

Seven Proofs From Christ of His Divinity

John 5:17-30

This is a remarkable passage that comes on the heels of healing the impotent man.

In fact, one of the main reasons Christ healed the impotent man was to bring about this confrontation and opportunity to preach the truth.

No doctrine has received greater scrutiny or caused greater controversy in the church than the Deity and Person of Christ.

It is what makes the difference between *Christianity* and false religions and cults.

When I say Christianity, I do not mean that every group that believes in the Deity of Christ is a Christian group.

They also must believe in salvation by grace alone, through faith alone by the work of Christ alone.

For example, The Roman Church is right in most of its views of the Person of Christ, but they are not right on The Work of Christ.

But Cults, by definition, do not believe in the Deity of Christ.

There is nothing new under the Sun.

Mormonism, Jehovah Witnesses, even small groups represented by various New Age philosophies repeat errors about the person of Christ that have already been refuted in church history.

Unfortunately, very few Christians know much about church history.

Worthy study.

More than we can deal with today.

Some of the more common errors.

I. Major heresies about the Deity of Christ are addressed in this passage.

1. EBIONISM

Comes from a Hebrew word which means "poor".

At first true Christians were referred to as Ebionites.

Most were poor.

Later, it was applied only to Jewish Christians.

Finally, it was applied only to those who held certain errors.

The roots of this can be traced to the Judiasers.

Those who were trying to bring all Christians under the yoke of the law.

They held strongly to the Jewish, Seventh Day Sabbath, and the Jewish laws regarding the Sabbath.

And most apparently believed that circumcision was necessary for salvation.

They were strong monotheists.

They held to ONE GOD.

That's good.

But, they had a problem with the person of Jesus.

The same problem we see here in John 5.

They admitted Christ was the promised Messiah.

They denied the virgin birth.

They said Jesus was an ordinary man.

That at His baptism, he **became** CHRIST as the dove descended.

Very mystical.

This was God's presence and power.

Right before His death, the Christ was removed, and Jesus died.

They did hold to the resurrection of Jesus, but "the Christ" is seen as a different entity, an altogether spiritual entity.

This great problem with this heresy, is it **denies Christ as a redeemer**.

It did uphold their monotheism.

Ebionites accept Matthew as the only authentic gospel.

Ebionites denied all the writings of Paul.

You can see why they would.

The great church father, Ireneus, was their greatest opponent. In the centuries to follow, the Ebionites never gained a strong foothold in the Christian community – and many were eventually absorbed into Islam – because of their strong monotheistic beliefs, and their denial of the divinity of Jesus.

2. ARIANISM

This may sound more familiar to you.

You have probably talked to Arians before.

You have probably had Arians come to your door to talk to you.

This came into being around the third century and became popular in the fourth century.

It was much more scholarly and still deceives 1000's to this day.

In fact, Jehovah's Witnesses can properly be called ARIANS.

They often deny that fact.

They often obscure their views, but they hold a form of Arianism.

The council of Nicea in 325 a.d. denounced this heresy.

That council, under Athanasius, defined Christianity as we know it as true orthodoxy, but Arianism continued on, and it still reappears from time to time in different forms.

1) Only God the Father is uncreated and eternal.

Everything else that exists came from God, including Christ.

As such, there can be no trinity.

- 2) Jesus created the world, but first, He was created by the Father.
The Word is a perfect creature, but none-the-less still a creature and therefore less than God.

Because they believed so strongly that Jesus was a created being their slogan became, "*There was a time when he was not.*"

Many Arians believed that Jesus was created before time, but still there was a time when he did not exist, unlike God who always was.

- 3) They agreed Jesus could be called "the Son of God", but this did not mean he was God. The son is not the same as the father. The son is beneath the father.

It is very frustrating to talk with a modern day Arian.
If they are honest, they will have to say that Jesus IS NOT God.

What they mean by Son of God is much less than what it means to us.
Many of the earliest Arians appear to be true Christians who could not understand the concept of the Trinity or the Hypostatic Union.

