

The Father & Son from the Apostle John

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Via telephone one day, my daughter-in-law and I were discussing the Father and Son. While sharing with me how much she was enjoying the book of John, I commented that I believed that the Father and Son could be understood from just the writings of John. It was her interest and enthusiasm which encouraged me to write this study.

John, in his main epistle, refers to himself, at least five times, as the “Disciple that Jesus loved.” He is the disciple who leaned on Jesus’ breast at the last supper, and he appears to be the only one of the twelve who attended all the trial of Jesus and followed him to the crucifixion. It was John to whom Jesus, already on the cross, gave charge of his mother. This closeness with the Savior gave the Apostle John the insight to write such a powerful testimony of the Son of God, his relationship to his heavenly Father, and the love they both have for humanity. Words are inadequate to describe the depth of God’s love, but John comes the closest.

Pre-existence & Divinity: John 1:1-3: *1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God. 3. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* At the beginning, John establishes that the Father and Son were together at creation, and that the Son created all things. The idea of two people can be clearly seen by looking at the original language in the first two verses: *1. In beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and God was the Word. 2. The same was in beginning with the God.* All things having been created by the Word establishes the fact that the Son existed before any creation and that he is a God separate from the God. (See also 6:62; 8:42; 3:16-17). The Word, a metaphor of the Christ, was made flesh (verse 14) and dwelled among men, and as the Son of God, he is to be worshiped by all created beings. In these verses, John reveals that the God to whom he is referring is the Father, the invisible God: **Jn 1:18:** *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* It is the Father of whom Jesus requested that he be glorified with the glory which he had before the world existed (Jn 17:5).

In the parable of the vine and branches (Jn 15:1-10), Jesus reveals three separate entities - 1) the husbandman, or vine dresser, who is the Father; 2) the vine, who is the Son; and 3) the branches which represent those abiding in Christ. Additionally, Jesus, speaking of the Jews in general, distinguished himself separate from the Father: **Jn 15:24:** *...now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father*, and that because they had not known the Father or the Son (Jn 16:3). As separate individuals, the Father and Son are one in purpose, dwelling in each other by the main principle of love (Jn 17:21-24).

The Only Begotten: The term “only begotten” is used four times in the main epistle of John and once in 1 John 4:9. From the original Greek, here is **1 Jn 4:9:** *In this was manifested the love of the God in us, because the Son of his - the only begotten - hath the God sent into the world, so that we might live through him.* The Greek word for “only begotten” is *monogenes*⁽³⁴³⁹⁾, which literally means ‘only one, or only child.’ Some try to make this word mean “unique” when applied to Jesus, but this is an error. Luke applies the same word to sons and daughters (Lk 7:12; 8:42; 9:38) as being an only child. And our understanding of children is that they are birthed by parents. The Father sent His “only” Son into the world. Jesus, in his trial before Pilate, makes reference to his two births - one eternal, the other in Bethlehem: **Jn 18:37:** *Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born (in eternity), and for this cause came I into the world (in Bethlehem), that I should bear witness unto the truth...* Neither birth is explained nor understood by man, moreover, we accept that it is within God’s power to do such a thing. The anointed One IS the only Son of God by birth, whereas we are children by adoption (Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5).

The Son was Sent: Over and over Jesus declares that he was sent by the Father, indicating two individuals, with one being ultimately in charge? And, the Son, being the one sent, makes the one sending him greater! **Jn 13:16**: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him (cf 14:28).* **Jn 8:16-18, 42**: *16. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. 17. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me bears witness of me..... 42. 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 9:4**: *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.* Jesus is not equal to the Father, as taught by the Trinity Doctrine, for the works he did was given Him by the Father: **Jn 5:36-37**: *36. ...for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. 37. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me...* Not only that, but all truth spoken by Jesus was given him by our heavenly Father. Here are more examples:

Jn 5:19-20, 30: *19. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do: for what things soever he does, these also does the Son likewise. 20. For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all things that himself does: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel..... 30. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

Jn 12:49-50: *49. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* **Jn 15:15**: *...for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*

The Son has a God: **Jn 14:28**: *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.* **Jn 20:17**: *Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.* How can this be when Jesus said, *I and my Father are one* (Jn 10:30)? He did not mean they were one physically, but one in spirit, one in principle and purpose. This concept includes humanity: **Jn 17:20-21**: *20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us...* **1 Jn 4:13**: *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* (Also 1 Jn 3:24). Will we be equal to the Father or Son? Will we be one physically with either, or both of them? Just because a doctrine has been believed for hundreds of years does not necessarily make it accurate, even if believed by our own parents and pastors. We need to discern righteously, accepting only what God teaches (1 Jn 2:20, 24, 27).

