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# Who Say Ye That I Am?

Six Theses on the Deity of Christ

*Written in competition for  
the Robert A. Dunn Award*

*With an Introductory Chapter by*  
WM. CHILDS ROBINSON  
Editor



WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING COMPANY  
Grand Rapids 1949 Michigan

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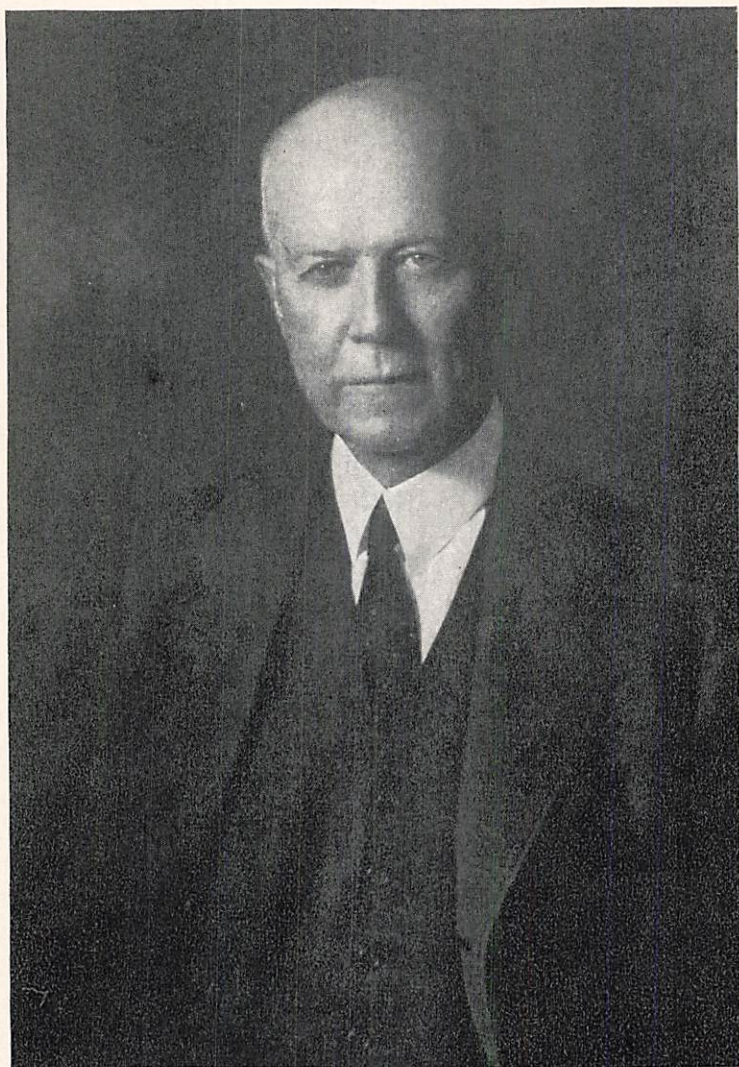
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*Set up and printed, January, 1949*

Theology Library  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
AT CLAREMONT  
California

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA





ROBERT A. DUNN, LL. D.

## DEDICATION

In affection and esteem this book is dedicated  
to the memory of

ROBERT A. DUNN, LL.D.

—as a tribute to his character, manifested in the activities of a business man interested in the economic and cultural life of his community and his country. While serving as President of the oldest bank in the state and directing his wholesale drug business, he was ever ready to give attention to the problems and affairs of those who sought his counsel. By his loyalty, charm and delightful humor and brilliant wit, he drew to him men both young and old in life-long friendships.

—as a recognition of the steadfast and unmoveable Christian faith which was the motive power of his life, and which in the evening of his days lifted him from the plane of petition to that of adoration.

—in appreciation of his devoted services to the Church. Whether as teacher of the men's class in the First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, or as Moderator of the General Assembly, whether as President of the Trustees of a fine old Christian College in this country, or as benefactor of seminaries for training evangelists in a far and benighted land, his goal was ever the same: *That the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ Should Be Taught and Preached in Its Divine Revelation and Power.*

—and as a token of gratitude for the Robert A. Dunn Award in Apologetics at Columbia Theological Seminary. We know of nothing that could more fully express the supreme desire of his heart than these papers. They are written by young men, starting upon the highest mission the world has ever known: *That of Bringing Men Back to God by the Preaching of the Gospel of His Only Son in the Purity of Its Divine Beauty and Power.*



## PREFACE

In the large this book is composed of theses presented in the course in Apologetics at Columbia Theological Seminary. Each student is assigned as a topic the testimony to Christ by one of the major writers of the New Testament. These theses are written as answers to our Lord's question, "Who say ye that I am?" The testimony of Matthew is found in the First Gospel, of Mark in the second, of Luke in Luke-Acts, of John in the writings ascribed to him, and of Paul in his Epistles and sermons.

While these papers were written by students, one writer has since taught a year at Davidson and another is teaching at Presbyterian College. Two are doing pastoral work. The editor claims a parent's privilege of voicing his gratitude that "I and the children God has given me" unite in this testimony to the glory and the grace of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The work in Apologetics has been greatly stimulated by a generous award given each year to that student writing the best paper in defense of the Deity of Christ. The offering of this award has resulted in lifting the calibre of all the papers. At the suggestion of the donor this book includes some papers that did and some that did not receive the award. The award is given in the name of Robert A. Dunn, LL.D., as a tribute to his faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and in recognition of his loyal devotion and service to Him.

WM. C. ROBINSON

COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

January, 1949.

## CONTENTS

- I. The Witness of the Immediate Context..... 13  
*by Wm. C. Robinson, Editor*
- II. The Witness of Matthew..... 27  
*by Wm. C. Robinson, Jr.*
- III. The Witness of Mark..... 47  
*by Albert N. Wells*
- IV. The Witness of Luke..... 69  
*by George A. Anderson*
- V. The Witness of John.....107  
*by George Scotchmer*
- VI. The Witness of Paul: Christ, The Lord.....133  
*by James M. Robinson*
- VII. The Witness of Paul and the Call of Faith.....149  
*by Preson Peek Phillips, Jr.*



I

THE WITNESS OF THE IMMEDIATE  
CONTEXT

by  
WM. C. ROBINSON,  
Editor

# I

## THE WITNESS OF THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

THE several following chapters in this series undertake to answer the question of Jesus, "Who say ye that I am?" from the standpoint of a whole book or group of books of the New Testament. In the course of these presentations several of the students have touched upon and in so doing have ably expounded the answer that Peter made at Caesarea Philippi. It seemed desirable, however, to give special attention to the text in its immediate context. For the premise on which we base our work is that the context determined the meaning and the context discloses the meaning of every text.

This introductory chapter, then, undertakes to examine the classical passage in which Jesus' question is found (Matt. 16:13-28; cf. Mk. 8:27-9:1, Lk. 9:18-27). In this passage one finds the answers of mere observers, the witness of the disciple to whom the Father has revealed the Messiah, and the testimony which Jesus gives concerning Himself.

Jesus' contemporaries described Him as one or another of the prophets. The particular prophet with whom they identified him is interesting. That some saw in Jesus a John the Baptist is proof that there was no moral flabbiness in His teaching. John had not hesitated to rebuke Herod for his adulterous marriage. The courage of Him who spake as never man spoke reminded men of John, as the later courage of Peter and John caused the Jews to note that they had been with Jesus. Paul reminds Timothy, "God has not given us the spirit of cowardice."

That others saw in Jesus an Elijah is evidence of His zeal for the living and true God. As there is no compromise with immorality in John, so there is no tolerance for false gods in Elijah. The Tishbite waged a victorious fight against the gods of race, blood, and soil. He slew the prophets of Baal at the brook Kishon. When Jesus cleansed the Temple these words were remembered of Him. "The zeal of Thine house shall eat me up." To the woman of Samaria, He said, "Ye know not what ye worship." The most theistic and the most practical sermon ever preached is the Sermon on the Mount. Here the eye of the Father is everywhere, here His goodness is the measure of perfection, and here His glory motivates every act. "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah." Jesus confronted men with the living and true God and called for godly living. The theological absolute demands moral probity.

But the weeping prophet also comes into the picture. Though something in Him reminded one of the Tishbite, Jesus refused to call down fire from heaven. Rather He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He went forth weeping bearing precious seed. He wept with Martha and Mary. Over Jerusalem He lamented, "How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Even outward observers could not wholly fail to see the compassionate heart of the Father revealed in Christ. Some said He was Jeremiah weeping for the sins and sorrows of God's people.

Finally, others said He was one of the prophets, an unnamed one. Indeed, each of the four answers identifies Jesus as a prophet. Fundamentally, a prophet speaks for God. The Word of God was so evidently on our Lord's lips that even spectators acclaimed Him a spokesman for God. Nicodemus was led to recognize Jesus as a teacher come from God because of the mighty works which He did. "For no one can do the signs that Thou doest except God be with him."



In our day there is a somewhat different account from those who have not accepted the full New Testament testimony to Christ. There is one school of thought, represented in America by Case of Chicago, which thinks of Jesus as a kind of John the Baptist—that is, as a herald of the future Son of Man. Fundamentally, the observers of our age break with the observers of Jesus' age just because they do not admit that He was the centre of a field of force that supernaturally healed the sick, raised the dead, and cast out demons. For the last two centuries modern man has assumed that the supernatural must be dismissed.

Banishing the supernatural from the portrait of Christ is, however, such a *tour de force* that it has wrecked the study of the Gospels. Some of the naturalistic critics are quite sure that Jesus was a mere ethical enthusiast, preaching a kingdom of love and proclaiming the infinite value of every soul. Others are equally certain that he was a fanatic obsessed with apocalyptic dreams. In order to get a purely natural picture the Gospels have to be turned into myths; and then it is an arbitrary matter how far the particular critic wishes to go. Among those who assume that Jesus was a mere man, Wienel holds that he is a man whom "we know right well—as well as if we could see him still before us today, and were able to hear his voice." On the other hand Pfleiderer holds that the legends have so grown up about this "mere man" that we can never know anything about his real personality. Drews takes the next step of asserting that there is no reason for supposing that he ever existed at all. Whichever of these views one takes is a mere matter of detail indifferent to history which knows nothing of any but the supernatural Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

In distinction from the ancient observers who saw in Jesus a prophet and from the modern spectators who find in Him a mere man, the disciple declares: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. This confession received Jesus' benediction

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1. cf. Warfield, B. B., *Christology and Criticism*, p. 303



and His assurance that the heavenly Father revealed it unto Peter.

Those who commit themselves to Christ seek to interpret Him on His own terms. And, for a correct knowledge and an adequate understanding of Jesus Christ, one must accept Him on His own terms. Every attempt to discover a purely human Jesus has ended in failure because the investigator started with his own presuppositions and specifications determined to make Christ conform to them. "But the Lord Jesus Christ is a non-conformist. He has His own terms and they are the only ones valid and acceptable. We cannot start with our moulds and force Him to conform to them."<sup>2</sup> When Christ comes into the heart He brings His own standards with Him.

The very term Christ or Messiah is a one that is strictly limited to the Judaic-Christian tradition. As the Messiah, Christ is the New Testament Figure in whom the Old Testament messianic promises converge. He is the Son of Man of Daniel, the Son and the Lord of David, the Branch of Jeremiah, the Immanuel and the Servant of Isaiah, the Lord whom Malachi saw coming suddenly to His temple. He is the Prophet of whom John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah and the other prophets were types; but He is also the King come to occupy the Throne of David and reign over the Israel of God forever. He is the Lamb of God who gave His life a ransom for many and the High Priest who ever liveth to intercede for His people.

In accepting Peter's confession that He was the Messiah, Jesus claimed to be the consummator of the old religion. He recognized in it a real revelation of God. The Temple was His Father's house and salvation was of the Jews. But "that whole dispensation had a forward look which terminated on Him. He traced in the loftiest passages of ancient prophecy the outline of His own features—the dim shadow cast before by Him who should come. He applied the most sacred oracles to Himself... Consider now how great this Person was, who

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2. Professor Joseph Hromadka of Prague.

felt that He was the end aimed at in the very existence of the true religion in the world. It was for Me, He virtually said, that God called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for Me that He led Israel out of Egypt and gave them laws by Moses, and read the lessons of history, and adumbrated the future, by the prophets; it is for Me that the whole course of God's providence and redemption has been working through the ages; all these laws, prophecies, institutions, catastrophies, deliverances, revelations are justified—they are shown to have a divine right to exist—because they end in Me."<sup>3</sup>

Peter's answer is direct discourse. Jesus asks, Who say ye? Peter answers, Thou art. Here is a direct facing of Christ and an answer given in the immediate I-Thou relationship. In Christ the living God directly confronts us and insists on a decision. "God is revealed through a Person in whom He gives Himself in utterly free grace, declaring His will sovereignly and creating thereby the very faith by which He can be apprehended."<sup>4</sup> Peter's avowal means, "Lord, we have forsaken all in order to follow Thee." As far as Peter knew his own heart, he would never forsake his Messiah; he would drink of the cup of which He drank and be baptized with the baptism with which He was baptized. He would not go away to another, for he knew that only Christ had the words of eternal life.

Time and testing would show that Peter needed to trust more in the LORD who upholds those that fall. The lesson must sink in: Flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. Faith is a reaction to God's grace, a personal reply to the Father's revelation of the Messiah. "Ye have come to know God, rather to be known by God." For the foundation of God has this seal: "The Lord knows them that are His." Peter's surface confidence in his own ability to sustain his avowals must give place to the contrite cry: "Lord Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I

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3. Denney, James, *Studies in Theology*, pp. 26-28

4. Mackintosh, H. R., *Types of Modern Theology*, p. 155



have a real affection for Thee." Our faith is an acknowledgment of His knowledge of us, our committals anchor in His grace to sustain them, our trust we entrust to Him. And yet our Lord blessed Peter's confession, recognized the revelation of the Father in it, and built thereon.

In His Word, God repeatedly reveals Himself in the first person singular (Exodus 20:2; 33:14, 19; Isaiah 40:28-29; 42:8; 43:1-3, 11, 15; 44:6; 45:21-22; Mt. 11:28-39; Mk. 14:61-62; Rev. 22:12, 13, 16-17). And our response in the second person is not a new discovery. In the *Gloria in Excelsis* the Church directs her worship to God the Father as *Thee*, and her petitions to the Lord Jesus Christ as *Thee*. In the *Te Deum Laudamus*, we sing:

"Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.

"Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

"When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

"Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father.

"We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge."

Peter's answer is definite. In the Greek there are four definite articles. Thou art *the* Christ, *the* Son of *the* God, *the* living God. In Thee God's power and presence are real. Thou art the source and centre of a field of force that is waging a victorious campaign against the hordes of evil. In Thee the gracious Reign of God is a living reality. In Thee it is in our midst, preaching the Gospel to the poor, binding up the broken-hearted, delivering the captives from the legions of Satan, healing the sick, forgiving the sinner. In Thee God has come among us ministering to our needs, bearing our burdens, lifting our loads.

Who say ye that I, the Son of Man, am? is a question concerning the nature of Christ. The Son of the living God is an answer that takes the sonship of the Messiah into a higher realm than that of a mission for God. The adjective *living* describes the essential character of God as the BEING who

lives of Himself and gives life to all. When one is speaking of nature or essential being, a son is of the genus and species of his father. Under the revelation which the heavenly Father makes of Jesus, Peter proclaims that He is the Messiah who is of the genus and species of His heavenly Father, the living God.

Under divine revelation Peter had taken Jesus on His own terms. But under Satanic temptation Peter immediately turned back from the things of God to the things of men. Peter needed the rod of rebuke as well as the staff of comfort to guide him in the way of life. There are depths of suffering, humiliation, and rejection in store for the Messiah which Peter refuses to admit. There are heights of glory for the Son of Man to ascend of which Peter is to get his first foretaste on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Peter's confession does not exhaust this passage of Scripture. Behind and above Peter's great confession is Jesus' greater confession. Indeed this pericope may be described as a panorama opening up in three vistas. To the observer, Jesus is a prophet. To the disciple, He is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. To Jesus Himself, He is the Son of Man who came to serve, to suffer, to be rejected, to give His life a ransom for many, and thereafter to rise from the dead, to reign in power, and to return in glory.

By using the term, the Son of Man, Jesus both deepened the human sympathy and heightened the heavenly glory of the Messiahship which Peter had confessed. "As used by our Lord the name 'Son of Man' is intrinsically a paradox. It binds Jesus to humanity, yet singles Him out from other men . . . It is just through present suffering and indignity that He who is to be Saviour and Judge passes to His Kingdom." (H. R. Mackintosh.)

The One like unto a son of man who appears in the seventh chapter of Daniel is the Old Testament basis for this term. Daniel is the only place in the Old Testament where the Aramaic terms which Jesus used occurs, and in Daniel it occurs



in the same context with which Jesus frequently clothes it, the coming on the clouds of heaven. In the Parables of Enoch the Son of Man is associated in heavenly glory with the Lord of Spirits. But on Jesus' lips the Son of Man of Daniel is united with the suffering Servant of Isaiah to which the Voice at His baptism had directed Him. Whenever the rabbis had put together these two messianic figures, they had stripped off the humiliation and suffering aspects of the Servant. In the heart of Jesus the paradox stands unrelieved. The heavenly glory of the Son of Man was His native right. The earthly humiliation of the Servant was the lot assigned Him by His Father. "Whosoever is minded to be great — to be ruler — among you, shall be your servant; and whosoever is minded to be first among you — to be actually sovereign — shall be your slave; for even the Son of Man — the Head and Founder of the one everlasting universal dominion, in whom humanity really comes to its sovereignty — even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many (Mark 10:42ff)."<sup>5</sup>

When Peter recognized His Messiahship, Jesus immediately told him that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things, and be rejected, and be killed, and rise the third day. And this lot for the Lord calls for cross-bearing on the part of the disciple. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

In the original picture in Daniel the one like unto a son of man stands in sharp contrast to the bestial figures that represent the brute violence of earthly powers. All the fierceness of the lion, all the ferocity of the bear, all the swiftness of a leopard, all the terror of the vicious beast with iron teeth rise to afflict the children of men. And then one comes like unto a son of man to receive an everlasting kingdom. The King of the Kingdom of God did come like a Son of Man identifying Himself with men, making all that is theirs His. He came as

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5. Denney, James, *Studies in Theology*, p. 38.

a baby, He grew as a child. He stood forth as the servant of the Lord, the first loyal subject of the Kingdom. He came to offer that perfect obedience for which many were to be received into the Reign of Grace. He came to be wounded for our iniquities, to bare the sin of many, and to make intercession for the transgressors. He came to Jerusalem to suffer the Just for the unjust, to be despised and rejected of men, to be delivered to death for our offenses, and to rise for our justification.

All through the messianic promises and their fulfillment courses the sympathy of man and the compassion of our fellow:<sup>6</sup>

"Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind." Isaiah 32:1-2.

"A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" Isaiah 53:2.

"One like unto a son of man" Daniel 7:13.

"The Son of Man has not where to lay His head." Matt. 8:20.

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking" Matt. 11:19.

"Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him" Matt. 12:32.

"Found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. 2:8.

Nor is this human compassion lacking even in the judgment scene. When the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the angels with Him, when He sits on the Throne of His Glory and divides the sheep from the goats, the test is:

In as much as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye did it unto ME. I was sick and in prison and ye came unto Me. Naked and ye clothed Me. Hungry and ye fed Me."

At the same time, the Son of Man is *par excellence* the Messiah of heavenly glory. "The title 'The Son of Man' in its implications and its settings trembles with all the significance of Deity."<sup>7</sup> In Daniel He comes with the clouds of heaven

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6. cf. Manson, Wm., *Jesus the Messiah*, pp. 165-167.

7. McNaugher, John, *Jesus Christ, the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever*, p. 41.



which are always a symbol of a Divine theophany. He sits enthroned with the Ancient of Days. He is given a kingdom that shall not pass away. In the New Testament the Son of Man comes from heaven. (John 3:13; 6:62). Even when He stands before Pilate in the abject form of a prisoner at the bar, Jesus declares: "I Am—the Christ, the Son of the Blessed—and henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Contrast the two judgment scenes if you would know the Son of Man. When he stands as a criminal, Jesus affirms the heavenly glory of the Son of Man. When He proclaims His own Coming in Glory to sit on the Throne of final judgment He requires of those whom He judges the human sympathy of a ministering life.

Peter! He is indeed the Messiah, the very Son of that God who is the only living God. But, Peter, His mission is both more human and more heavenly than you have yet realized. He is so fully our brother that He goes to the depths of human degradation, suffering, and passion to bear our load of guilt on His own shoulder. As He endures the contradiction of sinners against Himself, He cries, Father forgive them they know not what they do. Peter, "A Man like to me, Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever." Yet He is the Lord of glory, the Son of Man who came from heaven to offer Himself a sacrifice for our sins and thereafter to ascend up where He was before.\* This Man from Heaven who came as our brother and redeemer, will come in His native Glory with the angels of God swelling His train. For the Lord of glory is Lord of angels as well as men. The Son of Man will sit upon the

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\*"Thus the old apocalyptic concept receives in the mouth of Jesus a deep paradoxical meaning which unfolds itself in three groups of sayings: the sayings concerning the hidden heavenly height, concerning the way of suffering and concerning the revelation of the glory of the Son of Man." E. Stauffer, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 1947, p. 89, cf. p. 232.

Throne of His own Glory and call all nations before His judgment seat.

"Jesus made a stupendous claim when He claimed to be the Christ, and asserted that all earlier revelations, all earlier providence of God in Israel, had its chief end and its consummation in Him; but even that stupendous claim fades before this. For He asserts here the absolute finality of the revelation of God made in His Person, and tells us that not only all the history of Israel, but all human history, terminates in Him. To be acknowledged by Him at His coming is final blessedness; to be disowned by Him is final shame."<sup>8</sup> His word will divide men forever, dismissing some to Hell and receiving others to Heaven.

As Jesus blessed the revelation to Peter that He is the Son of the living God and as He revealed the implications of the Son of Man one begins to understand how Melito of Sardis testified that Jesus "showed His godhead concealed in the flesh" and "assured us of His two essences." The Son of Man bears witness to His heavenly origin, His supermundane glory, and His everlasting Reign; and united with the Servant of the Lord it not less truly speaks of His human passion, His brotherly tenderness, and his gracious intercession. Thou, O Christ, art the Lord to Whom we pray! And Thy pains and Thy prayers open to us the bounties of the Father's Throne of Grace!

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8. Denney, *op. cit.*, p. 43.



## II

### THE WITNESS OF MATTHEW

by

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## II

### THE WITNESS OF MATTHEW

THE purpose of this chapter is to present the testimony to the deity of Christ which is contained in "The Gospel According to Matthew." Before presenting this evidence it is well to inquire into the validity of its source.

"In assessing the reliability of ancient historical documents, it is generally agreed that, other things being equal, their reliability is likely to be greater, the shorter the space of time between the events recorded and the documents recording them. We can apply this criterion with confidence to our Gospels..."<sup>1</sup> The question of the date of "Matthew" immediately arises (the question of authorship is of interest but is not so integral to the discussion of validity, since the gospel is written anonymously; however, the tradition of Matthean authorship is early and strong).<sup>2</sup> The once popular theory of dating the Synoptics in the late second or third centuries has fallen since the discovery of early second century quotations from them.<sup>3</sup>

The efforts to give late dates to the Synoptics spring ultimately from a preconceived dogma that the supernatural is not possible and, therefore, that the gospel reports of supernatural events are false reports and their inclusion in the gospel narrative must be accounted for by natural means. Specifically, this dogma requires all predictive prophecy to be

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1. Bruce, F. F., "Some Aspects of Gospel Introduction," *The Evangelical Quarterly*, July 15, 1942, p. 191.

2. Cartledge, S. A., *A Conservative Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 75, 78f.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 84.



"explained" as a mere guess, a later interpolation, or written wholly after the event prophesied. Another requirement of this dogma is that all record of the supernatural in the life of Jesus must be accounted for on the basis of subjective experiences of the writers of the Gospels, and, since these supernatural events are posited as impossible, the Gospel writers should be removed as far as possible from the time and life of Jesus. Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, which actually occurred in 70 A.D., requires this school to date this prophecy after the fall of Jerusalem; the abundance of the supernatural reported in the Gospels urges them to remove the writing of the Gospels as far as possible from the events narrated.

One who believes in the supernatural does not have these preconceptions to bind him; one who objectively approaches the facts can evaluate these preconceptions for what they are: subjective, *a priori* dogmatism. F. F. Bruce, Lecturer in Greek, University of Leeds, says, "I know of no adequate reason for dating any of our Synoptic Gospels much, if at all, later than A.D. 70. The arguments . . . of Allen and Harnack for dating Mt. about 70 seem to me sufficiently decisive. . . And besides the early date of the composition of the Synoptics, I have tried to show that all of them contain material which took shape at a still earlier time, some of it even before the Passion . . ." <sup>4</sup> The accounts of the prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction do not seem to be written in retrospect; these accounts must have been written before 70 A.D. Dr. Cartledge <sup>5</sup> dates Matthew "about 60;" G. H. Schodde <sup>6</sup> puts it "in the 7th Christian decade."

Dating the composition of Matthew before 70 A.D. (and some of its sources earlier than 50) <sup>7</sup> not only serves to validate

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4. *Op. cit.*, p. 191f.

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 88.

6. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, "Matthew," vol. III, p. 2021.

7. Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

the author as a witness, but indicates that constraint was laid on him to hold true to facts which were widely known to other witnesses. Matthew is replete with citations of the notoriety of the facts reported. "When Herod the king heard it (the report of the wise man), he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." (2:3) The pogrom of the infants (2:16-18) fulfilled the prophecy of weeping and mourning throughout Israel. "Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about the Jordan" went out to hear John the Baptist (3:5). Multitudes are frequently reported as gathering to receive healing at the hands of Jesus (4:24, 25; 8:1, 2, 5, 16, 18; 9:2, 18, 20, 26, 31, 32; 12:23) or to hear his teaching (5:1; 8:1, 18; 9:36; 11:7, 12:46; 13:2, 36; 14:13; 15:10, 32). Even the objections and contentious questions of his enemies testify to the events of Jesus' ministry and to the validity of Matthew's account (8:34; 9:11; 12:2, 10, 24, 38; 13:54; 14:1f; 15:1, 12; 16:1). These are only some of many instances which could be noted, but they are sufficient to show how widely notorious were the facts which Matthew reports; this document does not bear the stamp of being the subjective, ecstatic composition of a man far removed from the events of which he writes. Rather it is the report of eye-witnesses, a report published during the lifetime of many who had seen the events as they occurred, who would have laughed the story to scorn if it had not been valid.

As has been stated, it is recognized that many do not accept a dating of Matthew sufficiently early to make possible its composition by an eye-witness and that many do not accept the account given as valid. It has been stated that this is based ultimately on a preconceived, subjective dogma of anti-supernaturalism. However, if one takes a historically objective approach to the question, it is found that even secular history affirms that Jesus lived on earth and that he was worshipped as God. He founded a church which has worshipped him for 1900 years. He changed the course of the world's history.



In seeking an explanation of these facts, and others like them, we must use the evidence which history provides. "A person or an event is known by (1) effects; (2) relics or monuments; (3) institutions; or (4) traditions, including chiefly documents."<sup>8</sup> We have the phenomena of Jesus Christ to explain; the best evidence which we have to explain these phenomena consists of those documents known as the New Testament, and, especially, the Synoptic Gospels. The true historical approach to the matter is to look at the evidence and from the evidence draw what conclusions are indicated. Those who minify the validity of the Synoptics and seek to construct their own concept of Jesus do so without evidence or, perhaps, even against the evidence. Therefore, the Synoptics, even though they be discounted by the naturalists, are the most valid historical source of information available. Since the Synoptics are in fundamental agreement, the study of the question of the deity of Christ from Matthew is based on a valid source.<sup>9</sup>

What is the purpose of the author of this gospel? N. B. Stonehouse<sup>10</sup> says, "Although he dwells on the genealogy, birth and early life of Jesus, he by no means approaches his subject as a secular biographer. His purpose is to depict Jesus as the Messianic king, the Son of David, whose history fulfills the revelation of the Old Testament. In accordance with this aim he selects his materials, each of the brief episodes pointing back to a particular prophecy of the Old Testament (cf. Mt. 1:23; 2:6, 15, 18, 23)." Warfield says, "It lies on the very face of these designations (ascribed to Jesus) that by Matthew, as truly as by Mark, Jesus is conceived in the first instance as the promised Messiah, and His career and work as funda-

8. Robinson, W. C., *Our Lord*, p. 26 (1949 ed.).

9. Karl Ludwig Schmidt, in "Jesus Messie et Fils de l'Homme," *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses*, January-February, 1938, states the question thus (p. 28): "No 'life of Jesus' then, no myth of Christ, but the history of the Messiah Jesus — that is the very special object which we propose for ourselves."