Admittedly, these are difficult theological concepts.
But Arianism evolved into a denial of the Deity of Christ.

He is a creature, although an elevated creature, even the highest of all creatures.

Of course, if He is not God, then He cannot be the Savior.
It is impossible to believe this and be a Christian.
You have destroyed the very foundation of Christianity.

3. DOCETISM

Another second century heresy addressed in this passage.

Jesus appeared to be human, but really was divine.

He only appeared to have a body -- in reality He was a phantom.

We see examples in the Bible of angels appearing unto men.
Even theophanies, the pre-incarnate Christ.

Terrible problem, if he didn't really have a body, he couldn't suffer and die.
Turns Christianity into a mystical religion with no ability to save.

Another error combatted in this passage is:

4. SABELLIANISM

Sometimes it will be called Monarchianism.

Best found today among those known as the "Jesus Only" people.

Some of your Apostolic groups.

Some of your Pentecostal groups.

Their error is not so much in the Deity of Christ, but in the Trinity.

God can be called the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit.

It is three ways of revealing the One God.

Like one person with three different names and three different roles.

He takes a role, but three aren't one.

There is only one who acts three different ways.

In John 5 Christ makes a real distinction between Himself and the Father.

Although He admits to being equal with the Father.

He even says later He is One with the Father.

None-the-less, there is distinction between the Father and Son.

II. The Absolute Equality of the Son with the Father in:

1. Working -- 17-18
2. Will -- 19
3. Intelligence -- 20
4. Prerogative -- 21
5. Honor -- 22-23
6. Giving Life -- 24-26
7. In Judicial Power and Authority -- 27-30

1. Working -- 17-18

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

The Jewish leaders fully understood Christ's line of reasoning.

They wanted to kill Christ because He healed on the Sabbath.

And they wanted to kill Christ because He claimed equality with God.

John 10:33 -- *The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*

John 19:7 -- *The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.*

Christ initiated the confrontation by healing on the Sabbath Day.

Why did Christ do what He did on the Sabbath?

Because it was an opportunity to teach about His person.

He can work because He is equal with God and God works on the Sabbath.

What?

Wait a minute Pastor, the Bible says God rested.

That's right.

We get tired and need rest. God never needs rest.

When he rested, He ceased from His creative labors.

He hallowed the day, and set it apart.

He rested from His creative labors, but not from His works of necessity and mercy.

He still governs the universe on the Sabbath day.

He still supplies the needs of all His creatures.

The sun rises and sets.

The tides come and go.

The grass grows just as much as any other day.

He sustains all of His creation and does good to his creation.

Works of necessity and mercy.

That is why Christ could heal.

God the Father worked.

Christ is equal to the Father.
He too has the right to heal and do good.
He does all things in unity with the Father.

The Jews understood His reference and all the more desired to kill him.

2. Will -- 19

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Some wrong views have been given over the years on this verse.

Christ is not saying He learns by imitation.

Christ is not even saying He limits His power and work in His humanity.

The first clause of the verse must be taken with the second clause.

Scripture explains Scripture.

And this verse must be tied together with v. 30.

John 5:30 -- *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.*

The last clause explains the first.

Christ and the Father are ONE in purpose and will.

Christ never goes against the Father.

Christ never even desires to go against the Father.

Think how much unlike you and me that is.

Sometimes we WANT to disobey God.

Sometimes we willfully DO disobey God.

Christ never did.

He perfectly obeyed and desired to obey perfectly.

**NEVER ONCE WAS HE TEMPTED TO DO ANYTHING OTHER
THAN THE FATHER'S WILL.**

Their wills are one.

these also doeth the Son likewise.

John Brown

*"All is of the Father -- all is by the Son.
Did the Father create the universe? So did the Son.
Does the Father uphold the universe? So does the Son.
Is the Father the Savior of the world? So is the Son.
Surely the Jews did not err when they concluded that our Lord made
himself 'equal with God.'
Surely, He who is so intimately connected with God
that He does what God does,
Does all God does,
Does all in the same manner in which God does it;
Surely such a person cannot but be equal with God."*

3. Intelligence -- 20

For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

Why does Christ need to be shown?

