

## Msg #174 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

*“Is Jesus God, or Just The Son Of God?”*

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about the word of God. Of course, every sermon you've ever heard preached concerns the word of God, but I'd like you to consider, not so much what the word tells us, but rather, that the word of God, is God, and therefore, Jesus, being the Word of God, is also God.

We know that Jesus is the Word of God. This is probably the most important thing that you can know about our Lord and Savior. He is the Word. In the book of John, chapter one, it tells us plainly that Jesus is the Word. And not only that, but it plainly tells us that the Word was present in the beginning. It says that the word was with God then, and that the Word was also God.

Now, think about this. It doesn't just say that Jesus is the Son of God. He certainly is the Son of God, but he is more than that. He is not only Jesus, but he is also God. There are some people who claim that Jesus is not God. No, I'm not just talking about Muslims or Jehovah's Witnesses. Muslims and Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus is not God, but that he was only a good prophet. They do believe he is a son of God, but only in the sense that all of us humans are also sons of God. They do not believe that Jesus is also God. But there are even some who call themselves Christians who cannot perceive that Jesus is God. They think, just like the Muslims and the Jehovah's Witnesses, that Jesus was just a man who was exalted, lifted up, to the status of the Savior of mankind.

However, this first chapter of the book of John, that I just previously referred to, tells us explicitly that the Word was both with God in the beginning and that the word was God. You can't get much more explicit than that. Jesus was not only with God in the beginning, but he was also God himself. John, chapter one, also tells us that the Word, which is Jesus, created all things and that nothing of creation was created except it was created by the Word. Now, we know that God created the heavens and the earth and everything in them, and all creation came into being by God speaking his word. God spoke, and it was done. So if it says in the first chapter of John that Jesus is the Word of God, then it was Jesus, the Word, who created all things in the beginning.

And notice something else. In verse fourteen of John, chapter one, it also says that this Word of God became flesh, and it dwelt among us. Clearly, God himself was manifested in the flesh in the physical form of Jesus Christ.

And here's another thing. Jesus himself claimed to be God. In John 14, we read that Philip, one of Jesus' disciples, asked Jesus to show them the Father. Jesus replied to Philip, saying, "have I been such a long time with you, and yet have you not known me, Philip? He that has seen me has seen the Father; and how can you say then, show us the Father?"

You see, Jesus was trying to explain a spiritual concept to Philip. No, Jesus was not just the Son of God, but in essence he was also God the Father. And, as it says in Deuteronomy 6:4, "The Lord our God is one Lord." In essence, Jesus cannot be God unless he is also one with the Father. Jesus is God, but in order to reveal himself more fully to humans, he became flesh.

Of course, we Christians know Jesus in Spirit. We have a spiritual relationship with him because he dwells in our hearts. He was the earthly manifestation of God, the outward showing of God, revealed to physical man by becoming a physical man. Yet, because he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, he has returned to the heavenly realm of the Spirit. As it says in John 4:24, "God is a Spirit." Jesus Christ is the revelation of God in the earth, and for a time God was able to be seen on Earth in the form of a man.

Now, one more thing. In Matthew, chapter 19, Mark 10, and Luke 18, we have the story of the young ruler who was very rich, and wanted to know how he could inherit eternal life. Of course we know the story of how Jesus told him to sell all that he had and give the money to the poor, and then to come and follow him. The rich young ruler went away sad because he had great possessions and didn't want to give them up. However, there's another part of this story which helps us to understand that Jesus is God. When the rich young ruler first came and knelt before Jesus, he said, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life." Notice that the rich young ruler had call Jesus, Good. And the answer Jesus gave first is especially important. Jesus replied to him, "Why do you call me good? There is no one who is good except God."

Now, first of all, Jesus said explicitly that no one is good except God. Now, let me ask you. Was Jesus good? Can you possibly believe that a man who is perfect, who has never committed

any sin, and who dies for all men's sins, is not perfect? Is it at all possible that Jesus was not to be considered good? Of course he was good. Jesus was not refuting the statement that the rich young ruler made, but was actually trying to make a point. Jesus was trying to get the rich young ruler to realize who he was talking to. Yes, Jesus was good. Therefore, if Jesus was good, and there was no one on earth that was good except God, then evidently Jesus was not only good, but he would therefore necessarily have to be God also. You can't be good without being God, because only God is good. If the rich young ruler could understand who it was he was talking to, he would then automatically realize how he could attain eternal life. Following Jesus is the answer because following Jesus is the same as following God.

Let me give you another scripture. Philippians 2:5-8 says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Notice that these verses first say that Jesus was in the form of God prior to coming to earth. He did not think it was wrong to be equal with God, but yet came to earth in the form of a man, a servant, humbling himself even to the point of death.