10. *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ*, p. 127.

mentally the career and work of the Messiah, at last come to introduce the promised Kingdom. And it lies equally on their very face that this Messiah whom Jesus is represented as being is conceived by Matthew, and is represented by Matthew as having been conceived by Jesus Himself, as a transcendent figure, as the current mode of speech puts it, i.e., as far transcending in His nature and dignity human conditions."<sup>11</sup> Matthew himself "calls Jesus in the formal opening of his Gospel (1:1), at the beginning of the narrative proper (1:18), and at the new beginning marked by His open proclamation of His dignity (16:21), by the solemn compound name of 'Jesus Christ,' thus carefully announcing His Messianic claims as governing the very frame-work of his Gospel." "With Matthew as with Mark, the presentation of Him as the promised Messiah belongs among the primary ends of the evangelist, and . . . in the process of this presentation a considerable number of Messianic titles are ascribed to Him."<sup>12</sup> It is our purpose now to consider some of these titles and see what they testify concerning the deity of Christ.

In Matthew the title 'Christ' occurs at 1:1, 17, 18; 2:4; 11:2; 16:16, 20; 22:42; 23:10; 24:5, 23; 26:63, 68; 27:17, 22. Today many think of 'Christ' as only the surname of our Lord; Schmidt traces this misunderstanding back very early, showing that the word was transliterated, not translated, into Latin, and thus its meaning of 'Anointed' was ignored.<sup>13</sup> This usage as a mere surname may have occurred during Jesus' very lifetime; Pilate addressed him (27:17, 22) as "Jesus surnamed Christ." It appears to have been used as a proper name of the Lord throughout Matthew (1:1, 17, 18; 11:2; 27:17, 22). However, the title is also used impersonally of the Messiah, the Anointed, in 2:4; 22:42; and it is used messianically in reference to Jesus himself: by Peter (16:16), by

11. Warfield, B. B., *The Lord of Glory*, p. 89, 58.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 73f.

13. Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 26.



Jesus himself (16:20; possibly 23:10, although the use here may be impersonal; 24:5, 23); by the High Priest (26:63), and, in ridicule, by the Jews (23:68). Its use as a proper name in 1:1, coupled with the title 'Son of David,' indicates that even as a proper name the Messianic connotation was felt; Warfield<sup>14</sup> says that the use of the title as Jesus' proper name does not indicate that it was evacuated of Messianic connotation but rather that this connotation was "conceived as His peculiar property and His proper designation."

Since, then, the title 'Christ' carries Messianic connotation, what does this teach us as to the deity of Christ? G. Vos<sup>15</sup> notes that the nominal form "'Mashiach' is a stronger form linguistically than the Participle Passive 'Mashuach' would have been. The latter only affirms that an act of anointing has taken place; the other form expresses that the recipient of the anointing in virtue of it possesses the abiding quality of 'an Anointed One.' The difference is about that between 'one who was (on a certain occasion) sent' and 'an ambassador.'" He points out the character borne by the recipient of the anointing was received from the declarative act of God in the anointing; this is shown in the Old Testament in the anointing of each of the Davidic kings (notice Jesus' identification of 'Master' and 'Christ' in 23:10). "Jesus' attitude throughout is that He labors under a law of commission to which in a large part the authoritativeness of his procedure both in teaching and acting is due.... The voice from heaven at both the baptism and the transfiguration in its second statement 'whom I have chosen' places at the very beginning of our Lord's ministry the attestation of his holding it under the sovereignty of God. And from this peculiar form of introduction the office derives a peculiar coloring of authoritativeness throughout."<sup>16</sup>

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14. *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

15. *The Self-Disclosure of Jesus*, p. 107f.

16. *Idem*.

This first element, the declarative-appointive nature of the office of Messiah, is combined with two others. The second of the three is the close association with God and consequent sacrosanctness which the anointing bestows. This relation to Jehovah is so close that injury done to the Anointed amounts to sacrilege. This relation involves the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, not merely as upon any prophet, but without measure. The third element of the Messianic anointing is "that something substantial is communicated from God to him . . . To Him the baptism must have been the anointing at the opening of his public career, and the anointing must have been that which fully made Him the Christ. And such possession of the Spirit was that which marked his entire life, with all its activities, to Himself and to others, as belonging to the sphere of the supernatural."<sup>17</sup> The Old Testament also uses the form 'Mashiach' of the High Priest (but not of ordinary priests). In Jesus these two concepts, Messiah-King and Messiah-Priest, come together.

Matthew's emphasis is chiefly on the kingly aspect of the Messiahship. Schmidt shows that the '*ego* — I say — passages' testify to the high concept of royal prerogative. "Here is the key which opens to us the understanding that in the words of Jesus the Gospels continually bear emphasis on the *ego*, the 'I' of the Messiah who speaks with all the extraordinary power of God."<sup>18</sup> He traces this directly to Jehovah's revelation of himself (Ex. 3:14) when he explained the name *Jahweh* as 'I am that I am,' and the same emphasis may be noted in Isaiah 41f. Jesus himself (Matt. 22:32) quotes one of the Old Testament 'I' passages: "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Again (11:10), "Behold, I send my messenger before my face . . ." After noting these New Testament references to the Old Testament 'I Jehovah' Schmidt says, "If, apart from that, the words in ref-

17. *Ibid.*, p. 110f.

18. Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 31-32.



erence to the 'I' of God are not, in spite of all, so frequent in the New Testament, it is that henceforth the 'I' of the Messiah Jesus passes to the highest plane. Not that there was a change in fact, but because everything concentrates itself on the christology: Jesus Christ speaks as God himself."<sup>19</sup>

The 'I passages' here referred to are not merely instances of the use of the Greek verb-form in the first person singular; rather they are instances in which the personal pronoun *ego* is used with the verb—the emphatic form (cf. the French: "moi, je dis"). This is signally demonstrated in the Sermon on the Mount. There Jesus uses 'I say' fourteen times (5:18, 20, 22, 26, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44; 6:2, 5, 16, 25, 29); however, in only six of these cases does he use the emphatic '*ego*—I' (5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). This appears tremendously significant when it is noted just where Jesus uses the emphatic '*ego*—I!' In most of the sermon he uses the simple verb; the emphatic form is used only in those passages where Jesus quotes from the law of Jehovah in the Old Testament (two of the quotations, vv. 21 and 27, from the Decalogue itself, and a third, v. 33, while not a direct quotation, is subsumed under the third Commandment) and, over against the law of Jehovah, sets his emphatic '*ego*—I say.' Here Jesus, on his own authority, abrogates the ethnic law of 'eye for eye and tooth for tooth,' the Levitical law of loving a neighbor and hating an enemy, giving to both a higher interpretation. His treatment of the Decalogue puts his '*ego*—I say' on the same plane as Jehovah-God who gave the law from the midst of the fire and smoke of Sinai.<sup>20</sup>

Schmidt does not use the Sermon on the Mount for his argument, but bases it on other passages from the Synoptics (from Matthew: 8:7; 10:16; 12:27; 14:27; 21:27; 22:34; 26:39; 28:20). His conclusion to this study—a study which is not based on a preconception but which is objectively ap-

19. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

20. cf. Stonehouse, N. B., *op. cit.*, p. 209.

proached — is very strong: "While in the words of men it is very rare that one finds an *ego* intentionally expressed, this thing is, on the contrary, very frequent in the words of Jesus. The *ego* of Jesus has in his mouth a precise sense, a Messianic sense. It is the expression of the Almighty which appertains to the Son himself . . . Jesus of Nazareth speaks in the manner of the God of the Old Testament, as One who reveals himself."<sup>21</sup>

Jesus clearly shows his own conception of the height of the title when he places the Christ above David, in whom inhered the highest Jewish thought of kingly power and dignity (22:42-46). More significant even than the exaltation above David is the reference which Jesus made to the 110th Psalm: "It was evidently to elevate the conception current as to the Christ whom He represented Himself as being that He put to His opponents the searching question, how could the Christ be merely David's son, when David himself, in the Spirit, spoke of Him as his Lord — a Lord seated on the right hand of God."<sup>22</sup>

The title 'Lord' came into common use after the Resurrection (cf. Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:8, 9; Romans 14:9); Matthew as the author does not refer to Jesus as Lord. However, Matthew records references to Jesus as Lord, both as a vocative form of address and as a title. "It occurs some twenty-one times as a form of address to Jesus, and, besides once as an address to God (11:25), only a single time to Pilate (27:63), outside of parables, as an address to anyone else. Even in its parabolic use, indeed, its reference is always (except 21:30 only) either to God . . . or to Jesus pictured in positions of supreme authority . . . It cannot be said, of course, that this supreme authority is explicit in every case of the actual use of the term . . . But its tendency is distinctly upwards . . . connected usually with at least Messianic implications (15:22; 20:30, 31; 7:21, 21)

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21. *Idem.*, p. 36.

22. Warfield, *op. cit.*, p. 75.



and is found occasionally to be suggestive of something even higher (25:37, 44)."<sup>23</sup>

The last two passages referred to represent Jesus as teaching that men who seek to enter the Kingdom of Heaven will cry to him as 'Lord, Lord' (7:21) and at the Day of Judgment Jesus will be seated on his kingly throne and will be addressed as 'Lord' (25:37, 44). The chief use of the term 'Lord' as a title is that made by Jesus himself. He calls himself 'Lord of the Sabbath,' one 'greater than the temple' (12:8, 6). He told his disciples to get the colt for his triumphal entry into Jerusalem and to say that 'the Lord' had need of it. After his question to the Pharisees (22:41ff) he quotes from the 110th Psalm, "The Lord said unto my Lord (Hebrew: Jehovah said to my Adhonai) . . ." This represents a very high identification, "a position of transcendental sovereignty . . ."<sup>24</sup> Jesus referred to himself as a 'house-despot' in the parable of the tares (13:27) and of the laborers hired at different hours of the day (20:1). Both of these are parables of the Kingdom of Heaven, and in both of them Jesus presents himself as "despot" of the Kingdom; his interpretation of the parable of the tares (13:37f) indicates his superiority to the angels, the messengers of God. A passage analogous to this is 5:10-12, where Jesus represents the persecution of his disciples as on the same plane with the persecution of the prophets of Jehovah.

The title 'Son of God' requires a change in perspective; the titles previously considered have principally described Jesus' relation to men, but here the principal import is of the relation borne between God the Father and the Son of God. "We here see the Messiahship, though a thing in time, yet solidly resting on the eternal things of the Godhead. The profoundest Christology of the New Testament here shows its ultimate roots."<sup>25</sup> It is not the purpose of this paper to consider all

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23. *Idem.*, p. 70f.

24. *Vos. op. cit.*, p. 123.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

of the instances of the use of this title in Matthew's account, but several will be considered.

In 11:27 Jesus calls himself the Son of God and so inter-relates himself with the Father that this is one of the best witnesses which Matthew preserves to the deity of Christ. "Our Lord, speaking in the most solemn manner, not only presents Himself, as the Son, as the sole source of knowledge of God and of blessedness for men, but places Himself in a position not of equality merely, but of absolute reciprocity and interpenetration of knowledge with the Father."<sup>26</sup> "No one knows thoroughly (accurately or well) the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know thoroughly the Father except the Son and he to whomsoever the Son wills to reveal." Since this study is based on Matthew, it is of interest to note that, where Luke (10:22) uses the verb *ginosko*, 'to know,' Matthew uses the intensive form, *epiginosko*, 'to know thoroughly, accurately, well.' Warfield, in the quotation above, emphasized the absolute reciprocity and interpenetration of knowledge between Father and Son; Vos points out that this knowledge is not acquired, but essential, knowledge: the correlation of the two clauses bears this out. First is mentioned the Father's knowledge of the Son; God's knowledge is not acquired knowledge, "consequently the knowledge Jesus has of God can not be acquired knowledge, for these two are put entirely on a line... if one is different from human knowledge, then the other must be so likewise."<sup>27</sup> The Son and the Father are also put on an equality in the revelation one of the other; the Father reveals the Son (v. 25), knows the Son (v.27); the Son knows the Father (v. 27), reveals the Father (v. 27). There is also the correspondence in sovereignty: "it was well-pleasing" in the sight of the Father to reveal the Son (v. 25); the Son reveals the Father 'to whomsoever he wills.' There

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26. Warfield, "Person of Christ," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. IV, p. 2346.

27. Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 148f.



is a soteric correspondence: Jesus' invitation (v. 28) corresponds to the invitations of Jehovah in the Old Testament ("Look unto me and be saved all ye ends of the earth," Isaiah 45:22). The great invitation of v. 28 ("Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest") is followed with the statement, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (v. 29). Such a sweeping invitation followed by the statement of v. 29 could only have been uttered by the greatest liar the world has known—or by God, who alone could make such statements and be truthful.

In the parable of the wicked husbandmen (21:33-46) Jesus represents himself as the Son who is sent to gather the fruits of the vineyard after the servants have failed and been killed. The chief priests and Pharisees "perceived that he spake of them." Jerusalem "that killest the prophets" (the servants of the parable) is rejecting the Son. Thus Jesus clearly ranks himself above the Old Testament servants: "It is clear that sonship here involves a higher dignity and a closer relation to God than the highest and closest that the Old Testament had known of official status in the theocracy...the Son is the highest messenger of God conceivable. Hence for rejecting Him absolute destruction befalls the husbandmen . . ." <sup>28</sup> It might be said that this indicates nothing higher than Messiahship; however the parable represents the Son as being the Son before his mission. The Sonship existed before the Messianic mission; Jesus teaches his pre-existence.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only," 24:36. Here Jesus classes himself above the angels in the scale of knowledge of divine secrets. If this were knowledge based on the nature of the ones named, we might be led to an Arian position: Jesus is a being greater than angels but less than God. However, it does not appear that this knowledge is inherent in the nature of the beings mentioned. The angels are the

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28. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

messengers of God and as such receive their knowledge by revelation. This revelatory knowledge comes at a point of time which is hidden in the decrees of God, and which has not been revealed to his messengers or even is a part of the "official knowledge" of the Messianic Son.<sup>29</sup> Since this knowledge is not accessible by reason of nature but by revelation, this passage affirms the Son's superiority over the angels without requiring that he be of a nature lower than God's.

Among examples of the applications of 'Son of God' to Jesus other than his own, Peter's 'Great Confession' at Caesarea Philippi (16:13f) is the best known. There is a similarity between this and the confession (14:33) after Jesus walked on the water. Only Matthew (of the three Synoptics) records that Peter at Caesarea Philippi said "the Son of the living God," and only Matthew preserves the quotation of the disciples in the boat, "Thou art truly the Son of God" (Mark and John refer to the event, but do not include this quotation).

In the fact that it was not associated with the idea of Messiahship the earlier confession (14:33) stands higher than Peter's 'Great Confession.' The disciples confessed Jesus' deity as he openly manifested to them his power over the elements; Peter's confession was in answer to a question which brought his mind to the height of the Messianic concept.<sup>30</sup>

The Messianically worded question which Jesus put to the disciples at Caesarea Philippi by no means required the answer which Peter gave — this is clearly shown by the variety of opinions held by others (v. 14). Jesus puts his own endorsement on Peter's confession by saying that it was not humanly-acquired knowledge but a revelation from God. This reference is to "the Living God." Here the term is especially significant. The question at issue is the character ascribed to Jesus. "If thus the sonship is associated, not merely with a mission from God, but with the essential character of God

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29. *Ibid.*, p. 168.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 179.



as possessing life, then it transcends Messiahship, and appears as the outcome, not of the will merely, but of the nature of God, and correspondingly can not but be descriptive of nature in the case of Jesus."<sup>31</sup>

There is another witness to Jesus' claim to the title, 'Christ, the Son of God.' The High Priest made this the crux of his question to Jesus (26:63f). This question is evidence of the height of the designations which Jesus was known to apply to himself. But the great significance of this passage lies in Jesus' affirmation of the titles suggested and his addition to them. It is also highly significant that Jesus answered this question under the oath imposed by the Jewish High Priest in the name of "the living God." Under this oath Jesus affirmed: "(1) that He was the Christ, (2) that He was the Son of God, (3) that He was the One who would sit at the right hand of Power, and (4) that He was the Son of man who would come on the clouds of heaven... in His answer to the High Priest Jesus combines two of the loftiest Old Testament Messianic predictions, namely, Psalm 110:1 in which the Messiah as Adhonay sits at Jehovah's right hand, and Daniel 7:13-14 in which Messiah as the Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days in order to receive dominion, glory, and a kingdom. Jesus thus unites two passages which associate the Messiah in kingly dignity, power, and dominion with Jehovah and applies them to Himself."<sup>32</sup> The cumulative testimony of these four affirmations is tremendous: Jesus was asserting his own Deity. "The High-priest who was learned in all the wisdom of the rabbis and who took in the whole immediate context so understood Jesus and understood Him aright. Either Jesus is God, or He is a blasphemer. On the ground of His Greater Confession the Highpriest pronounced Him a blasphemer; on the ground of the same confession we worship Him as our Lord and our

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31. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

32. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 65, 73 (1949 ed.).

God."<sup>33</sup> The first three of these four affirmations have been considered in this paper; next will be presented the witness to the deity of Christ found in the title 'Son of Man.'

'Son of Man' is a title which only Jesus uses. In Matthew it occurs twenty-nine times, ten of these before Peter's Caesarea Philippi confession, and nineteen afterward. In the later passages more emphasis is placed on the eschatological return in glory; the earlier passages show the humiliation (8:20), the lack of asceticism (11:19), the eschatological element (10:23). They also represent the Son of Man as Lord of the Sabbath (12:8), the sower of the good seed (13:37), the one who shall rise from the dead (12:40), the one who shall send forth his angels in the judgment (12:41). These are high Messianic attributes, but they are general attributes. More specific, and somewhat contrary to the futuristic coloring of the Messianic frame, is the instance (9:6) where Jesus teaches that "the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins." Jesus forgave the paralytic's sins, something which only God can do, and, in order to answer the skeptics, he, with a word, healed the paralytic's body, something which only God can do. To claim the power to do either is blasphemy; to demonstrate the power is evidence of Deity.

To find the full meaning of the title 'Son of Man' it is necessary to look at its Old Testament background. It is based chiefly on Daniel 7:13 (note that in 24:30 and 26:64 the Son of Man is represented as "coming on the clouds of heaven," the very scene which Daniel reported). The Danielic vision is of "one like unto a son of man" who came on the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days, was brought before him, given universal and everlasting regal authority. The New Testament usage differs from Daniel in that the former portrays the Son of Man as the judge while the latter shows the Son of Man brought before the Ancient of Days, who is the judge; some point out that Daniel shows the Son of Man re-

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33. *Ibid.*, p. 72 f.



ceiving kingly authority while the New Testament shows him exercising judicial power. This last is hardly a valid distinction as the latter power is generally subsumed under the former. Vos assesses Daniel's contributions as "the atmosphere of the supernatural . . . The 'coming' is a coming theophany-like, a coming out of the other world. Nothing else in the Gospels has so impressed the stamp of the supernatural and the super-human upon the self-portrayal of Jesus as these parousia 'Son of Man' passages."<sup>34</sup> Matthew records the following use of the term after Caesarea Philippi: Jesus taught his resurrection (17:9; 22:23; 20:19); his return in glory (16:28; 19:28; 24:30; 25:31; 26:64) attended by angels (16:27; 25:31) coming on the clouds of heaven (24:30; 26:64); his office of judge (16:27; 19:28; 24:31 says that he will gather the elect; 25:31 f. is the great scene of judgment). Warfield sums up the testimony afforded in Jesus' self-designation by the term 'Son of Man': "It intimates on every occasion of its employment Our Lord's consciousness of being a supra-mundane being, who has entered into a sphere of earthly life on a high mission, on the accomplishment of which He is to return to His heavenly sphere, whence He shall in due season come back to earth, now, however, in His proper majesty, to gather up the fruits of His work and consummate all things. It is a designation, thus, which implies at once a heavenly preexistence, a present humiliation, and a future glory; and He proclaims Himself in this future glory no less than the universal King seated on the throne of judgment for quick and dead."<sup>35</sup>

This study of the Messianic titles (Christ, Lord, Son of God, Son of Man) has sought to show their significance as witnesses to the deity of Christ. Matthew closes his account with the quotation of the 'Great Commission' (28:18-20) of our Lord, who holds all authority, in heaven and on earth, and who is always with us: "disciple all nations, baptizing

34. Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

35. Warfield, *Ibid.*, p. 2346.

them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. . ." The 'baptismal formula' reveals the 'Trinitarian Name' of God: three names are not given here—the word 'name' is in the singular—but one name. This one name does not designate one person by three appellatives—note the repetition of 'and the' before the second and third parts of the name—but rather three persons are included in the one name. Here Jesus "asserts a place for Himself in the precincts of the ineffable Name. Here is a claim not merely to a deity in some sense equivalent to and as it were alongside of the deity of the Father, but to a deity in some high sense one with the deity of the Father."<sup>36</sup> The Gospel which opens with the name, 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God,' indicating both our Lord's Messianic office and his divinity, closes with the Trinitarian Name, 'the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,' which shows his divine nature. His office is Messiah; his nature God. Matthew's purpose was to present Jesus as Messiah, but as he comes to the end of his account, Matthew forgets our Lord's office and thinks only of his nature: almighty and eternal God.

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36. Warfield, *The Lord of Glory*, p. 83.



### III

## THE WITNESS OF MARK

by

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### III

#### THE WITNESS OF MARK

WHO do ye say that I am?" This question which Jesus asked His disciples in Caesarea Philippi is perhaps the most momentous question ever asked. It is a question of particular weight and significance not only to the Christian Church in general but to individuals, because the very nature of the question and the Questioner make the answer we give a matter of faith. The first and great answer is that given by the apostle Peter, "Thou art the Christ." Mk. 8:29. This has been the historical answer of the Christian Church and the answer upon which the church is founded. But there have been attempts to discover other answers, attempts which have profoundly affected Christian thought. As will be seen, these attempts end in confusion, but they do serve the purpose of calling forth positive statements of the true answer to Jesus' great question. The purpose of this discussion is to discover the answer of the evangelist Mark as it is given in the Gospel account which is traditionally attributed to him.

Paul tells us in I Corinthians 8:5 that there are "gods many and lords many." Undoubtedly the sense in which he uses these terms denotes that they are idols and false gods, "like unto gold or silver or stone graven by art and man's device." However, to avoid any such confusion and error in our thinking about Jesus, it is necessary not only to show that He is Divine but to identify Him with a specific Deity whose nature and attributes are clear and evident. We are not suggesting for a moment that there is even the slightest comparison between Jesus Christ and the false gods of men's hands. On



the contrary, no greater contrast is conceivable. But a conclusive argument supporting the Deity of Christ must include these two elements:

I. Jesus is Divine — of the nature of true Deity,

II. Jesus is Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Our purpose, then, is twofold, and this discussion will be adapted to suit that purpose.

### General Evaluation of the Gospel Account

The Gospel according to Mark is the briefest and is commonly accepted as being the earliest of the Gospel accounts. A. B. Bruce dates it around 60 A.D., while dating Luke 62 and Matthew 70. As a result of its generally accepted primitive nature, Mark has been made to bear the brunt of recent radical criticism attempting to discover a purely human Jesus Who would fit into the mold of the naturalistic frame of mind of our anti-supernaturalistic age. Warfield characterizes the attack thus: "At the dictation of anti-supernaturalistic presuppositions, John is set aside in favor of the Synoptics, and then the Synoptics are set aside in favor of Mark." The attempt is then made from this latter account to present a merely human Jesus. Being unable "to eliminate the Divine Jesus and His supernatural accompaniment of mighty works in the Gospel of Mark as a whole, the attempt is made to distinguish between the narrative element (assumed to be colored by the thought of the Christian community) and the reportorial element (which may repeat real sayings of Jesus), and then in the reportorial element all that is too lofty for the naturalistic Jesus must be trimmed down until it fits in with His simply human character."<sup>1</sup> The precariousness of these proceedings is glaringly evident. "In the processes of such criticism it is pure subjectivity which rules, and the investigator gets out as results

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1. Warfield, *Christology and Criticism*, p. 164.

only what he puts in as premises."<sup>2</sup> Yet, in spite of the precariousness thus evidenced, and in spite of the fact that criticism of this type leaves Christianity wholly without basis or justification, it becomes even more necessary for us to determine the really authentic picture which Mark presents of Jesus and then to defend that presentation with might and main. Mark's answer to the question, "Who do ye say that I am?" bears a tremendous significance in the realm of historical apologetics, for, to many, upon Mark's answer rests the final conclusion to be drawn. For the purposes of this discussion the integrity and trustworthiness of Mark's Gospel account will be presupposed, with one exception. The questionable portion of Chapter 16 will be discussed in a later section.

As Hromadka has said, it is absolutely indispensable to a correct knowledge and adequate understanding of Jesus Christ that we accept Him on His *own* terms. Every attempt to discover a purely human Jesus has ended in failure because the investigator started out with his own presuppositions and specifications, determined to make Christ conform to them. But the Lord Jesus is a Non-Conformist; He has His own terms, and they are the only ones valid and acceptable.

It is not correct to say that each of the four Gospel accounts presents a Christ peculiarly its own. The lofty Christology of John is sometimes said to be out of harmony with the Christology of Mark and the other Synoptics. Even Wade C. Smith in his "Fishers of Men" Testament says that Mark presents Jesus Christ as the Servant, while John sets Him forth as the Son of God. While we can appreciate the spirit in which he does this, we should also understand that this is one distinction which might very easily lend itself to misinterpretation. The Christ presented to us by John is the identical Christ presented by Mark. The Christology of Mark is just as high as that of John, although on the surface it may not appear to be so. It is true that John emphasizes His Deity while Mark

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2. Warfield, *Christology and Criticism*, p. 165.



emphasizes His Messiahship. But in Mark as well as in the other Synoptics there is an underlying element of the same glory that is so evident in John. Indeed, for the four evangelists to present a true picture of Christ, there could be no variation in their Christologies without giving a false picture of His true nature. And one testimony to the authenticity of the Person they set forth is that He is absolutely interchangeable among all four accounts. The eternal Word of God of John "fits in" to Mark's account just as well as He does in John's. "All the high teaching of John's Gospel is but a series of variations upon the theme here given its classical expression. Mark has in view to show that this great religious movement in which he himself had a part had its beginnings in a Divine interposition: Matthew, that this divine interposition was in fulfillment of the promises made to Israel; Luke, that it had as its end the redemption of the world; John, that the agent in it was none other than the Son of God Himself."<sup>3</sup> So the four Gospels not only present the same Christ, but they dovetail together to give us a more-than-adequate picture of the One Who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever."

#### I. JESUS IS DIVINE—OF THE NATURE OF TRUE DEITY

In this portion of our discussion we will consider three answers to the question, "Who do ye say that I am?" They are, A. The Answer of Jesus' Own Self-Consciousness, B. The Answer of Jesus' Teachings, C. The Answer of Jesus' Miracles.

##### *A. The Answer of Jesus' Own Self-Consciousness.*

One of the most convincing arguments supporting the Deity of Jesus is the testimony of His own self-consciousness. It is evident from the outset that Jesus regarded Himself in a most remarkable way. Certainly within the thoughts of His own mind He was no ordinary person. That He claimed for Himself an extraordinary place is manifest by the fact that He did

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3. Warfield, *Christology and Criticism*, p. 170.

not reject Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi, but rather gave His stamp of approval upon it by charging His disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ, Mk. 8:30. One marvels at the way in which He draws attention to Himself, placing Himself at the center of every situation that arises. As He was passing along the Sea of Galilee, His words to Simon and Andrew were, "Follow *Me* . . ." His answer to the father of the epileptic boy was, "Bring him to *Me*". 9:19. In Simon's house in Bethany when the woman had anointed His head with costly ointment, He said, "Let her alone; she has done a beautiful thing to *Me*." 14:6. In 12:1-12 He speaks of Himself as being the only Son and Heir, distinct and separate from the servants.

Jesus' extraordinary self-consciousness is manifest in at least three ways in Mark: 1) He classed Himself above all creatures, 2) He identified Himself with the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13, and 3) He claimed for Himself authority to forgive sins.

1) There are two outstanding passages in Mark where Jesus ranks Himself above all creatures. One is 13:32—"But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." In these words Jesus, classing Himself above all humanity and even above the angels, places Himself in the same category with the Father. It is interesting to note that this is one of Schmiedel's "pillar passages." Schmiedel says that Jesus here reveals a limitation in His knowledge of the time of His return to earth, thereby betraying His merely human nature. It is true that Jesus confessed that there was one thing He did not know, but Schmiedel fails to take into account the other extreme of the passage, which is that of the highest exaltation. When He was in the flesh, He was certainly subject to human limitations—yet without sin, and it is not inconsistent with a high view of His Person and Nature to realize that while subject to the limitations of the flesh He would not know the time of an event that was hidden in the secret counsels of His Father. Surely in the light



of the other meaning of the text and in the light of the other passages bearing on His nature it is a perilous thing to call in question His Deity on such a doubtful consideration as this.