We show a child how to do something he doesn't understand.

Long division.

Over and over again we show them how to do it, until it clicks.

Is that what this verse is saying?

Of course not.

This verse shows His excellency in all things.

The Father has no secrets from the Son.

They are perfectly intimate with one another.

Everything the Father knows (everything) the Son also knows.

The Father does not hide anything from the Son.

This is another exclusive claim to Deity, and angered the Jews.

4. Prerogative -- 21

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

And those that are raised to Spiritual life are the same ones the Father wills to bring to Spiritual life.

As we said in v. 19 -- **THEIR WILLS ARE ONE!**

This is a great proof of particular redemption.

Some believe God elected some to life and then Christ died for everybody.

Two different wills.

The will of the Father -- to save His elect.

The will of the Son -- to save everyone.

No, Christ died on purpose, and with a purpose. To save His people from their sins.

5. Honor -- 22-23

*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:
That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth
not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*

Did the Jews worship Jehovah?

NO.

They had a form of true worship, but they did not know God.

If they had known God, they would have known Jesus.

Simeon in the temple. He knew who Jesus was.

As he held the baby in His arms, he prophesied about him.

The same with Anna the prophetess.

John the Baptist leaped in His mother's womb before he was born at the voice of Jesus.

As an adult, he knew Him, once God opened his eyes.

That's the way it was with all of the elect.

As Christ was revealed to them, they knew Him.

Other than that, their eyes were shut and **THEY COULD NOT KNOW HIM.**

On the day of Pentecost, 3,000 more hearts were opened.

The true elect embraced Christ when He was revealed to them.

The non-elect refused to believe in the face of overwhelming evidence.

And it's still that way today.

Do you honor the Son?

If you don't, you will spend eternity in Hell.

6. Giving Life -- 24-26

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

Christ is eternal.

1:4 -- In Him *WAS* life

We derive our life from God.

God has life in Himself.

Christ has life in Himself.

7. In Judicial Power and Authority -- 27-30

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

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; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

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.

Son of Man

v. 27 is an interesting statement.

Why is authority given to Christ?

Because he is the Son of man.

Think about it in context.

Do you think Christ is saying He is the judge because He is a man?

I'm a man. Why can't I be the judge?

There have been millions and millions of men.

Why aren't they the judge?

The answer lies in what Son of Man means.

80 times in the gospels Christ calls Himself the Son of Man.

It is His favorite term for Himself.

It is used 3 different ways.

- 1) It is simply a substitute for "I".
- 2) Sometimes, it is used of the Heavenly Son of Man who will one day return in glory.
- 3) Sometimes it is used when talking about His suffering that will bring salvation to His people.

But let's ask, "Why use a term like this?"

Son of God in v. 25 seems so much more clear.

- 1) Jesus is God and Man. THE GOD/MAN.
- 2) The term Son of Man is His terminology for Messiah.
- 3) Christ uses the name like a parable.
Christ often spoke in parables.
Often, no one understood His parables.
The Disciples had to ask what they meant, and then, in private Christ would explain the meaning.

Why? So that seeing they would not see and hearing they would not hear. Christ speaking in parables was a form of judicial hardening of the lost, and explains truths to the elect.

John 1:51 -- *The Heavenly Son of Man.*

John 3:13 -- *The Heavenly Son of Man again.*

John 3:14 -- *An example of the suffering work of the Son of Man.*

John 6:62 -- *The Heavenly Son of Man again.*

John 8:28 -- *Once again, the Son of Man suffering for His people.*

There are many, many more instances, but these are sufficient. The term Son of Man is a special designation for Messiah. It emphasises His suffering and His glory which are ONE. He has eternal glory as the Son of Man because of His work upon the cross of Calvary and His victory over death.