Who Do You Say That I Am?
Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expositional Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**
169- The Father's Revelation of the Son- Part 1

Church November 01, 2026

Matthew 16:13-20
13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."
15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
17 And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.
18 I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.
19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."
20 Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.

To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

509 years ago, yesterday- a 33- year old Augustinian Monk, they called, "*Brother Martin*" nailed 95 Thesis; 95 Points of Discussion; 95 Issues of Theology on the front Door of the Church at Whittenberg, Germany. But Martin was NOT *vandalizing* the Church. For many years- the front Door of that Castle Church was the "*Bulletin Board*" for the Seminary. And when *anyone* had a Question or an Argument with the current Theology of the visible Church- they would nail their Question or Argument on that Door- which would inform the Bishops and Cardinals and the teaching Monks- what their Students were concerned about and needing Help with. That Door is still there today.

Now what is NOT usually known- is that the Issue that was troubling young Martin- was the Issue of "*Indulgences*". Where the Pope- in his Capacity as the "*Vicar of Christ*"; and the "*Successor to Peter*"- had the "*Keys*" to

either *unlock* Forgiveness or continued Punishment to those, who were supposedly being purified in Purgatory- and to *distribute* it to whomever he chose.

THAT is the Subject that Martin Luther wanted to discuss. But *without* either his Knowledge or his Permission- several different Groups- took his 95 Thesis- utilized the "*Printing Press*"- that in God's Good Providence had recently been invented- and before the End of November, Luther's Teachings were reaching the general Population of Germany!

Luther was ordered by the Cardinals and Bishops to *repent* and to publicly *recant* his Teachings; and when he *refused*- he was *excommunicated* from the visible Church in Germany. It was the Excommunication that ignited the Fire in Luther to pursue more deeply what his 95 Thesis had begun. And what finally came out from that small and very terrible Moment- was the greatest Revival of the Grace of God the World has ever known- that has now spread around the World- that we call today, the "*Protestant Reformation*"!

And this Church- the Covenant of Peace Church- *officially and formally- proudly and loudly*- and completely *unashamedly*- teaches, preaches, believes, defends, and loves- the Tenets of the Protestant Reformation! And you, the Members of this small, seemingly insignificant Assembly- are Part of the world-wide Heirs of that Reformation! We belong to the Group that has NOT *given-up*; *forgotten* nor *neglected* our "Protest" against the Man-made and unbiblical Teachings of Rome. And we *continue* to be very vocal about it- because it matters!

Now make no Mistake about this. This is real, serious Business, folks. Because, while there are many Issues we may categorically disagree with Rome about- we focus our "Protest" with Rome around two *titanic and eternal* Questions:

1. WHO/WHAT has the Power and Authority to "*bind the Conscience*" (bring about Conviction); AND to "determine 'Right' from 'Wrong'"? The Pope in his Capacity as the "*vicar of Christ*" or the *"Scriptures- rightly and fully interpreted- in their correct and full Context"*?
2. HOW are lost people "Forgiven and made Righteous" (Justification)? Are they justified by Faith ALONE; by Faith PLUS Works; or by Works ALONE?

… and those two Questions represent the "*Formal*" (#1) and the "*Material*"(#2) CAUSES of the Protestant Reformation.

So, in *addition* to NOT agreeing with Rome about WHO/WHAT has the Authority to bring Conviction into our Minds and Hearts and WHO/WHAT determines "Right" from "Wrong"- we don't even agree HOW lost people are forgiven and made "*fit for Heaven*"- which I would suggest is very, very Serious!