The other passage in which He places Himself above all creatures is 14:62. In answer to the high priest's question, "Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus replies, "I am; and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of Heaven." This answer to a question which was designed deliberately to force Jesus to incriminate Himself is one of the loftiest statements of His Deity available. He makes no effort to conceal the matter as He had at Caesarea Philippi; He makes a full breast of the whole affair, leaving no doubt of the fact that He considered Himself to be a heavenly figure occupying the most exalted position possible. "An analysis of this passage shows that under solemn oath imposed by the high priest Jesus affirmed: (1) that He was the Christ, (2) that He was the Son of the Blessed, (3) that He was the one Who would sit at the right hand of power, and (4) that He was the Son of Man Who would come on the clouds of Heaven. Each of these four affirmations is distinctly Messianic. Their cumulative Messianic effect is 'stunningly significant.'"<sup>4</sup> It can be shown very clearly from this passage that Jesus unites the functions of Messiah with Jehovah and then applies them to Himself, but that aspect is reserved for a later section. It is sufficient for us here to see that Jesus affirmed openly that He was Divine in the highest sense possible.

Other passages in Mark manifest this outstanding and extraordinary self-consciousness. In 2:28 He declares, "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Now the Sabbath to the Jew was not something to be taken lightly. It was a highly prized and treasured institution, included in the Tables of the Law, and when Jesus makes for Himself this claim He is in a very real sense placing Himself above the Law and claiming

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4. Robinson, *Our Lord*, p. 65 (1949 ed.)

dominion over it. In addition, there is the little word "also", which implies that He is Lord of much more than the Sabbath and that His Lordship is an attribute of His Messianic dignity. In 11:3 He uses the term Lord in an absolute sense, implying that it would be honored by those who would ask, "Why do ye this?" And in 12:35-37 He declares Himself to be "David's Lord" as well as "David's Son." Yes, Jesus classed Himself above all creatures, not arrogantly so, but in a manner which was clear and impossible not to understand. Indeed, this was one of the main reasons why His enemies were so determined to destroy Him.

2) Jesus' favorite title when referring to Himself was "Son of Man." Now it is possible to believe that one reason He applied this term to Himself as frequently as He did was to associate Himself with the human race in such a way that all could know that He was truly man. "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:15. "To Mark the Son of Man, as reflected in the sayings he cites from the lips of the Lord, is the divinely sent Redeemer, come to minister to men and to give His life a ransom for many—" <sup>5</sup> And it is this title which seems to express better than any other His human nature as well as His superhuman nature. But by far His main reason in employing this name for Himself was to identify Himself with the heavenly figure of Daniel 7:13. The more this majestic Personage is studied and contemplated, the more certain it becomes that it is none other than Jesus Himself. "Critics of all schools have come to recognize that the Son of Man is the figure seen in Daniel 7:13 and in the parables of Enoch." <sup>6</sup>

In Mark Jesus uses this figure eleven times. In six out of the eleven (2:10, 28; 8:38; 9:31; 13:26; 14:62), He refers directly to some aspect of His glory, and in two of these (13:26;

5. Warfield, *The Lord of Glory*, p. 29.

6. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 75.



14:62) He speaks of the "Son of Man coming on the clouds of Heaven", the identical figure of Daniel. In two more of His uses of the term He speaks of Himself as being the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (9:12; 14:21), and in two others (8:31; 9:9) He refers to the glory He was to experience in His resurrection. The Son of Man is a Messianic and apocalyptic Personage. In 14:62 He is the Christ, the Son of the Blessed, the One seated at the right hand of Power, and the One coming on the clouds of heaven. It is no wonder Vos has said that nothing else in the Gospels has so stamped the supernatural and the superhuman upon the self-portrayal of Jesus as these parousia Son of Man passages. That the Son of Man is a Divine Person is evident; that Jesus identified Himself with that Personage is clear and unmistakable.

3) The account of the healing of the paralytic was the beginning of Jesus' open break with the scribes and Pharisees. There is no indication of any hostility thus far — at least in Mark, but when Jesus said to the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven" (2:5), a storm of indignation was raised in the hearts of the scribes. And justly so. For "who can forgive sins but God only?" They were perfectly within their bounds when they thus reasoned within themselves. But the determining factor which they failed to recognize was that Deity was present and Deity was exercising Divine right in forgiving the sins of the paralytic. Their failure was not in an incorrect understanding of this Divine prerogative, but in their erroneous conception of the One Who stood before them. Then Jesus, realizing their questionings and confusion, proved His right by giving them a sign: "But that ye may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — He said to the paralytic — "I say unto you, rise, take up your bed, and go into your own home." 10, 11. Paraphrasing, we may say: "That ye may know that the Son of Man is truly the Lord and has authority to forgive sins I am giving you a sign that cannot be misunderstood." This is undoubtedly a claim for Lordship, supported by a

miracle of healing that was impossible to overlook and that bore undeniable witness to His Divine authority.

Now the matter of Jesus' own Divine self-consciousness, so forcefully expressed in His classing Himself above all creatures, His identifying Himself with the Son of Man of Daniel, and in His exercising the Divine prerogative of forgiving sins—and in other ways as well — poses a very interesting question. Was Jesus actually what He thought and said He was? If He was — and is — then the matter becomes clear. But if He was not what He claimed to be, what was He? There are only two possibilities: He was a lunatic or He was a deceiver. For what mere man in his right mind and acting on the principles of good moral conduct would make for himself such exorbitant claims as did Jesus of Nazareth? Who today would be so insane to say that He was a mentally deranged personality or who would be so presumptuous to affirm that He, of all men, was one who had no regard for truth and whose entire ministry was a deception? No such Jesus as this could claim for Himself the love and devotion of millions, could sway empires, could transform human souls from sin to sainthood or could create the nobility of Christian character. There is no reasonable alternative. Jesus was — and is — what He said He was. Without the truth of this great fact the existence of the Christian Church is inexplicable, the faith of millions is vain, and we are yet in our sins. "Who do ye say that I am"? "Thou art the Christ!"

### *B. The Answer of Jesus' Teaching*

The title of a current book is, "Jesus Came Preaching." Perhaps we can adapt that title to our purposes by saying that Jesus came preaching and teaching. In Mk. 1:14 He came into Galilee preaching, and in 1:21 He entered the synagogue and taught. It seems to be highly significant that during His three year ministry Jesus taught in detail the truth of the Kingdom of God and then laid down His life to confirm and establish it. In His teaching recorded in Mark Jesus bears witness



to His own Lordship. It is partly through His teaching that He manifests His extraordinary self-consciousness, as He does in the parable of the vineyard, referring to Himself as the beloved Son, and in the eschatological discourses in chapter 13. Mark, being the shortest of the Gospel accounts, does not record as many of His teachings as do the other Gospel writers, but in 4:34 we are expressly told that, while His teaching of the multitudes was done in parables, He explained everything privately to His own disciples.

But what concerns us here about Jesus' teaching is not the content of that teaching, as important as that is, but the manner in which He taught. The scribes had been accustomed to rely on other authorities for their teaching, quoting at length from men long revered and recognized as learned in the Law and the other Jewish Scriptures of that day. But in 1:22 we learn that Jesus did not rely on other authorities; He was His own authority. "And they were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The astonishment of the people was called forth by the commanding manner in which He presented His subjects. And as if in reply to the astonishment and the questioning of the multitude, the opportunity was presented for Jesus to perform the miracle in which He drives an unclean spirit out of the man who was in their midst. 1:23-27. This seems to be the sense of the passage, since the people associated the driving out of the unclean spirit with His teaching. 1:27. Therefore, His teaching with such authority was supported and vindicated by the miracle which He wrought. As a result of this incident, "His fame spread abroad throughout all the surrounding regions of Galilee." 1:28.

In 11:27-33 we see an incident in which His authority is openly and expressly challenged by His enemies. Notice that they do not ask Him why or how He does these things (which referred undoubtedly to both His teaching and His miracles), but by what authority they are accomplished. Authority car-

ries here not only the idea of right or warrant but also that of power. However, Jesus does not choose to reveal to them the answer to a question which should have been perfectly obvious and no doubt was to those who were willing to understand. He allows His answer to hinge upon their reply to a counter question, a question which was relatively simple and should have called forth an answer from the scribes and Pharisees immediately. But being unwilling to be put to shame before the people, they declined to answer. The sense of Jesus' reply is this: "If you are unwilling to answer My question, then I feel Myself under no obligation to answer you. If you do not know from whence came John's baptism, then you have no right to know from whence I received My authority."

But He is perfectly willing for us to know from whence His authority came, if we inquire in good faith. Is it not from the Father Who bore witness to Him on the Mount of Transfiguration with the words: "This is My beloved Son: hear Him."? (9:7) He has the authority of Heaven in His words, (Mk. 8:38) authority with which He forces the unclean spirits to obey Him and authority with which He confounds the shrewdest and wisest among the religious leaders of that day, authority that astonishes the people and which makes them hear Him gladly. It is hardly reasonable to assume that a mere man would claim for Himself such authority and exercise it, and certainly unreasonable to say that He would be able to support His authority with a clear-cut miracle such as that in 1:23-27. No less than Divine power and sanction itself would enable this humble Man of "lowly" birth to cause such astonishment among the people and to completely silence the outstanding religious authorities of the Jewish nation. "Who do ye say that I am?" "Thou art the Christ!"

### *C. The Answer of Jesus' Miracles*

It has been said that a miracle is a parable in action. Perhaps it would have been proper to treat the answer of Jesus' miracles under the heading of His teachings, for as Warfield says, "Jesus'



miracles are pieces of symbolical teaching, to reveal the nature of this supernatural Person and to afford a foretaste of the blessedness of His rule in the Kingdom He came to found."<sup>7</sup> For our purposes His miracles are to be considered only as attestations to His Divine nature, each one bearing witness to the supernatural character of the One Who performed it.

1. Mark records twelve specific miracles in which Jesus restored those who were stricken with disease, either of the body or of the mind, two miracles in which He fed the multitudes in the wilderness with only a small quantity of food, and three in which He manifests His control over the elements of nature. He mentions others, however, and these specifically mentioned are not to be considered the only ones He performed. The striking thing about Jesus' miracles is that they were never arbitrary. They were, as Warfield has pointed out, "pieces of symbolical teaching." In other words, His miracles were never an end in themselves, but only a means to a greater end. On several occasions He sought to suppress the publicity brought about by His miraculous powers, so that the people would not regard Him simply as a wonder-worker. Now Jesus is not the only one who performed miracles in the Bible. Moses wrought many signs to convince Pharaoh that he was acting in the power of the Almighty God, Elijah called down fire from heaven on Mount Carmel, Peter was very careful to say to the impotent man, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." But "the miracles wrought by Jesus differed from those wrought by the prophets and the apostles in that they were wrought by *His Own* inherent power rather than by power relegated to Him."<sup>8</sup> When Jesus performed a miracle, there was the commanding, "I say unto you, arise" (2:11), while those others who wrought miracles expressly disclaimed that they were done by any power within themselves but through the power of God working through them. Is there not

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7. Warfield, *Christology and Criticism*, p. 162.

8. Boettner, *Studies in Theology*, p. 176.

a telling distinction, therefore, in the manner in which Jesus' miracles were wrought and is it not clear that He Himself was the very essence of Divine power, able to heal broken bodies with a touch of His hand and to force even the elements of nature to obey His voice? Jesus no doubt anticipated the difficulty people would have in understanding the truth of His nature, for every miracle He performed was a sign pointing to the fact that here was a Divine Person. His miracles are object lessons in Christology.

2. Not only do we find that His actual miracles witness to His Divine nature, but the miracle of His own life bears tremendous weight also in answering the question. When He was led before the High Priest (14:53-65), "the whole council sought testimony against Him, to put Him to death; but they found none." Those who were most zealous to eliminate Him were unable to detect a single flaw in His character or conduct. Even when they resorted to false witness, they could find nothing which made him liable to criminal prosecution; their testimonies were nothing but a jumble of confusion. It was only by a direct appeal designed intentionally to force Jesus to speak His own death warrant that they were able to consider Him guilty of blasphemy and send Him to the cross via Pilate's judgment hall.

3. We have purposely held to a later place in this discussion the greatest miracle of all: the bodily resurrection of the crucified Jesus from the dead. The reason for this procedure is not that we attach no importance to this great article of our faith, but because of the debate over the authenticity of the present ending of Mark's Gospel, which includes part of the Resurrection account. It is frequently held that chapter 16: 9-20 is not genuine but was added at some later time by a scribe attempting to complete a seemingly incomplete account, on the basis of the facts presented in the other Gospels. Dr. A. B. Bruce, in his *Expositor's Greek Testament*, sides strongly with



this view.<sup>9</sup> But whatever question there may be about the form of this closing chapter of Mark, there is no question but that the writer presents a risen, living Christ. Even if the debated portion is omitted and we consider verse eight as the end of the Gospel, we have the empty tomb with the young man sitting within it saying to the women, "He is risen!" That Jesus had risen is evident from these eight verses.

In addition, the entire Gospel is evidence that Christ had risen. It has been well said that "every line of the New Testament is written from the standpoint of faith in the risen Christ." Without the Resurrection the Gospel according to Mark — or the other three Gospel accounts for that matter would never have been written. Not one of Peter's sermons in the book of Acts would have been preached, not one of the epistles would have been written had not Christ risen from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures. In fact, none of the testimonies which we now have would have been preserved. The Resurrection of Christ is attested by the book of faith, the movement of faith and the church of faith.

So for our purposes the important point is that in whatever form we consider chapter 16 to be, we still have presented to us a risen, living Christ. And this presentation is supported by the fact of the very existence of that portion of God's Word in which the living Christ is openly manifested.

## II. JESUS IS JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the preceding section of our discussion we have sought to show that Jesus is Divine — of the nature of true Deity. It now remains to show that not only is He true Deity but that He is a specific Deity, namely, Jehovah, the Lord of the Old Testament. In so doing we exclude all other concepts of Lord and designate Jesus as One Whose attributes and Nature are pictured for us in every page of the Old Testament Scriptures,

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9. A. B. Bruce, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, p. 454.

and point to Him as the Incarnate Jehovah Himself tabernacling for a time with men. To make this identification we will consider three portions of Mark's account: the Prologue—1:1-11; 12:35-37; and 14:62.

*A. The Answer of Mark's Prologue*

It is difficult to capture the strikingness of the prologue to Mark's Gospel account. Perhaps the best way to characterize it is to say that while it fulfills many Old Testament prophecies, it is in particular the direct fulfillment of Malachi 3:1-3. There is an element of suddenness about these first few verses that is essential to a proper understanding of them. Mark does not give the account of Jesus' birth as do Matthew and Luke, outlining in detail the manner in which the Son of God took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh; nor does he go back into eternity to the Word Who was in the beginning with the Father. To him all this is unnecessary. He determines to present the Lord—Jehovah-Adonai—of the Old Testament coming suddenly to His temple, seemingly from out of nowhere, on His mission of redemption of a sinful humanity.

John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. In Malachi 3:1 it is Jehovah of hosts Who says, "Behold, I send *My* messenger, and he shall prepare the way before *Me*: and Adonai, Whom ye seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire; behold, he cometh." In this verse we see that Jehovah and Adonai are interchangeable terms, both referring to the Covenant God of the Old Testament Who is to come. So in Mark 1:2, where Malachi 3:1 is quoted it is a direct reference to the coming of Jehovah-Adonai Himself, and the change of pronouns from *My* to *Thy* identifies this coming with Jesus' advent. Furthermore, this passage from Malachi is quoted by Jesus in the other two Synoptics (Matt. 11:10, Luke 7:27), and at each time He specifically says that John is the messenger of whom the prophet speaks.



The implication is clear, then, that He—Jesus—is the One for Whom the way is being prepared. There can be no doubt that Jesus here identifies Himself with the Covenant God of the Old Testament—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This position is further strengthened by the solemn way in which He points to John as the messenger: “And if ye are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” Matt. 11:14,15. John’s mission was of the highest: to prepare the way for the coming of Jehovah. In addition, the prophecy from Isaiah 40:3, which is directly associated with Malachi 3:1, speaks of the coming of Jehovah our God. It is plain to see, therefore that Mark 1:2,3 directly identifies the coming of Jehovah with the coming of Jesus.

And so the messenger had come. And what was it that he preached? “After me comes One Who is greater than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” 1:7,8. The country was electrified with excitement, the air tense with expectation. Could this be the Messiah of Whom he was speaking? Or was it Jehovah Himself coming to establish His eternal reign of peace and righteousness? The hopes and expectations of the people were raised to a new high. Then suddenly the Lord came—v. 9— as He had been prophesied and heralded, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. Then when He came up out of the water, the Heavens were parted assunder, the Spirit descended upon Him as a dove, and the Father’s voice from Heaven was heard: “Thou art My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.”

The Christology presented here is of the loftiest type, fully as high as any in the New Testament. In these opening verses of Mark Jesus is identified with the Christ (or Messiah), the Son of God, the One Who is to baptize with the Holy Spirit, the One upon Whom the Spirit descended as a dove through the cloven heavens, the One to Whom the voice from heaven

bore witness, Adonai—the Lord of the Old Testament, and Jehovah Himself, Jahweh, the Ineffable Name for God which was considered too sacred to pronounce! It is plain, therefore, that Jesus was not only the fulfillment of the Messianic hope but that He also fulfilled the hope for the coming of Jehovah. Jesus is the Messiah; Jesus is Jehovah. In these opening words of the most primitive Gospel, we are introduced to a Jesus Who is not only Divine, but a Jesus Who is identical with the Lord of the Old Testament. Truly He was “in the beginning with God” as the evangelist John says, but Mark shows this great truth not in profound words, but by even more profound outward testimony and fulfillment of prophecy.

#### *B. The Answer of Peter: the Christ*

Every answer to the question, “Who do ye say that I am?”, which we have found so far in Mark’s Gospel account has yielded convincing evidence supporting Peter’s answer, “Thou art the Christ.” However, it is necessary for us to evaluate that answer itself in the light of what Mark says about it. “Christ” is the Greek word for “Anointed” and corresponds to the Hebrew and Aramaic “Messiah.” A study of the Old Testament use of the term discloses a gradual evolution from its first application to any person anointed with the holy oil, such as the high priest (Lev. 4:3, 5, 16) through its application to Saul (II Sam. 1:14, 16), to representatives of the line of David (Ps. 18:50, 89:39), to its final application to a coming Great Deliverer (Jer. 23:5)—also of the line of David—“Whose goings forth are from old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2). Many other passages in the Old Testament Scriptures speak of the coming of the Messiah, and the Messianic hope dwelt in the heart of every devout Jew. It is now generally understood, however, that there are two streams of prophetic promise running through the Old Testament. One is the coming of the Messiah, which we have just outlined, and the other the coming of Adonai, Jehovah Himself, as has been pointed out in an earlier part of



this discussion. The Messiah was regarded as being of human lineage, as is evident from Jesus' question of the scribes in Mark 12:35. Therefore, if the Messiah is to be the Son of David according to the flesh, does that not make it plain that He could not have been Divine also? The two streams of prophetic promise were thus kept separate and were expected to be fulfilled separately. Does not the term "Christ," then, become void of Divine connotation, and reduce itself to a mere human deliverer who would come some day and free His people from their political and national bondage? This seems to have been the current conception among the Jews, and the dilemma is easily recognized. Jesus certainly recognized it, because He has given us one passage directly designed to solve it. This passage (Mark 12:35-37) is part of the "triple tradition" preserved in all three of the Synoptic Gospels. Linking this passage to Peter's answer, "Thou art the Christ", we see that the prophetic streams meet in Jesus, and we thus are finally and conclusively vindicated in identifying Him with Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Jesus Himself asks the question, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David?" Then He quotes from Psalm 110, a passage in which David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, says: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, till I put thy enemies under thy feet." Jesus thus identifies the Christ with Adonai. But if David represents Jehovah as speaking thus to Adonai—the Christ—how could He be David's son? "Here, with obvious reference to Himself, our Lord argues that when David in the Spirit represents the Lord as saying to His Lord, 'Sit Thou on My Right Hand', he ascribes a dignity to the Messiah very much greater than could belong to Him simply as David's son."<sup>10</sup> But notice that Jesus does not answer His second question as given in verse 37. For actually the Christ is of the line of David according to the flesh

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10. Warfield, *The Lord of Glory*, p. 143.

and the two streams of Old Testament prophecy, one of a human Messiah and the other of the Lord Himself, merge in the God-Man Christ Jesus. And the fundamental difficulty, which Jesus eliminates at this point, is in thus combining the two prophecies into one. The two parallel lines meet in the Infinity of perfection Who is the Lord Jesus Christ. In the light of this great fact Peter's answer is given its fullest expression and its deepest meaning, and the Christian faith is substantiated.

### *C. The Answer of Jesus Himself*

In an earlier section of this discussion attention was called to Jesus' answer to the question of the high priest: "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" His answer was, "I am; and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of Heaven." It was pointed out that this is one of the passages in which He classes Himself above all creatures, placing Himself in the most exalted position conceivable. But in carrying this discussion further we will see that not only does He here claim Lordship and exaltation, but He also specifically "unites two passages which associate the Messiah in kingly dignity, power and dominion with Jehovah and then applies them to Himself"<sup>11</sup> These two passages are Psalm 110:1 in which the Messiah as Adonai sits at Jehovah's right hand, and Daniel 7:13, in which the Messiah as the Son of Man comes with the clouds of Heaven. We have already seen that the Son of Man is a distinctly Messianic Personage of heavenly origin, and it is a certain here that Jesus is applying the term to Himself. This great fact is in itself enough to affirm His Deity, but our main point of emphasis here is that Jesus expressly and unmistakably identified the Son of Man with Adonai. It is therefore clear that the Son of Man and Adonai are one and the same and that they are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The two concepts are so interwoven that they are inseparable, just as they are inseparable in the Person of Christ,

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11. Robinson, *Our Lord*, p. 66.



the divinely sent Redeemer, come to minister to men, and to give His life a ransom for many; yet at one and the same time, Jehovah of hosts, the God of the Covenant, Who appeared to Abraham, to Moses and to Isaiah, the Giver of the Law, the Rewarder of the righteous and the Punisher of the wicked. This—from His Own lips—is Jesus. This is His answer to His Own question.

Such is the answer of Mark's Gospel account to Jesus' great question. This discussion has not been an attempt to exhaust the evidence found in Mark supporting the Deity of Jesus Christ, but an earnest effort to present the most evident and easily discerned attestations to it. Indeed, the entire Gospel account is evidence of no mean importance, since it is written from the standpoint of faith in Christ. However, time and space do not permit further treatment. It suffices to say that the conclusion reached herein has the confirmation of the Christian Church, the Christian centuries, the lives and testimonies of millions of believers and the personal faith of every individual who has cried out with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!".

IV

THE WITNESS OF LUKE

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## IV

### THE WITNESS OF LUKE

#### INTRODUCTION

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is the only person in all history concerning whom it is imperative that every man make a decision. The question of Jesus, "Who say ye that I am?" confronts every man who hears the gospel and demands an answer.

From the time of his earthly ministry until this day, there have been various and diametrically opposite conceptions of the person of Christ. Some of the contemporaries of Jesus saw his miracles, noticed his care for the poor and needy, and heard his voice of authority as he fearlessly denounced evil. Surely this is the great prophet Elijah come back to us, they concluded. Others seem to have noticed that he taught in parables and preached from a heart distressed and broken because of the sin of his people, yet filled with compassion for them. They saw his ministry of love and heard his insistent call to repentance. "This is Jeremiah redivivus," they said. Conscience smitten Herod Antipas heard of the mighty works of Jesus and said, "It is John whom I beheaded, he is risen from the dead."

These all saw in Jesus of Nazareth a great prophet, a leader in Israel; some of them admired Jesus, some respected him, some loved him, some feared him, and others hated him, but to many of them he was no more than an extraordinary man. Peter, however, to whom the Father had revealed the truth, could testify with assurance, "Thou art the Christ of God." To Peter, who could add the testimony of personal knowledge and experience to the certainty of divine revelation, Jesus Christ

was the Messiah, the Son of God come to tabernacle in human flesh.

Today there are many who see in Jesus Christ a great teacher, a religious genius, a martyred Jewish prophet or social reformer. Dr. Donald W. Riddle, to mention only one, says of Christ, "There had been a man, Jesus, who had lived in Galilee. He had lived a significant life as a Jew, and, although he was not a professional religious leader, he achieved such distinctive values in religious life that he had impressed his associates as a notable person." To Dr. Riddle the gospels are only Jewish "folklore" and the Christ of the Bible only a notable Jew who "achieved distinctive values in religious life." Our conclusion is fundamentally different.

In this paper we shall consider the evidence for the deity of Christ as it is presented in the writings of Luke, i. e., in the book of Luke and in Acts.

#### THE VALUE OF LUKE'S TESTIMONY

We know very little of the life of Luke save that he was a physician, that he wrote Luke-Acts, and that he traveled with the Apostle Paul. Paul speaks of him as "the beloved physician" and as "my fellow worker." When the aging Paul was spending his last days in a Roman prison many of his friends forsook him and to Timothy he wrote, "Only Luke is with me" (II Tim. 4:11). This indicates that he was a man of strength of character, unwilling to leave the imprisoned Apostle.

Most of our knowledge of Luke's travels comes from the "We sections" of the book of Acts. By the "We sections" we refer to those parts of the book in which the author changes from the third person to the first person and thereby presents himself as a member of Paul's missionary party. These passages include: Acts 16:10-17; 20:5 to 21:18; and 27:1 to 28:16. Of all Paul's numerous companions, only Luke will fit as the author of these sections. This confirms the unanimous tradition that Luke wrote the two books ascribed to him. From



the "We sections" we learn that Luke joined Paul at Troas on the second missionary journey, that he remained at Philippi until Paul came to that city on the third journey, and that he accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. He was with Paul at both the beginning and end of his imprisonment in Caesarea, on the voyage to Rome and during at least a part of his final imprisonment. Philemon 24 indicates that he remained in Rome for a considerable length of time.

These "We sections" bring Luke in contact with Silas of Jerusalem, James the brother of Jesus, the Jerusalem elders (21:18), and with many other first hand witnesses of the events which he records in Luke-Acts. Luke not only had personal contact with those immediately acquainted with Christ and the disciples, but also his writings were favorably received by groups of Christians which included in their membership those who were eye witnesses of the events which he records. Had there been no miraculous element in the life of Christ or had there been any deviation from the exact truth, this must necessarily have been noticed by the Jerusalem Christians who were scattered throughout the early church and the writings of Luke anathematized rather than added to the sacred canon.

The introductions to Luke and Acts indicate clearly that the two books form a unit. Goodspeed says, "No finding of modern New Testament study is more assured than that Luke and Acts are not two books, written at different times, but two volumes of a single work, conceived and executed as a unit." Both volumes are addressed to Theophilus. In the gospel introduction he is addressed as "most excellent Theophilus." This same form of address (see Greek text) is used by Claudius Lysias to Felix the governor (23:26), by Tertullus to Felix in his accusation of Paul (24:3), and by Paul himself in addressing Festus (26:25). This indicates that Theophilus was a nobleman or official. Ramsay thinks it was a baptismal name which Luke employs because it was dangerous for a Roman of rank to be recognized as a Christian.

Luke was seemingly the most highly educated of the New Testament writers except possibly his companion the Apostle Paul. His literary style and methods are the best; his structure is balanced and formal. Renan calls his first volume "the most literary of the gospels." Luke is recognized by all as a most accurate historian. Ramsay calls him "the greatest historian of all times," speaks of the "vivid accuracy of Acts 27," and says, "Our hypothesis is that Acts was written by a great historian, a writer who set himself the task to record the facts as they occurred, a strong partisan indeed, but raised above partiality by his perfect confidence that he had only to describe the facts as they occurred, in order to make the truth of Christianity and the honor of Paul apparent."

Both the "We sections" of Acts and the birth narrative of Luke have been considered interpolations by some. There is, however, no textual evidence to support this theory and internal evidence in its favor is almost, if not entirely, negligible. Even so liberal a scholar as Dr. Kirsopp Lake of Harvard is convinced that Acts is a unity. In the Hastings Dictionary of the Apostolic Church he has written: "The argument from literary affinities between the We clauses and the rest of Acts remains at present unshaken; and, until some further analysis succeeds in showing why it should be thought that the We clauses have been taken from a source not written by the redactor himself, the traditional view that Luke, the companion of St. Paul, was the editor of the whole book is the most reasonable one." Harnack, after a very detailed comparison of the "We sections" with the rest of Acts concluded that the entire book is a "grand unity of literary form." The vocabulary and form of the birth narrative also have the earmarks of Lukan authorship.

