

An Attempt To Listen To God

The Trinity
The Deity of Our Lord
Part 3

By

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Continued from The Deity of Our Lord - Part 2

His Deity Is Evidenced By His Words, The Exclusiveness Of His Declarations

His Declarations:

- a) He declared power to transcend the Mosaic law:
 - i) In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-7:29) and after the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:21-5:44), the Lord makes mention of six passages from the Old Testament law and declares His authority over them. It is all too easy to read the passage and miss the reality of the greatness of the speaker, and that which He is doing each time He says: "But I say unto you". When God gave the law at Mount Sinai, it was a frightening experience, and all were made aware that they were in the presence of God. At that time Moses quaked, the multitude trembled, and the mount quaked (Ex. 19:16, 18; Heb. 12:21), for God was about to speak. The Lord is giving a sermon and He does not speak as Haggai being "the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message" (Hag. 1:13), nor as a prophet saying: "Thus saith the Lord" (Ex. 8:20; 2 Sam. 7:5; Jer. 7:20, 21). He begins His comments with the word "But". What manner of man is He that would repeat the commands of God and then say "But"? Then, if that was not sufficient, He then added: "I say unto you". Furthermore, He says it repeatedly! This is an either or situation. Either He is a blasphemer or He is the equal with God in moral adjudication's. Moses debated with God but never said: "But I say unto you".
 1. He says repeatedly:
 - (a) It was said by them of old time:
 - (i) "Thou shalt not kill . . . But I say unto you" (Matt. 5:21-22)
 - (ii) "Thou shalt not commit adultery . . . But I say unto you" (Matt. 5:27-28)
 - (iii) "Thou shalt not forswear thyself . . . But I say unto you" (Matt. 5:33-34)
 - (b) It hath been said:
 - (i) "Whosoever shall put away his wife . . . But I say unto you" (Matt. 5:31-32)
 - (ii) "An eye for an eye . . . But I say unto you" (Matt. 5:38-39)
 - (iii) "Thou shalt love thy neighbor . . . But I say unto you" (Matt. 5:43-44)
 - c) Then add to this the absoluteness of His statements when He at other times said: "But I say unto you":
 - (i) "But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. 11:24). How would He know there were degrees of punishment in Hell and the finality of the adjudication? It would be impossible had God not committed all judgement to Him because He is the Son of Man (Jn. 5:22, 27).
 - d) Now this carpenter of Nazareth says six times over: "But I say unto you", and on first appearance seems to do that which the Pharisees do by adding to the law. He is not adding to it, but fulfilling the law (Matt. 5:17), that is, "fill it out", showing that living by the law was more than external functioning. Who, but one who is deity, would dare to give an exposition of that which God had said, saying in effect: "When God gave this command, this is what was meant and How He intended it to be taken, not dead formal external but in the heart, mind and motive".
 2. Looking at another expression He said: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do" (Jn. 14:13). This is an unconditional promise given to us, and for Him to fulfill that promise necessitates:
 - (a) Omnipotence to fulfill the request
 - (b) Omniscience to know the motive for the request and know who was asking.
 - (i) Who but deity could make such a pledge? In our own strength we cannot give an unconditional promise on anything, only God could do that.

3. Again, He unilaterally declared His own pre-existence. None of us really came into the world for all our forefathers came from Adam who was created from the dust of this world. Consequently, none of us had a pre-existence before conception. Yet, the Lord speaks not of His pre-birth, post conception period, but of pre-conception, and going beyond that, He does not declare that He had a beginning but insists that He is eternal! Clearly, none but one who is deity could in truth declare such facts. Taking two expressions:
 - (a) He “came down from Heaven” (Jn 3:13), but there was more, for He who is “the Truth” (Jn. 14:6), and the “Faithful and true witness” (Rev. 3:14; 19:11) also declared that:
 - (i) He came out from God:
 - (1) Jesus said unto them: “If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me” (Jn. 8:42)
 - (2) “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God” (Jn. 13:3)
 - (3) “For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God” (Jn. 16:27)
 - (4) “Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God” (Jn. 16:36)
 - (ii) He was sent by God:
 - (1) “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (Jn. 3:17)
 - (iii) He was sent by the Father:
 - (1) “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God” (Jn. 10:3)
 - (b) He also said: “Before Abraham was, I am” (Jn. 8:58). This was a clear indication of His eternity, for none but God could say: “I am”, indicating permanent and unchangeable existence.
- b) He declared to have mastery over all the dead. It was not only His own death and the overcoming of it by resurrection, but “all”. There is not a cemetery in the world, not a river or ocean where ashes have been cast, that He is incapable of resurrecting that individual.
 - i) His own death:
 1. Speaking to those in the temple He said: “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up” (Jn. 2:19)
 2. Again He said: “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” (Jn. 10:18)
 - ii) All humanity:
 1. “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.” (Jn. 5:28)
 - (a) Those who rose after the Lord arose (Matt. 27:52)
 - (b) The saints of this age (1 Thess. 4:14)
 - (c) The Old Testament believers, a question I have yet to hear a conclusive answer to.
 - (d) The two witnesses (Rev. 11:7-12)
 - (e) The unbelievers at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11-15)
- c) He told the disciples to trust Him as they trusted in God:
 - i) “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me” (Jn 14:1)