And here's the Kicker- ONE OF US IS WRONG! ONE OF US IS ETERNALLY WRONG! Because we simply CANNOT both be Right! In other words, one of us preaches the "*biblical Gospel*" and the other preaches "*another Gospel*"! So, this Issue has *eternal* Ramifications- because God the Holy Spirit "moved" on the Apostle Paul to write this in **Galatians 1:6-9:**

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;
7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.
8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!
9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

Now all this Information about the Reformation may be "*peachy-keen*" but what does it have to do with **Matthew 16:13-20**? Because I'm NOT preaching about the Protestant Reformation this Morning. This Sermon is my 169th Attempt at expositing and explaining each verse of what the Apostle Matthew was "moved" by God the Holy Spirit- to write about the Birth; Life; Ministry; Death; Resurrection; and Ascension of Jesus, the Christ- the ONLY Savior of the World! And, next week- this "Journey" will be five years old

Now EVERY verse in the Bible is very Important. But this Passage in **Matthew 16**- is one of the *most* Important Passages in the entire Bible! In fact, I began this verse-by-verse "*Journey*" through the **Gospel of Matthew** back on November 14, 2021- precisely because of this particular Passage- which is WHY the entire Series of Sermons on **Matthew** is entitled, "*Who do you say that I am?*" Because "WHO WE SAY JESUS IS"- *determines* whether we are saved and going to Heaven or simply religious people operating in our own Thoughts.

And what makes this Passage so Important- is what BOTH the Apostle Peter and the Lord Christ said here. So, the *primary* Issue that the Apostle Matthew wanted to address- as he was "moved" by God the Holy Spirit to write this Book- is:

WHO is Jesus?

… but the *secondary* Issue is:

WHO do <u>WE</u> say Jesus is?

… the *third* Issue is:

On WHAT/WHO is Jesus building His Church?

… while the *fourth* Issue is: WHAT did Jesus mean when He said,

"… I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."?

… and those are the four Issues I will cover in this small mini-series on **Matthew 16**.

Now the Reason we need to know what this Passage *says*; and what it *means* by what it says- is because the Protestant View of this Passage is very Different than what those, involved in the Roman "religious System", teach.

Rome teaches that Jesus was talking *directly and individually* and *only*- to Peter. And then they *go on* to teach that this Passage is the Foundation of NOT merely the Christian Church- but also of the Office of the Papacy. Historic Protestantism teaches something very Different. And as I exposit this Passage- I will address those Issues- *fully*.

But *strangely*, there is usually much Unity between Rome and the Protestants- about the historic Meaning of what Jesus said at the End of verse 18. And I will also get into that as well. So, let's begin by looking again at verses 13&14:

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

Now in **Luke 9:18-** the good Doctor began this very *same* Event in the Life of Jesus by writing,

And it happened that while He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, "Who do the people say that I am?"

... while the Apostle Peter's Scribe- John Mark, wrote this from **Mark 8:27:**

Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He questioned His disciples, saying to them, "Who do people say that I am?"

… so, both **Matthew** and **Mark** tell us that Jesus and His Disciples were in a "Village" that was in the "District" of an Area of ancient Israel called, "*Caesarea Philippi*". While Luke says Jesus began this Discussion with His Disciples after He had been praying- alone.

And this Region, or Area was called, "*Caesarea Philippi*". Now, when you hear the word, "*Caesarea*", you should understand that this word refers to "*Caesar*" or the Ruler of the Roman Empire. So, this is a Town named for Caesar. But it wasn't the only one. There's another Town named, "*Caesarea*" down on the Coast- directly west of the City of Jerusalem. So, they called this Town, "*Caesarea Philippi*" in order to distinguish it from the other one.

Now if you're familiar with the Old Testament and the History of Israel- then you know that the *northernmost* Point in Israel was given by Joshua, to the "Tribe of Dan". **Genesis 30:1-6** says that "*Dan*" was born to Jacob and Bilhah- Rachel's Slave- making him Jacob's *fifth* Son. And Rachel named him, "*Dan*" (meaning: *"to judge"* or *"he has vindicated"*), declaring that God had heeded her Plea and given her a Son.

Many years later, in **Genesis 49**- Jacob was dying. And so, he had his Sons gathered to him- so he could give them a final Prophecy. And in **Genesis 49:16-18**- Jacob said this to Dan,

16 "Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel.
17 "Dan shall be a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse's heels, So that his rider falls backward.
18 "For Your salvation I wait, O Lord.

… which was *foretelling* both the Tribe's *future* Leadership (such as Samson) and its later *spiritual* Struggles.