It has been widely held that Luke had two primary sources for his gospel, namely: the gospel of Mark and a document comprised chiefly of the sayings of Jesus, commonly known as Q (Quelle). This document supposedly was used by



Matthew and Luke but not by Mark. As evidence for this Clogg cites that if Mark be divided into 105 sections, only four of these are absent from both Matthew and Luke. Of the remaining 101 sections, 93 are found in Matthew and 81 in Luke. Another theory accounting for the similarity of the wording of the gospels is that oral tradition had obtained a high degree of fixity during the years immediately following the ascension. It is doubtlessly true that Luke did use source material — his preface to the gospel suggests as much, and it is surely true that the Jews were far more accustomed to learning and reciting long passages verbatim than we. From a reconstructed Q we can find texts to support nearly every known argument for the deity of Christ, but this is deemed unnecessary for we consider *all* scripture equally inspired, true, and reliable. Our confidence is not in pre-gospel manuscripts but in the Holy Spirit who inspired the writers.

The exact date of the gospel of Luke is unknown but since Luke was in Palestine at the beginning and at the end of Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea it is not improbable that it was written around the year 58, approximately 25 years after the crucifixion. Luke accompanied Paul to Rome in 59 and probably wrote Acts in 61. The abrupt close of the book of Acts with no mention of Paul's death suggests rather strongly that Paul was still alive. If this is true we can date Acts definitely in 61. It has been suggested that either Luke or Matthew had been written and come to be recognized as Scripture when Paul wrote I Timothy, c. 65 (cf. I Tim. 5:18 w. Matt. 10:10 and Luke 10:7). The earliest references to the writings of Luke are found in the Didache and in the Epistle of Barnabas, both written in the late first or early second centuries, and in the epistle to the Corinthians by Clement of Rome, written around the year 95. The Muratorian Canon (Italy 170-200) opens with this statement: "The third book of the Gospel, according to Luke, the well known physician . . . Luke wrote in his own name after the ascension of Christ, and when Paul

had associated him with himself as one studious of right. Nor did he, himself, see the Lord in the flesh."

From this survey of Luke's writings we have found that Luke was a very careful and highly accurate historian, that he was well acquainted with Paul and many of the leaders of the early church and with many Christians who could give him first hand information concerning the events recorded in his narratives, that he was a well educated physician and that he made either two short or one extended visit to Palestine. As a physician, minister, and member of Paul's missionary party he was surely well acquainted with all possible objections to the Christology of the New Testament. Luke's proximity to the events he records allows practically no time at all for the deification of a purely human Jesus. His accuracy as a historian and his honesty as a Christian compel us to believe that he recorded only what actually occurred. For these reasons his words must be taken seriously by the critical; for us they are final because they are also the words of God.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE NAMES AND TITLES OF OUR LORD

The very names and titles ascribed to Our Lord Jesus are irrefutable evidence of his deity, of his equality and oneness with God the Father.

*Jesus* — Ninety-eight times in Luke and 49 times in Acts our Lord is referred to by his angel-given name of Jesus, a name not unusual in Jewish families. Called by some the "human name of Christ," the name Jesus is the ordinary narrative appellation of our Lord in Luke. In both Luke and in Acts it appears in such combinations as "Jesus of Nazareth," "Christ Jesus," or "the Lord Jesus."

The name is thought to be from the same root as "Joshua" (Jehoshua, or Jeshua in post-exilic books; thought to be from 'Hoshea', a Hiph. form of 'Yasha', meaning to save). As Joshua led God's people out of the wilderness, across Jordan, and into the promised land of milk and honey, so the greater divine Joshua leads God's elect into the eternal promised land



of rest and peace — a function which no mere man, no teacher, no sage, no martyred prophet could perform. The name "Jesus" means "saviour."

The significance of the name "Jesus" in relation to the deity of Christ lies in the angelic announcement (Luke 1:31-33) concerning him who was to bear the name and in that Jesus is the divine Saviour of both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Before the birth of Jesus an angel appeared to Mary and told her that she would call her son Jesus—the very fact that the angel knew that the child would be a son indicates divine foreknowledge and foreordination. The angel continued his announcement by saying that Jesus would be great, that he would be the Son of the Highest, that he would be given the throne of his father David, that he would reign over the house of Jacob forever and that of his kingdom there should be no end.

The very expression "Son of the Highest" separates Jesus from all other men. If the word "Son" be taken in a nativistic sense, then of no other man since Adam could it be said, "He is a son of God." If it be taken to express his essential nature, as we believe it is, then he is here declared to be very God. Moreover, it is certain that none but God can reign forever (*eis tous aionas*) over Jacob. None but God can rule over a kingdom that has no end.

The meaning of the name "Jesus" is significant because in Luke 2:11 the angel tells the shepherds that he who is born in Bethlehem is a "Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Simeon in the *Nunc Dimittis* (Luke 2:30) after taking the eight-day old Jesus in his arms, said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Jesus himself declared, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Now it is certain that none but God could be the Saviour of the souls of men — man has no power to save a soul. He who saves the soul must be equal to him who created the soul.

He who comes to save the lost, to die for the guilty must be both sinless and divine.

In the Old Testament Jehovah is the redeemer and Saviour of his people (Job 19:25; Ps. 19:14, 78:35, 106:21, Isa. 35:4, 41:14, 43:3, 11, 14, 47:4, 49:7, 26 and Hosea 13:4, 14). Indeed in the Old Testament Jehovah declares, "There is no saviour beside me." In the Lukan writings, in the verses quoted and in such other passages as Luke 1:76-79 and Acts 5:31 and 13:23, Jesus is the Saviour of the people of God. Jesus performs a work which, according to the Old Testament, can only be done by Jehovah.

Surely only one who is God as well as man could forgive sins (Luke 5:20 and 7:47). No mere man who ever lived could say, "This is my body which is given for (huper) you," or "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Why could Peter say, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"? Why did Paul say to the Philippian jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house"? Because he to whom Peter, Paul and the church through the ages have pointed as the Saviour of men's souls is Jesus the Saviour who came to "seek and to save that which was lost."

*Lord.* A second name, a title, that even more definitely proclaims the deity of Christ is the title "Lord," a title ascribed to Christ by David, by Elizabeth, by the disciples, by a leper, by the early church, and even by the very angels of heaven. The title "Lord," like the English "Sir," "Mister," or "Lord" in Old English, was sometimes used to indicate respect or deference in honorific address. It was the title of respect and honor with which a servant addressed his master. It is sometimes so used in the Lukan writings, but being the LXX designation of Jehovah, Adhonay, El and Elohim, it more frequently refers to God the Father or to Christ in their deity and sovereignty. That Luke thought of both Christ and the



Father as being coordinate members of the Godhead is shown by the fact that of the 100 uses of the title in Luke, at least 35 refer definitely to the Lord Jesus and at least 33 definitely to the Father. In Acts the same title, "Lord," is used more than 100 times. In these passages there are at least 35 definite references to Jesus Christ, while less than ten seem definitely to refer to the Father. As even Dr. A. C. McGiffert admits, frequently it is most difficult to determine which is referred to in Acts.

The word "Lord" (Kyrios) is defined by Thayer as "he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has the power of deciding; the possessor and disposer of a thing; the owner; the one who has control of a thing." The title "Lord" is a recognition of Messianic dignity; it denotes reverence and allegiance, and in the Acts as well as in the early church it was the accepted name-title by which Jesus Christ was known. The dignity, the greatness, yea, the deity inherent in the title "Lord" is shown in Acts by the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord of the Kingdom (1:6), Lord of the disciples (1:21), Lord of salvation (2:21 and 16:31), Lord of spirits (7:59), Lord in whose name baptism is administered (8:16 and 19:5), Lord of the members of the Damascus church (9:17), Lord of all (10:36), Lord of the early Christians who believed that the gospel was for the Greek as well as the Jew (11:20), Lord of grace (15:11), the Lord for whose name the early Christians hazarded their lives (15:26), and Lord of glory (22:11).

The English word "Jehovah" is a transliteration of the most sacred Hebrew word for God as it is voweled in the Masoretic text of the Old Testament. The scribes used the consonants of the Tetragram (JHVH, translated LORD) with the vowels of Adhonay, which is translated as Lord. In the LXX even the sacred Tetragram is translated by the word Kyrios. This means that in New Testament circles where the LXX was the Bible, Kyrios was the usual word for God. The fact that this

title, together with the Old Testament texts in which it occurs, is regularly ascribed to both Jesus Christ and to the Father in Luke-Acts and in the early Church can only mean that Christ was regarded as truly one with the Father. Dr. Warfield says: "We should never lose from sight the outstanding fact that to men familiar with the Septuagint and the usage of 'Lord' as the personal name of the Deity there illustrated, the term 'Lord' was charged with associations of deity, so that a habit of speaking of Jesus as 'the Lord,' by way of eminence, such as is illustrated by Luke and certainly was current from the beginning of the Christian proclamation, Luke 19:31, was apt to carry with it implications of deity which, if not rebuked or in some way guarded against, must be considered as receiving the sanction of Jesus Himself."

The identity of our Lord Jesus Christ with the Jehovah of the Old Testament is further proved by the ascription to Christ in the New Testament of texts specifically ascribed to Jehovah in the Old Testament. Such a text is Luke 3:4 ("Prepare ye the way of the Lord") quoted from Isaiah 40:3. In the Isaiah passage the Lord is Jehovah—in Luke the Lord is Jesus Christ. Acts 2:17-21 also identifies the Kyrios of the New Testament with Jehovah of the Old Testament when compared with Joel 2:27-29. Acts 2:34-36 declares that the crucified Jesus is both Lord and Christ and identifies him with the Adhonay of Psalm 110. Luke 1:76 and 7:27 identify the Lord Jesus with the Lord (Adhonay) of Malachi 3:1.

It is noteworthy that in Luke the Messiah is referred to as *the* Lord (ho Kyrios) at least fifteen times. The Pharisees, not admitting the deity of the Messiah, could not explain how David could call him Lord. Indeed it is impossible to explain how Elizabeth could call a cousin's son Lord, how the great king David could call a remote descendant Lord, how the angel could call a newborn babe Lord, how the Apostle Paul, steeped in Jewish Monotheism, could call a crucified Galilean Lord



unless indeed, Christ be the Lord of glory, coequal with the Father.

Closely allied with the use of the title "Lord" to refer to both the Father and the Son is the use of "the name" to refer both to Jehovah and to Jesus. In Leviticus 24:11-16 he who blasphemed "the name" (hashem) was punished for cursing God. In Acts "the name" used absolutely (4:7, 12, 17; 5:28, 41; and 9:21) refers to the one by whose power the lame man was healed, the one by whom we are saved, the one whom the apostles preached, the one worshiped in Jerusalem—in each case to Jesus Christ and in each case to one who must be greater than any mere man.

*Messiah-Christ.* The Christian Church has ever recognized that the Christ of the New Testament fulfils the Old Testament promises of the Messiah. The simple title "Messiah" is not found in the Old Testament except in the ninth chapter of Daniel. More frequently the Messiah is referred to as the Anointed of Jehovah, David, David the Prince, or the Righteous Branch of David. In Isaiah 9:6-7, a passage echoed in Luke 1:32-35, the coming ruler upon David's throne is given the names, Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father (or Father of Eternity), and Prince of Peace. Here the Messiah is called Mighty God, an emphatic affirmation of his deity. Moreover, only God can be the Father of Eternity and rule with "judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever."

After Old Testament times the promises of the Anointed One seemed to crystallize in the title "Messiah" and were taken over into New Testament language in the official title "Christ." Both Messiah and Christ mean 'anointed' or 'the anointed one.' The high priest in Israel was the anointed priest (Lev. 4:3, 5, 16 and 6:15) and the expression "anointed priest," could, according to Dr. Vos, be translated "the priest the Messiah" or "the Messiah priest."

The real meaning of the title "Christ" is set forth in the Larger Catechism in answer to the question, "Why was our

mediator called Christ?" According to the scripture summary of the Westminster Assembly, "Our Mediator was called Christ, because he was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure; and so set apart, and fully furnished with all authority and ability, to execute the office of prophet, priest, and king of his church, in the estate both of his humiliation and exaltation." Our General Assembly of 1910 approved, with other texts, as proof of this statement, Luke 4:14, 18-21; and Acts 3:22.

Thus as Messiah-Christ our Lord was anointed to be our Prophet, Priest and King. Now, the significance of the Messiahship in relation to the deity of our Lord lies in the fact that none but God could execute these offices as they are executed by Christ. As a prophet our Lord revealed the Father as no man could reveal him and spoke words which no mere man could utter, a proof of his deity which we shall presently consider. As priest he offered himself a sacrifice for the redemption of God's people in a manner which demonstrated his deity. As king he rules over a never ending kingdom which is too great and too extensive and too holy to be ruled by man.

Luke tells us that when our Lord first visited Nazareth during his ministry he read the promise in Isaiah 61:1-2a concerning the one whom the LORD had anointed and then made the declaration, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Other Old Testament passages indicating the deity of the Messiah include, Jeremiah 23:5-6 in which the Righteous Branch of David is called Jehovah (JHVH) our Righteousness and Micah 5:2 in which it is declared of the ruler of Israel to be born in Bethlehem that "his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

That Jesus was fully conscious of his Messiahship and deity is shown in that he forgave sins (Luke 5:20 and 7:47), in his affirmative answer to the question of John the Baptist, "Art thou he that should come?" (Luke 7:20-22 and cf. Luke 4:17-21), in his acceptance of Peter's confession that he was



"the Christ of God" (Luke 9:20), in his declaration of his coming in glory and judgment (Luke 9:26 and 21:36), in his foretelling of his suffering, death, and resurrection (Luke 9:44; 11:29-30; 18:31-33; and 22:15), and in the Jubilation passage in which he confesses a unique relation to the Father (10:22). Jesus also pointed out in his teaching that Christ the Son of David is also the Lord of David according to Psalm 110 (Luke 20:41-44).

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Hosea emphasize that the coming Messiah will be of the house of David. In the New Testament the Messiah-Christ is hailed by the angel as the Son of the Highest who will reign over the house of David forever (Luke 1:31-33). Peter, in Acts 2:30 tells us that God had sworn to David that "of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." In Acts 4:25-27, in the apostles' prayer upon the release of Peter and John, Psalm 2:1-2 is quoted and "Christ" is substituted for "his Anointed," thus showing that to the early Church Christ was synonymous with the Anointed One of the Old Testament. In Acts 2:34-36 Peter solemnly declares to the Jews that God has made the Jesus they crucified both Lord and Christ, and identifies the Crucified One with David's Lord, the Adhonay of Psalm 110.

Thus the Messiah-Christ is seen to be a divine person throughout the Bible; he is identified with the Jehovah and Adhonay of the Old Testament; he is shown to have existed from all eternity; he is given names indicating his deity; and he is seen executing his office as prophet, priest, and king as no mere man could ever execute any one part of it.

*Son of Man.* Jesus usually referred to himself as the Son of man; in the Synoptics he so spoke of himself 69 times, 25 of these being in Luke. Ordinarily it is assumed by most Christians that Son of man speaks of the humanity of Christ as Son of God refers to his deity, but neither the original nor the New Testament usage of the title supports this assumption.

It is now generally recognized that the expression Son of man as used by Christ had reference to its usage in Daniel 7:13-27 (cf. Luke 22:69). The Son of man of Daniel comes with the clouds of heaven and is given dominion and a kingdom "that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Surely only the eternal God has such a kingdom, such dominion, and can receive such universal service. The Son of man of Daniel is eschatological and divine rather than human.

The book of Enoch, well known in New Testament times and quoted by Jude in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of his epistle, speaks of the Son of man as an exalted heavenly figure who ushers in the end of this age and the beginning of the age to come. About this Son of man Enoch says, "Before the sun and signs were created, before the stars of heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of spirits. All who dwell on earth will fall down and bow the knee before him and will bless and laud and celebrate with song the Lord of spirits." Enoch also declares, "And he sat on the throne of his glory and the sum of judgment was committed unto him, the Son of man, and he caused the sinners and those who have led the world astray to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth." The Son of man in Enoch is a heavenly figure great enough to hold in his hand the destinies of men.

In Luke the Son of man has power to forgive sins (5:24), he is Lord of the Sabbath day (6:5), he is so great that those reproached for his sake receive great reward in heaven (6:22-23), he is to be slain and rise from the dead (9:22), he will come in his own glory (9:26). It is the Son of man who will confess the disciples before the angels (12:8), he will come as Lord in an hour in which men do not expect him (12:40), he is the one before whom men shall stand to be judged (21:36) he it is who sits on the right hand of the power of God (22:69).



In Acts Stephen saw the Son of man, identified as Jesus, standing at the right hand of God (7:55-56). Thus in the Lukan writings it is impossible to conceive of the Son of man as other than very God as well as complete man. He who by a miracle vindicates his power to forgive sins, who is Lord of the Sabbath, who sits on the right hand of God and who comes in glory must indeed be the eternal, omnipotent and all-glorious Son of God.

*Son of God.* Jesus also spoke of himself as the Son of God (Luke 22:69-71), and in so doing claimed a unique relation to God the Father. The title "son of God" is used in Scripture to refer to Adam (Luke 3:38—Adam tou Theou), to the Jewish nation (Ex. 4:22), to Solomon (II Sam. 7:14), to Christians (I John 3:2), and probably to angels (Job 1:6; 2:1; and 38:7).

The angelic announcement that Jesus would be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35) has sometimes been interpreted in a nativistic sense—having existed from all eternity, Christ is not born to a human father as other men. Even so, Christ would be shown to be the eternal God and his deity demonstrated, but elsewhere in Luke the title "Son of God" most certainly refers to Christ in his essential deity.

Our Lord distinguishes his sonship from that of all others. He speaks of God as "my Father" and as "your Father" but never as "our Father" when including himself. As Jesus pointed out in the Jubilation passage (Luke 10:22) his sonship is unique, he is the eternal Son, coequal with the Father.

Before his birth the angel hailed Christ as the Son of the Highest (Luke 1:32); at his baptism the Holy Spirit descended in bodily shape like a dove and a voice from heaven declared, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." The Devil assumed the Sonship of Christ in at least two of the three recorded temptations (Luke 4:3 and 9). Demons, when they were cast out by Christ hailed him as the Son of God (Luke 4:41). The very fact that our Lord cast out demons in his

own name shows him to be the Lord of evil spirits and truly God. The demon possessed Gadarene cried out, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high?" (Luke 8:28). At the transfiguration the heavenly voice came again saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear him" (Luke 9:35). In the parable of the wicked husbandmen (Luke 20:9-19) the Son is distinguished from and declared to be greater than all the messengers of God to Israel.

The most definite and irrefutable evidence that Jesus declared that as Son of God he was one with the Father is found in his affirmative answer to the question put to him by the Jewish Council, "Art thou then the Son of God?" (Luke 22:69-71). The Council realized that his prediction that he would sit "on the right hand of the power of God" could well be a claim to deity, so they asked him pointedly, "Art thou then the Son of God?" These men, schooled in the Old Testament, definitely understood his reply to be a blasphemy—a man claiming to be God. On the basis of their presupposition that Jesus was a mere man they were right. Jesus Christ, the truest and most upright man who ever walked on earth declared to the highest religious court on earth in that day that he was the Son of God.

*Judge.* A title which most definitely asserts the deity of our Lord is that of "Judge." For surely he who is ordained to judge both the living and the dead must be far greater than the greatest judge of earth. Peter, in his sermon in the house of Cornelius, declared to the gentiles that Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified and risen one, is he whom God has appointed to judge the quick and the dead (Acts 10:42).

Paul, in his address to the Athenians in Mars Hill, declared to the Greeks that God has "appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained: whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). Who but one with the power and knowledge and wisdom of God



can resurrect the dead, assemble them with the living and pronounce righteous judgment upon them according to their deeds and motives?

Our Lord Jesus, ever conscious that the Father had committed all judgment unto him, that all men should one day stand before him (Luke 21:36), could pronounce woes upon Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum and declare that it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of Judgment than for Chorazin and Bethsaida (Luke 10:12-14). He who judges his fellow men is man; he who judges all men of all ages righteously can only be the eternal, all powerful, all knowing, all wise God. Upon the testimony of the resurrection Christ is to be such a judge.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

The first recorded words of our Lord Jesus, spoken at the age of 12, reveal his consciousness of his unique relationship to God. When questioned by his mother as to why he had tarried in Jerusalem instead of returning with them to Nazareth after the passover, he replied, "ouk eideite hoti en tois tou patros mou dei einai me:" (Luke 2:4), which may be translated as in the Authorized Version, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" or as in the American Revised Version, "Know ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" Not only has the young Jesus amazed the teachers of the law by his understanding and answers, but now he speaks of God as "my Father," a truth which he emphasized in his ministry (Luke 9:26; 10:22; 23:34; 24:49).

The last recorded words of our Lord upon the cross also reveal his divine power and authority. For no mere man in all history has ever had the power to dismiss his spirit of his own volition as did our Lord Jesus when he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46). To represent our Lord's death Luke uses the verb "paratithemai," John uses "paredoken" and Mark "exepneusen." Mark simply re-

cords the fact of Christ's death. Luke and John use verbs which can only be interpreted as meaning that Jesus miraculously, and of his own volition, handed over his spirit to God when once he had paid the full price for sin. Jesus himself had said of his life, "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" (John 10:18). Pilate marveled that Christ was already dead when Joseph requested his body for burial. There was a miracle on Calvary on Friday as well as a miracle in the garden on Easter morning—a miracle which demonstrated the divine power of him who had the authority to dismiss his spirit.

The last recorded words of our Lord on earth were a prophecy of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the witnessing of the church (Acts 1:8), a prophecy which demonstrated his familiarity with the counsels of the Godhead and foreknowledge of coming events.

The first recorded words of the ascended Lord were spoken to Saul of Tarsus, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thy me?" (Acts 9:4). Here on the Damascus road the Lord Jesus appeared in a glorious light from heaven and declared that Saul, by persecuting the Christians, was persecuting him. Surely the one who so speaks from heaven, who so appears in glory after his ascension, who so transforms Saul to Paul the Apostle, is indeed very God, worthy of the worship accorded him by the Church throughout the ages.

We have already quoted a number of passages in which our Lord spoke words which revealed his deity and his consciousness of being truly one with the Father. As we have indicated, no mere man could predict the circumstances of his death, declare that his appearing was the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies, announce that he would rise from the dead three days after his crucifixion, or assert that he would sit upon the right hand of power and return with power and great glory. No man in his right mind would promise to con-



fess his followers before the angels, to reward them in heaven, or tell them that they would stand before him in a coming judgment. None less than the Son of God could say, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," or "This cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you." None less than one coequal with the Father could testify to the Jewish Council that he was indeed the Son of God and for this testimony be condemned to death for blasphemy. Surely none less than one of the God-head would consider himself great enough to say to his disciples, "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him" (Luke 10:22).

In addition to these words, confirmed by miracles and his sinless life, our Lord also made appointments and promises which only God could make. After the last supper our Lord said to the disciples, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:29-30). Whatever may be the exact interpretation of these verses, they at least indicate that Christ made appointments in the kingdom of heaven, a kingdom in which God is sovereign. On the cross our Saviour made this promise to the repentant thief, "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Surely he who has such compassion in death, who promises a place in paradise to a crucified thief can only be the eternal Son of God, the Saviour of God's elect.

The prophets of Israel made numerous predictions, many of which were fulfilled in the life of Christ, proving him to be the promised Messiah, but these prophets always attributed their foreknowledge to revelations from God. Ezekiel introduced chapters 20 to 35 of his book with the repeated formula, "The word of the Lord came unto me saying." "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying," is a typical introductory

statement in Jeremiah. "Thus saith the Lord," and "Moreover the Lord said unto me," are representative introductions to the prophecies of Isaiah. Daniel did not claim to interpret dreams of himself; rather he said, "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (Dan. 2:28). But not so with the prophecies of our Lord, for he appealed to no source of knowledge or authority higher than himself. In addition to the many definite predictions of his passion, death, and resurrection, he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (Luke 19:43 and 21:6), and gave a vivid summary of conditions that would prevail in the world before his coming in glory (Luke 21:8-17), and forewarned Peter that he would deny him three times (Luke 22:34). Such prophecies, many of them immediately fulfilled, show the divine omniscience of our Lord. The fact that he spoke in his own right sets him apart from and on a higher plane than the great prophets of Israel.

The commands given by our Lord would have been absurd if uttered by any man who ever lived, whether monarch or prophet. When a demon possessed man cried out in the synagogue, Jesus commanded the demon, "Hold thy peace and come out of him" (Luke 4:35). To the fishermen who had worked throughout the night in vain he said, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught" (Luke 5:4); to the leper he said, "Be thou clean" (Luke 5:13); to the man with the withered hand he said, "Stretch forth thy hand" (Luke 6:10); to the dead son of the widow of Nain he gave the simple command, "I say unto thee, arise" (Luke 7:14) and to the daughter of Jairus he said, "Maid, arise" (Luke 8:54). To the blind beggar he said, "Receive thy sight" (Luke 18:42). As our Lord prepared for his triumphal entry into Jerusalem he commanded two of his disciples to fetch a colt and in giving them specific directions revealed his foreknowledge of where the colt would be tied in another village upon



their arrival (Luke 19:30). When preparing for the Passover supper he said to Peter and John, "Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in" (Luke 22:10), thus revealing his exact knowledge of where the water carrier would be when Peter and John entered the city.

The assertions which our Lord made concerning himself clearly demonstrate his full consciousness of his own deity and equality with the Father. Early in his ministry he spoke of himself as the bridegroom (Luke 5:34-35). To the Jewish disciples this would mean that he professed to be one with God himself, for in the Old Testament, e.g., Hosea 2:16-23, Jehovah is represented as the husband of his people. He stated that those who came to him, heard his sayings and did them were like the man who built his house on a rock and that those who did not keep his sayings were like the foolish man who built his house without a foundation (Luke 6:47-49). After Peter's declaration of his deity, our Lord Jesus said to his disciples, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24). After thus telling the disciples that those who lost their lives for his sake would save them, he declared that he would some day come in his own glory and in the glory of the Father and of the angels (Luke 9:26). To the seventy he said, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19) and to the multitudes he declared, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God (Luke 12:8-9). On another occasion he told the multitudes that those who would be his disciples must put him before family and kin, yea, before life itself (Luke 14:26). Our Lord spoke of the Temple as "My house" (Luke 19:46), quoting from Isaiah

56:7, and assumed the authority to evict the occupants who were making it a place of merchandise. The very fact that Christ was able of himself to drive a group of merchants from their place of business shows that he was no ordinary man.

Before his ascension the risen Lord instructed the eleven that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations and said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you" (Luke 24:47-49). Now repentance is properly "toward God" and only God can forgive sins. So also, he who sends the Holy Spirit must be at least an equal of the Spirit and thus a person of the Godhead. It was said of the Lord Jesus that he taught as one having authority and not as the scribes who found their authority in others who preceded them. He spoke with his own authority making such statements as, "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you" (Luke 6:27). Surely only one possessing the authority, wisdom and knowledge of the Father and equal with him could utter such words—words which put his enemies to silence, caused the blind to see, the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, the lepers to be cleansed, the demon possessed to be liberated, yea, even the dead to rise. Even as he said, his words have not passed away (Luke 21:33), rather they are loved and honored as the words of God, for indeed the words of our Lord could never have come from the lips of man.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE WORKS OF OUR LORD

We live in a pragmatic age, an age which asks its contemporaries, "What can you do?" and of historical characters—if indeed it looks to the past at all—"What did he do?" The disciples and the Church have ever gloried in the answer to this question, for the works, the miracles of our Lord authenticate and accredit his claim to be the Son of God.

By miracles we mean those events in history, those real, historical events of God's extraordinary providence which are



fully intelligible to men but which are the direct result or effect of the immediate working of God rather than of natural causes. Professor Berkhof quotes this definition in his *Systematic Theology*: "A miracle is something done without recourse to the ordinary means of production, a result called forth directly by the first cause without mediation, at least in the usual way of second causes." By way of illustration, we believe that the record of how Jesus stilled the tempest (Luke 8:22-25), is history rather than allegory or interpolation of tradition. We cannot accept the suggestion that the storm was raging over only a small area and that Jesus told the disciples to row over to the calm area. The eyewitnesses were convinced that the wind and waves obeyed the voice of their sovereign Creator.

