for Christ is the Word made flesh. Thus, they cannot be convinced by the Bible. All the profes-

sions they utter make no difference; for they cannot see any authority in them.

Those who deny the personhood of the Holy Spirit have only a step to go into spiritualism, and those who don’t believe in the Holy Spirit deny the authority of Christ as well. They refuse the work of conversion that the Holy Spirit brings and basely accuse God of sending them a serpent.

“I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”—Luke 11:9-13.

The purpose of this newsletter is to strengthen people’s faith and understanding in the pillar of our belief in the Godhead, which Hebrews 6:1 also declares to be a foundation of Christianity—“Faith toward God.” The Heavenly Trio, whose names we are baptized in, have pledged themselves to work for our salvation:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Matthew 28:19.

Let’s give God the glory He deserves. After all, it is time that we fear God and give Him glory because He is worthy and the hour of His judgment has come.

“We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”—1 John 5:20.

May we all be found with eternal life in the True God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*For a finished work*



**Jonathan Taylor**

*Wisdom is justified of all her children. -Luke 7:35*

*More Food for the Little Flock —*