So, *Caesarea Philippi* was right at the base of Mount Hermon in northern Israel, while southernmost point of "Dan's" land- was identified by the term, "Beersheba". And so, when wanting to encompass the whole Land, the people of the Scriptures would say, "*the Land extended from Dan to Beersheba!"*

Two and a half miles *west* of Dan- was a town known as, "*Panias*". And "*Panias*" was named for "*Pan*"- the Greek god, who was supposedly born in a cave in that Area. And this was also the Area where the Headwaters of the Jordan River began.

But if you were at the *north* End of the Sea of Galilee and you proceeded 25 miles North and East- you would travel 1700 Feet above Sea Level to a very flat Plateau. And that Plateau stretches out along the Foot of Mount Hermon. Now Mt. Hermon goes up about 9,232 ft. And it's snow- covered most all of the Year; and the people of Cana, Nazareth, and other cities can see this Mountain all year long.

But up on that Plateau was the town of "*Panias*"- and by the 1st Century- it had become the Center for a religious Cult- that during the Time Jesus was in His Ministry- was experiencing *tremendous* Growth. So, "Panias" was primarily occupied by pagan Gentiles and NOT Jews- at least NOT the Jews, who were faithful to God. And so, because it was on the very Frontier of Paganism; and because that Area also represented the last vestiges of Judaism- the Area that Jesus is walking through in our main Passage- tended to be *dominated* by Greek Influences- in Language, Custom, as well as Religion.

Now in our Day- this part of the World would be in the southwestern Corner of the Nation of "*Syria*". But at this Point in History- it was still under the Control of Israel- which was under the Domination of Rome.

So, this is the Place to which Jesus retreated. And it would be a welcomed Retreat from the stifling Heat of the Galilean Lowlands; a welcomed Retreat from the Pressure of the Jewish Society; as well as a Retreat from the ongoing, never-ending Confrontation Jesus had with the Jewish religious Leaders.

But it was also a Retreat from the sinful and violent Influence of Herod Antipas, who was constantly trying to have Jesus arrested like he had done with John the Baptist. So, Jesus retreated to an Area controlled by "Philip the Tetrarch"- because Philip was a more- just Man; a more- kind Man, and a more- patient Man- who imposed NO Threat against Jesus or His Disciples.

But he was, however, fully committed to Caesar as indicated by the Fact that he himself changed the name of "*Panias*" to "*Caesarea*". And Philip enlarged that Area and rebuilt much of it. And so, he actually turned that Region into a very nice Place- named after his political Hero- "*Caesar*". So, it was designated as, "*Caesarea Philippi*" in Honor of both *himself* as well as Caesar. And so, the Apostle Matthew tells us that Jesus went there with His Disciples.

And the Fact that this particular Incident is recorded in all three of the "*Synoptic Gospels*" (**Matthew, Mark**, and **Luke**)- tells us that this Event is of *great* Importance. So, right here- at the Point where both Paganism and the religion of the Old Testament meet together- is where Jesus asked His Disciples, the most Important Question in all of human History; and the Question every single Person will have to answer: *"Who do you say I am?"*

Now the Truth is that the Name, "*Jesus*" is an English *rendering* of the Latin, "*Iesus*"-which is itself a *transliteration* of the Greek name, "*Iesous*", which came from the ancient Hebrew, "*Yeshua*"- which means: "*Yahweh is Salvation*". And "*Yeshua*" comes from the very *same* Hebrew root for "*Yehoshua*"- who we know as "*Joshua*" in the Old Testament.

Now neither the Greek nor the Hebrew Languages contain the Letter, "J" in their Alphabet. In fact, the Letter, "J" didn't even *exist* until Gian Giorgio began using it in 1524. And it wasn't *formally* used in any educational, scientific,

medical, religious, or legal Writings until the 17th Century (1600's)- when it was used in the 1629 edition of the King James Version of the Bible.

And I said all of that to say that while "*Jesus*" is NOT the Lord's *original* Hebrew Name- it IS the English *rendering* of His original Hebrew Name. And so, since we speak English and NOT Hebrew- it is perfectly fine to call Him, "*Jesus*". And that is True- firstly, because that IS the accurate English rendering of His Hebrew Name. But secondly, because our Savior absolutely knows you are referring to Him, when you use that English Name.