It is significant that the miracles of Jesus were believed and attested by many eyewitnesses and that they were accepted as true by the Jerusalem church whose members included those who were well acquainted with the details of the life and works of our Lord. It is also noteworthy that Herod wished to see a miracle performed by Jesus (Luke 23:8). This can only mean that the works of Christ were known even to the Roman governor. It may also be noted that the miracles of our Lord were done instantaneously, excluding the possibility of natural causes, and that none of them can be duplicated today.

In addition to such supernatural events as the virgin birth of our Lord, the supernatural birth of John the baptizer, Christ's passing through the hostile mob at Nazareth, the transfiguration, Christ's knowledge of the thoughts and intents of his enemies, the resurrection, the post-resurrection appearances and the ascension, Luke records at least 22 specific miracles performed by Christ.

It is true that Peter, Paul and other Christians worked miracles, but their miracles were always done in the name of Christ and attributed to him alone. Said Peter to the lame man at the Temple, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 2:5). When questioned about this miracle by the

Jewish Council, Peter declared, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole" (Acts 4:10). To the unclean spirit possessing the maid in Philippi, Paul gave this command, "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her" (Acts 16:18). These quotations from Acts demonstrate both the power of the name of Jesus Christ and that the Apostles regarded themselves as ministers of Jesus of Nazareth, ministering in his name.

These miracles of our Lord, done in his own name, unexplainable on natural grounds, seen by multitudes and recorded by contemporary historians, demonstrate that Jesus Christ was Lord of all realms of life. He who has power over demons, over nature and human nature, and who gives life to the dead can only be the Lord from heaven. He was indeed approved among the Jews by miracles and wonders and signs such as no man could have wrought (Acts 2:22).

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF OUR LORD

The uniqueness of the life and person of our Lord is even more manifest when we consider his life not as a series of isolated miraculous events but in its relations to the whole Christian revelation and history. Christian Theism, the world and life view of the Scriptures, the configuration of redemption, the Old Testament prophecies, types, and revelation as well as the total picture of the gospels and the history of the early church all demand that Christ be the divine, eternal God-man whom Luke presents as our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament promised the coming of a child, a son of David who would also be David's Lord and who would bear such names as Mighty God, Father of Eternity and Prince of Peace. It foretold the reign of the Righteous Branch of David who would be called Jehovah our Righteousness. Moses told that he would spring from the tribe of Judah, Isaiah that he



would be a son of David, Daniel the time of his coming, Micah that he would be born in Bethlehem, Jeremiah that Bethlehem would sorrow on his account, Hosea that his childhood would be spent in Egypt, Isaiah that he would reside in Galilee, Isaiah and Malachi that one like Elijah would herald his coming, Zechariah that he would enter Jerusalem on a colt and be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, Isaiah and Psalms of his atonement by suffering and Psalms that he would rise from the dead. These and many other such prophecies together with the types and sacrifices of the Old Testament all pointed to exactly such a person as Luke presents in his gospel as the divine-human Saviour. Luke's presentation of Christ is congruous to the picture given throughout the Bible, making the whole consistently supernatural.

Throughout Luke there is complete harmony and unity in presenting Jesus Christ as both human and divine. The angel announced to the virgin Mary that her son would be a Saviour, the Son of the Highest. Miraculously born John the Baptist hailed him as "one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose" (Luke 3:16). Throughout his ministry his mighty works, wondrous words, spotless life, miraculous death, resurrection and ascension fairly shout the confession of Peter that he was indeed the Christ of God. Then, the coming of the Holy Spirit according to his promise, the preaching of eyewitnesses, the testimony and power of the early church and the written testimony of contemporary historians all affirm the conviction of the disciples that he was indeed the Lord from heaven.

The virgin birth very strongly implies the deity of our Lord, if, indeed, it does not positively require it. If Christ had been born by ordinary generation the natural conclusion would be that he was an ordinary man. The fact that Luke presents him as the eternal Son of God and as born of a virgin harmonizes perfectly with the whole configuration of God's revelation of redemption. Even the most critical must admit the validity of

Dr. Machen's conclusion that the virgin birth as taught by Luke was an essential element of early Christian faith and that it was so regarded by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian. The fact that it was incorporated in the earliest creeds shows it was accepted by the Church and implies that it had an emphatic place in apostolic preaching.

Our Lord Jesus only, of all men who ever lived on earth, lived without sin. The angel foretold that he would be holy. Now, there were many good men in Bible times, but only of Christ could it be said, "He was holy, he never confessed a sin, he never sighed over a mistake, never shed a tear for a regretted wrong, never grieved over past failures nor bowed his head in shame." His bitterest enemies could find no fault or flaw in his life and Pilate who condemned him to be crucified confessed, "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23:4). Surely such a person was no mere man.

We cannot, with many religious people of our day, call Jesus Christ a good man. If he was only a man he was not good—aut deus, aut non bonus homo—for if our Lord was only human he was a liar, an imposter, a blasphemer and an accomplice to the greatest known system of idolatry. But the life of our Lord as it forms a part of God's revelation makes this impossible. His character testifies that his words are true; his mighty works give his words the authentication of divine approval. The only possible conclusion is that our Lord was the Son of God as he claimed to be and proved by his sinless and miraculous life.

As we have already shown, the miraculous death of our Lord, which came as he voluntarily dismissed his spirit, demonstrated his deity. In the light of the total revelation of redemption is it not significant that Christ only of all the great characters of history is remembered for his death. The first five books of the Bible are either entirely by Moses or about him but only a few verses tell of his death. Nearly half of the New Testament is a record of the work of the Apostle Paul or



from his pen and yet his death is not mentioned at all. The great leaders of the world are universally remembered for their lives but Christ is remembered also for his death, nearly one third of the gospel records dealing with his passion, death and related events. Only the sinless and infinite Son of God could die for the sin of all of God's people and this New Testament emphasis upon his death is wonderfully consistent with the Old Testament promises of a suffering Saviour upon whom God would lay the sin of us all. In view of the unity of scripture, to deny the deity of Christ as proclaimed in the Lukan writings is to deny the whole of divine revelation, much of which is confirmed by secular and church history and remains unexplainable on a naturalistic basis.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF GOD THE FATHER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

The old ecclesiastical maxim "*Abi, Ariane, ad Iordanem et videbis Trinitatem*" refers, of course, to the baptism of our Lord when the Holy Spirit descended upon him and the Father's voice from heaven proclaimed his deity with the words, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). This voice was heard again upon the mountain of transfiguration, saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear him" (Luke 9:22).

In addition to these vocal testimonies to the unique relationship of our Lord to God the Father, the providence of God bears abundant witness to the deity of Christ. Micah foretold the birth in Bethlehem of an eternal ruler, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," and declared of him, "He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God" (Micah 5:3-5). But Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth and surely they would not leave their home just prior to the birth of a child. How then, did it happen that this prophecy was fulfilled and the Messiahship of our Lord thus vindicated? We are convinced that it did not "happen" at all, for the Father who preserves

and governs all his creatures and all their actions by his providence, caused Cæsar Augustus in Rome to issue the enrollment decree which brought about the presence of Mary and Joseph in the city of David at the proper time. The darkness which hid the cross and the rending of the temple veil surely bore unmistakable witness that he who died on Calvary was no ordinary man and that his sacrifice was sufficient for all time, making entrance into the holy of holies by the blood of animals obsolete.

While we attribute the miracles of Christ as well as his creative and redemptive work to his own power, it may be argued that either Jesus was God working in his own power or that God gave him the power with which he worked the many miracles. If the latter alternative be chosen, our Lord's claim of unique Sonship and deity are approved or authenticated by the power which God continued to grant to him.

In a very real sense all Scripture is the testimony of the Holy Spirit and the statements, conclusions and even the very words of the Bible are from him through inspiration. The prophecies fulfilled in the life of Christ are part of his evidential authentication of our Lord as the divine-human Messiah.

In Luke we note that Elizabeth being filled with the Holy Spirit, i.e., being completely controlled by the Holy Spirit, called Mary the mother of her Lord (*tou kyriou mou*) (Luke 1:43), a most extraordinary assertion for an elderly Jewish woman of position to make concerning the unborn child of a younger cousin from Nazareth. Zacharias, when filled by the Spirit, declared that John would be the forerunner of the Lord (Luke 1:76). The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would see the Lord's Christ before his death. When the infant Jesus was brought to the temple he blessed him and uttered the *Nunc Dimittis* (Luke 2:25-32). In Acts the Holy Spirit bore witness to Jesus Christ by coming in fulness according to his promise and in granting power to those who proclaimed his resurrection, deity and salvation. Though the



Holy Spirit never spoke except through those whom he controlled or inspired, his invariable testimony has been that Jesus Christ was indeed the Lord from heaven, eternally one with the Father and the Spirit.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF ANGELS

Nothing could be more final than the testimony of God the Father and the Holy Spirit to the deity of Christ, but we shall also consider the Christology of the angels, those ministers of God who dwell in his presence and do his pleasure, for surely they know and speak the truth. The angel Gabriel, in his appearance to Zacharias, revealed to him that his son John would be the herald of the Lord, the one who prepared the people for the coming of the Lord (Kyrios in Luke 1:16-17 and Jehovah in the corresponding prophetic passage, Isa. 40:3-4). Here Gabriel twice speaks of the unborn Jesus as the Lord—he who is our Lord and Saviour is also the Lord of the great angel Gabriel who stands in the presence of God. To Mary Gabriel declared that her son would also be the Son of the Highest, that he would be called Jesus, that he would reign forever over an endless kingdom, that he would be holy, and that he would be the Son of God. Gabriel's salutation to Mary reveals that in his mind the coming of Jesus is a most significant event and that he thinks Mary highly honored to be his mother (Luke 1:26-38). When the angels appeared to the shepherds they announced that the one born in Bethlehem was a Saviour, Christ the Lord. At Christ's birth the angels called Him Lord and praised God (Luke 2:8-15).

As the Saviour prayed in the garden before his arrest an angel came to strengthen him (Luke 22:43), and after his resurrection angels told those who came early to the tomb that he was alive (Luke 24:4-23). In these passages the angels are presented as ministers of the Lord Jesus, foretelling his birth, announcing his advent, ministering to him and proclaiming his resurrection; they call him Lord and thus proclaim that he

is greater and higher than they, higher even than Gabriel himself.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE ENEMIES OF OUR LORD

The enemies of our Lord at one time or another conceded nearly every claim made about him by his disciples and friends. The Devil admitted the deity of our Lord when he tempted him to turn stones into bread, to jump from the pinnacle of the temple, and to worship him to receive the kingdoms of this world, for surely such temptations could be real only to one possessing the power of the Creator. The demons which Jesus cast out loudly proclaimed his deity in such words as, "I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God" (Luke 4:34-41 and 8:28).

The enemies of Jesus, the scribes, Pharisees and chief priests, murmured because he forgave sins (Luke 5:21), they were angry because he healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath (Luke 6:6-11), they accused him of casting out devils through Beelzebub the prince of the devils (Luke 11:15), they were indignant because on the Sabbath he healed a woman who for 18 years had been infirm (Luke 13:14), they demanded to know by what authority he did his mighty works (Luke 20:2), and on the cross they derided him by saying, "He saved others; let him save himself" (Luke 23:35). Pilate, after listening to all the evidence against Jesus, declared, "I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him" (Luke 23:14), and the centurion who had been detailed to carry out the execution declared, "Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47). While these men would not admit the deity of our Lord they were forced to recognize his mighty works and his sinless life. Their opposition to him and to his disciples in Acts showed plainly that they were opposing what they knew to be the truth and that no amount of evidence would turn their hearts to him whom even the devils acknowledged to be the Son of God.



## THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

We have already considered the supernatural birth of John in connection with the words of the angels. We have seen that John was the herald of Jehovah promised by Isaiah and noted that Zacharias, when filled with the Spirit, predicted that his son would go before the Lord, preparing his way. Zacharias also bore testimony to the deity of Christ when he named him the dayspring from on high (Luke 1:78).

John's testimony to the greatness and deity of Christ was most emphatic and specific. Said he, "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Luke 3:16). John here presents our Lord as one far greater than man and unmistakably ascribes deity to him in promising that he will baptize with the Holy Ghost for only a member of the Godhead could baptize with the Holy Spirit. John also bore witness to the deity of Jesus Christ by presenting him as the judge of men, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable" (Luke 3:17). Only one with the knowledge and power of God could make and execute such judgment.

Nor does John's question from the prison invalidate his earlier testimony. It would be natural for such a stern son of the desert to come to doubt in a dungeon even as the first Elijah became faint-hearted, fled the country and sat in discouragement under the juniper tree. Then, too, we must remember that John was a prophet of the old dispensation, without the light of the New Testament, and that he probably could not understand how the same Messiah could be both a suffering servant and a glorious ruler. Jesus' answer to John vindicates his Messiahship to us as it did to the imprisoned prophet in Machærus.

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE ORAL GOSPEL

Most conclusive is the testimony of the Oral Gospel in Acts to the deity of Christ, the witness of Peter, Stephen, Paul and the other early Christians who were at most only a few years removed from the life of our Lord. First we shall consider the preaching of Peter, the disciple who had worshipped the Lord and declared his deity even before the crucifixion (Luke 5:8 and 9:20). Peter was so overwhelmingly convinced of the Messiahship and deity of the Lord after his post-resurrection appearances and the coming of the Holy Spirit that neither his past failures nor the threats of the Jewish Council could daunt his courage or change his message. Whatever our other conclusions may be, we must all admit that Peter was an eyewitness to all the evidence and that he was thoroughly convinced that Jesus was the Son of God. Men do not so risk their lives and their honor for less than the strongest convictions.

In his sermon on the day of Pentecost Peter declared to the Jews that Jesus was approved by his well known miracles, wonders and signs, that the disciples were all witnesses of the resurrection, that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Holy One and the Lord of David, that he had been by the right hand of God exalted and that God had made him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:22-36). He commanded the lame man at the temple to rise up and walk in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and when a crowd gathered to see this wonder he solemnly declared that the lame man had been made strong by faith in the Holy One and the Just, the crucified Prince of Life, that the resurrection was the fulfillment of prophecy and that God had raised up his Son (Acts 3:1-16). Before the angry Council he gave this testimony, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole" (Acts 4:10), and then he warned them that there was no salvation except in Christ, that "There is none other name



under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

When brought before the Council after being released from prison by an angel, Peter witnessed of Christ, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31). At Lydda Peter healed the palsied Eneas with the words, "Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise and make thy bed" (Acts 9:34). To the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius Peter preached that Jesus was ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead and that there was remission of sins for those who believed in him (Acts 10:42-43). The Christology of Peter was the highest—those closest to Jesus had no doubts of his deity.

The very fact that Saul of Tarsus, the bitter enemy of Christ and the church, became a Christian is significant; the fact that he prayed to Jesus (Acts 22:17-21) is most significant; the fact that he explicitly refers to Jesus as God (Theos in Acts 20:28) is conclusive proof that Paul was thoroughly convinced of the deity of Christ. Paul regularly spoke of Jesus as the Lord (Kyrios). Being a Pharisee and knowing the LXX almost by heart, he would certainly apply Kyrios to God only.

Paul believed in the deity of Christ primarily because the risen Christ appeared to him in glory on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-19). After his sight was restored and he had been baptized, Luke tells us that "Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" and that this same Jesus was the Christ (Acts 9:20-22). In Antioch he preached the saviourhood of Christ and the resurrection, proved from the Psalms that Jesus was the Son of God, the Holy One, and proclaimed forgiveness of sins and justification by belief in him (Acts 13:23-29). At Philippi Paul cast out a demon in the name of Christ and promised salvation to the jailer and his house if they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:16-31). In Athens he proclaimed to the Greeks the resurrection

of Christ and declared that the resurrected one would be the judge of the world (Acts 17:31).

If any man on earth knew all the evidence against the deity of Christ and his resurrection which the Sanhedrin could find or invent, it was Saul of Tarsus. Saul became Paul the Apostle and declared to all the Roman world that he had seen the risen glorified Lord Jesus and that he was indeed the Son of God.

Stephen the first martyr testified eloquently to the deity of Christ, calling him the Just One and declaring that he saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. As he was dying his last prayer included this petition to Christ, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). In death men pray only to God himself. The life and words of Stephen can only be interpreted to mean that he, like Peter and Paul, was assured of the deity and reality of the living Lord Jesus.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

So sure were the early Christians that Christ had arisen and that he was indeed the Lord and Saviour that they gave their lives to proclaim his saving grace. Those who were unwilling to believe until convinced by the appearance of the resurrected Christ were very sure of his resurrection, salvation and deity that they gave up everything earthly to tell the good news of the Lord ascended to heaven. It is not possible to explain the power, growth and vital assurance of the deity of Christ in the early church in a naturalistic frame. No legend would have given such boldness to scared Peter, no myth would have convinced the scholarly Paul, no dream would have given such steadfastness to Stephen or changed the frightened disciples to flaming evangelists.

The early church prayed to Jesus (Acts 2:4; 6:59-60), baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:4-5) and proclaimed his resurrection and deity throughout the Roman world, as has been shown in the consideration of the Oral Gospel. Those who knew and saw and were close to Jesus believed and



declared in life and in death that Jesus Christ was indeed the Son of God.

#### CONCLUSION

Who then is Jesus Christ? The names and titles ascribed to him declare his deity; his words show his consciousness of oneness with the Father; his works, done in his own name, demonstrate that he is the Lord of nature, human nature, demons and death; the miraculous and sinless life of our Lord as it integrates the configuration of redemption shows that he cannot be mere man; God the Father, the Holy Spirit, the angels and even the devils declare his deity; his enemies concede the claims of his friends; John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, Stephen, yea, the entire body of early Christians, hundreds of whom had seen the risen Lord, declare that he is the Son of God, the Lord of all, worthy of worship and service. The gospel records can no longer be considered late second century documents of questionable value and accuracy. The writings of Luke are proved to be historical documents of the highest degree of accuracy. We are convinced that they are inspired of God and that he whom they hail as the Saviour is indeed the Christ of God.

V

THE WITNESS OF JOHN

by

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## V

### THE WITNESS OF JOHN

FUNDAMENTAL to a minimum comprehension of Christian truth is a recognition of the Deity of Jesus Christ. There can be no true and adequate evaluation of Christianity without the proper appraisal of the Person of the Saviour. It has been said that the watermark of the New Testament is the deity of Jesus Christ. Indeed it is more than that: it is the specific theme of large sections of the New Testament and the great presupposition of all New Testament teaching. Further, it is the supreme truth which integrates the Old Testament with the New and gives the Written Word the Living Word as its unifying and transcendent theme.

While the Synoptic Gospels give us just as graphic, specific, and concrete presentations of the deity of Christ, the Fourth Gospel gives us the most extended handling of this vital truth. However, before we begin to investigate the great amount of material relating to Christ's deity in this Gospel, we should do well to test, at least briefly, the strength of critical opinion against the Johannine Gospel. "For if the foundations be shaken, where shall the righteous stand?" We hardly need indicate that there is a fairly contemporary accumulation of critical opinion against the authority of the Fourth Gospel. A rapid review of the writings of the "critical" scholars will suffice to persuade the most benign that there is a need for maintaining a strong apologetic for the conservative position in this particular area of Biblical study.

Listen to the following asseveration of the German critic Schmiedel: "There is a positive relief from an intolerable bur-

den as soon as the student has made up his mind to give up any such theory as that of the genuineness of the Gospel, as also of its authenticity in the sense of its being the work of any eye-witness who meant to record actual history."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Plummer, a conservative critic, says: "The fourth Gospel is the battlefield of the New Testament, as the Book of Daniel is of the Old: the genuineness of both probably always will remain a controversy."<sup>2</sup> Another prominent conservative New Testament scholar is not to be charged with over-statement in saying: "Inasmuch as most writers hold today that in John we have the result of the reflection of the Church on the facts contained in the Synoptics at the beginning of the second century, we do well to investigate afresh the true status of the Fourth Gospel."<sup>3</sup>

While it is beyond the scope of this paper to follow this recommendation to the extent of giving a comprehensive presentation of all the considerations involved, we should do well to list in summary fashion some of the strong supporting evidences of the traditional view.

*Attestation and Authorship* — The early date and Apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel may be looked at from the standpoints of (1) External evidence and (2) Internal evidence. With regard to (1) the External evidence, we may say it is as strong in the direction of the above as that for any Book in the New Testament.<sup>4</sup> There are but two objections in this section of the argument, (a) the silence of the Apostolic fathers, (b) its rejection by Marcion, the Alogoi and possibly another sect. (a) The silence of the Apostolic Fathers. We answer, if such a silence could be proved it would well be explained on the basis of the consideration that the Fourth Gospel was written some considerable years after the others. They would

1. *Encyclopedia Biblica* ii 2554.

2. A. Plummer, *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*: "St. John" p. 18.

3. Thiessen, H. C. *Introduction to the New Testament* p. 162.

4. *Idem*.



likely have nothing to indicate that another Gospel was forthcoming. However, it is plain there is not silence on the part of the Apostolic Fathers. The Epistle of Barnabas (A.D. 120-130) contains a very probable reference to John 1:14. Klein, while not admitting that the Apostle John wrote it, is persuaded that this allusion to the Fourth Gospel is plain. Plummer says: "The shorter Greek form of the Ignatian Epistles (c. A.D. 115) contains allusions to it, which cannot seriously be considered doubtful."<sup>5</sup> Others, such as Polycarp (A.D. 150), Papias (A.D. 150), Basilides (A.D. 115), and Justin Martyr (A.D. 150), obviously refer to either the epistle or the Fourth Gospel, which are unquestionably by the same hand. From Irenæus (A.D. 170) the evidence immediately becomes abundant. There are a great host of witnesses which treat the Fourth Gospel as a universally acknowledged fact. (b) The rejection of the Fourth Gospel by Marcion and some obscure sects, is of no real importance. It is apparent that the objections were on doctrinal, rather than on critical grounds. This is certainly true in the case of Marcion and very likely in the other cases. The Alogoi of whom Irenæus speaks, may have rejected it because they possibly confused its Logos teaching with the heretical views of the Gnostic Cerinthus who used the Logos concept with vastly different connotation from that of John the Apostle.

Indeed the presence of some objections from isolated quarters confirms, rather than militates against, the broad general recognition of the genuineness of this Gospel. Certainly it is impossible to believe that this Gospel suddenly came to the place of popularity and prestige which it unquestionably enjoys from A.D. 170 onward. It is much more conceivable to believe that it was universally received long before this date and at this time enjoyed complete and final victory over suspicions hitherto voiced concerning it.

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5. Plummer, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

(2) Now turning to the Internal evidence supporting the early date and Apostolic authorship of this Book, we find that it supports the external. This is of two kinds: (a) direct, and (b) indirect.

(a) The direct evidence is the plain claim that the author was an apostle as well as an eye witness of the things concerning which he wrote (cp. John 21:24, 21:20). The denial of this evidence leaves us with the alternative of an imposter as the author. Therefore it is of importance to discern whether or not the (b) internal evidence supports the direct evidence in its testimony that the writer was an apostle and an eye witness. We note that he was:

1. A Jew—his precise and elaborate handling of the Old Testament teachings and contemporary Jewish customs renders this designation irrefutable—(e.g. 12:40, 13:18, 19:37, 2:13, 6:4, 7:37, etc.).
2. A Palestinian Jew—many of his statements point to a Palestinian home. His remarks include intricate details as to terrain, geography, customs, buildings, cities, etc. (e.g. 4:11, 5:12, 12:21, 11:1, 18; 18:1, etc.).
3. A contemporary of the Persons and the Events narrated. He speaks of the chief priests and Pharisees, not the Sadducees and Pharisees, knowing that the Sadducees held the office of chief priest in that day (11:47-53). The writer was known to the high priest and went into the high priest's palace with Jesus (13:15). He alone tells us that it was the high priest's servant Malchus whose ear Peter cut off (18:10). The controversies with which he deals are not those of the second century when the Gnostic and Ebionite heresies were rampant, but those which were common among the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem when they still looked for a Deliverer from the yoke of Rome (6:15, 11:47-50). The violation of the Sabbath was not of



such importance in the second century as in the first (5:9-11, 9:14-16).<sup>6</sup>

4. An Apostle—his knowledge of the thoughts of the disciples is too intimate for a fictional writer (2:11, 17, 22; 4:27; 6:19, 60; 12:16; 13:22, 28; 20:9; 21:12). He knows the private conversations between Christ and His disciples and among themselves (4:31, 33; 9:2; 11:8, 12, 16; 16:17, 29). He is acquainted with the haunts of the disciples (11:54; 18:2; 20:19). He is very close to the Lord, and sets forth His motives (2:24, 25; 4:1-3; 5:6; 6:6, 15; 7:1; 13:1, 3, 11; 16:19; 18:4; 19:28) as well as His feelings (11:33, 38; 13:21).
5. The Apostle John—from the Synoptics we know that three disciples were specially intimate with Jesus: Peter, James and his brother John. Neither Peter nor James could be the Author because of its later date, after the martyrdom of each. Moreover, the style is far from that of Peter's First Epistle.

Again, the writer was "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He is so referred to in three other places. He is close to Peter, as was the John of the Synoptics and of Acts.

Finally, while the Fourth Evangelist is careful to distinguish both places and persons (2:1; 11:18; 1:44; 6:71; 12:4), invariably describing the other disciples with minute precision, yet he neglects a distinction which the Synoptists make. They distinguish John the son of Zebedee from John the Baptist. This distinction the Fourth Evangelist does not make. He simply calls the Baptist, John. He need not make further distinction to save confusion when he himself is the other John.<sup>7</sup>

Such evidence we believe sufficient to attest the Apostolic authorship and hence the canonicity of this Gospel. We could

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6. See Thiessen, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 169.

7. Plummer, A., *John's Gospel*, *Cambridge Bible*, pp. 29, 30.

indeed greatly multiply supporting data as well as *ad hominem* argumentation. For those who would investigate a more thorough discussion of the introductory material we recommend Zahn's Introduction to the New Testament, the monumental work of Dr. Sanday,<sup>8</sup> or any of the other scholarly works upholding the above views.

Neither do we deem it expedient to the purpose of this presentation to go into detail concerning the date of the writing of the Fourth Gospel, except to say that it is the general conclusion of most conservative scholars that it was written at Ephesus between A.D. 80-95.

Having thus attested the canonicity of John's Gospel and finding it a highly acceptable document, yea verily, an integral part of the Word of God, we are now prepared to move forward into a study of what this document has to declare concerning the person of Christ. While our own convictions are established concerning the deity of our Lord, unfortunately such is not the conclusion of all who labor in the field of Christian scholarship. We have appraisals of His Person all the way from the radical humanistic conceptions presented by Schweitzer<sup>9</sup> to the semi-Arian view of Millar Burrows of Yale, who while admitting that the Scriptures present Christ as King, Son of God, Logos, Saviour, and Redeemer, says: "The New Testament, however, never quite puts Christ in the place of God. Jesus is moved by the Spirit of God, he is the Son of God, God is in him, and he is in God, he is the incarnation of the eternal, divine Logos, the radiation of God's glory and the imprint of his very substance, the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, sharing titles and attributes with God, reigning with Him, being addressed in prayer with Him, being even called 'my Lord and my God' and perhaps 'our God and

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8. Wm. Sanday, *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*.

9. Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*.



Saviour, Jesus Christ.' Yet he is never identified with God, but always remains a distinct person."<sup>10</sup>

We believe what Burrows denies concerning the Person of Christ is in reality set forth in the very things he admits. We are convinced that the New Testament specifically teaches that Christ is God manifest in the flesh and that the Fourth Gospel adds its testimony to that of the Synoptics, the Epistles and the Apocalypse in the presentation of this great truth.

Moving into our assigned field of study, we observe with Torrey that there are "five distinctly divine attributes."<sup>11</sup> These are eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, and immutability. Do we discern these attributes in Christ as He is presented to us in John's Gospel? Examination quickly reveals such to be the case.

Christ is eternal. Dr. Walvoord remarks: "The incarnate Christ is unexplainable, apart from eternal Deity. The introduction to the Gospel of John has no other justifiable explanation than a statement of His eternity: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made.' The phrase 'in the beginning' (en arche) probably in itself is a reference to a point in time in eternity past beyond which it is impossible to go, as Dörner interprets it."<sup>12</sup> In any case, the verb "was" (en) is explicit.<sup>13</sup> Dods remarks: "The Logos did not then begin to be, but at that point at which all else began He already was."<sup>14</sup>

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10. Millar Burrows, *Outline of Biblical Theology*, p. 112.

11. R. A. Torrey, *Fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Faith*, p. 79.

12. "The Pre-incarnate Son of God", art. in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Jan.-Mar., 1947, vol. 104, p. 32.

