

Text

Various

Reading – John 1:1-18

From the 1689 - Paragraph 2

The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with him who made the world, who upholdeth and governeth all things he hath made, **[Deity of Christ]**

did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin;

[Humanity of Christ]

being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her; and the power of the Most High overshadowing her; and so was made of a woman of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David according to the Scriptures; **[Virgin Birth]**

so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion; which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.

[Incarnation/Hypostatic Union - Nicæan Creed]

Main Point

The Son Worthy of Worship

Introduction (300)

Hook

Some people say they follow and love Jesus, but which Jesus do they follow and love? You may know family or friends who say they follow and love Jesus, but you are not sure it is the same Jesus you follow.

Let me put it this way: Which Jesus do you follow and Love?

A Jesus of your own making?

A Jesus that fits into your box?

A Jesus that conforms to your understanding?

A Jesus that can be rationalized?

Is the Jesus you follow and love fit to Worship? Is He worthy of worship?

If he is not worthy of worship, he is not the Jesus of the Bible.

God created us to worship Him. He revealed himself so that we could worship Him. In the Person of Jesus Christ God has revealed himself like no other way. In Jesus Christ we have been revealed the Second Person of the Triune God.

Today I want us to think about the Deity of Christ in light of our worship. The truth of the Deity of Christ is much more than a mere set of facts to be understood and believed. No the deity of Christ should captivate our hearts, fill our hearts with awe and cause our whole being to bow down and worship Him.

Jesus is very God of very God. Creator and sustainer. Holy and perfect. Worthy of all worship and adoration.

From the 1689

As you know we have embarked on a study following the outline of chapter 8 of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. The topic of this chapter is Christ the Mediator.

Today we are springboarding from the first portion of the second paragraph which confesses the deity of Christ. This portion says:

The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with him who made the world, who upholdeth and governeth all things he hath made, [Deity of Christ]

The paragraph continues to affirm the Humanity of Christ, the Virgin Birth and the Incarnation.

We will discuss these glorious and mind-bending truths in later studies, but tonight, we are focusing on the Deity of Christ.

And specifically, how Jesus is Worthy of our Worship.

Outline

To help our cold and hard hearts grapple with these glorious truths I want us to focus on one passage from which shines forth the glory of the divinity of Christ. There are many others in the Bible, but for tonight we will focus on Mark 2:3-11.

In this passage, we will look at five ways the deity of Christ is proclaimed.

First, we will see that Jesus forgives sins,

then the fact that people place their faith in him,
thirdly we will see the implication of Jesus knowing the thoughts of his listeners,
fourth we will consider the title “Son of Man”
and finally, what the healing in this specific passage implies.

All of these things proclaiming the deity of Jesus and inspiring worship.

Part 1 – Mark 2:3-11

Exposition

So let us begin by looking at our passage.

Please turn with me to Mark 2:3-11.

I am sure you know the context well. Jesus is just beginning his public ministry, he has spent some time in the region of Galilee and now returns to the city of Capernaum which becomes his base camp. People come to hear him preach (some to learn and some to criticize), but people also come in the hopes of being healed, because the stories have spread that this teacher can do miracles... And so our passage picks up

³And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. ⁵And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸ And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’?

¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.”

¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”

Only God can forgives sin

There is a lot we can learn from this passage, but as we think about the deity of Jesus, the first thing to highlight is that Jesus forgives sin.

⁵ And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Now the scribes rightly are alarmed by this. Red flags go up in their minds. In verses 6 and 7 the narrative continues

⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

And they are right. If Jesus was a mere man, to say sin is forgiven would be blaspheme. They are dead right *“Only God can forgive sin”*.

And it is not just a question of authority and legality. True, only God has the authority to clean our legal record of sins, but it is also deeply personal.

Illustration of TB forgiveness from wife

Think of it this way. There are times when I say or act in a certain way that is not loving towards my wife. And when those times are brought to my attention, by God’s grace, I know I need to ask for forgiveness from my wife.

But imagine how strange it would be if someone called me up and said “Thomas, your misbehaviour against your wife is all forgiven.”