You see, he was with God in the beginning, and he was God. And God is God in three persons, yet he is only one God. God himself became a man so that he might suffer the death of the cross in the place of mankind so that we might be saved in spite of our sins. There is no one that is good but God, therefore it took God himself to become a man so that he could use his goodness to overcome the flesh, thereby accomplishing what mankind could never accomplish. He became flesh so that sin could be overcome, so that all who believe in him could have life everlasting. There is no one else who could be good. There is no one else who could have victory over the flesh and be perfectly pure and holy from the filthiness of sin. Jesus was God, made in the form of man, so that he could deliver man from eternal death.

Now, here's another interesting point. Jesus was God, but we are human. God is a spirit, but humans are flesh and blood. In order for God to reveal himself more fully to humans, he became flesh. We humans cannot see God in spirit, but we can see God when he is flesh and blood. Jesus, in the flesh, was just the revealing in outward physical form of God himself. And because physical humans cannot comprehend the spiritual realm very well, God therefore revealed himself through the physical realm.

Of course, we think of the terms, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and automatically we think of three different individuals. But God is one God. He is only one Lord. There isn't three Gods. But in order for God to get us humans to comprehend him, he gave us the terms, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Some people say this is difficult to understand, how God can be three persons, and yet be only one God. But it's not really difficult at all. All we have to do is to realize that God can present

himself in any form he wants to. Meaning that he can present himself as Spirit, or he can present himself as God who thunders from the top of Mt. Sinai, or as God the man, the babe born in a manger and growing up in flesh and blood. God must then use terms to differentiate between God as a being in heaven, or as God who is a Spirit and causes miracles to take place, or as God who is on earth in the form of flesh and blood.

And God has done this, using the terms, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to describe himself in three different aspects for the sake of us humans. These terms, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, help us to understand which aspect of God to focus on in a given situation. As God the Father, God is seen as the authority over his Holy Spirit and over his body. As God the Holy Spirit, he is seen as the God who moves men to righteousness by conversing with them and guiding them according to God the Father's will. As God the Son, he appears in the flesh, and humbles himself to the Father, meaning that he becomes the obedient servant to authority, just as a son is obedient to the authority of any father.

And here's something else that will make this all more easily understood. You and I are also one. We are one being, each of us. No one can say that you are two or three people because you know for certain that there is only one of you. But, like God, you can be described in three different ways, depending on which part of you people want to focus on. You also, just like God, have a father part of you which is responsible for controlling how your spirit moves in you and how your body responds. Just as a father will be the authority over a son, your mind is the controlling factor which controls your spirit or body. That's why we refer to God the Father when we are focusing on the heavenly aspect of God. It is easier to understand God's behavior and influence from a heavenly perspective if we give the heavenly perspective a different name than the earthly perspective. Jesus was the earthly perspective of God, and in order to understand which aspect of God we are focusing on, the Bible calls him Jesus. When we use the term, God the Son, or Jesus, we easily understand that we are looking at God in the perspective of his earthly work. Jesus, on earth, was God revealed in the flesh, but in the flesh God was not giving orders, but was obeying the orders. Father and Son are just the terms used to differentiate between God's heavenly perspective and his earthly perspective. And, by having the earthly perspective in the form of Jesus, we humans can more easily understand the workings of God.

The life of Jesus enables physical human beings to comprehend the things of God more fully. And when we see God walking on the earth, we refer to that perspective as the Son of God, rather than God the Father, because we aren't focusing on God's actions, as those coming from heaven, but as those actions and words which are in response to heaven. Jesus, being God in the form of flesh and blood, helps us to recognize the qualities that should be present in humans if they were perfectly in accord with God himself. Jesus is the revelation of God in earthly perspective.

Now, once again, take a look at yourself. You know that your body doesn't tell your mind what to think. It is your mind that directs your body. And the reason that your mind directs your body is because your mind is the sum total of your thoughts, beliefs, and convictions. Your father part

of you is the authority part of you because it is the part of you that has your knowledge. Your body part of you is the obedient part of you because it is the part of you that responds to your knowledge just as a son responds to his father's knowledge. And in this way you are like God, in that you have thoughts, beliefs, and convictions, and you also have a body that will respond to those thoughts, beliefs, and convictions. And you are even more like God because you have a spirit, just as God has a spirit. Of course, God's spirit is the Holy Spirit, because it is a good spirit. Your spirit might be either good or bad, depending on the situation, and also depending on whether or not you have accepted God's sacrifice for you and been given a new spirit.

