

# G R A C E

Reformed Baptist Church

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## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

### Sermon Notes

#### *The Father and the Son*

John 5:18-24

February 27, 2005

“Nowhere else in the Gospels do we find our Lord making such a formal, systematic, orderly, regular statement of His own unity with the Father, His divine commission and authority, and the proofs of His Messiahship, as we find in this discourse.”  
J.C. Ryle

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- The **TRINITY**
  - God eternally exists as three *distinct* persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.

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- **John 1:1**
  - Three Spiritual Truths:
    - 1.) **Logos existed before Creation began**
      - “was” in the Greek – *en* and *egeneto*
      - *en* : an ongoing existence (This is used in John 1:1)
        - “It [*en*] is a timeless word – that is, it simply points to existence before the present time without reference to a point of origin.” James White
      - *egeneto* : something that has come into being or existence
      - John 8:58
        - Before Abraham was born, “I am”
      - ‘Although the meanings of *en* (“was”) and *egeneto* (rendered “were made” in verse 3, and “came” in verse 6 and “became” in verse 14) often overlap, John repeatedly uses the two verbs side by side to establish something of a contrast. For example, in 8:58 Jesus insists, “[Before] Abraham *was born* [a form of the second verb], *I am* [a form of the first verb].” In other words, when John uses the two verbs in the same context, *en* frequently signals existence, whereas *egeneto* signals “coming into being” or “coming into use.” ***In the beginning, the Word was already in existence.*** Stretch our imagination backward as we will, we can find no point in time where we may agree with Arius, who, speaking of the Word, said, “There was once when he was not.” D.A. Carson

**2.) Relational difference between Logos and God**

- “and the Word was with God and the Word was with God”
- There is a *relational difference* between the Word and God (the Father)
- *προς* (*pros*) - “with” in the English – the Word was with God
- *pros* (as opposed to *meta* [μετα]) often means “to” or “towards”
- “The Greek word *pros* means ‘to be in company with someone’ or to be ‘face-to-face.’ It speaks of communion, interaction, fellowship. Remember that this is an eternal fellowship, a timeless relationship...[the structure of this sentence] presents a plane of equality and intimacy, face to face with each other.” James White
- Jesus is distinguishable from God, but of the **same substance**

**3.) There was unity with between the Word and God**

- The Word *was* God
- “The Word was God. Here the word ‘God’ is without the article in the original. When it is used in this way, it refers to the divine essence. Emphasis is upon the quality or character. Thus, John teaches us here that our Lord is essentially Deity. He possesses the same essence as God the Father, is one with Him in nature and attributes. Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter, the teacher, is Very God.” Kenneth Wuest
- In the phrase “The Word was God,” there is no article before “God.”
  - “The effect of ordering the words this way is to emphasize ‘God,’ as if John were saying, ‘and the word was *God!*’ In fact, if John had included the article, he would have been so identifying the Word with God that no divine being could exist apart from the Word... The ‘Word does not by Himself make up the entire Godhead; nevertheless the divinity that belongs to the rest of the Godhead belongs also to Him. The Word *was* with God, God’s eternal Fellow; the Word *was* God, God’s own Self.” D.A. Carson

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**Verse 18**

- The Jews were seeking to kill Jesus because He: (1) claimed equality with the Father, and (2) broke the Sabbath (according to rabbinical tradition) willfully
- **How did the Jews fundamentally misunderstand Jesus’ equality with the Father?**
- Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ from the Father in His \_\_\_\_\_, yet he is the same in \_\_\_\_\_.

## Verse 19

- *The Son can do nothing of Himself*
  - This is a statement of **ability**
    - The Greek word δυναμει, *dunamai*
  - In other words, “The Son **is not able to do anything** of Himself”
  - Does this truth diminish the omnipotence of the Son?
  - The phrase *of Himself* may be better translated “**on His own initiate**”
  - **In other words, every action of the Son reflects His perfect union with and submission to the Father**
  - “Though he is the unique Son of God, and may truly be called God (1:1, 18; 20:28) and take to Himself divine titles (8:58) and, as in this context, divine rights (5:17), yet is he always submissive to the Father.” D.A. Carson
  - What type of subordination does this reveal? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- *The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something **He sees** the Father doing*
  - Why is so significant – that the Son **sees** the Father?
  - **Scripture states that NO ONE has seen the Father (God)**
    - Exodus 33:20; John 1:18; John 6:46; 1 John 4:12
  - In the Fourth Century, a heresy arose, called Arianism, that taught that Jesus Christ was a created being. Arians believed that God was unchangeable, unique, and unknowable. Therefore, they concluded, “no substance of God could in any way be communicated or shared with any other being...since God was immutable (unchangeable) and unknowable, Christ had to be a created being, made out of nothing by God.” *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*
  - However, The Son “has seen the Father” (John 6:46) and **was** (and is) **God** (John 1:1).
  - John 1:1 states, “the Word was *with* (pros) God”
    - The word Greek word *pros* can mean “towards”

- John 1:18 states, “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”
  - The word here for *explained* is **exegeted**
  - Jesus has exegeted the Father
  - It is through Jesus Christ that we know the Father
  
- *For whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner*
  - This passage reflects the **perfect union** of the Father and the Son
  - “John often reverts to the thought of Jesus’ close relationship to the Father (6:57; 7:16; 8:26, 38; 10:30; 14:9-10, etc.). The implication is that the authority with which He teaches and acts is nothing less than the authority of God.”  
Leon Morris
  - This is truly **perfect Sonship**
  