So, please do not be bothered by those who teach that we are worshipping a false god- because "*Jesus*" is NOT the Lord's *original* Name. Because while it IS True that, "*Jesus*" is NOT the Lord's *original* Name- it is also True- that "*Jesus*" is the SAME Name of the Savior of the World- who was named, originally, in Hebrew as, "*Yeshua*"! So, NO! I don't plan on *eliminating* my usage of "*Jesus*" by switching to "*Yeshua*" anytime soon.

I categorically *deny* that English is somehow an *insufficient* Language. And so, I simply *reject* the silly Notion that because I say, *"Moses"* instead of *"Moshe"*; and *"Paul"* instead of *"Saul"*; and *"Peter"* instead of *"Simon"*; and "*Mary*" instead of "*Maryam*"; and "*Martha*" instead of "*Marta*"; and *"Joseph"* instead of *"Yosef"*; and "*John and James*" instead of "*Yochanan and Ya'akov*"; and "*Matthew*" instead of "*Matityahu*"; and "*Mark*" instead of "*Marqos*"; and "*Luke*" instead of "*Lukas*"- that somehow, I'm not as *close* to God or that I'm not as *spiritual* as I need to be.

People, who get all wrapped up in things like that- as well as those who think they're going to Hell if they don't use the King James Version- are people, who are trapped in a Cult; or those who really don't know the Bible very well. And so, they *major* on the Minors; and they *minor* on the Majors!

They're more interested in the Trappings of Christianity; the Symbols; the external Mechanisms- than they are the Reality of the Power of the Word of God *unleashed* in their Lives- because God the Holy Spirit has *empowered* them to *know* and *understand* and *believe* and *love* and *defend* and *obey* WHAT the Bible actually *says*; WHAT it *means* by what it says- in its *correct and full* Context! Because THAT is what changes lost, fallen and sinful Rebels- into broken, humble, and joyful Bond-slaves of the Lord Christ!

But what IS Important; what IS True; And what IS Vital for us to know- is: WHO IS JESUS? Because a correct Confession of Jesus is a Requirement for anyone to enter into Heaven Whereas a false or wrong Confession of Jesus- will keep you out! WHO JESUS IS- is part of what are called, the "*Essential Truths*" of Christianity. These are the "*Truth-Claims"* of the Holy Bible- which we *summarize* by calling it, the "*Gospel*".

The *Essential Truths*" of Christianity are the Issues you MUST understand and believe- in order to be saved; be a Christian; have your Sins forgiven; be made Righteous; and go to Heaven. These are the *indisputable* Facts of the Gospel; the *unarguable* Beliefs that *every* Soul
MUST adopt as his *own*- in order to be saved! When Christianity teaches that we are "Forgiven" and made to be "Righteous"- by Faith ALONE- the Essential Truths are *part* of what you HAVE to have Faith in. So, Justification involves lost Sinners believing and hoping and trusting in TWO things:

1. WHO Jesus is
2. WHAT Jesus alone has done

It is Wrong to tell people that they simply need to *"Accept Jesus into their Hearts"*. That is NOT the Gospel; and that phrase is NOT found *anywhere* in the Bible. Jesus NEVER taught it; and neither did the Apostles. But to tell people that this is what they need to do- *changes* what the Bible actually requires. What the Bible tells lost Sinners to do is to:

- *Hear* the Gospel
- *Believe* the Gospel
- *Obey* the Gospel

… and when we tell people they MUST, "*Obey the Gospel*"- we mean that the lost Sinner MUST repent! And so, we are to "*repent of*" or "*turn away from*"- our Sins! But we are *also* to repent of and turn away from our old sinful *Way of Life* as well.

In other words, the Bible teaches that Repentance goes *way beyond* simply saying, "*I'm Sorry!*" The Concept of Repentance has to do with what **Luke 3:8a** says,

Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance…

… so, we MUST *prove*- BY OUR ACTIONS- and NOT merely by our Words- that our Repentance is *Genuine*!

