

If You Have Seen Me, You Have Seen the Father

JOHN 14:7-11

John 14:7-11 ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father '? ¹⁰ "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. ¹¹ "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

This section of Scripture comes on the heels of Jesus revealing to his disciples that he is about to leave them to go back to the Father. This is all in the context of Jesus soon to be put to death by crucifixion.

And yet, despite this reality Jesus can continue to encourage his disciples to place their faith in him as he continues to do the work of the Father, which necessarily means our Lord must continue to live to accomplish this work, despite his imminent death. And so, he ends with the glorious truth we ended with last week.

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

And so, Jesus continues to place his ministry in light of him finishing the Father's will by connecting both of them to the work the Father sent the Son into the world to accomplish. Thus, "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." Verse 7 of our text.

Earlier in this gospel Jesus made this statement to the Pharisees:

John 8:12 "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

After some back and forth, the Pharisees demanded to know by what authority Jesus could make such claims. Our Lord then brings an end to the discussion.

John 8:18-19 ¹⁸ "I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me." ¹⁹ So they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also."

To know the Son is to know the Father; therefore, to know the Father necessarily means to know the Son. In other words, both the Son and the Father are one in that they both share the same essence of the one true God while being distinct in their persons, as God has revealed Himself in the word God.

Colossians 2:9 ⁹ For in Him [Christ] all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

The Son of God is tasked with revealing the Father as he came into the world, taking on flesh to accomplish the will of the Father who sent him to redeem a people for himself.

John 6:38-39 ³⁸ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

If there is only one God and that God has come to this earth in the flesh, then it only stands to reason that if the Father is God, the Son, who is also God, reflects the deity of the Father in bodily form. What this conveys is the One true God has revealed himself in more than one person; three to be exact: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the case of the eternal Son of God, he assumed an additional nature, that of man, as he was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. (Luke 1:35)

This is what Paul conveys to the Philippians in his letter to them.

Philippians 2:6-7 although He [Jesus Christ] existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is no less God in spite of his humbling himself by taking on flesh. It was necessary that he did so. In this way he was able to take our sin as a perfect substitute (as only God could) and redeem sinful men becoming sin on their behalf, though without sin, himself.

This is why Paul could continue in the same breath when writing to these Philippians ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:8-11)

Though the Pharisees certainly did not believe in the deity of Jesus, we find his disciples also struggling to fully understand the implications of God taking on flesh to reveal the Father. Therefore, as Jesus says, to see the Son, is to see the Father. But we must be careful not to draw a strict one to one correlation by suggesting some form of modalism, where the Son becomes the Father as it suits him to reveal the Father at any particular point.

One definition of modalism is found at the website "Christian history for Every Man" and puts it very succinctly.

Modalism is the belief that God, rather than being three persons, is one person who reveals himself in three "modes," much as an actor might play three roles in a movie. It is also called Sabellianism or monarchianism.

This doctrine of Christ's eternal Godhood (distinct from the person of the Father) and his true humanity, was further defined, as revealed in the word of God, at the council of Chalcedon in 451 AD. What is commonly called the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ recognizes the one eternal person of the Son of God, (now incarnate) who is revealed in

the Scriptures as having two natures that are distinct but not confused; that of fully God and fully man, thus the God/man. Paul would put this into perspective when writing to the Colossians.

Colossians 1:15-20 ¹⁵ He [Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, ²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Though the word of God clearly distinguishes between the persons of the Godhead; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there are still those who teach that this is not so, as with the case of Oneness Pentecostals, for example, who insist, among other aberrant teachings, that there is only One God who simply manifests himself in different ways, as the occasion demands.

But it is hard to escape how the living God has revealed a relationship between three distinct persons in the Godhead. There are numerous passages that deal with this. I will only cite a few that clearly shows this unique relationship.

John 3:35 ³⁵ "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.

If Jesus and the Father are the same person, this verse would make no sense. So, the verse would essentially say, The Father loves the Son, posing as the Father, and has given all things into the Father's hand.

God is not schizophrenic when describing a love that extends from the Father to the Son. Upon the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, Jesus cries out to Father.

Luke 23:46 ⁴⁶ And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last.

According to Oneness theology, Jesus, now manifest in the flesh as the human expression of the eternal Father, is crying out to the Father. Not only is this bad exegesis of the passage, it betrays the very existence of the eternal Son of God, as the Oneness proponents teach that Jesus, the man, did not come into existence until his incarnation. In other words, this creates a huge problem as James White from his book, *The Forgotten Trinity*, brings to light. "Jesus then becomes two persons, the Father and the Son, the Father being the deity, the Son the human nature."

One of the best examples of all three persons of the one true Godhead showing up at the same place at the same time is what is recorded at the baptism of Jesus.

Matthew 3:16-17 ¹⁶ After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove *and* lighting on Him, ¹⁷ and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

In this passage the eternal Son of God, who now has two natures, that of God and man, is still only one Person, the eternal Son of . The Spirit of God, a person, not an inanimate force, is said to descend upon the Son as a dove, and a third person, the Father, addresses the crowd gathered at this event, and speaks lovingly of My Son.

By the way, I would highly recommend James White's book, the Forgotten Trinity, as it is an excellent primer on the doctrinal issues relating to the Trinity as it explains in layman's terms the beauty of the Triune God who is revealed in Scripture.

So, back to our text. John 14:7 ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

Here Jesus conveys to his disciples how he is tasked to reveal the Father; that is, the Son of God reveals God the Father, as he walks among his disciples and expresses the holiness of the Father, the love of the Father and the will of the Father as he has sent His eternal Son to reveal all that the Father desires to accomplish in the Son for His people.