- d) He made the amazing declaration that love for Him was an indication that one was a child of God.
 - i) "If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceedeth forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but He sent me" (Jn. 8:42)
- e) He accepts the acknowledgment that He is the Lamb of God as true, without correcting a misunderstood statement.
 - i) "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29)
 - ii) That they understood correctly His declaration of absolute Deity (Jn. 10:33)
- f) He declares that those who have seen Him have seen the Father: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn 14:9); and that He is the revelation of God: "The Only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (Jn. 1:18)
- g) He declares the honour, that is, God for Himself in saying:
 - i) Equality in working:
 - 1. What He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise" (Jn. 5:19)
 - ii) Equality in resurrecting power:
 - 1. "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (Jn. 5:21)
 - iii) Equality in judgment:
 - 1. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn. 5:22)
 - iv) Equality in honour:
 - 1. "All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (Jn. 5:23)
 - v) Equality in self existing:
 - 1. "As the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (Jn. 5:26)
- h) He declares Himself to be the dispenser of eternal life:
 - i) "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" (Jn. 10:28)

For any human being to make such repeated declarations, declarations that were going to affect the people at that time and untold thousands afterward and do nothing about it, would be to put a slight on the person and power of God. Surely a God of love and truth would not allow people to be so deceived.

His Deity Is Evidenced By His Works

- 1) The fundamental problem for humanity was the failure to believe that the Carpenter of Nazareth was the Christ, the Son of God. It was for this reason John wrote his book (Jn. 20:30-31). To assist man in believing this truth the Lord said: "Believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn. 14:11). There are 37 recorded miracles by the Lord. This does not count "group" healings. These were very important for they were "signs" that He was Messiah in accordance with the words of Isaiah:
 - a) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath . . . sent me to bind up the broken hearted . . . the opening of prison to them that are bound . . . to comfort all that mourn" (Isa. 61:1-2)
 - b) "Behold, your God will come . . . and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isa. 35:4-6)
- 2) Had the Lord been incapable of doing the miraculous, it would have been a clear evidence that He was not the One with the anointing of God. Consequently, as God's Anointed, His Messiah, His Christ, the Son of God, He does the miracles.

- 3) Furthermore, God is not bounded by distance. Did He not heal from Heaven without coming to earth? Then if Jesus is God He must be able to heal at a distance.
- 4) With these thoughts in mind, and looking again at the passage, the question becomes: "Of the 37 miracles the Lord performed, what is so special about the ones John records?" Of the "signs", as John speaks of them (John's Greek never uses the word for miracle but also the word for sign), why does he write of seven that no one else writes about? The turning of water to wine (Jn. 2:1-11); the healing of the nobleman's son (Jn. 4:46-50); His healing of the impotent man after thirty eight years (Jn. 5:1-17); His walking on the water (Jn. 6:15-21); giving sight to the man blind from birth (Jn. 9:1-41); raising of Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-44), and the multitude of fishes (Jn. 20:1-14), and why repeat the feeding of the 5000 (Jn. 6:1-14)?
- 5) Restricting ourselves to the healing of the nobleman's son (Jn. 4:46-50) it is asked: "what is so important about this, and in what ways does it manifest the Deity of the Lord?"
 - a) The man comes to the Lord. He came and "besought" the Lord to come to his house, for his son (a diminutive term, his little son) was deathly ill. But, the Lord gives no word of comfort to the father, neither does He offer to go to where the son is! Instead, He makes a statement in the hearing of the man and those about him, concerning the Jews as a whole. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (v. 48).
 - b) This father, like many around him, had no concerns for his own spiritual welfare. He came with a questioning heart. To him it was an "either" "or" situation. If his son was healed he would believe, and if the son was not healed he would not believe Jesus was who he declared Himself to be. Like Thomas later (Jn. ch. 20) he wanted to see the evidence before believing. Divine Persons do not work that way. God demands unquestioning faith when possible. I say when possible because the widow of Nain's son could not exercise faith! Furthermore, he besought the Lord to come down to his house.
 - c) This man did not really believe, therefore the God of truth, who looks not on the outward appearance but on the heart, goes deeper than external appearance and verbalization. The Lord was by His omniscience testing the man. "Do you really believe without seeing the sign?" It is a major evidence of the Lord's Deity. He knew the man's deepest need and can reveal it to man. Having made the man aware of his need, and knowing he has the faith that He was God and could heal, he then appealed to the Lord again to "come down". This is the second time (vv. 47, 49). This would now be used to show another evidence that Jesus is Deity. God does not need to be in the geographical vicinity of the one needing help, he can heal at a distance. I wonder, did this man know the scripture which says: "He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions" (Psa. 107:20)? This was the experience of the Psalmist: "O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and Thou hast healed me" (Psa. 30:2). The truth to be learnt was great. Surely if this Nazarene was God, He did not need to come to his home for the boy could be healed at a distance! Perhaps he was quite like us, knowing what God says but being hesitant to believe it.
 - d) To this there is added another evidence of His Deity. God is able to work with an individual even though they may not know it, nor indeed those around. He healed unseen by the recipient. Lazarus was a development of this.
 - e) The Lord answers: "Go they way; thy son liveth" (Jn. 4:50). It was another major truth of Deity. God cannot be brought under our control. Mary tried to do this when she said to the Lord: "They have no wine" (Jn. 2:3). Peter was the same when He said: "Be it far from thee, Lord (Matt. 16:22) and "Not so, Lord" (Acts 10:14). The Lord does not go down to the man's house but He will ease the burden the man carries for the glory of God and the sufficiency of the evidence of who He is.

- f) God gives life by the power of His spoken word:
 - i) “Thy son liveth” (Jn. 4:50) is more than a prophecy of the healing of the lad, it was a word of power. Three times over there is emphasis on the word for “live” (v. 50, 51, 53). John does not want us to miss the truth. Christ gives life.
- g) God must be believed even when there is no external evidence given and all one has is the Word of God.

Was Jesus Deity? His works declare to all who want to know the truth that He is indeed Deity.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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