Okay, but then, when we tell people they MUST also "*Believe"* the Gospel"- we mean that they should read; and listen; and study; and understand; and be taught; and ask Questions about "*Essential Truth*"- so they can Believe:

- WHO Jesus is
- WHAT Jesus *alone* has done- *to* us and *for* us- through His Birth; Life; Ministry; Death; Resurrection; and Ascension

… and that's WHY I say that, WHO Jesus is- is very Important!

So, WHO lived a sinless Life; bled and died on the Cross; and rose again? WHO "sat down" at the "Right Hand" of God? WHO upholds all things by the Word of His Power? And WHO is coming again- with great Power and Glory? WHO is Jesus Christ? One way that sacred Scripture describes Jesus is found in **Hebrews 1:3&4**

3 And He [Jesus] **is the radiance of His** [God the Father's] **glory and the exact representation of His** [God the Father's] **nature, and upholds all things by the word of His** [Jesus'] **power. When He** [Jesus] **had made purification of sins, He** [Jesus] **sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,**
4 having become as much better than the angels, as He [Jesus] **has inherited a more excellent name than they** [the Angels]**.**

These are the Qualities about Jesus that God the Holy Spirit *initially* wanted that unknown Writer to teach to those 1st Century Jews. But now that this Information is contained in the "*Canon of Scripture*"- these Qualities are part of the "*Essential Truth*" of the biblical Gospel- that ALL who are truly saved (Jew or Gentile) MUST believe and love and fully embrace!

So, these two infallible and inerrant verses tells us that Jesus was/is:

1. The Radiance of God's Glory
2. The *exact* Representation of God's Nature
3. [He] upholds all things by the Word of His Power
4. He made Purification of Sins
5. He sat down at the "Right Hand" of the Majesty on high
6. He is much *better* than the Angels
7. He has *inherited* a *more excellent* Name than the Angels

So, the early Church spent the better Part of its first 1,000 years of Existence- reading and studying and praying and analyzing and debating and trying to figure out- what these two verses mean- and *how* all of Mankind is to understand Jesus.

How should we comprehend God in human Flesh? How does that even work? How do we comprehend a Being, who was NEVER created and yet, died? How does God die? How do weak, sinful Men *kill* God? How did Jesus, "**increase in Wisdom" (Luke 2:40)** if He is God? If Jesus is God- *how* did He bleed? But if Jesus was a Man- *how* did He forgive Sin; and open blind Eyes; and raise the Dead; and walk on Water; and rise again?

This Morning- over 2,000 years since He walked on this Earth- Jesus is the single MOST *loved* Man in all the World! From a Prayer Meeting in an Upper Room with 120 scared people until this Morning- more than 2 billion people claim Him as Savior![1] This Morning there are between 350,000 and 400,000 Congregations in America! But there are between 4.7 and 5 million Congregations around the World! And that is *growing* by about 3,500 *new* Congregations every Week! Every single Day- all around the World- there are MORE Books written; MORE Songs sung; MORE Analysis made; MORE Speeches given; MORE Sermons preached: MORE Teachings taught; MORE Prayers offered; MORE Movies and Videos made; and MORE Conversations engaged in- about or to Jesus- than any other Issue or Person! And all of that Love is because that Man said,

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. (John 14:6)

… and those, who *love* Him say, *"Thank-You, Jesus! You ARE the ONLY Way; the ONLY Truth; and the ONLY Life- and I am allowed to come to the Father ONLY through You!"*

But Jesus is also the single MOST *hated* Man in all of human History! Every single Day- MORE People *argue; fight; debate; reject; despise; malign; mock; and laugh* at Jesus (and His Followers)- than any other Person! Battles; Skirmishes; and even bloody Wars have been
Fought- in His Name. Businesses; Partnerships; Friendships; and Marriages have *ended* because of Jesus. And even entire Families have been torn apart when one or more of the Members begin to love and follow Him! There has been MORE Torture; Beatings; Imprisonment; and Executions against the Followers of Jesus- than with any other Group in all of human History. In **Luke 21:17**, Jesus Himself said,

… you will be hated by all because of My name.