The Spirit of God is also God, just as much as the Father and the Son are God. Yet, here again, the Holy Spirit is a term used in scripture when we are focused on the perspective of God's power. It is the Holy Spirit which is referred to when miracles are performed. Even in Genesis, the creation was a result of God's Spirit moving on the face of the waters. The New Testament also shows the Holy Spirit as the power of God. The Holy Spirit is also the liaison between God in heaven and man on the earth. It is the Holy Spirit that Jesus said was responsible for the miracles he did. It was the Holy Spirit that would be our comforter. It was the Holy Spirit who would also be our guide into all truth. Now of course, God is the truth. He is the word, and he is the power. But, by recognizing God in three different aspects, we can more fully understand God.

And notice something else. God, who is one God, will also dwell in us. Not only is the Holy Spirit given to every man, but as Jesus says, both the Father and him will abide in us. Jesus will come to us, and God will come to us, and the Holy Spirit will also be in us. Yet, God is one God. He is one Lord. And God the Father will dwell in us, being our authority. God the Son will dwell in us, being our example. And God the Holy Spirit will dwell in us, being the liaison between spirit and flesh, the interpreter of God's thoughts, which will bring understanding to men. And this same Holy Spirit will also move our hearts, reveal God's truth, and direct our paths. And most importantly, the Holy Spirit will also be the power of God which enables us to be obedient to God, and to accomplish God's will.

Even Jesus only accomplished the will of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. It was the Spirit of God, given without measure to him, that enabled him to accomplish God's will. In this same sense, we also have the Holy Spirit in order to enable us and to accomplish God's will. However, in us it is a little bit different. We don't have the Holy Spirit of God without measure. If we did, we could do all miracles, and know all things. But the Bible says in John 3:34 that God did not give the Holy Spirit to Jesus by measure. To Jesus, God gave the Holy Spirit without measure, and by this fulness of the Holy Spirit Jesus could accomplish the complete and perfect will of God. As humans, we are still hindered by our flesh, and by only having a measure of the Holy Spirit. But just as God the Father and God the Son are united in the same Spirit, so are we united in our body and mind by our spirit. The important thing to remember though is that our spirit must be a new spirit that is given by Jesus Christ. He has put a new spirit within us, and he and the Father have come to dwell with us.

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God has revealed himself to us, allowing us to comprehend him in three ways; by his heavenly authority, by his power, and by his perfect example. God is good, because the Father is truth. God is good because his Holy Spirit accomplishes God's truth. And God is good because the example of Jesus reveals the perfection of Truth. And considering this, you and I are not good, in the sense of our being flesh and blood, for we are not God. Only God is good. However, when we become born again in spirit, we then become good in spirit because we have put off the old man of the flesh and put on the perfect Godly example of Jesus Christ. No, we are still not completely free of the flesh or of its temptations, but we are born again in spirit and therefore are righteous in spirit. We are still sinners in the flesh, but because we are born again in spirit we are now spirit beings, and therefore the sin that sometimes occurs in our flesh is no longer attributable to us.

Without the example of Jesus, God could never have shown us so clearly what we can become when we are finally rid of our flesh and secured in his body. When we have come to see God's earthly example, we finally realize what is expected of us. However, we are still locked within these fleshly bodies, and therefore sin is still taking place. But as the apostle Paul explains, now it is no longer we who are sinning, but sin is being accomplished in our flesh. We are no longer considered as sinners though, because we are no longer flesh but are now born again spirit men. Sin is still taking occasion by our flesh, but sin is not taking place in our hearts, and therefore we are not accounted as sinners, but accounted as righteous. Our flesh is condemned because of sin, but we are still alive through Jesus Christ. Our earthly body may go to the grave, but we will not lose our eternal lives because we have an abode in the body of Christ. We may lose our fleshly body for the time being, but we are alive in Christ as members of his body. We have put on Christ. We are alive in him.

You and I can be seen from three perspectives; soul, spirit, and body. God can also be seen from three perspectives, soul, spirit, and body. But to say that the body of God is not God is like saying that your body is not you. If someone were to say that your body was not really you, you would laugh at them. You know certainly that without your body nobody would be able to see you or comprehend you. You also know that without your body you would have no way to show people what you think, what you believe, or especially how strongly you feel about something. Our bodies are part of us, and without them, no one can understand us or perceive us. No one could comprehend us. But in the same sense, our bodies give people understanding of who we really are. We are, each of us, an existing being. We exist. We are a living being. Our bodies attest to that. In the same way, God is alive. He exists. He is a living being, and his body, Jesus Christ, attests to that. To say that Jesus is not God is like saying that God's body is not him. That would be the same thing as saying that your body is not you. Don't let someone fool you that way.