13. cf. A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* pp. 309, 310.

14. Marcus Dods "The Gospel of St. John", *Expositors' Greek Testament* p. 683.

John the Baptist, whose physical birth pre-dated that of the Saviour, testifies: "This was He of whom I said, He that cometh after me, is become before me: for He was before me."<sup>15</sup> Again, our Lord Himself testified to this truth when He said: "Before Abraham was born (genesthai) I am (eimi)."<sup>16</sup> The profound implications of His statement were plain to the Jews, who evidenced their understanding by attempting to stone Him. Even more conclusive in this direction are His intimate words of petition to His Father, in John 17:5, "And now, Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." Again, in verse 24 of the same chapter, he prays: "Father, I desire that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world." In the latter, not only does He affirm His pre-existence, but also anticipates His post-existence. Thiessen remarks, "Inasmuch as He is eternal, He is also self-existent."<sup>17</sup> This supposition is well supported by Scripture itself: In John 1:4 we read, "In Him (Logos) was life; and the life was the light of men"; in John 5:26, "for as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself."

Christ is omnipresent. This is plainly invoked in His words to Nicodemus, in the course of that memorable nocturnal interview: "And no one hath ascended into Heaven, but He that descended out of Heaven, even the Son of Man, Who is in Heaven."<sup>18</sup> He was in Heaven while on earth. Matt. 18:20 and Matt. 28:20 indicate the converse truth, He is on earth while He is in Heaven.

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15. John 1:15 (R.V.).

16. John 8:58 (R.V.).

17. H. C. Thiessen, *An Outline of Lectures in Systematic Theology*, p. 63.

18. John 3:13 (R.V.).



Christ is omniscient. It was his supernatural knowledge of Nathanael's presence under the fig-tree before Philip called him, which drew from Nathanael the confession, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."<sup>19</sup> It was His supernatural knowledge of the Samaritan woman which drew from her the acknowledgment, "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet";<sup>20</sup> and, later, the public testimonial to her fellow-citizens, "Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"<sup>21</sup>

He foreknew the time and manner of His exit from this world (John 12:33, 13:1). He knew who would betray Him (John 13:26). He knew the Father (John 7:29; 10:15).

Christ is omnipotent. He had power over nature (John 2:11). He had power over the elements (John 6:18, 19). He had power over death (John 11:43, 44). He had power over the incurable bodily afflictions (John 9:6 f.). Some may object saying that Christ did perform these miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit, as did the prophets of old. However, it may first be remarked that His miracles greatly outnumber those of any particular prophet. He performed a multitude of miracles in a relatively short period of time. Secondly, He Himself cites these demonstrations of His omnipotence as proof of His deity. (John 5:36, cp. 20:30, 31).

Christ is immutable. This is true of His plans, His promises and His Person. Scripture references are too numerous to mention in this connection. Thus we see from the Fourth Gospel that Christ is in full possession of the "five distinctively divine attributes."

The second great consideration which confronts us with reference to the deity of Christ in the Gospel of John is the fact that divine offices and prerogatives belong to Him. First of all, He is the Creator of all things. This takes us back once again

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19. John 1:48, 49.

20. John 4:17.

21. John 4:29.

to the first chapter of John's Gospel, wherein we read that, "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."<sup>22</sup> In John 1:10 we read, "the world was made by Him." Secondly, He is the sustainer of all things. This is explicitly set forth in other sections of Scripture, but the statement of John 1:4, "in Him was life and the life was the light of men," seems to carry with it the subjection of His common sustaining grace. Thirdly, He forgives sins. This prerogative none of His disciples, not even Peter, claimed to possess (cp. John 20: 23 with I John 1:9; Acts 8:20, 22). John the Baptist bore witness to Him as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." It may be indicated at this point that the descriptive figure, the "Lamb of God," which harks back to the Old Testament sacrifices, also looks forward to the highest presentation of Christ found in the Book of Revelation, where we see the "Lamb of God" repeatedly referred to as the supreme personality in the midst of the throne, receiving the worship and the adoration of the redeemed out of every tribe and tongue and nation (Rev. 5:8, 9, 12; 6:1; 7:9, 14-17). Fourthly, He will raise the dead. In John 6:39 we read, "and this is the Father's will . . . of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day." (See also John 6:40, 54; 11:25.) Finally, Christ will execute judgment. In John 5:27 we read that the Father "hath given Him authority to execute judgment also because He is the Son of Man." In John's Gospel we behold the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"; but over in the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John we again behold the Lamb not only in the highest position of glory but also depicted as the One who visits wrath and judgment upon the unrighteous of this world (Rev. 6:15-17). In John 5:22 our Lord is very specific in His right to this authority, declaring "the Father judgeth no man, but hath

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22. John 1:10-22.



committed all judgment unto the Son." Thus we see that Jesus assumes divine offices and divine prerogatives.

The third major consideration is that things said of Jehovah and Elohim in the Old Testament are also said of Christ in the New. The parallelism between Genesis and John is so suggestive in this direction that comment is almost superfluous. In Genesis 1:1 we read: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." John 1:1-3 informs us: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made." Reynolds says "from early times expositors have perceived that the evangelist essayed here a comparison with the (en arche) 'in the beginning' of the first verse of the Book of Genesis. This can hardly be doubted."<sup>23</sup> It is patent that John is desirous of removing every iota of ambiguity by identifying the Logos as the Creator of all things.

Again, Christ is described in John 12:41 as the One seen by Isaiah who in Isaiah 6:1 says, "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple." Once more Isaiah speaks of the forerunner of Jehovah as the "voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God'" (Isa. 40:3). This very verse is applied to John the Baptist as the forerunner of Christ (John 1:23).

Yet again it is patent from many other sections of the Gospels that our Lord endorsed the utterances of the Samaritans who testified, "We . . . know that this is indeed the Christ the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42). It is abundantly plain from the Old Testament that such a designation belongs only to Jehovah-God. Hosea 13:4 declares, "I am the Lord thy

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23. H. R. Reynolds, "The Gospel According to St. John", *The Pulpit Commentary*, p. 4.

God . . . thou shalt know no God but Me: for there is no Saviour beside Me."

Finally, Christ is presented as the effulgence of God's glory. Old Testament references which identify Jehovah as "the glory" are too numerous to refer to. Several passages in John's Gospel (1:14; 2:11; 12:41; 17:5, 22, 24) reveal that the writer of the Fourth Gospel regarded, along with the other New Testament writers, our Lord as "the Glory of God, the Shekinah: God manifest to men."<sup>24</sup> "Glory is the most distinctively characterizing quality of the God of the Old Testament as it is the most frequent accompaniment of the Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament."<sup>25</sup>

In the fourth place, names of Deity are given to him, as well as names which imply Deity. He is called "Lord." Thomas, upon beholding Him after His resurrection, exclaims, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). John, seeing Him on the shore, remarks, "It is the Lord!" (John 21:7). We have already referred to John's inspired interpretation (John 12:4) of Isaiah 6:1, wherein he equates "the Lord" of Isaiah's vision with Christ. This identification is repeatedly presented in other sections of the New Testament. "The identification of our Lord Jesus Christ with the Lord of the Old Testament results in an explicit doctrine of His Deity."<sup>26</sup>

He is called the "Son of God". He is so designated by John the Baptist at His manifestation (John 1:34), by Nathaniel (John 1:49), by Peter (John 6:69), by Martha (John 11:27), by John the Evangelist (John 20:31), and by Christ Himself by direct statement as in John 3:16; 10:36; 11:4; by implica-

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24. Warfield, B. B., *The Lord of Glory; Christology and Criticism*, p. 265.

25. Robinson, W. C., *Our Lord, an Affirmation of the Deity of Christ*, p. 115 (1949 ed.).

26. *Ibid.*, p. 147.



tion in the passages where He speaks of "My Father"—eg. John 10:29, 30; 15:8, etc.)

It may be objected that this term refers in Scripture to angels, to men, to the Jewish nation as a whole, to the Jewish Kings and to all saints. However, it is plain that it carried with it a much higher connotation in its application to Christ, both in His own use of it and in the Jewish understanding of His use of it. Our Lord did not frequently use this term in public utterance. When He did use it, it was in private interview; or when He was challenged by His enemy to assent to it, He did so. The instances of the latter are indeed significant. Twice in John's Gospel does the discussion of His right to this title come up. Each issues in reactions so cataclysmic as to convey the tremendous import of this term to the Jewish mind. First, in John 10, He is challenged by the Jews, "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." He answers with a statement, concluding with the pronouncement "I and My Father are One." The Jews take up stones to cast at Him. He asks them on what basis they do so, and they reply, "Because thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Here was a golden opportunity for an Arian Christ to have quietly neutralized the hate-charged atmosphere with a few well-chosen words explaining that He was not claiming to be God. But, this is no Arian Christ who stands before the multitude. This is no purely humanistic Jesus who is about to answer. Instead of explaining Himself out of their indictment, He takes up their indictment and referring to an Old Testament passage which applies the term "gods" to men, He reveals the contrast between that very general use of the term "gods" (i.e. "those unto whom the Word of God came"), and the unique use of that term when it applied "to Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world." That the Jews understood His unqualified claim to deity is evinced in their immediate resumption of the attempt to stone Him.

The second discussion is even more significant. This time He is on trial for His life before the Jewish Sanhedrin. Only

the result of this trial is recorded in John's Gospel. The priests have brought Him to Caesar with the following verdict. "We have a law and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John 19:7). While the recommendation was wrong, their accusation was right. Matt. 26:63-66 gives us a very vivid description of the trial itself which wound up with the accusation of blasphemy and the recommendation of death when Christ answered in the affirmative to the high-priest's challenge: "I adjure thee by the high God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." (Matt. 26:63) Therefore we conclude that His disciples and His enemies understand from their Jewish background that the real import of the term "Son of God" was Deity.<sup>27</sup>

Thiessen indicates at this point "that in Scripture the term 'son' does not necessarily denote *descent* from another (cf: 'sons of thunder,' Mark 3:17; 'sons of Abraham,' Gal. 3:7, A.S.V.; David is called 'son' of Saul, I Sam. 24:16; 26:17, and 'son' of Nabal, I Sam. 25:8). We must note also the fact that the Father calls Him His 'Son' (Ps. 2:7; Matt. 3:17; Heb. 1:2, 8). He is the Father's Son by eternal generation (Ps. 2:7; Heb. 1:5)."<sup>28</sup>

Again, Christ is called the Son of Man. This was obviously His favorite self-designation. It occurs in Matthew thirty-two times, in Mark fifteen times, in Luke twenty-five times, and in John twelve times.<sup>29</sup>

This phrase has been speciously interpreted as being only descriptive of Christ's humanity. However, it has been pointed out: "Critics of all schools have come to recognize that the Son of Man is the figure seen in Daniel 7:13, and in the Parables of Enoch. In these passages, as in the Gospels, He is always a super-mundane figure. He pre-exists under the pinions of the Lord of Spirit and descends out of

27. See Stalker, *The Christology of Jesus*, for a fuller statement.

28. Thiessen, *Outlines of Lectures in Systematic Theology*, p. 64.

29. Stalker, *op. cit.*, p. 46.



heaven, as is expressly taught in John 3:13; 6:63. Case recognizes this when, from his naturalistic point of view, he asserts that Jesus could not have identified Himself with the Son of Man, because the Son of Man is too lofty a figure to be identified with a mere man. Vos says nothing else in the Gospels has so stamped the supernatural and the super-human upon the selfportrayal of Jesus as these parousia Son-of-man passages."

Once more He is described in the Fourth Gospel as the Logos. Many have been the attempts to read into this term Graeco-Jewish philosophical concepts and give it a connotation far removed from that intended by John. Whatever the deviation of the term, its *usus loquendi*, so far as the writer was concerned, connoted Deity. If it lacked such a connotation, John gave it such meaning in his opening remarks: "In the beginning was the Logos and the Logos was with God and *the Logos was God.*" (John 1:1). This term "Logos (translated the "Word") is worthy of investigation. Plummer comments, "The expression 'Logos' is a remarkable one; all the more so, because St. John assumes that his readers will at once understand it. This shows that his Gospel was written in the first instance for his own disciples, who would be familiar with his teaching and phraseology.

"Whence did St. John derive the expression, Logos? It has its origin in the Targums, or paraphrases of the Hebrew Scriptures, in use in Palestine, rather than in the mixture of Jewish and Greek philosophy prevalent at Alexandria and Ephesus, as is very commonly asserted."<sup>31</sup> It should be indicated (1) that we find God personified, usually as an instrument for executing the Divine Will. (Ps. 33:6; 107:20; 119:89; 147:15; Prov. 8:9, etc.) (2) That in the Apocrypha the personification is more complete than in the Old Testa-

30. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

31. Plummer, A., "John's Gospel", *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, p. 60.

ment (Ecclesiasticus 1:1-20; 24:1-22; Wisdom 6:22; 9:18; 18) (3) That in the Targums, the Aramaic paraphrases of the Old Testament, the development is carried still further. These, in oral form were well known to the Jews of the first century. The Targums interestingly and significantly enough substituted the Memra or "Word of God", where the Scriptures speak of direct communication from God to man. Contrasting this with the Graeco-Judaic Logos concept of Philo, we discern tremendous differences. The Logos of Philo is pre-eminently the Divine Reason and is impersonal. The Memra of the Targum is rather the Divine Word; i.e., the Will of God, revealed in personal action. Hence it becomes transparently clear from whence John drew his Logos concept. Plummer summarizes: "The personification of the Divine Word in O.T. is poetical, in Philo metaphysical, in St. John historical. The Apocrypha and Targums help to fill the chasm between O.T. and Philo; history itself fills the far greater chasm which separates all from St. John. Between Jewish poetry and Alexandrine speculation on the one hand, and the Fourth Gospel on the other, lies the historical fact of the incarnation of the Logos, the life of Jesus Christ.

"The Logos of St. John, therefore, is not a mere attribute of God, but the Son of God, existing from all eternity, and manifested in space and time in the person of Jesus Christ. In the Logos had been hidden from eternity all that God had to say to man; for the Logos was the living expression of the nature, purposes, and will of God. (Comp. the impersonal designation of Christ in I John 1:1.) Human thought had been searching in vain for some means of connecting the finite with the Infinite, of making God intelligible to man and leading man up to God. St. John knew that he possessed the key to this enigma. He therefore took the phrase which human reason had lighted on in its gropings, stripped it of its misleading associations, fixed it by identifying it with the Christ, and filled



it with that fullness of meaning which he himself had derived from Christ's own teaching."<sup>32</sup>

He uses the Jehovistic "I Am", in self-reference, as we have already indicated (John 8:24; 8:58; 18:6).

Most important of all is the fact that Christ is expressly called "God"—John 1:1 is very emphatic, in the Greek. It reads: "And God was the Word." The omission of the article before "Theos" indicates that God is the predicate. There is no question to be answered as to Who God is, but rather as to Who the Logos is.<sup>33</sup> Placing "Theos" at the beginning of the clause throws a tremendous emphasis upon it.

Again, John 1:18, according to the modern critical texts, should be translated, "the only begotten God."<sup>34</sup> Thus, He is not only the only begotten Son (John 3:16) but also the only begotten God.

In John 20:38, we have Thomas' great confession, "My Lord and My God". Robertson strongly contends that these substantives are in the vocative case, thus referring them to the Person of the resurrected Christ.<sup>35</sup> Strong also points out: "Since it (the confession) was unrebuked by Christ, it is equivalent to an expression, on His own part, of his claim to Deity."<sup>36</sup> John's testimony is the same in his epistle as in his Gospel, for he writes, in I John 5:20: "We are in Him that is true even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

The term "Messiah", which appears twice in John's Gospel (John 1:41 and 4:25) may also be included under those terms which connote Deity. The term, according to Cruden, means, literally, "the Anointed One" . . . the expected King and deliverer of the Hebrews who should free them from the yoke

32. Ibid. p. 61-62.

33. cf. Thiessen, *Outline of Lectures in Systematic Theology*, *op. cit.* p. 64 and Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

34. Plummer, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

35. Robertson, A. T., "Grammar of the Greek N. T.", p. 466.

36. Strong, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

of aliens and make them a great nation ruling over the whole world. Christ is the same word in the Greek. Jesus of Nazareth, believed by His followers to be this long-promised Messiah of the Jews, is for that reason called Christ. The first promise of the Messiah, although not using that name, is that to Eve, in Genesis 3:15. The same promise was, in varying phraseology, repeated to many individuals, through the ages, notably to Abraham and David."<sup>37</sup> It would require an exhaustive study to trace all the Messianic references to the Messiah in the Old Testament, but it would very emphatically bring before us the realization that this coming King, this Anointed One, possessed the escutcheon of Deity.

Our fifth major consideration is the fact that Christ sustains certain relations to God that prove His Deity. John displays adequate recognition of the Triadic formula at various points in his Gospel; particularly in his interview with Nicodemus (John 3:1-17), the farewell discourses (John 14-16), and in the Gospel of the forty days (John 20:21-22). "With the greatest possible emphasis Jesus asserts His own oneness with the Father and then immediately promises to make request of the Father that He may give the disciples another Advocate. In this case (14, 16) the Father sends the Advocate; in the next (15, 26) Jesus, the Son, sends Him. The Advocate is so personal that He may take the Saviour's place and bear witness to Him. It is expedient that Jesus go away, that the Advocate may come. And yet, in another sense, Jesus rather comes in the Advocate's coming; indeed, in His coming, both the Father and the Son ("We") come to abide in the Christian (14, 18, 23). As we read these discourses we are kept in continual contact with three who stand each to the others in personal relationship and who are yet, in a deep underlying sense,

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37. Cruden, A., *Complete Concordance to the Old and New Testament*, p. 430.



one."<sup>38</sup> It is also plain that whatsoever the Father has, is also Christ's (John 16:15; 17:10). Finally, He and the Father are One (John 10:31), here the Greek "one", (hen), is neuter, not masculine, (heis). This means one substance, not one person, cf. John 17:11, 14:9. It may well be noted in this connection that while He also speaks of the sonship of believers and their oneness with Him and the Father, He is ever careful to distinguish between His own Sonship and that of His disciples. "He speaks constantly of 'My Father' and of 'your Father', but never of 'our Father'. Feeble attempts have been made to break down this distinction, but totally without avail. The fact, if substantiated, is a cardinal one, and it is useless, in face of it, to assert that obviously His Sonship must be the same as ours."<sup>39</sup>

In the sixth place, Divine worship is rendered to and accepted by Him. Inasmuch as the Old Testament (Ex. 34:14) and Christ Himself (Matt. 4:10) declare that God only is to be worshipped and inasmuch as both ordinary man and angels refused the worship which was offered them (Acts 10:25, 26; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9), for Christ to accept it, would have been blasphemy if He were not God. Over and above this, the Scriptures not only inform us that Christ was worshipped both before and after His resurrection (John 10:38; 20:16, 17, 28), but insist upon our worshipping Him. In John 5:22, 23 we find this mandate related to our very soul's salvation. Our Lord declares, "the Father hath committed all judgment to His Son in order that all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father Who sent Him." Thus we may conclude with Thiessen, "If He is a deceiver, or is self-deceived, and, in either case, if He is not God He is not good (*Christus si non Deus, non bonus*)"<sup>40</sup>

38. Robinson, op. cit., p. 189.

39. Stalker, op. cit., p. 105.

40. Thiessen, *Outline of Lectures in Systematic Theology*, p. 65.

In the seventh instance, Christ's own consciousness and claims prove His Deity. Inasmuch as some of this material has already been set forth under other heads, we shall hardly do more than make listing of it here. He asserted His pre-existence (John 8:58; 17:50). He claimed that He and the Father were One (John 10:30; 17:11; 14:9). He indicated that He was the unique Son of God (John 10:36). He requested that prayer be offered in His name (John 16:23, 24). Dr. Vos cites these, along with many other self-disclosures by our Lord, in his monumental work on that transcendent theme.<sup>41</sup> Such egotistical utterances would be intolerable if they did not issue from the lips of One who was indeed God manifest in the flesh. Logic would suggest that He either is what He knew Himself to be and what He claimed for Himself, or that He is unfit to be recognized at all.

There are two additional considerations which we have not subsumed under our general headings pointing to the Deity of Jesus Christ. There are respectively, His holiness of character and His resurrection from the dead. John gives adequate testimony to both these facts. Speaking of His holiness, the apostle Peter describes Him as the "Holy One of God" (John 6:69 A.R.V.). John, in his Epistle, declares, "In Him was no sin" (I John 3:5). Our Lord's own testimony concerning Himself follows the same vein. "I do always the things that are pleasing to Him" (John 8:29). "The Prince of the world cometh; and He has nothing in Me" (John 14:30). To His enemies He threw out the challenge, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" (John 8:46)—and the challenge went unanswered. As He stood within the shadow of the cross and looked back upon His life, He could say, "I have kept my Father's commandments" (John 15:10) and again, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4). He prayed often, but never for pardon. He taught His disciples the prayer

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41. Vos. *The Self Disclosure of Jesus*.



of forgiveness, but never prayed that prayer Himself. He went to the temple, but He never offered propitiatory sacrifices. "Nowhere in the records do we find that Jesus ever betrayed the slightest consciousness of sin."<sup>42</sup> There is one explanation for such a demonstration of perfection and holiness, namely, His Deity.

In conclusion we hold that Christ's resurrection is the most conclusive and climactic attestation in time of His Deity. When the Jews challenged and asked for a sign our Lord answered them, "destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." He of course spoke of the temple of His body and John interprets, "when therefore He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them and they believed the Scriptures and the Word which Jesus had said" (John 2:18-22). John gives us an ample account of the "Gospel of the forty days," and banishes from our minds all possible misconceptions as to the nature and reality of this event.

As to the credibility of the resurrection we have first the argument from testimony. Under this heading we might remark there are three things which make a testimony trustworthy: first, the witnesses must be competent, that is, be eye-witnesses; second, they must be sufficient in number; and third, they must have a good reputation. The apostles qualify in all three of these respects. Not only did the twelve see Him but there were five hundred additionally. As to their character, no one ever assailed them on ethical grounds and tradition informs us that eleven of the twelve sealed their testimony by death as martyrs. We can also mention the events of the resurrection morn, and the twelve post-resurrection appearances of Christ.

Then there is the argument from cause and effect. Every effect has a cause. There are a number of effects in Christian history that must be traced to the bodily resurrection of Christ.

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42. Boettner, L., *The Person of Christ*, p. 124.

First there is the open tomb which in the light of all the evidences can not be explained any other way. Second there is the Lord's day. It is remarkable that the apostles being Jews should turn from their time-honored sabbath day which had been made a seal of their covenant-relation with God to turn of a sudden to a recognition of a new day. The origin of the Lord's day can only be credited to the fact of Christ's resurrection and the effect of the same upon His disciples. Finally, there is the Christian church as an effect of this same event. As we glimpse the disciples before they saw their risen Lord we know they were in no condition to be founders of a new religion but their disposition and attitude was utterly changed by the appearance of the risen Saviour.<sup>43</sup>

Even "liberal" scholars acknowledge that the weight of evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is very strong and then affirm that were it fifty times stronger any hypothesis were more possible than the actual resurrection since it contradicts their conceptions of the demands of physics and chemistry."<sup>44</sup> Such an approach as this is impossible and unscientific in that it stubbornly resists the best possible evidences and closes its sights to the facts of history because these facts give testimony to that which transcends the finite. Those of such outlook will do well to listen to the testimony of so keen a critic as Heinrich Ewald, who acknowledged: "Nothing stands more historically certain than that Jesus rose from the dead and appeared again to His followers, or than that their seeing Him thus, again, was the beginning of a higher faith, and of all their Christian work in the world. It is equally certain that they thus saw Him, not as a common man, or as a shade or ghost risen from the grave; but as the one and Only Son of God — already more than man at once in nature and power; and that all who thus beheld Him, recognized at once and

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43. Thiessen, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-171.

44. Rashdall and Lake as quoted by James Orr, *The Resurrection of Jesus*, p. 46.



instinctively His unique divine dignity, and firmly believed in it thenceforth. The Twelve and others had, indeed, learned to look on Him, even in life, as the True Messianic King and the Son of God, but from the moment of His reappearing, they recognized more clearly and fully the divine side of His nature, and saw in Him the conqueror of death. Yet the two pictures of Him thus fixed in their minds were in their essence identical. That former familiar appearance of the earthly Christ, and this higher vision of Him, with its depth of emotion and ecstatic joy, were so inter-related that, even in the first days or weeks after His death, they could never have seen in Him the Heavenly Messiah, if they had not first known him as well as the earthly."<sup>45</sup>

Thus we conclude our study of the Deity of Christ in the Fourth Gospel. We have little more than touched upon the more evident suggestions of this high and holy theme but what we have gleaned has been sufficient to cause us to prostrate ourselves at the feet of our now ascended Saviour and cry with Thomas "My Lord and My God."

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45. Heinrich Ewald, *Geschichte* vol. VI, p. 75.





VI

THE WITNESS OF PAUL:  
CHRIST, THE LORD

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## VI

### THE WITNESS OF PAUL

This paper consists in a study of Paul's Christology, or, more exactly, that portion of Paul's Christology which may be discovered from his usage of the term "The Lord," a term by which he ordinarily means Christ. Our study shall consist of an examination of five groups of passages, each one of which groups reveals a facet in Paul's Christology. These facets may be summarized thus: I. "The Lord" is the Jehovah of the Old Testament; II. "The Lord" is equal to God the Father; III. "The Lord" plus "God" equals one God; IV. "The Lord" is the second Person of the Trinity; V. "The Lord" is called God. After each group has been examined individually, and each conclusion has been reached independently, we shall assemble the combined weight of the five conclusions into a Christology which, we trust, equals that of John.

#### 1. "THE LORD" IS THE JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE term "The Lord" occurs in the LXX to translate both "Adonai" and "Jahweh," since the latter was read by the Jews as "Adonai." Usually Paul quotes the LXX "Lord" as designating Jesus: (1) II Thess. 1:9, quoting Is. 2:10, 19, 21. The reference in the preceding verse to "the Lord Jesus" makes it clear that "The Lord" here is understood of the second Person of the Trinity. (2) I Cor. 1:31, condensing Jer. 9:23f. The context makes it clear that, since it is Christ who has been "made unto" us things worth glorying in, Christ is the Lord in whom we glory. (3) II Cor. 10:17 also from Jer. 9:23f. The preceding verses declare that Paul will glory only within his measure, which is the gospel of Christ. Jeremiah is quoted as a proof text that he is right in



glorifying only in Christ's gospel. Therefore it is evident that Paul uses Jeremiah's "Lord" to designate Christ. (4) I Cor. 10:9, referring to Num. 21:5f. In verses 21-22, where verse nine is applied to the problem at hand, "Lord" evidently means Jesus; we are therefore justified in assuming it means Jesus in verse nine. The substitution of "Christ" for "Lord" in the texts of the Western and Syrian families, and in the Patristics, indicates that the early church understood Christ to be meant in this passage. (5) I Cor. 10:26, quoting Ps. 24:1. Verses 21-22 give us the Lord's cup and the Lord's table, both referring to Christ. In the same discussion we now have the Lord's earth, which we may also assume to refer to Christ. (6) II Cor. 3:16, quoting Ex. 34:34. The veil is in verse 14 said to be removed in Christ. Therefore the Lord toward whom they must turn in verse 16 in order for the veil to be removed must also be Christ. Verse 17 seems to identify the Lord with the third Person of the Trinity by saying "the Lord is the Spirit." Yet the next clause, referring to "the Lord's Spirit," returns "Lord" to the second Person of the Trinity. Perhaps Paul has in mind something similar to Christ the life-giving Spirit of I Cor. 15:45. (7) Rom. 10:13, quoting Joel 2:32. Joel is quoted as a proof text for Paul's assertion that he will be saved who confesses Jesus as Lord. Evidently Paul understands Joel to mean Jesus by Lord, else what the appropriateness to the proof text? (8) Eph. 6:4, summarizing Deut. 6:7, 20-25. Eph. 5:22-6:9 gives instructions for those in various domestic relationships. In the first of these relationships, husband and wife, "Lord" 5:22 is identified as "Christ" by the following verse. In the third of these relationships, master and servant, "The Lord" of 6:8 who rewards is the same as the "Christ" whom in 6:5f one serves. The presupposition therefore is heavily in favor of identifying "The Lord" of the second relationship, parents and children, also with Christ. We may with some degree of certainty then assert that Paul has Christ in mind as he quoted "Lord" from Deuteronomy.

