

JESUS THE SON

1. INTRODUCTION

The Second Person of the Trinity is called God the Son. Strong, when writing of the three titles of God expressed in the Trinity, says:

“The Father is not God as such; for God is not only Father, but also Son and Holy Spirit. The term ‘Father’ designates that hypostatical (meaning real personal subsistence or substance of each of the three divisions of the Trinity) distinction in the divine nature in virtue of which God is related to the Son, and through the Spirit to the Church and the world.”

“The Son is not God as such, for God is not only Son, but also Father and Holy Spirit. ‘The Son’ designates that distinction in virtue of which God is related to the Father, is sent by the Father to redeem the world, and with the Father sends the Holy Spirit.”

“The Holy Spirit is not God as such; for God is not only Holy Spirit, but also Father and Son. ‘The Holy Spirit’ designates that distinction in virtue of which God is related to the Father and the Son, and is sent by them to accomplish the work of renewing the ungodly and of sanctifying the Church.”

2. TITLES OF THE SON INCLUDED IN THE DESIGNATION OF SON

The Scripture enlarges our understanding of the Son of God in His pre-existent state by using the names of Logos, the Image, and the Effulgence (brightness, glory) of God. The term Logos combines in itself the two ideas of thought and word and of reason and expression. While the Logos as divine thought or reason is one with God, the Logos as divine word or expression is distinguishable from God.

Words are means by which personal beings express or reveal themselves. Jesus Christ was “the Word” before there was any creatures to whom revelations could be made. It would seem to be only a necessary inference from this title that in Christ, God must be from eternity expressed or revealed to Himself. In other words, the Logos is the principle of truth, or self-consciousness, in God.

John 1:1-5 is an essential Scripture to understand. Without this teaching we fail to fully appreciate who Jesus is. The Word was in the beginning. He has always existed. He was with God and was God. More than that, He had all things created through Him. In Him was life which was the light to men. Finally, in Him and Him only was life and that life was the light of man.

The term ‘Image’ suggests the ideas of copy or counterpart. Man is the image of God only relatively. It means being in relationship but not absolute. Whereas Christ is the Image absolutely and archetypally (meaning the original pattern or model). As the perfect representation of the Father’s perfections, the Son would seem to be the object and principle of love in the Godhead.

The term 'Effulgence,' finally, is an allusion to the sun and its radiance. As the effulgence of the sun manifests the sun's nature, which otherwise would be unrevealed, yet is inseparable from the sun and ever with it, so Christ reveals God, but is eternally one with God. Here is a principle of moment, of will, which seems to connect itself with holiness, or self-asserting purity, of the divine nature.

The words of Hebrews 1:3 are relevant at this point. "Who being the (effulgence) brightness of His (God's) glory and the express image of His (God's) person (substance), and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

This text shows clearly that the Son is the exact brightness of God's glory and the very image of God's person.

In one self-revealing incident Jesus becomes transfigured before Peter, James and John:

Matthew 17:2 "And He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light" (see also Mark 9:2).

When Jesus was revealed in His glory it is interesting that both Moses and Elijah joined Him. Some theologians suggest that Moses went straight to heaven as did Elijah. If this is so then Jesus showed that only life exists in His glory not death. This is why when a person comes to faith in Christ he never dies but has everlasting life bestowed upon him

(See John 3:16).

3. THE SON OF GOD REVEALED IN MARK

Mark's Gospel starts abruptly in verse 1 of the first chapter with, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" Mark 1:1.

Matthew 16:13-17 is where Jesus asked if they knew who he was. Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven." It is important to see what Jesus said to Peter's outcry. For a person to fully realise that Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity they must have a revelation from the Father in heaven.

4. THE DEVIL CHALLENGED JESUS ON HIS TITLE OF THE SON OF GOD

When the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil, the device the Devil used was to require Jesus to prove that He was the Son of God.

It is likely that he wanted to cause confusion between Jesus as the Son of Man and as the Son of God.

It was a subtle way of doing it. "If You are the Son of God" (Matthew 4:3) "command these stones". And again "If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down"... (Matthew 4:6). Jesus response on each occasion was to refer to, and use, the Word of God. The reason, of course, was that He was the "Word of God." This was the first and most significant challenge that Satan ever made and it failed. Right at the commencement of His ministry, Jesus was challenged on His relationship with God.

False cults do the same today. This is one of the reasons we know where they get their influence - Satan.

5. DEMONS SAW IMMEDIATELY THAT JESUS WAS THE SON OF GOD

The evil spirits understood who Jesus was before He said anything to them. They recognised Him as the Son of God.

Mark 3:11-12 “And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, “You are the Son of God.” But He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.”

Luke 4:41 “And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of God!” And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.”

Mark 1:24-25 “...saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—“the Holy One of God!”. But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!”

Mark 5:7-8 “And he cried out with a loud voice and said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me.” For He said to him, “Come out of the man, unclean spirit!”

We are now going to see for ourselves what Scripture says about the Son of God in the Gospels.