That would make no sense whatsoever because it is against my wife that I have misbehaved and only **she** has the right to forgive me or not. It is not a legal issue but a personal one.

Jesus forgives sin makes him God

And similarly, when we sin, when we break God’s law it is first and foremost a personal affront against Him. And therefore, only God has the right to extend forgiveness.

And yet Jesus boldly proclaims *“Son, your sins are forgiven”*. There is no deferred authority here. He is speaking the very words of God as God. And doing the very actions of God as God. He does not seek to clarify with the scribes “I’m just speaking on behalf of God”.

No, in fact he makes a point of underscoring that this forgiveness comes from his own authority. Yes only God can forgive sin and he boldly and unashamedly forgives sin.

Faith in Jesus

But notice something else in verse 5 which is striking. *Jesus saw their faith*. These men, and specifically the paralytic were hoping, trusting, relying, believing that Jesus could help them. You can imagine in the midst of the despair a spark of hope, entirely kindled by Jesus. Were they placing their faith in a mere man?

Now if Jesus was a mere man would that have been good? Listen to how God speaks of placing our trust or our faith in men.

Jeremiah 17:5-6

⁵ Thus says the Lord:

*“Cursed is the man who trusts in man
and makes flesh his strength,^[a]
whose heart turns away from the Lord.*

*⁶ He is like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see any good come.
He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.*

*⁷ “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.*

But the paralyzed man is not cursed. Before he had faith in Jesus he would have been described as “*a shrub in the desert*” or “*a parched places of the wilderness*”. But he goes away happy. He goes away blessed because he put his faith in Jesus. You can see the echo of verse 7 in this whole story of the paralytic

*⁷ “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.*

And this should speak to each and every one of us. The very basis of being a Christian is to Trust in Jesus for salvation. If He was a mere man then we are cursed, not only because our hope is misplaced, but because God condemns it.

But as this passage depicts and many others, Jesus is no mere man, Jesus is God incarnate. To trust in Jesus is to trust in the Lord.

And those who trust in Jesus are truly blessed, because they know that their sins have been paid for, and that God forgives the offence we have done against him.

When you trust that Jesus has paid for your sins, He too says to you *“Son/Daughter, your sins are forgiven.”*

And he says that, not as a mere man, but as God incarnate and so we can know, deep down in our souls that our relationship with God is repaired, our debt is paid and our place in heaven is sure.

Jesus Knows their thoughts

But those are just two things that declare the deity of Jesus in this passage. Let us look at another one. Notice verse 8:

⁸ And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in your hearts?”

Mark tells us that Jesus knew what the scribes were thinking and stewing about. And the text makes it clear that he was not just deducing what he assumed they were thinking and by chance he guessed right.

The text tells us that He “*perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves*”.

He knows what is going on in their hearts.

Another verse which makes this point is John 2:24-25. Let me read it for us:

²⁴ But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people ²⁵ and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

This is a knowledge much deeper than even the prophets and apostles had. Jesus knew what was in man.

He knows the hearts of men.

Now cross reference that stunning thought with Jeremiah 17:9-10

*⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately sick;
who can understand it?*

*¹⁰ “I the Lord search the heart
and test the mind,^[b]
to give every man according to his ways,
according to the fruit of his deeds.”*

Jeremiah is saying that we don’t even know our own heart, but the Lord knows. Jeremiah is saying, only the Lord knows the heart and minds of men.

From these verses and others similar we see that Jesus knows in a way that is only true to God.

He know things which are impossible for a mere man to know. In fact he knows things that only God knows.

Jesus also has this attribute of unlimited knowledge which is only true of God.

So in seeing that Jesus knows the hearts of the scribes, and the faith of the men, we see this as a declaration of the deity of Jesus.

Son of Man

But the passage does not stop there. There are two more things which proclaim the deity of Jesus. In verse 9 we read

*⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the **Son of Man** has authority on earth to forgive sins”— he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.”*

We will talk about the healing soon, but notice what Jesus calls himself. He calls himself “Son of Man”. Now this may mean nothing to you, but **Son of Man** is a loaded term. The minds of the Scribes would have gone straight to a prophecy given by Daniel.