(9) Phil. 2:10f, based on Is. 45:23. Here it is expressly stated that Jesus is Lord. (10) Rom. 14:11, also based on Is. 45:23. Since the rejection of the *Textus Receptus*, it has become doubtful as to who is meant by "Lord." In favor of identifying "Lord" here with Christ we may suggest several points: Verse nine discusses the appropriateness of designating Christ as "Lord". Lord and God are so closely identified throughout the whole fourteenth chapter that we may conclude that one Person is in mind; yet it would be much more difficult to say that all of the passages refer to the Father than to refer them to the Son. The context of Is. 45:23 identifies Lord and God as one, and as the Saviour, in such a way that they would naturally be thought of by Paul as referring to the second Person of the Trinity. We have already seen that Paul can understand Isaiah as referring to Christ, Phil. 2:10f. Finally, it is Paul's viewpoint that Christ is the one who is the Judge, II Cor. 5:10, Acts 17:31, Rom. 2:16, although as the Judge He is God's Vicar.

The preponderance of these passages identifying the LXX "Lord" with the Son rather than the Father demonstrates that Paul's prevailing tendency is to identify the Old Testament Jehovah, the LXX Lord, with the New Testament Jesus Christ, leaving the Old Testament Elohim, the LXX God, to be identified with the New Testament Father. This identification seems to have established Paul's terminology. Even though Paul realized that his identification of the Old Testament divine names with the Father and Son was not inflexible, he still preferred to maintain the terminology of his identification. This is strikingly demonstrated in two passages in which he quotes Old Testament Jehovah passages as referring to the Father, but changes Jehovah (Lord) to Elohim (God) in order to conform to his usual practice, Rom. 11:2 quoting I Kings 19:10, and Rom. 11:8 quoting Is. 29:10 and Deut. 29:4. (Incidentally, this liberty which Paul takes shows that



he considers Elohim and Jehovah as interchangeable and therefore in some sense the same deity. Might we not then expect him to hold the same view of their New Testament counterparts, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ?)

We conclude, then, that Paul identified the Old Testament Elohim, LXX God, with the New Testament Father, so as to create the formula "God the Father," and the Old Testament Jehovah, LXX Lord, with the New Testament Jesus Christ, giving the formula "The Lord Jesus Christ." In that the Old Testament presents both Elohim and Jehovah, God and Lord, as equal and equally divine, may we not expect Paul to present Elohim and Jehovah, God (the Father) and the Lord (Jesus Christ) as equal, and equally divine, equally "God?"

## II. "THE LORD IS EQUAL TO GOD THE FATHER"

The expression "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" and its near equivalents are so frequently on Paul's pen that we may with propriety consider it an established manner of designation. By means of this expression Paul presents God and the Lord as equal sources of grace and peace, II Thess. 1:2, Gal. 1:3, I Cor. 1:3, II Cor. 1:2, Rom. 1:7, Eph. 1:2, Col. 1:2, Phile. 3, Phil. 1:2, as equal sources of grace, mercy, and peace, I Tim. 1:2, and II Tim. 1:2, and as equal sources of peace and love, Eph. 6:23. God and the Saviour are equal sources of grace and peace in Tit. 1:4. The Thessalonian church is equally "in" God and the Lord, I Thess. 1:1, II Thess. 1:1. God and the Lord are equal objects of prayer in I Thess. 3:11. The order in which the two are mentioned is usually God first, then the Lord. Lest we suppose that this regular order suggests a subordination in Paul's Trinity, let us note that in two instances the order is, for reasons involved in the context, reversed: Gal. 1:1, II Thess. 2:16. Surely, in Paul's mind, equality with God was not something which Christ needed to seize in order to possess, Phil. 2:6.

## III. "THE LORD" PLUS "GOD" EQUALS ONE GOD

The two epistles to the Thessalonians are parallel epistles. Each is divided into two parts, the first part narrative, the second hortatory. Thus there are four sections in the two epistles. Each of these four sections concludes with a prayer, I Thess. 2:11-13; 5:23; II Thess. 2:16-17; 3:16. These prayers are parallel, each beginning with "And He Himself," followed by a name or names of the deity, and then a volitive optative form of the verb in the singular number. In the two prayers following narrative sections, I Thess. 3:11-13, II Thess. 2:16-17, a duality in deity is named, "Our God and Father and our Lord Jesus," "Our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father." Each of these dual deities is followed by a singular verb, third person singular first aorist optative active, "May he direct," "May he comfort," "May he establish." This clearly shows that this duality of deity is considered as one unit, capable of agreeing with a singular verb. This duality of deity is considered as just as much a unit as the single deity in the other two prayers, where we also find third singular aorist optative forms following the name of the deity. We see that we now have in each case a deity considered as singular, followed by a singular verb, and prefixed by a singular pronoun, "He Himself." In the two cases where but one deity is named, the pronoun is obviously the subject, with the name of the deity as an explanatory semi-parenthetic appositive. In the two cases where the deity is dual, some unitary subject is needed to unite them in preparation for the singular verb. If we follow the parallelism of the other two prayers, and construe "He Himself" as the subject, "He Himself" is the unifying term, and the reference to deity which follows is an explanatory appositive. The four prayers are seen thus to be built upon the same skeleton, which we may outline as follows:

Subject	Parenthetical appositive	Verb
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The four appositives become four different ways of designating the same "He Himself" to whom Paul prays. Paul prays



to a God who may be variously designated as "Our God and Father and our Lord Jesus," "Our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father," "The God of peace," "The Lord of peace." Each of these is, to Paul, equal to God, and therefore, roughly speaking, equal to each other. However, lest we suppose that "The God of peace" of I Thess. 5:23 be merely a different name for "The Lord of peace" of II Thess. 3:16, both God and Lord are used in the two other prayers; yet so as in some way to form one God, as we have seen. It would seem that both God and the Lord are distinct persons, yet so as to form one God(head). Further, the mention of one implies the presence of the other, for in two cases "He Himself" is explained only by one name, in the one case God, in the other Lord, and in one prayer where both names are at first used, the prayer is continued in the name of one only, I Thess. 3:12, yet with no indication that a difference in the divinity addressed is intended. (The same is true of Col. 1:2, where the Lord is omitted, but evidently understood, since Paul's constant source of grace and peace in the other epistles is the duality of names. In I Thess. 1:1 both names are omitted, yet implied.) Again, when two names are mentioned, the order is opposite in each case, lest we attach superiority to the one named first. It seems that every possible combination of God and Lord is used by Paul to explain the "He Himself" to whom he prayed, which leads us to conclude that for Paul either "God" or "Lord" or both "God" and "Lord" designates the one God whom he worshipped.

If we construe "He Himself" with merely the first of the dual names, we destroy the parallelism of the four prayers, for "He Himself" must now be in two cases as broad as the whole subject of the verb, but in two only as broad as half the subject. We must also say in connection with the dual names, that for no apparent reason one name is stressed by "He Himself" in one case, and in the other case the other name is stressed. Further, if we fail to construe "He Himself" with both names, we have no unitary subject for the singular

verb, and are quite unprepared psychologically and grammatically for the singular verb which follows. Finally, with the structure of our prayers thus broken, we must suppose that the outward parallelism of "And He Himself . . . deity . . . singular verb" to be mere coincidence.

These alternatives being improbable, we must conclude that these four prayers provide us four ways of expressing the God Paul worshipped. From the examination of these four expressions of deity we conclude that they are interchangeable in order, that one may in familiar expressions represent and imply the other, and that the sum of both is one unit, one "He Himself," taking a singular verb.

*I Cor. 8:4-6*

In this passage Paul gives us the theological basis for his practical advice concerning things offered to idols. We may be assured that it is with minute care that Paul summarizes Christian theology in distinction from pagan theology. Hence we may with propriety anticipate a significant order and arrangement in Paul's language.

The general plan of the passage is first to state the Christian thesis, then to present the pagan viewpoint, and finally to present an elaboration of the Christian theology which points out the similarities and divergencies of the two views more particularly. The Christian thesis is: "There is no God but one." The pagan theology states: "(For even if) there are (so-called) gods whether in heaven or upon the earth, as there are gods many and lords many." First the contrast of monotheism and polytheism is painted: "No God but one"/"gods." Next we see the pagan "gods" placed in two categories, "in heaven" and "on earth," or as we perhaps would say, transcendent and immanent. This duality is further explained by another pair, "gods many" and "lords many," prefixed by an expression suggesting that this clause is to explain the previous expression "in heaven" and "on earth." If then we correlate the parallelism, we find that "in heaven" are "gods



many," "on earth" are "lords many," according to Paul's interpretation of pagan theology. Notice here that we have two meanings for the term "gods." First of all, it means all pagan deities; second, it is narrowed to those deities which are "in heaven." The formula runs: "Gods" equals "gods many" ("in heaven") plus "lords many" ("on earth"). Were we to say the term "gods" is used in the same sense with equal comprehensiveness in both places it occurs, we would then have to remove "lords" from the category of "gods," and with "lords" we would have to remove its correlative, "on earth." But this last we cannot do, since "on earth" is clearly included under "gods": "Gods, whether in heaven or on earth." Besides, what then would be the meaning or purpose of mentioning "lords" "on earth" at all? Therefore "lords many" must be included among the "(so-called) gods," just as "gods many" are among the "(so-called) gods." Clearly we have here a genus "gods" composed of two species, "gods" and "lords."

Now we return to the Christian thesis, "There is no God but one," elaborated so as to read: "But to us, one God the Father, from whom all things, and we to Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things and we through Him." Immediately we see a duality in the Christian viewpoint, just as in the pagan. We cannot say there are here presented two Christian deities, for this passage is clearly an elaboration of the previous statement, "There is no God but one." Only two alternatives remain: We may say that "one God the Father" plus "one Lord Jesus Christ" equals "no God but one"; or we may say that "one God the Father" is the "no God but one," while "one Lord Jesus Christ" is not considered as entering into the question of "God." If we were to accept the second of these alternatives, again we would have to explain why "the Lord" is mentioned at all. Would not this tend to confuse the Corinthians, in that they certainly had a very high view of Christ, at least bordering on divinity? Would not this tendency to confuse the Lord with God be even more acute after

Paul had pointed out that pagans considered their lords as gods? If Paul did not desire Christ to be considered God, would he not have done well to omit His name entirely? Or having mentioned Him, would he not certainly have added an explanatory note making it clear that he did not intend to include Christ in God?

Yet, apart from the question of Paul's purpose or lack of it, we believe that the structure of the passage forbids this second alternative. Let us examine this structure more minutely. First note that each theology begins by giving a single name to divinity: Christian "God," pagan "gods." Note further that each theology proceeds to subdivide or elaborate its position into a duality. Just as the all-embracing name for divinity is identical for both theologies, save that one is singular, the other plural, just so the duality we now discover is the same in name for both theologies, save that one is singular, the other plural: the Christian, "one God" and "one Lord"; the pagan, "gods many" and "lords many." Note further that each member of each duality is provided with a descriptive phrase giving the general impression which the worshiper has of the deity in question. Here also the pagan and Christian phrases correspond roughly: "gods many" "in heaven," "one God" "from whom all things and we to Him," where transcendence is prominent; "lords many" "on earth," "one Lord," "through whom all things and we through him," where immanence or mediatorship is stressed. The difference in the pagan and Christian phrases seems to be that the pagan system describes the deity in terms of location, while the Christian system describes the deity in terms of relationship or activity. We may also note that the Christian deities are named, "the Father" and "Jesus Christ," while the pagan deities remain anonymous. The result of this comparative analysis seems to be the conclusion that both theologies are here presented upon the same framework, upon which framework the different viewpoints are



clearly set forth. A skeleton of the passage makes this evident. For distinctness we italicize the Christian portion:

	<i>God</i>	
	<i>gods</i>	
in heaven		on earth
gods many		lords many
<i>one God</i>		<i>one Lord</i>
<i>from whom all things</i>	<i>through whom all things</i>	
<i>and we to him</i>	<i>and we through him</i>	

If the four dualities here encountered ("in heaven"/"on earth"; "gods many"/"lords many"; "one God"/"one Lord"; "from whom all things and we to him"/"through whom all things and we through him") are not meant to be a parallel structure, how can one account for the fact that the first members of all four pairs correspond, and the second members correspond? Is it not beyond the realm of chance that no one of the four is reversed? Therefore we posit a framework, which may be expressed as follows:

#### Genus Name of Divinity

Species Name A, plus  
Descriptive phrase

Species Name B, plus  
Descriptive phrase

Thus we see the pagan scheme to be an insert within the Christian scheme to make the Christian contrasts stand out more vividly and have more significance in the present context. Now, if we exclude "one Lord" from the primary statement of "no God but one," we wreck this whole parallelism, for we have already demonstrated that "lords many" could not follow suit by being excluded from "(so-called) gods." The key to the interpretation lies in the necessary inclusion of "on earth" within the "so-called gods." The force of the structure and parallelism carries on the argument to the conclusion, which we may state thus: The Christian theology, as set forth

in I Cor. 8:4-6, consists in one God, composed of, or in some unexplained way subsisting in, one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's failure to resolve the enigma of one plus one equals one is only understandable if we conjecture that Paul felt the enigma would be intelligible to the Corinthians. Apparently Paul had taught the Corinthians something in the direction of our doctrine of the Trinity.

#### IV. "THE LORD" IS THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY

On four occasions Paul presents us with a trinitarian statement. The four are not all as patently trinitarian as is Matt. 28:19, yet all call by name the three members of the godhead in close succession. Again, the "correct" order is not maintained, but we find several arrangements of the persons, as follows: 3-2-1; 2-3-1; 3-2-1; 2-1-3. Yet when we arrange them in 1-2-3 order we see that there is a marked fixidity in the names of the three persons:

I Cor. 12:4-6	God	Lord	Spirit
Romans 15:30	God	Lord Jesus Christ	Spirit
Eph. 4:4-6	God and Father	Lord	Spirit
II Cor. 13:14	God	Lord Jesus Christ	Holy Spirit

From these passages we can not only see that Paul conceived of God in a trinitarian manner, but also that for him the persons of the trinity had distinct "personal" names. Him whom Jesus in Matt. 28:19 calls "Father" Paul calls "God"; Him whom Jesus calls "Son" Paul calls "Lord"; Him whom Jesus calls "Holy Spirit" Paul calls "Spirit." Thus Paul's "Lord" is a member of the godhead just as much as his "God." We should then be prepared to see Paul uniting these three members of the trinity into one God(head).

#### V. "THE LORD" IS CALLED GOD

In II Thess. 1:12 we find the expression "the grace of the God of us and Lord Jesus Christ," a construction in which we have a single article used with the first of two nouns connected by "and." According to Smyth's *A Greek Grammar for Col-*



*leges*, Par. 1143, "A single article, used with the first of two or more nouns connected by "and," produces the effect of a single notion." Winer, *A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament*, Seventh English Edition, 19, 4d, comments on this construction as follows: "If . . . such nouns connected by *kai* are of the *same* gender, the Article is *omitted* 1). When the connecting nouns are regarded as only parts of one whole, or members of the one community." I Thess. 3:11 also may be considered an example of this rather common Greek construction: "The God and Father of us." Here obviously "God" and "Father" both refer to "a single notion," the first person of the Trinity. Likewise in the passage under consideration, "the God . . . and Lord" must be construed as "a single notion," the second person of the Trinity. In Titus 2:13 we have a similar example: "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and Saviour of us Christ Jesus." Here likewise "the great God and Saviour" who is to appear comprises "a single notion," in that the order of words is parallel to I Thess. 3:11. It could be argued that the omission of the second article in Titus 2:13 is due to the adjective "great," if this adjective be construed as governing both nouns, Winer, 19,4d,2; or we could account for the omission on the basis that the genitive following the second noun makes that noun sufficiently definite, Winer, 19, Note 1. If, however, one uses a study of these modifiers to weaken the argument on Titus 2:13, that one must for consistency concede that the same study strengthens the argument on II Thess. 1:12, for, according to Winer, 19,5b, "The Article is used in the case under consideration, commonly . . . when the first noun is followed by a Genitive, and the second, therefore, is appended to an independent group." It must be, then, that Paul deliberately omitted the second article lest we consider the second noun as independent. We conclude that in one or more cases Paul uses "God" in designating Jesus Christ, in conjunction with "Lord" or "Saviour." We should therefore not be surprised when we hear Paul say, "From whom is Christ according to

the flesh, the one being above all, God, blessed forever," Rom. 9:5; nor when he commends, "the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood," Acts 20:28. Although Paul may be . . . . reluctant to ascribe to Christ the personal name God, generally reserving this term for the first Person of the Trinity, yet he displays no reluctance in ascribing to Christ the generic name God, and including Him in the "no God but one."

On the basis of these five groups of passages, we may summarize the leading points of Paul's Christology as revealed in connection with his use of the term "The Lord": The Jehovah of the Old Testament is Jesus Christ. This Jehovah, or Lord, as the LXX renders it, is equal to God the Father; He and God the Father . . . . together form one God; He as the second Person of the Trinity plus God the Father and the Holy Spirit form one God(head). Therefore this Lord may with appropriateness be called God. The deity of this "Lord" having thus been firmly and completely established, let it not be supposed that Paul's usage of "The Lord" as the customary designation for Christ in any way suggests a subordination in Paul's mind, any more than the Jehovah of the Old Testament is thought of as subordinate to Adonai. Rather let us conclude that the term "The Lord" on Paul's pen is just as much a divine name as is "God" in its "personal" usage, in that both are persons in the one God(head); and let us conclude that the name God in its generic sense of Godhead may with equal appropriateness be applied to both Father and Son, to both "God" and "Lord."



VII

THE WITNESS OF PAUL AND THE  
CALL TO FAITH

by

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## VII

# THE WITNESS OF PAUL AND THE CALL TO FAITH

### INTRODUCTION

*"Wherefore . . . no man can say that Jesus is  
Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."*—I Cor. 12:3

**W**HO was—or who is Jesus Christ? Upon the answer given to this question depends the eternal salvation or the eternal damnation of immortal souls.

Practically everyone who has ever heard the name of Jesus Christ will admit that a person bearing this name once walked the earth and that the movement which we know as Christianity sprang from Him. Few people doubt that for the last 1900 years His influence has been the most potent and uplifting of all influences in shaping and moulding the life of our western world. That Jesus was the finest specimen of humanity that the world has ever known, that His teachings were the purest and loftiest that the world has ever received, and that His actions were the most faultless that the world has ever seen, is admitted by practically everyone.

From the very first moment that Jesus set foot on earth, until this present hour, however, there has been no end of controversy concerning His Person and concerning the place that He occupies in the religion that He founded. More specifically, the controversy has to do with the question whether Jesus was as the Scriptures represent Him to have been—the second



Person of the Trinity, God incarnate, who is to be worshiped and obeyed even as the Father—or whether He was only a man endowed with unusual spiritual insight, differing from other men not in kind, but only in degree.

Historically, we find that Jesus' apostles themselves were not too certain of the answer to this question until the resurrection. But, when they beheld the resurrected Christ, doubt was removed from their minds, and they became convinced that Jesus was the Eternal Son of God (Romans 1:4). Later, after the last apostle had departed from this life, there arose again a certain degree of controversy concerning the Person of Christ. In fact, the first great question upon which the early church took action had to do with the Person of Christ. The Church settled that question for herself with the rejection of Arianism and the affirmation that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, Deity incarnate, "Of one essence (homoousion) with the Father." That decision was written into her authoritative creeds, and ever since that time Eastern, Roman and Evangelical Christianity has been bold to assert the Deity of Christ in creed, hymn, and devotional writings.

In comparatively recent times, however, we find the Church being torn asunder again by this age-old Christological Controversy. The result is that today even among those who call themselves Christian there is no general agreement either as to who Christ is or as to what He does for our salvation. This in turn has led to endless confusion not only between denominations, but also within individual churches.

We believe, with Boettner, that "The doctrine of the Person of Christ is not merely one of a number of equally important doctrines, but the most central and basic of the entire system, the very cornerstone of the temple of truth which is set forth in Scripture."<sup>1</sup> Consequently, it will be our purpose in this paper to show that to admit the Deity of Christ and to trust Him for salvation constitutes one a Christian, and that to

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1. Boettner, Loraine, *Studies in Theology*, p. 141.

reject His Deity marks one a non-Christian. For our apology we will appeal to the first great Christian theologian, the Apostle Paul. We hope to present clearly the answer Paul has given to that searching question of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Who say ye that I am?" (Matt. 16:15).

*"I find that without a hold of Christ, there is no hold of God at all."*—THOMAS CHALMERS.

### I. Paul's Answer in Terms of Christ's Life

"Thou art Very and Eternal God, Creator and Ruler of all things."

#### 1. CHRIST'S DEITY ASSERTED

In several great passages in his epistles, Paul asserts in unmistakable terms the Deity of the Saviour. In beginning our study of Paul's Christology, it might be well to deal with a few of these individually:

A. *Romans 9:5*: In this magnificent passage Paul is presenting a picture of the glory that God has showered upon Israel. He is reminding the Israelites that Christ had sprung from the blood of Israel, as far as His human nature was concerned; but Christ's Israelitic descent is, in the apostle's eyes, so consummate a glory for Israel because Christ is much more than one of the sons of men, in fact, by reason of His higher, pre-existent nature, He is "God over all, blessed forever."

There is not a critical or exegetical leg for anyone to stand on who would make this passage say less than that Christ is God over all, blessed forever. The usually liberal-minded International Critical Commentary, after reviewing all the evidence on the subject, concludes, "... the result of our investigations into the grammar of the sentence and the drift of the argument is to incline to the belief that the words (*Theos* and *epi panton*) would naturally refer to Christ, unless *Theos* is so



definitely a proper name that it would imply a contrast in itself. *We have seen that this is not so.*"<sup>2</sup>

Warfield says, "There is not a scintilla of evidence of textual corruption in Romans 9:5. . . . It is a mere matter of fact that Paul, speaking distinctly 'ou kata timyn alla kata phusin,' as the contrast with 'to kata sarka' shows, designates Christ here '*God over all, blessed forever.*'"<sup>3</sup>

It is hard to understand why so many critics have undertaken to vacate this declaration of its plain meaning. If it stood alone among Paul's utterances, it might be natural for those who do not want a Divine Saviour to seek some way to set it aside. But so far from standing alone, it is but one of many declarations running through Paul's epistles to the same effect:

B. *Philippians* 2:6: Beyond question Paul is asserting here that Christ Jesus is "on an equality with God." Fausset<sup>4</sup> exegetes this passage thus, ". . . who subsisting in the form of God, esteemed an equality with God no act of self-arrogation—no act of claiming to one's self what does not belong to him." Lietzman finds himself forced to admit in his commentary on Romans 9:5, "Since Paul represents Christ in *Philippians* 2:6 as 'isa Theo' there is no reason why he should not, on occasion, call him directly 'Theos.'"

Warfield says,<sup>5</sup> "It is undeniable that in the philosophico-popular mode of speech here employed, 'form' means just that body of characterizing qualities which makes anything the thing it is—in a word, its specific character." Hence, to Warfield, *Philippians* 2:6 is a more definite assertion of Christ's Deity than even Romans 9:5: "To say that Christ Jesus is 'in the

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2. Sanday and Headlam, *Commentary on Romans*, pp. 137-138.

3. Warfield, B. B., *Christology and Criticism*, p. 268.

4. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*.

5. Warfield, B. B., *Christology and Criticism*, p. 271.

form of God' is then to say not less, but more than to say shortly that He is 'God.'"<sup>6</sup>

C. *Colossians* 2:9: This passage stands by the side of Philippians 2:6 in asserting Christ's Deity. Here Paul declares that in Christ "there dwelleth<sup>7</sup> all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." That is to say, in plain words, that Christ is an incarnation of the Godhead in all its fulness, which again is a statement rather difficult to harmonize with any notion that it was something less than God incarnate in Christ Jesus. However, the most exhaustive assertion of our Lord's Deity to be found in the writings of Paul occurs in

D. *Colossians* 1:15-17: This magnificent dogmatic passage is introduced in typical Pauline style to meet a definite problem. The Colossian church was exposed to the intellectual attacks of the Gnostic heresy which degraded Jesus Christ to the rank of a long series of inferior beings, supposed to range between mankind and the supreme God. Against this position Paul asserts that Christ is "The Image of the Invisible God." This expression, "image of God," supplements the title of "the Son." As "the Son" Christ is derived eternally from the Father,<sup>8</sup> and He is one substance with the Father. As "the image," Christ is, in that one substance, the exact likeness of the Father, in all things except actually being the Father. "The image" is God's eternal reflection of Himself, whereby God reveals Himself to His creation.<sup>9</sup>

But Christ is seen here as the originator of this creation. As the "image," Christ is *not* the first in rank among created beings, but begotten before all creation. Of all things in earth and heaven, of things seen and unseen, of angels, of thrones,

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6. Ibid, p. 272

7. "plyroma", Sir Wm. Ramsay & Dr. James Hope Moulton translate, "Every attribute". Jesus *retained* these attributes (Note present tense katoikei) in his earthly incarnation.

8. See Chapter I, Section 2-B-ii of this paper, "His Relation to the Father".

9. See Chapter I, Section 2-A-i of this paper, "Jahweh".



of dominions, of principalities, of powers—it is said that they were created *in* Christ, *by* Christ, and *for* Christ:

IN HIM—There was no creative process external to and independent of Him.

BY HIM—The force which has summoned the worlds out of nothingness into being, and which upholds them in being, is His. He is the one Producer and Sustainer of all created existence.

FOR HIM—He is not, as Arianism afterwards pretended, merely an inferior workman, creating for the glory of a God superior to Himself. *He creates for Himself.* He is the End of created things, as well as their Source. “He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”

We see without difficulty that this passage is a parallel to John 1. Certainly the “image” spoken of here by Paul is the equivalent in His rank and functions to the “logos” of John. He exists prior to creation; He is the one agent in creation; He is a divine person; He is equal with God and shares His essential life; He is really none other than God Himself.

E. *I Timothy* 3:16: Here, in a companion passage to the ones discussed above, Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as “God manifest in the flesh.” His manifestation “in the flesh” exposed Him to misapprehension, as though he were nothing more than flesh and blood (*John* 6:41, 7:27). Nevertheless, He was “justified,” “vindicated in His true character,”<sup>10</sup> by His visible glory, His resurrection, and ascension.<sup>11</sup>

Space does not permit us to treat these passages exhaustively, nor to discuss many other parallel passages, such as *Acts* 20:28 (where Paul says plainly that God purchased the Church “with

10. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary* on *I Timothy*.

11. The authenticity of this reading is defended by Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, pp. 495-496, and is rejected by Westcott and Hort.

His own blood"), Titus 2:13 (where Christ is called "our Great God and Saviour"), I Cor. 1:24 (where Paul calls Christ "the power of God, and the wisdom of God"), II Thess. 1:12, II Cor. 4:4, I Cor. 2:8, etc. Some of these, however, will be touched upon elsewhere in this paper.

## 2. CHRIST'S DEITY INDICATED

### A. The Names of Christ:

i. *Jahweh*—Christ is obviously thought of by Paul as one and the same person as the *Deity* of his Jewish forefathers. The name "Lord" (Kurios) which Paul consistently uses to describe Christ is precisely the same word used in the Septuagint to designate the God of the Old Testament, even Jahweh. Somerville says,<sup>12</sup> "The word Kurios, used in the Septuagint as equivalent to God (Theos), was used to render the solemn name Jahweh." This name is used almost exclusively for Christ in the New Testament.

The New Testament indicates the office of the Lord Jesus Christ to be that of Mediator between God and man. Every time the person of Jahweh occurs in the Old Testament, it is in connection with God's dealings with men. When questions of mercy and grace are implied, the Person of the Trinity who functions in that crisis is always the Jahweh Person.<sup>13</sup>

The New Testament apostles, especially Paul, consistently applied Jahweh texts of the Old Testament to the Person and works of the Lord Jesus Christ. For instance, Jahweh of Psalm 68:18 and Christ of Ephesians 4:8 are both seen "leading captivity captive." And whosoever shall call upon the name of Jahweh (Joel 2:32), or whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord (Rom. 10:13, Acts 2:34) shall be saved. Further, there is coming a day when every knee shall bow to Jahweh

12. Somerville, Dav., *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*, pp. 143, 295.

13. Rimmer, Harry, *The Magnificence of Jesus*.



(Isa. 45:23), but at the same time, every knee shall also be bowing to Jesus (Phil. 2:10). (Other texts of this nature are Malachi 3:1 and Mark 1:3, Isaiah 2:19 and II Thess 1:9, II Samuel 3:39 and II Tim 4:14, etc.) Paul would never have been able to bring himself to such an application unless he had renounced his belief in the authority and sacred character of the Hebrew Scriptures, or else believed sincerely that Jesus Christ was Jahweh Himself visiting and redeeming His people.

ii. *Kurios*—Paul's very use of the term *Kurios*, or Lord, for Christ indicates strongly that Paul means to assign Him universal dominion, not only over men, but over the whole universe of created beings.<sup>14</sup> For Paul, the essence of Christianity is the recognition of Jesus as "Lord" (Rom. 10:9, II Cor. 4:5, I Cor. 12:3, Phil. 2:11). The proclamation of the Gospel is summed up for him therefore in this term (II Cor. 4:5), the confession of Jesus as Lord is salvation (Romans 10:9). No one can say that Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:3). Edwards says,<sup>15</sup> commenting on the meaning of "The Lord of Glory" in I Corinthians 2:8, "... the Lord to whom glory belongs as His native right . . . Glory is the peculiar attribute of Jehovah among all the gods (Ps. 29:1). The expression is theologically important because it implies that Jesus was Lord of Glory, that is, Jahweh, and that the Lord of Glory died (Acts 3:15)."