The Father: Above Jesus said that his Father was greater than he and his Father, meaning the Son is not co-equal with God in their realm. Although John referred to Jesus as God, and we are to worship him, Jesus himself identified the Father as the only true God: **Jn 17:1-3**: *1. These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

It is the Son who came to reveal the Father because He is invisible when viewed through the eyes of the flesh: **1 Jn 5:20:** *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life (American Standard). The ideas presented in this verse are the same as in John 17:1-3, 21. To be one with the Son is to be one with the Father - the only true God. Bear in mind also that we are gods (Jn 10:34), as it is our choice who rules in the kingdom between our ears - our thoughts, or God's thoughts.*

Comforter, Spirit of Truth & the Holy Spirit: Jn 14:2-3: *2. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* The Greek word translated mansions, is rendered abode in verse 23. It was prophesied that the Son of God would build the temple of the Lord (Zech 6:12-13). So, Jesus is speaking metaphorically of a spiritual temple being prepared in himself (cf Jn 2:19-21) - a spiritual mind-set which should become our dwelling place. Our mind is the temple where the Spirit of Truth resides (cf 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16), which is the understanding developed in the Son by the Father (cf Heb 5:8-9). As the Son abides in the Father, by hearing and doing what the Father speaks to him (verse 10-11), so we abide in the Son by hearing and doing, and He abides in us by his words, which is his spirit. **Jn 6:63:** *...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* This concept is further defined by John:

Comforter: Jn 14:16-17, 26: *16. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17. Even the Spirit of truth... 26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name...* We see from these verses that the Comforter, Spirit of Truth and Holy Spirit are different descriptions of the same person. Who is the person Jesus is revealing to his disciples?

In verse 17, Jesus told the disciples that they knew the Spirit of Truth *for he dwells with you, and shall be in you.* He also said that the world could not receive him, because it could not see him. It is obvious from the context that the disciples knew Jesus was speaking of himself in the third person. Notice in verse 21 Jesus said that he would manifest himself to the person obeying his commands - *I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.* To this statement, Judas said (verse 22), *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?* The disciples knew Jesus would come to them as a Comforter, but they did not understand the spiritual nature of his ministry, that it would be an unseen thing that takes place in a person's heart. Just as the Father sent Jesus as the Son of man, He would send him again as the Comforter and Spirit of Truth (Jn 16:26), so that humanity could now understand the Father in a whole new and living way.

If Jesus is the Comforter, why would he say that he would send another one? The best way to answer this is by of Saul's experience, after he was anointed king of Israel (1 Sam 10:1-9). The Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he was another person, because God gave him a new heart. Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered (Heb 5:8-9) and became the author of eternal salvation, and therefore he was another person after the cross because he changed inwardly. It is not any different with individuals who repent and turn their lives toward God - spiritual truth gives them a new heart, a new way of thinking and doing things. **Jn 15:3:** *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* When our hearts are clean, then are we another person, even as Jesus became another person, which makes him our Comforter.

The Greek word translated Comforter is *parakletos* ⁽³⁸⁷⁵⁾, used in the masculine form only by John. Outside the main gospel, the word is used in **1 Jn 2:1:** *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have a [parakletos ⁽³⁸⁷⁵⁾] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:* The verse tells

us directly that the parakletos, or Comforter, is Jesus Christ.

The Spirit of Truth: Jn 14:3-6: 3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* 4. *And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.* 5. *Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?* 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* The disciples were struggling to understand the spiritual import of the words Jesus spake, and by answering Thomas' question Jesus assured the disciples that He was the ONLY way, the ONLY truth, the ONLY life. If Jesus is the truth, then the Spirit of Truth is the spirit of Jesus. This idea is confirmed in other scriptures as well (cf Gal 4:6). **1 Jn 3:23-24:** 23. *And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.* 24. *And he that keeps his commandments dwells in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* Remember, John 6:63 was quoted above saying that the words Jesus speaks to us are spirit and life.

Jn 16:13: *How-be-it when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.* Several scriptures were quoted above to show how all things the Son spoke came from his Father. He is saying the same thing here as applying after the cross. It is Jesus Christ, as the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit who gives to us what the Father gives to him as he consults with the Father in our behalf. (Cf Rev 1:1)

The Holy Spirit: We have reasoned by scripture to show that the Comforter and Spirit of Truth is speaking of Jesus. Therefore, we can also conclude that since the Comforter and Spirit of Truth are the same as the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit is Jesus, or the spirit of Jesus (cf 2 Cor 3:17; Phil 1:9; 1 Pet 1:11). Why did the disciples not understand these concepts at first? **Jn 16:25:** *These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.* It was after the cross before the disciples understood most of Jesus' teachings (cf Jn 2:22; 20:9), and so is it with our experience, what Jesus taught will be proverbs until we understand the cross.

Summary: Jn 3:34-35: 34. *For he whom God hath sent speaks the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.* 35. *The Father loves the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* The eternal spirit of the Father, or the mind of the Father, has been given the Son without measure, and the Son has been delegated all authority by the Father to work in behalf of mankind (cp Jn 5:22).

By experiencing the life of flesh and blood, the Son came to understand the love of the Father for humanity and His plans for us. Now, the Son can immerse us in the Father's spirit, which could not be done until after he was glorified by his experience of the cross: **Jn 7:37-39:** 37. *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.* 38. *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* 39. *(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet {given}; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)* To have a holy spirit is to have the Father's and Son's understanding and be able to receive their love in our heart. A person could not be complete in God's love before Jesus was glorified by giving his life for the world. It is the only means whereby any person can be convinced of the Father's love for humanity. Until the understanding of the cross is realized, knowing God's love is only intellectual, and the cross cannot be understood correctly when based on false teachings of the Father and Son.

Jn 20:30-31: 30. *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written*

in this book: 31. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of [the] God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (character). Amen.