^{NAU} John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

The Son of God didn't find the beginning of his existence, as Oneness Theology teaches, at his incarnation, rather his existence as the eternal Son of God has been forever, as he comes down from heaven to take on flesh.

In our text when Jesus says if "you had known me" the apostle John uses the Greek word *ginosko* which means to come to know or to recognize. But then the verse goes on to say, "you would have known My Father also." The word know, as it relates to knowing the Father, is the Greek word *oida* which gives the sense of perceiving or understanding to the degree that as you know the one you will properly perceive the other, which is why the end of the verse reads, "from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

John reverts back to the Greek word *ginosko* in the latter part of the verse concerning the Father, as it relays the idea that just as Jesus is standing in front of these disciples as they come to understand his role of revealing the Father, as they can touch him and speak directly to them, so too, now they have that same relationship to the Father as their knowledge and understanding of him is seen through the Son.

All of their lives these Jews were taught that God their Father is the one in whom they trusted for all things relating to the Kingdom of God and their redemption which is found in their God. The prophet Isaiah makes this connection clear.

Isaiah 63:16 ¹⁶ For You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us And Israel does not recognize us. You, O LORD, are our Father, Our Redeemer from of old is Your name.

Isaiah 64:8 ⁸ But now, O LORD, You are our Father, We are the clay, and You our potter; And all of us are the work of Your hand.

And yet earlier in the book of Isaiah the prophet identifies the Lord, the King of Israel, as their Redeemer, again whom they would have understood as God their Father.

And yet this Redeemer announces himself to Isaiah in words that are reminiscent to NT hearers of God's word.

^{NAU} Isaiah 44:6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.

This God, who is the first and the last, is the same God who announced himself to the apostle John, who wrote this gospel, as well as the book of Revelation where we find these words delivered by the risen Christ.

^{NAU} Revelation 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

When Jesus says to his disciples that to know him is to know the Father, this is what our Lord had in mind. He is the Redeemer and Savior of all his people, revealed in the OT, now manifest in the flesh as the Son is sent from the Father to accomplish what the Father sent him to do. It was not the Father who took on flesh, nor was it the Father who died on the cross, but the Son who is the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. In other words, the eternal One who reveals the Father and His mission to redeem all of his people through the means of His Son, is the second person of the Triune God.

Philip then responds to Jesus back in our text.

John 14:8 ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

At this point it seems Philip, and I dare say, the rest of the disciples, were still not comprehending the breadth and width of this statement from Jesus. But being the Teacher that Jesus was to his disciples, he explains it all again.

John 14:9-10 ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father '? ¹⁰ "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

Notice what Jesus does not say to Philip. He does not say, Do you not believe that I am the Father and that the Father is me. No, he says do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.

The faith of Christ's disciples at this particular rime did not depend on them being able to figure these spiritual words out and the teaching behind these words. And yet these are spiritual truths whom the Spirit of God would make clear to these disciples after Christ's resurrection. It was earlier in the ministry of Jesus where we see the ability of the disciples to recognize Jesus as the Messiah as it was revealed to them, and that it was not because of their own spiritual acuity that enabled them to have eyes to see and ears to hear, but because of God's ability to open their dead spiritual hearts to receive these things from God.

Matthew 16:13-17 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.

And now these same disciples are expected to glean the truth from Jesus that he and the Father are one in essence and one in mission as the Son reveals the Father and the salvation that is found in the Father through the Son.

This is why the Jews regarded their God and Father as their Savior. And yet, both the Father and the Son are placed in the same context when addressing the salvation of God's people.

Titus 1:4 Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Jude 1:25 ⁵ to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

These disciples of Jesus had been taught for the last three years that Jesus came into the world to accomplish their salvation as he was sent from the Father. We need only go back to the very beginning of this gospel.

John 1:18-19 ¹⁸ 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 5:19 ¹⁹ Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

The list goes on all throughout the gospel of John and so it is no wonder that Jesus says, to Philip, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father '? (John 14:9)

In saying this to Philip, and by implication to the rest of the disciples, Jesus is taking them back to all his former teachings on this subject. But so as to drive home his point he puts this teaching into terms these disciples could not question as he moves them from words he spoke, to works he performs that both speak to the same thing.

John 14:10 ¹⁰ "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

The works of the Father in the Son parallel the words Jesus uses to explain his mission from the Father who has all power and authority.

John 14:11 ¹¹ "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

What works? The works only God can do. Jesus pointed this out earlier in this gospel.

^{NAU} John 5:36 "But the testimony which I have is greater than *the testimony of John*; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish-- the very works that I do-- testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

These works include the signs and wonders that only God could do.

^{NAU} John 2:23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing.

When the unbelieving Jews accused Jesus of blaspheming because he referred to himself as the Son of God Jesus replied in this way.

John 10:36-38 ³⁶ do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God '? ³⁷ "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; ³⁸ but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

Christ's entire ministry in both word and works testified to him being the Son of God sent from the Father, and even toward the end of his ministry Jesus is still teaching his disciples that he is who he says he is.

All of these words and works will prove to accomplish their intended goal in his disciples, especially after his resurrection when the Spirit of God, the third person in this Godhead, will bring these things to their minds, as later in this same chapter Jesus will remind the disciples that their teaching will continue even after his death and resurrection.

John 14:26 ²⁶ "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

It would be the Spirit who would take all the teachings of Jesus and then personally teach the disciples of those things Jesus spoke of which included the following during the ministry of Jesus.

John 2:18-22 ¹⁸ The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. ²² So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

John 12:14-16 ¹⁴ Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, ¹⁵ "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT." ¹⁶ These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

As to the works that Jesus did during his ministry in the midst of his disciples, he reminds them that they too will do works for God.

John 14:12 ¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

What works is Jesus identifying here that these disciples will also do and in a greater capacity? We'll find out next week.