… and in **Matthew 10:34-39**, our Lord said,
34 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.
35 For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW;

[1] *Claiming* Jesus as "Savior" and actually *being* "Saved" are NOT the same thing

36 and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD.
37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.
38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
39 He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

… and ALL of that Hostility; Division; Debate; and Hatred comes because that Man said,

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. (John 14:6)

… and those who *hate* Him say, *"WHO does this 'Jesus' think He is? WHY does He think He has the Right and the Authority to make such a divisive and offensive Claim?"*

But that isn't the ONLY profound and offensive thing that Jesus said. He also said, **"Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9)**! And the Apostle Paul said, in **Colossians 1:15,** that Jesus was/is… **"… the image of the invisible God"**

My dear Friends, it is my Conviction that we SHOULD/MUST take some Time- EVERY SINGLE DAY- to analyze what we really believe about Jesus. WHY? Because we are fallen "Creatures of the Dust"- we can repeat true Statements like: **"Jesus is the exact Representation of the Nature of God"**- and yet remain absolutely Ignorant about what it means or even be Wrong in the way we think about it! For example:

- We *could* say that Jesus is the Representation of God the Father- the Way a Painting *represents* the Person in the Painting. But that would be dead Wrong- because that is NOT True about Jesus!
- We *could* say that Jesus *represents* the Nature of God the Way an authorized Letter from a President represents the President. But that would be Wrong, too.
- Or we *could* say that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the *exact* Representation of God the Father- in the Way we put an Object into a wax Mold- and that Mold makes an Imprint- which represents that Object. But that, too, would be a *terrible* Way to think of Jesus

And the Reason we know that all three of those Ways are utterly Inadequate to describe our Lord- is because the *first* phrase of **Hebrews 1:3** tells us HOW Jesus is a *"Representation of God"*! And it is NOT like any of those Explanations!

The Bible declares that Jesus is an *exact* Representation of the Father- IN THAT **"He is the Radiance of God's Glory"!** And that means that Jesus *represents* the "Glory of God" the Way "Radiance" *represents* "Glory"!

And that is very Different than the Way a Painting *represents* a Person; or the Way a Letter *represents* a President; or the Way a wax Mold *represents* an Object. "Radiance"- flowing out from and streaming down from- the Sun- is NOT something Different from the Sun! It is NOT a different Essence from what it is radiating from!

So, the "*Radiance of the Glory*" IS the Glory itself- *radiating*! That is the *profound* Truth to get a handle on here: Jesus Christ is NOT someone *other* than God! He IS God- *representing* God! Jesus is the Father- *streaming out* in Glory; *standing forth* on the Earth; in *another Person*- Whose Essence is the very SAME divine Essence as the Father!

Now the Reason I went through that with you- is to illustrate WHY the Church spent the better Part of its first 1000 years of Existence- trying to understand and explain Jesus- in words! Because if we don't believe correctly WHO Jesus is- we CANNOT be saved!

Now it is True that this is a very profound Mystery. And I'm NOT going to even begin to explain all that this means. But simply by going over this with you this Morning- I hope that some of you can see a little bit *more*! And that's WHY I say we need to ponder these things- every Day!

I want to try to crack open the Window enough to *help* you worship Jesus- *fully; correctly; biblically*- and to *prevent* you from making *heretical* Statements about the Son- being a Creature; a moral Man; or a mere Prophet!

So, please let me give you three Ways that the Son "streams out"; or is "radiating" the Glory of the Father.

1. The Father and the Son are "*Coeternal*".

First, let's compare Jesus with the Sun and the Sun- radiating out its Beams. There is no Time that the Sun exists- that its radiant Light does not also Exist. They are so much a Part of each other- that when the Sun exists- the Radiance of the Sun also exists.

So, because God the Father exists- the Son exists. They are "Co-eternal". The Father did NOT exist and then say, *"I think I'll create a Son!"* That is NOT the Way it happened! Jesus is "eternally Begotten" and "eternally streaming out"! So, where there is Light, there are ALWAYS Rays of that Light. And where there is

God- there is ALWAYS a Son of God. The Radiance IS the Glory- radiating out! So, the Radiance is NOT *essentially* Different *from* the Glory. And the Son of God is NOT *essentially* Different *from* God the Father. Jesus is NOT- *by Nature*- another Being other than fully God!