In Daniel 7:13-14 we read of a glorious vision of heaven that Daniel saw where the title “son of man” originates from.

In Dan 7:13-14 we read

*¹³ “I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like **a son of man**,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.
¹⁴ And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,*

*that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.*

So notice what the title “Son of Man” implies. Notice how loaded this title is. It is talking of one who has heavenly origin, one who has dominion and glory. One who has ultimate power and authority. One who has a kingdom that will never end.

If forgiving sins was not enough, he then calls himself the “Son of Man”. One who comes from heaven with power and authority, one who is from **eternity**.

Heals the Sick

Of course all of these words would hold little weight in their own right. Any charlatan can claim to forgive your sins. Any person trying to promote themselves can claim to be “the Son of Man” and some may believe them. But Jesus is willing to prove his authority. He is willing to set up a humanly impossible challenge for himself, in order to reveal his authority. He is no charlatan. He is no mere man.

And so in verse 9 He sets up his challenge:

⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” ¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all,

The purpose of this healing is explicit. Jesus is declaring: I have the authority to forgive sin. I have the right to forgive sin. I am the son of man. I am worthy of your faith and your trust.

In healing this paralytic, Jesus is declaring that He is God incarnate.

Application

Initial reaction to deity

When we ponder the deity of Christ, what is your reaction? What is your initial reaction when you think that Jesus can forgive your sins. That he knows your very thoughts. That he has heavenly origin, power, authority, glory, and eternal existence? That he can heal the sick from his own authority and power.

In this passage we see how the people in Jesus' day reacted to the declaration of Jesus' Deity. At the end of verse 12 we read:

so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

They were amazed, they were in awe, they were in wonder of what had just happened.

And what more they glorified God. They worshiped God. They praised God.

Not just an academic exercise

Now, there is a time to ponder how his deity and humanity work together. A time to bring genuine questions about this incomprehensible reality. The Bible reveals much to us and we will spend more time exploring what we can know.

But the time for objections should be short and fleeting compared to the time we spend in wonder, amazement, and worship. Let us remember that we are the creature and He is the creator. In humility we can learn much about his Majesty, but we must not think that we can force Him to fit into our feeble and finite mind.

Let us not turn into foolish debate what should inspire our hearts to worship.

Jesus is God incarnate and he is worthy of worship.

Worship Him and nothing else

Let him capture your heart and your affections. Let him be the centre of your life. Let him be the one thing that consumes you and drives you.

We were created to worship. That is how God made us. And our Lord Jesus is worthy of our worship. The question is not do you worship, the question is what do you worship?

John Calvin rightly said, *"The human heart is a perpetual idol factory"*. If Jesus is not the object of your worship something else will be. If Jesus is not on the throne of your heart, something else will be.

Either your thoughts and actions will be governed by a love for Christ, a desire to please him and be like him.

Or your thoughts and actions will be governed by a desire for happiness, a desire for pleasure, a desire to be accepted, a desire to be entertained, a desire to be wealthy, a desire to be married, a desire to be fit and strong, a desire to have no more troubles or whatever else you may desire.

Now all these things are not evil in their own right, and some are worthy of pursuit, but when these or anything take the place of Jesus in your heart they become idols. When you are willing to sin to get these things, they become idols. Don't let these idols entice you. Don't let these things capture your awe.

Instead, be amazed, be in awe, of Our Lord Jesus Christ and worship him.

Conclusion

We were created to worship God, but sin made us worshipers of ourselves and of created things. The majesty and glory of God became dark to us. We are made to worship God but unable to worship Him.

But God in his kindness and wisdom, did not leave us in the dark. He revealed himself to us through the person of Jesus Christ. To see him is to see God. To read of him is to read of God. To worship him is to worship God. Jesus is worthy of worship.

Let me close with the praise of the saints as they worship the Son, the Lamb of God. Rev 5:12-13

*“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!”*

~~*¹³And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth
and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in
them, saying,*~~

*“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and
ever!”*

~~*¹⁴And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped.*~~

Let us pray