"The only distinction which can be discerned between 'God' and 'Lord' in Paul's usage of the terms is a distinction not in relative dignity, but in emphasis on actual sovereignty. 'God' is, so to speak, a term of pure exaltation; 'Lord' carries with it more expressly the idea of sovereign rulership *in actual exercise*."<sup>16</sup> The most probable reason for Paul's use of the

14. See Robinson, J. A., *Commentary on Ephesians*, pp. 72, 90.

15. Edwards, T. C., *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*.

16. Warfield, B. B., *Christology and Criticism*, p. 273.

term "Lord" for Jesus Christ was that Paul realized that the God of providence, in whose hand is the Kingdom to "reign until he hath put all his enemies under his feet" (I Cor. 15:24, Phil. 2:9-11), had manifested Himself in the flesh and was now reigning far above any conceivable power as Head over all things for His Church. In other words, the term "Lord" was appropriated by Paul for Christ, *not* because it is a term of function *rather than* dignity, but because *along with* the dignity it emphasizes also function.

B. The Attributes of Christ:

i. *His Pre-Existence*—Paul served a Messiah who had existed from all eternity. "This Messiah is definitely represented as a divine being who has entered the world on a mission of mercy to sinful man, in the prosecution of which He has given Himself as a sacrifice for sin, but has risen again from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God, henceforth to rule as Lord of All."<sup>17</sup>

As we read the epistles of Paul we cannot but see there a trend of thought running through the apostle's mind which necessarily was based upon his knowledge of Christ's pre-incarnate glory. For Paul's mind was continually filled with Christ's *condescension*. He is continually emphasizing the voluntary humility of the Lord Jesus.

Now just what was it that our Lord condescended to do? Was it to leave a place of political or intellectual eminence? No, Paul had the advantage over the man Jesus in these respects. Was it to bow from a state of moral eminence? No, if Jesus was mere man, His continual self-assertion was rather moral reprobation. Was it to give up a position of angelical eminence? No, Paul made it plain that Christ was related to the angels simply as the author of their being (Col. 1:16), the duties of the angels being to worship His person and to serve His servants.

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17. Warfield, B. B., *Christology and Criticism*, p. 150.



What, then, is Paul's position regarding this condescension? It is summed up perfectly in Philippians 2:5-11. Here we see two distinct stages of humiliation. Being found *in fashion* as a man, He voluntarily humbled Himself and became obedient unto death (Phil. 2:8). But before this, there was a mightier act of condescension when He became man out of a state of pre-existent glory, "emptying" Himself and taking the form of a servant.

Now what was it that happened when Jesus "eauton ekenosen"? What is involved in this process of "kenosis" of which Paul speaks? On this subject there has been wide disagreement. Some have said He laid aside His divine attributes, and thus was limited by the weakness of human nature. Others say that He laid aside only His divine glory, and prayed for its return in John 17.

But many scholars assert that the correct exegesis of this passage indicates that Jesus did *not* lay aside His nature, and forsook none of His attributes when He became incarnate. One word seems to be the key to the whole passage, the word "morphei." Concerning this word, Warfield<sup>18</sup> says that Paul here clearly calls Christ God in the most emphatic manner possible. "That the representation of Christ Jesus as 'en morphei theou uparxon' is precisely to call him God is evidenced not merely by the intimation which is immediately given that He who is 'in the form of God' is 'on an equality with God,' but by the connotation of the phraseology itself." J. B. Lightfoot says, "'morphei' implies *not* the external accidents, but the *essential* attributes."

Boettner's exegesis of the phrase, "en morphei theou uparxon," is "sharing fully in the Divine nature and possessing all the attributes and qualities that make God what He is."<sup>19</sup> The

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18. Warfield, B. B., *Christology and Criticism*, p. 271.

19. Boettner, Loraine, *Studies in Theology*, p. 147.

Companion Bible defines morphei as "the *essential* form, including all the qualities which can be made visible to the eye."<sup>20</sup>

Hence, we see that Christ was the possessor of the very essence of Deity before His incarnation, and the bodily substance of Deity is, of course, immutable and unsearchable. Hence this kenosis involved *not* a laying aside of anything, but rather a voluntary humiliation. "Taking the form of a servant was not a supercession of 'the form of God' but *an addition to it*."<sup>21</sup> Even though Jesus was now made in the likeness of man and formed in fashion as a man, He remained nevertheless unbrokenly "in the form of God."<sup>22</sup>

Though this is perhaps the greatest of Paul's pre-existence passages, it is by no means unique. Paul constantly refers to the pre-existent life of Jesus Christ. For instance:

The Second Adam differs from the first in that He is "The Lord from Heaven" (I Cor. 15:47). When ancient Israel was wandering in the desert, Christ had been Himself effectually present as Guardian and Sustainer of the Lord's people (I Cor. 10:4). Paul, pleading with the wealthy Corinthian churches in behalf of the poor Jewish churches, reminds them of the matchless grace of the Saviour who, when He was rich, became poor for our sakes (II Cor. 8:9). Here Christ's *eternal* wealth is in contrast with His temporal impoverishment. For His poverty began with the manger of Bethlehem. He became poor by the act of incarnation. Being rich in the pre-incarnate, unending life of His higher nature. He became poor in time when He was manifested in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16).

And so, we find that Philippians 2:5-11 is merely a summary of Paul's doctrine of the pre-existent Christ who, sharing fully in the Divine nature and possessing all of the attributes and qualities that make God what He is, did not selfishly choose to remain exclusively in that blessed condition while men and

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20. *The Companion Bible*, Oxford University Press, p. 1775.

21. Warfield, B. B., *The Lord of Glory*, p. 248.

22. Note that uparxon, verse 6, is present tense, NOT aorist.



women continued to be victims of sin and misery, but took into union with His Divine nature a human nature (and that, of course, without losing or modifying His divine nature which is perfect and immutable), became incarnate, accepted the condition of servanthood and then as God clothed in human nature offered Himself as the Substitute for His people. In fulfilling His mission He thus submitted Himself to the prescribed penalty for sin, which is suffering and death.<sup>23 24</sup>

ii. *His Relation to the Father*—Paul served a Messiah who was Lord and Master because of the peculiar relationship He bore to God the Father. Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Because we know God's Son, Christ Jesus, we are enabled to glorify the Father (Rom. 15:6); the Blessed One is described as God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Cor. 1:3; 11:31); Jesus Christ is God the Father's "dear Son" (Col. 1:14); and when the fulness of time was come *God sent forth His Son* to redeem the elect (Gal. 4:4-5). This great gift of God, the gift of His "Own Son" (Rom. 8:3) is shown to be a gift of inestimable value, and we are enjoined to estimate the greatness of the gift by the closeness of the relation indicated (Rom. 8:32).

Romans 5:8-10 brings forth this last point beautifully. Here we are told that scarcely for a righteous man would one die; but God commends *His own* love to us—how? By dying for us Himself while we were yet sinners? No. By *Christ's* dying for us. But how does God commend *His own* love for us by someone else's dying for us? Obviously the relation between Christ and God is thought of as so intimate that Christ's dying is equivalent to God Himself dying. And so, we read further that this Christ is God's Son (v. 10) and His dying for us is to such an extent the pledge of God's love that it carries with it the promise and potency of all good things (v. 10, 11).

23. See Boettner, *Studies in Theology*, p. 147.

24. See Part II of this Chapter.

And so we see that Paul shows the sonship of Christ to be a *peculiar* sonship, not just the "sonship" of creation or adoption. Hence we can assume that the only sonship Paul expected his readers to see in Christ was that of the eternally begotten Son of God the Father. Beast begets beast, man begets man, and God begets God. Hence the Deity of Christ is seen clearly in the great "sonship" passage of Paul, where the Christ of Paul is portrayed vividly as the "only begotten Son" of John 3:16. Now we can understand the interchangeable use of "God" and "Christ" in Romans 5:8. Obviously the relation between Christ and God is thought of as so intimate that Christ's dying is equivalent to God Himself dying.<sup>25 26</sup>

iii. *His Contrast with all Humanity*—Paul served a Messiah, the last Adam, who is in contrast with all manhood as represented in the First Adam (Rom. 5; I Cor. 15). This contrast is physical, psychological, moral, and historical. The *body* of the First Adam was corruptible, and earthly; the *body* of the Last Adam is glorious and incorruptible. The First Adam enjoyed natural life; he was made a living soul. The Last Adam is a supernatural Being, capable of communicating His higher life to others; He is the quickening Spirit. The First Adam was a sinner, and his sin compromised the entire race that sprung from him. The Last Adam sins not; His life is one mighty act of righteousness; and they who are in living communion with Him share in this His righteousness. The historical consequence of the action of the First Adam was death, the death of the body and soul. This consequence is transmitted to his descendants along with his other legacy of transmitted sin. The historical consequence of this action and suffering of the Last Adam is life; and communion with His living righteousness is the assurance to His faithful disciples of a real exemption from the law of sin and death.

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25. See Warfield, B. B., *The Lord of Glory*, p. 252.

26. See Part II of this Chapter.



This train of thought permeates all of Paul's writings. Read, for instance, the opening verses of Romans (Rom. 1:1-4) where the apostle is setting forth the nature and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Note Paul says that Christ "came to be"<sup>27</sup> of the seed of David . . . but He was "designated," "marked out as," "recognized as" (*oristhentos*), the Son of God by His resurrection . . . Obviously, Paul is preserving the idea that Christ's humanity had a definite, historical beginning, while His deity did not.

Or look at the ninth chapter of Romans where Paul, having occasion to mention Christ as sprung from the seed of Israel, at once pauses (as if to give no opportunity for misinterpretation of his meaning) to make plain that Christ came from Israel "as concerning the flesh," but that in reality He is "God over all, blessed forever" (Rom. 9:5). Yes, Paul repeatedly shows Christ to be a real part of the human race, yet he is careful to preserve the fact that Christ is also in real contrast to all humanity.

iv. *His Regenerating Power*—Paul served a Messiah who is the Creator of man and, as such, is able and willing to make His creature over again. The believer in Christ becomes a *new creature* (Gal. 6:14). He is a work of God (Eph. 2:10). He has been created according to a Divine standard (Eph. 4:24), but he is also said to be created IN CHRIST JESUS (Eph. 2:10). Christ is the sphere of the new creation (II Cor. 5:17). The Christian is crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20). He dies with Christ (II Tim. 2:11; Rom. 6:8). He is buried with Christ (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). He is quickened with Christ (Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13). He rises with Christ (Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12; Col. 3:1). He lives with Christ (Rom. 6:8; II Tim. 2:11). He is made to sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6).

These and countless other references to the new life all depend upon a Divine Christ. If Jesus be not truly God, all

27. "genomenou", Aorist participle, denoting point action.

Paul's dissertations regarding regeneration become crude, vapid, worthless, misleading metaphor. How can a man, in Christ, be a new creation if Christ be not the Creator Himself? And how can Christ really be in us, if He is not one with the Omnipresent God? "Surely only He who made the soul can thus sound its depths and dwell within it, and renew its powers, and enlarge its capacities."<sup>28</sup>

v. *All the Attributes of God*—Yes, Paul continually indicated the Deity of his Messiah by emphatically ascribing to Him *all* the attributes of God Himself. No better illustration of this fact can be found than the companion passages of Ephesians 1:20-23 and I Timothy 6:13-16. "Little need be said of these pæans of glorification save to point out that the attributes they ascribe to Christ are the ultimate superlatives of the language, and that nowhere in all Holy Writ have been ascribed to God any more infinite perfections. Particularly should it be noted that in the former text, the power and majesty given to Christ is the gift of God the Father so that it might seem, if the passage were isolated, that God had abdicated His throne in favor of the Son. Only when the triadic formula of the Godhead is apprehended can such lofty ascriptions to Christ be made intelligible, much less understood."<sup>29</sup>

Let us note well that the Apostle Paul does not mention these attributes in a secondary sense such as might be predicted of a creature, but rather in such a sense as to be applicable to God alone. Christ is a Spirit (Phil. 1:20; I Cor. 10:4), infinite (Col. 2:3), eternal (Col. 1:17), and unchangeable (Rom. 9:5), in his being (Eph. 1:10; II Tim. 2:13b), wisdom (Col. 2:3), power (Eph. 1:21; I Cor. 1:18-24), holiness (II Cor. 4:4), justice (II Tim. 4:1; II Cor. 5:10), goodness (Rom. 8:35; Eph. 3:19), and truth (II Cor. 11:10; Eph. 4:15)."<sup>30</sup>

28. Liddon, H. P., *Bampton Lectures*, p. 348.

29. Smith, Geo. H., *I Know in Whom I Have Believed*, p. 15.

30. The reader will note here the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* definition of God.



Christ is omnipotent (Eph. 1:22), omniscient (Col. 2:3), and omnipresent (Eph. 1:22). He has the authority to forgive sins (Col. 1:14), He is the Creator (Col. 1:16-17, I Cor. 8:6), the Author of Salvation (Rom. 6:23; Gal. 3:13), the object of faith (Eph. 1:15), the object of worship and prayer (Rom. 10:13; I Cor. 8:4-6; II Cor. 13:14), the judge of all men (II Cor. 5:10). Dr. Charles Hodge says. "Christ is the God of the apostles and early Christians in the sense that He is the object of all their religious affections. They regarded Him as the person to whom they specially belonged; to whom they were responsible for their moral conduct; to whom they had to account for their sins; for the use of their time and talents. They knew that they were to stand before His judgment seat; that every act, thought, and word of theirs and of every man who shall ever live, was to lie open to His omniscient eye; and that on His decision the destiny of every human soul was to depend. . . . True religion in their view consists not in the love or reverence of God, merely as the Infinite Spirit, the Creator and Preserver of all things, but in the knowledge and love of Christ."<sup>31</sup>

### 3. CHRIST'S DEITY IMPLIED

It would be grossly erroneous to recognize the doctrine of Jesus' Deity only in those passages in Paul's writings which distinctly assert it. For the full proof of Paul's Christology we must look through every passage of his epistles, since the doctrine colors, underlies, and interprets the most characteristic features of his thought and teaching.<sup>32</sup>

See how Jesus' Deity appears before us in every portion of Paul's epistles, even where it is not asserted in so many words. See how Paul continually emphasizes the Divine Glory of Jesus Christ. This doctrine is distributed evenly over the whole text of his epistles. It lies in those greetings by which the apostle

31. Hodge, Charles, *Systematic Theology*, I, 498.

32. Liddon, H. P., *Bampton Lectures*, p. 348.

associates Jesus Christ with God the Father as being the source of the highest spiritual blessings (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; I Thess. 1:1, etc.). He asserts it plainly when he reminds the Galatians that he is an apostle *not from man*, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father (Gal. 1:1). It is implied in the benedictions which the apostle pronounces in the name of Jesus Christ without otherwise naming God (Rom. 16:20, 24; I Cor. 16:23; II Cor. 13:13; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; I Cor. 16:23).

Let us look, for instance, at the most non-doctrinal of all Paul's epistles—those to the Corinthian Christians—and see how the idea of Christ's Deity is pressed home to the believers there. Paul says that there is no foundation upon which men can build other than Jesus Christ (I Cor. 3:2)—not even God, if Christ be other than God. Christ is the solution to all problems of organization (I Cor. 12:27), and morals (I Cor. 6:15), of Christian responsibility (II Cor. 13:5), and of Christian discipline. He delivers to Satan in the name of Christ (I Cor. 5:4, 5), he absolves in the Person of Christ (II Cor. 2:10). One who defames the memorial of Christ brings judgment (*krima*) upon himself (I Cor. 11:29). We can know the glory of God only in the Person of Jesus Christ (II Cor. 4:4). What is the highest intellectual attainment? That every thought be brought into submission to Christ (II Cor. 10:5). What is the highest life to be lived in this world? One of perpetual mortification for the love of Jesus (II Cor. 4:10; II Cor. 12:10).

These are but a few texts, taken at random, from Paul's epistles to the Corinthians. These epistles are almost devoid of doctrinal matter, but deal with certain problems arising in the church. And yet, we see the Deity of our Saviour staring us in the face from nearly every page. Certainly some of these texts, taken alone, do not assert the Deity of Jesus Christ. But put them together; add, as you may, dozens more to their number from these, and the other epistles, and you see the whole body of language before you implying that Christ held



in the mind of Paul the position of very and eternal God. In these epistles it is not the teaching, but the Person and Work of Jesus Christ upon which Paul's eye appears to rest. Christ Himself is in Paul's mind—and the Gospel of Christ . . . " . . . and if Christ be not God, Paul cannot be acquitted of assigning to Him generally a prominence which is inconsistent with serious loyalty to monotheistic truth."<sup>33</sup>

\* \* \* \*

The work of the "Higher" critics has no effect on this composite testimony of Paul. The conclusions drawn here from a study of Paul's Christology do not depend upon one or the other of his epistles. The conception of Jesus embedded in these letters is the same in them all; if they are not all Paul's, they are certainly all Pauline. You may discard any number of them you choose, therefore, as not Paul's own work, and the Deity of Christ shines forth from those that remain.

Let us take the most extreme of all the radical hypotheses concerning the Pauline epistles—the Tuebingen theory, which leaves Paul only four epistles: Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians. In these epistles may be found Paul's witness to the complete Deity of Christ. They tell us, for example:

1. While Jesus was of the seed of David on the side of His flesh, He had another side to His being on which He was the Son of God (Rom. 1:3, 4).

2. As God's Own Son, He was rich before He became poor by taking to Himself the form of flesh (II Cor. 8:9).

3. In His real nature, He is not merely God's Son, but Himself God over all, blessed forever (Rom. 9:5).\*

33. Liddon, H. P., *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 331-332.

\*"Paul goes a step further, and in Romans 9:5 carries a doxological formula, which originally applied to God the Father, over to God the Son: 'who is God over all blessed forever, Amen.' Rom. 9:5a and 9:5b belong structurally and Christologically together as do Rom. 1:3 and 1:4." Stauffer, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testament*, 1947, pp. 94, 263.

*"In the light of the testimony it is impossible to believe that there ever was a different conception of Jesus prevalent in the Church."*

—B. B. WARFIELD<sup>34</sup>

*"A Saviour not quite God is a bridge broken at the farther end."*

—BISHOP MOULE, of Durham

## II. Paul's Answer in Terms of Christ's Death

"Thou art the only Redeemer of the Elect—the sole owner of their life."

### 1. THE EFFICACY OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

The great, all-compelling, all-consuming passion in Paul's heart was not *primarily* the thought of a powerful, ruling king, but rather of a crucified, bleeding, dying Saviour. "But we preach *Christ Crucified* . . ." (I Cor. 1:23), "*for I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified*" (I Cor. 2:2).

Yet, within the picture that Paul paints of a dying Christ is contained a greater proof of His Deity than any other argument that could be presented. For upon His death hinges our whole conception of Jesus Christ. If His death was unnecessary — a mere miscarriage of justice — then the supernatural elements in His Person, life, and resurrection are also of no great importance, and with them His Deity becomes a question which may be admitted or denied, as one sees fit. This is why Paul emphasizes in Romans 3:25-26 the absolute necessity for the death of Jesus Christ in order to vindicate and uphold the character and justice of God. There was no other way whereby at one and the same time "He might be just, and the justifier" of sinners who had broken His Holy laws (Rom. 3:26). Further, the death of Jesus Christ was necessary to show "His (God's) righteousness because of the passing over of the sins

34. Warfield, B. B., *The Lord of Glory*, p. 255.



done aforetime, in the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25, R.V.). Jahweh had required heavy penalty for sins: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4). But Jahweh, in His mercy, had spared the faithful of earlier ages from the penalties which were due them for their sin. He had accepted animal sacrifices as a temporary measure, looking forward to the Great Sacrifice that was to come. But with the death of Jesus Christ, *full payment* was made for these sins, and all those coming under the power of this Great Sacrifice were "justified freely . . . through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

"Upon the Person of the Lord depends the whole interpretation of the cross."<sup>35</sup> Is it possible that this bearer of the sins of all humanity, pictured in the Epistle to the Romans and Galatians can only be a human martyr after all? Why then is the effect of His death so distinct in kind from any which has followed the martyrdom of His other servants? How is it that by dying He has achieved that reconciliation to God which the law of nature and the law of Sinai had failed to secure? Does not the whole representation of the Last Adam in Romans and Corinthians point to a dignity more than human? No *man* can justly die in the place of a sinner; still less could *one innocent man* die in the place of a great many guilty ones. Were the whole race of men to suffer for all eternity in the hottest portion of lowest hell, this would not even atone for *one* sin against Infinite God.<sup>36</sup> Angels could not pay the penalty for sin, for they were not members of the sinful race. Only Infinite God Himself, suffering in human nature to satisfy the claims of His Own just laws, can *justly* take the place of sinners and satisfy the penalties which otherwise must rest on them. Yes, Paul makes it plain that the Saviour that died on the cross for him was none other than God Himself. This is seen most

35. Soltau, J. Stanley, in *Modernism Contrasted with Christianity*.

36. From a sermon by Jonathan Edwards, "Wicked Men Useful in their Destruction Only."

vividly in the little Epistle to Titus. In Chapter 1, verse 3, Paul speaks of "God our Saviour." Yet in the very next verse, he names "the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." Again in Chapter 2, verse 10, Paul speaks of "God our Saviour in all things." Yet he changes his terminology again in verse 13 and says "Our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." This same contrast is repeated in the third chapter, verses four and six. Now *note carefully*: In these three chapters Paul, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, mentions his "Saviour" six times. Three times he names Him as God, and three times he proclaims Him as Jesus Christ. Further, to make it doubly plain, he designates Jesus in one of these verses "Our Great God and Saviour." In fact, as we think on this context, it is worthy to note that the very fact that Paul uses the term "Jesus" in speaking of Christ indicates his belief that He was Jahweh manifest as the Saviour of man—for "Jesus" means literally "Jehovah Saviour" (Matt. 1:21). Hallelujah—what a Saviour!

## 2. THE POWER IN CHRIST'S BLOOD

In the Old Testament age Jahweh had dealt with the believing sinner through the blood sacrifice. God had made it plain that "without shedding of blood is no remission (of sins)" (Heb. 9:22). The blood was God's pattern for cleansing from sin. "The life of the flesh is in the blood. . . . I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11, 14).

Now in God's scheme of things, the value of a sacrifice corresponded to the value of the blood shed in it. And the value of the blood corresponded to the value of the life that was in it. Hence the blood of a bullock was worth more than a sheep, or a goat, because its life was more valuable (Lev. 17:11; 4:3-27). But if this be true, then who can tell the value or power of the blood of Jesus? For Paul tells us plainly that ". . . in *Him* dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"



Col. 2:9), and that the eternal life of the Godhead was carried in His blood (Acts 20:28). The power of that blood is nothing less than the eternal power of God Himself.

No wonder Paul is constantly emphasizing the blood's redeeming power. To the Romans he writes of "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . through faith in his blood" (Rom. 3:24-25), and of "being now justified by his blood" (Rom. 5:9). To the Corinthians he declares that the "cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the Blood of Christ" (I Cor. 10:16). In the Epistle to the Galatians he uses the word "Cross" to convey the same meaning, while in Colossians he writes the two words and speaks of "The Blood of His Cross" (Gal. 6:14; Col. 1:20). He reminds the Ephesians that "we have redemption through His blood," and that we "are made nigh (to God) by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 1:7; 2:13).

Because the sin that besets us has been made powerless through the power of the blood of Christ, we become reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:18; Eph. 2:13-16; Col. 1:20-21). "The wrath of God turns around and hides itself in the depth of divine love."<sup>37</sup> Man is no longer terrified as he compares his own sinfulness with God's infinite righteousness. God's countenance beams with pleasure and approval as the penitent sinner draws near to Him, and He invites him to intimate fellowship. There is nothing now that can separate him from God (Rom. 8:38-39).

Once we are by faith united to Christ and become partakers of this glorious redemption, we become a part of His Own body (Eph. 1:23; 4:15-16; I Cor. 6:15-16, etc.). His precious blood is the life of the new body even as our own blood was the life of the old (I Cor. 10:16). The communion of the flesh and blood of Christ is necessary for all who desire to inherit eternal life. "The Church . . . is his body" (Eph. 1:33); "He is the Head from whom the whole body fitly

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37. Murray, Andrew, *The Power of the Blood of Jesus*, p. 29.

joined together maketh increase of the body" (Eph. 4:15-16). Our bodies are *members* of Christ (I Cor. 6:15-16).

"Can He who is not merely a living soul, but a quickening Spirit; from whom life radiates throughout renewed humanity (Gal. 2:10); from whom there flows a stream of grace more abundant than all the sins of all mankind—can He be only *one* of the race which He thus blesses and saves? And if Jesus is more than human, can anyone suggest a possible intermediate position between humanity and Deity which Paul, with his earnest belief in the God of Israel, could have believed Him to occupy?"<sup>38</sup>

*"The historic faith of the Church, as contained in the Scriptures, is clear, logical, and guaranteed by the character and purposes of God Himself. There alone are to be found assurance and certainty in these days of world-wide uncertainty and upheaval, and therein alone is to be found the hope of the Church and of the human race."*

—J. STANLEY SOLTAU

### III. Conclusion

As we conclude this discussion, the question may be asked, "In view of this great mass of evidence (only a fragment of which was presented in this paper), how can any fair-minded person rise up and say, as do the Unitarians and Modernists, that Christ was not Deity, or that He did not claim Deity?" Paul answers this question in words that cannot be misunderstood, "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3).

Here Paul declares that only by the spiritual insight which the Holy Spirit gives as He regenerates a soul can that soul form a true judgment of the Deity of Christ. No one recognizes Christ as Lord and as *his* Lord unless he has been born

38. Liddon, H. P., *Bampton Lectures*, p. 329.



again. The historical Christ cannot be understood or appreciated apart from an experience of Him in one's life. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that *perish* foolishness; but unto us which are saved, *it* is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18).

In other words, there are two sources of authoritative evidence: one, objective, the other subjective. This *subjective* evidence becomes real only through the supernatural—never through the natural. Hence one, however learned, who has not experienced that miracle called the new birth cannot write adequately on Christ and Christianity, for he does not have access to great areas of pertinent facts. Calvin said, "Those who have been inwardly taught by the Spirit, feel an entire acquiescence in the Scriptures, and that it is self-authenticated, carrying with it its own evidence, and ought not to be made the subject of demonstration and arguments from reason; but it obtains the credit which it deserves with us by the testimony of the Spirit."<sup>39</sup>

It is a fact, duly authenticated, that millions have not only believed in accounts of the Deity of Christ, His resurrection and ascension, but these millions have also known and experienced Him as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, Comforter, Friend, and King of their lives. These, *and these only*, have found that true understanding of the objective evidence concerning Christ's Deity is obtained through the light thrown on it by the subjective, that is, by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Men are continually asking why it is that many great scholars and scientists reject the Deity of Christ. The answer is that they have never met the conditions for knowing the living Christ. The intellectual giant may be a spiritual imbecile, for Paul declares that Christ is spiritually discerned and spiritually appropriated *Only* through the new birth. "Too many people have assumed that one's intellectual acumen fits or qualifies him to write of Christ, His teachings and claims. Christ is experienced only through the supernatural. Take away the supernat-

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39. Calvin, John, *Institutes*, I, vii, 5.

ural, and the very door is closed through which we enter the Christian experience."<sup>40</sup>

Unbelief, then, is not merely lack of intellectual assent growing out of a lack of adequate evidence on the subject, but it is a disease of the mind, of the soul, with its roots going all the way to depraved human personality — perverting the will, the emotions, the judgment, the whole man. The unbeliever, *Whether in the pulpit or out*, who takes pride in rejecting doctrines taught in God's Word, such as the Deity of Christ (while accepting as fact less authentic accounts in other fields of knowledge) fails to realize that his unbelief is due, not to a superior intelligence, but to a lack of supernatural experience upon which hinges all spiritual understanding and blessing, and ultimately *Eternal Life Itself*.

*"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."* I COR. 12:3.

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40. Whitley, C. D., *The Background of Modern Unbelief*.

THE END

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