2. The Son is NOT "Created" nor "Made".

Compare this with a solar Calculator. I think of this because I was using one the other night- working on my own personal Business. And I asked Rhonda, *"Where is the off switch?"* And she said, *"It's a solar Calculator. Just put it back on the table and it will turn off on its own."*

Now what that means is that when the Sun shines through my Window- a number appears on the Screen. So, it would be Fair to say that the Light *created* the Number; or *made* it; or *produced* it in some Way. And yet- that Number is NOT the Light!

So, we CAN'T think of the Son of God like we do the Numbers on a solar Calculator: that God made the Son; or that He brought the Son into Being- like the Light is with the Calculator. NO! The Son IS the Light- *shining* on the World and *making* the World! And that's WHY the *Nicene Creed* that we just said awhile ago, says that Jesus is:

"Begotten NOT made- being of ONE SUBSTANCE with the Father"

… and what those guys were trying to say was: Humans *beget* babies; dogs *beget* puppies; cats *beget* kittens; and God *begets* God!

3. The Son *mediates* (reveals) the Father.

It is by the "Means" of the Rays of the Light- that we are able to *see* the Light. For Example, when I begin my Day- I open a Window that is on my right side- which is facing East. And in the Morning- the Light is literally blinding- and the Rays of Light come in and flood my Desk and shine so brightly on my computer Screens- that it makes it hard to see what's on the Screens! It is truly breathtaking, brilliant, Light!

Now, if I would look through that window- directly at the Sun, when it's shining- first of all, it would permanently blind me. So, please don't ever do that. But that Brilliance- that is so Bright- that it would blind me- is just a little Example of the Glory of God. If God were to show me His Glory- *without any Filters*- it would NOT merely *blind* me- it would *kill* me! I am a wicked Sinner and my Eyes

have seen ugly and wicked things. So, neither me nor my Eyes are allowed to behold God in His complete Beauty or Glory. It would be too much to bear!

So, I need a "Means"; a "Mediator" in order to see God. And that "go-between"; that one, single Mediator is NOT Mary; it is NOT the Pope; it is NOT the Church; and it is NOT an Angel. The one Mediator between the pristine, righteous and eternal God and wicked, sinful, fallen Man- is the Son of God- Jesus Christ- Who ALONE is the very Radiance of the Glory of God! The Apostle John infallibly wrote,

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. (John 1:18)

… where the word, "explained" comes from a Greek word (*exegeomai*; Strong's #1834)- which means: *to unfold; declare; reveal; explain; or make known*. So, Jesus *unfolds; declares; reveals; explains; or makes known*- the Father to us!

Our Sin has *separated* us from God. That's what being "Fallen" means. We have "fallen away" from a personal, true, and eternal Relationship with Almighty God- that is based in both God's Love for us and our Love for God! And, because we are "fallen" we CANNOT approach God on our own or by ourselves- or the intensity of the Glory of God- would eviscerate us!

So, Salvation, in, by, and through Jesus- *reconciles* us- NOT to just go to Heaven; and NOT to merely *escape* Hell- but we are reconciled back to God! So, Jesus is the Mediator that *reveals* God to us- so we may, by WHO Jesus is and WHAT Jesus alone has done- *return* to God!

The Beams of Light that flood my Desk in the Mornings arrive at my Desk about 8 Minutes AFTER it left the Sun. The Sun is 93 million miles away from my Desk. So, what I'm seeing is what is- eight Minutes ago!

So, the Sun is a Star- that is burning with such intensity- that it is producing 100 sextillion kilowatt hours of Power every single hour of every Day! That's why I *can't* look at it! But when I see those Beams of Light *flooding* into my Office and *landing* on my Desk- I am beholding the Object that mediates; or reveals; or explains; or that declares; the *magnificent Glory* of the Sun!

And when God the Holy Spirit- unveils my Mind (that satan has blinded)- through the Preaching of the Gospel- I am then given the Grace to see:

… the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face [Person] **of Christ. (2Corinthians 4:6b)**

… so, when I look at Jesus Christ- I am seeing God! And that's WHY we worship Him!

Amen! Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your Pace. *Soli Deo Gloria!* To the Glory of God alone.