- Hebrews 1:3 states, “And He [the Son] is the radiance of His [the Father’s] glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”
  - Jesus Christ, the Son, is the **exact representation**
  - The Greek word here is *χαρακτηρ* (character)
    - “the exact expression (the image) of any person or thing, marked likeness, precise reproduction in every respect”
    - In other words, the writer in Hebrews is NOT saying that Jesus Christ is like a photocopy of the Father; rather, he is stating that Jesus Christ is like an electronic copy (of a file) of the Father – an EXACT representation (NOTE: This is an analogy - I know this, like all analogies, will fall apart)

## Verse 20

- *The Father loves the Son*
  - The verb here for *love* (φιλεω) is in the present tense
    - This tense denotes a continuous, habitual love that never ceases
  
- *and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing*

- The verb for *shows* is also in the present tense

- **How does the Father show His love for the Son?**

- **How does the Son show His love for the Father?**

“If the Father out of love for His Son shows Him all He does, and the Son in consequence and out of love for His Father obeys Him perfectly and does whatever the Father does, such that people observe the Son and wonder at what He does, then two important truths follow:”

- 1) The Son by His obedience to His Father is acting in such a way that He is *revealing* the Father, doing the Father’s deeds, performing the Father’s will. The Son is ‘exegeting’ or ‘narrating’ the Father.
- 2) This marvelous disclosure of the nature and character of God utterly depends, in the first instance, not on God’s love of us, but on the love of the Father for the Son and on the love of the Son for the Father.

Carson

- NOTE: Since Jesus is stating that a) He has seen God, and b) the Father shows Him **all** the things that He Himself is doing, then Jesus must be claiming equality with God.

- *and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel*

- greater works than **these**

- Likely, here Jesus is referring to His healing of physical diseases and ailments (as seen with the man at the pools of Bethesda)

- **greater works** than these

- Jesus will give (spiritual) life to the dead, and pronounce judgment in the eschaton

- *so that you will marvel.*

- Jesus is addressing the Jews – His enemies

- Therefore, He is stating that **through** these greater works, they will marvel

- However, **when** could these events take place?

## Verse 21

- *For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life*
  - The Old Testament indicates that only God can raise the dead:
    - “See now that I, I am He,  
And there is no god besides Me;  
It is I who put to death and give life  
I have wounded and it is I who heal,  
And there is no one who can deliver from My hand.” Deuteronomy 32:39
    - “The LORD kills and makes alive;  
He brings down to Sheol and raises up.” 1 Samuel 2:6
    - “Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life” 2 Kings 5:7
  - One ancient Rabbi stated that God possesses three keys that He gave to NO representative:
    - (1) The key of rain (Deuteronomy 28:12)
    - (2) The key of the womb (Genesis 30:22)
    - (3) The key of the resurrection of the dead (Ezekiel 37:13)
- *even so the Son also give life*
  - Jesus is claiming for Himself **authority** that is restricted to God
  - Jesus is here revealing His equality with the Father
    - “He [Jesus] does not claim simply to be an instrument in God’s hand for restoring the dead to life, as Elijah and Elisha were; he asserts that authority has been given him to raise the dead not merely to a resumption of this mortal life but to the life of the age to come.”  
F.F. Bruce
    - In other words, this is an **eschatological resurrection** that Jesus is referring to
- *to whom He wishes*
  - Just as Jesus chose the lame man out of the multitude around the twin pools of Bethesda, He chooses the ones He will give life to

- “The Son gives life where He chooses, not where people choose.” Morris
- This underscores the Evangelist’s words previously in John 1:4: “In Him was life...”

## Verse 22

- *For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son*
  - In the Old Testament, God, as with the resurrection, is seen as the Judge (Genesis 18:25); yet Jesus Christ, here, is claiming such authority
  - “The Father and the Son both enjoy the prerogative of giving life, *for* the Father has determined that it will not be his direct task to judge anyone, but has instead entrusted all judgment to the Son. **Seen in this light, the authority to give resurrection life is the entailment of the authority to judge on the last day.**” Carson
  - “Christ is our Judge, and He uses no jury” Anonymous
  - In the eschaton (the last day), Christ will be the Judge (Revelation 20:11-15)
  - Does Verse 22 contradict John 3:17? Why or why not?

## Verse 23

- *so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.*
  - The reason why the Father has revealed Himself to the Son (19-20), given Him the authority to give resurrection life (21), and given Him the authority to judge (22) is **so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father.**
  - Jesus is claiming that He is worthy of the same honor the Father is
  - Read Isaiah 45:22-23 and Philippians 2:9-11
    - “When the Son is exalted, the Father is glorified. So here the honoring of the Son is the Father’s good pleasure.” Bruce
  - To dishonor the Son is to dishonor the Father – the One who sent Him

- NOTICE: Although the Father sent the Son, and therefore, the Son is, to some degree, an ambassador, or representative of the Father, Christ is much more, for **NEVER is the ambassador worthy of the same honor as the Head of State**
- Because of the intimacy and perfect union of the Father and Son, the statement in Verse 23 does not contradict Isaiah 42:8, “I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another...”

#### Verse 24

- *Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.*
  - What must I do to inherit eternal life?
    - *He who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me*
    - Notice the significance of **hearing** the **words of Christ**
      - “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” Romans 10:17
    - “Hearing in this context, as often elsewhere, includes belief and obedience.” Carson
    - However, in order to **hear**, we must first be \_\_\_\_\_.
  - In short, in order to inherit eternal life, “**Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ**”
  - Why, because He has the authority to resurrect and judge. He is God.
  - Finally, it is clear that **Eternal life begins NOW!**