

Exalting Jesus Christ

"I and My Father are One!"

INTRODUCTION:

- I. I want you to open your Bibles to the very first verse of the Bible – Genesis chapter 1 verse 1.
 - A. Some four thousand years ago, as Moses sat down to write these words by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, He gave us a clue to the divine character and divine nature of God that is often missed.
 1. Most of you could probably quote this verse from memory:
 - a. **Genesis 1:1** – *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*
 2. The word I want you to focus on is the word "God."
 - a. It's from the Hebrew, "Elohyim."
 - b. The root of this word is the Hebrew, "Elowahh" – which is simply translated God in the singular sense.
 - c. But "Elohyim" – the word used in Genesis 1:1 – is translated God in the plural sense.

- d. It doesn't mean that there were a group of God's that joined together to create the heavens and the earth, but rather than the God of Genesis 1:1 is not singular in nature, but plural.

B. Now I want you to look at Genesis chapter 1 verses 26 and 27.

- 1. Moses is still using the Hebrew word "Elohyim" – or God in the plural sense in these verses as well.
 - a. **Genesis 1:26-27** – *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*
- 2. Moses wrote that *"God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. . .'"*
 - a. Some say that Jehovah God was speaking to the angels of heaven when He said *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness."*
 - (1). This is the claim made by Jehovah's Witnesses because they deny the deity and Godhood of Jesus Christ.

- (2). They consider it blasphemy to say that Jesus and God the Father are of the same divine essence and divine nature.
 - (3). To them, Jesus is merely a god – with a little "g" – but not the God spoken of in Genesis.
3. However, Moses went on to write, *"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*
 - a. God was not speaking to the angels of heaven when He said, *"Let Us create man in Our own image, according to Our likeness."*
 - b. How do we know? Simply because Moses said, *"God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him."*
 - c. Man was not created in the image of angels or any other heavenly being.
 - d. Man was created in the image of God, according to God's likeness.
4. But the words I want you to notice are the personal pronouns "US" and "OUR."
 - a. Even God speaks of Himself in a plural sense.

- II. The Jews in the days of Jesus didn't understand this very complex nature of God.
 - A. They always thought of God in the singular – never in a plural sense.
 - 1. In fact, to equate anything or anyone with Jehovah would be blasphemy in their minds.
 - B. And yet, the plural nature of God is second nature to our understanding.
 - 1. We know that God – the God of Genesis – is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
 - a. All three persons are completely distinct from the other – meaning, the Father is not the Son, nor is the Son the Father, and neither are the Holy Spirit.
 - b. There are three distinct persons – three distinct and separate personalities – in the Godhead.
 - c. And yet, these three are ONE – meaning they all possess the same divine character, the same divine nature, and the same divine essence.
 - d. In fact, the Bible ascribes the word "God" to all three – to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – all three are called "God."
 - 2. How do we explain three separate and distinct persons as one God?

- a. I don't think we're expected to wrap our minds around the triune nature of God because it's beyond our ability to fully understand, let alone explain.
 - b. But if you can understand how a husband and wife – two separate and distinct individuals – can become "one flesh" in marriage, then perhaps you can begin to grasp the Father, Son and Holy Spirit being "one God."
- C. However, the godhood of Jesus Christ is something the apostle John affirmed from the first verse of his gospel – when he referred to Jesus as "the Word."
- 1. **John 1:1-2** – *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.*
 - a. John was simply affirming that Jesus is as much entitled to be called God, as the God He was with in the beginning.
 - b. The reason is simply because Jesus is God – Jesus is deity, He possesses the same divine character, nature and essence as God the Father.
 - 2. Furthermore, John added: **John 1:3** – *All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

3. Now perhaps you can truly see Jesus in the very first verse of the Bible: **Genesis 1:1** – *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*
 - a. John said God created all things through Jesus.
 - b. So did the apostle Paul: **Ephesians 3:8-9** – *To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;*
4. It's important that we understand this about Jesus because knowing these things makes the next claim of Jesus even more meaningful.

- II. As we come to the second half of the 10th chapter of John in our series "Exalting Jesus Christ" we find Jesus once again coming face to face with His adversaries.
 - A. In every confrontation of the Lord with the religious rulers in Jerusalem He boldly and unmistakably claimed His deity – claiming that He is the Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah.
 1. But the claim Jesus is about to make will raise the anger of His adversaries to fever pitch.

2. Jesus will boldly claim, *"I and My Father are One."*
- B. Once again, to fully understand the impact this statement had on those who heard it, we need to do three things:
 1. First, we want to understand the setting in which Jesus makes this bold claim.
 2. Then we want to examine His teaching.
 3. And finally, look at the diverse reactions of those who heard Him.

BODY:

- I. In the first half of the 10th chapter of John, Jesus made His great claim of being the Good Shepherd who gives His life for His sheep.
 - A. If you recall, at that time Jesus had been in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.
 1. And it was sometime after the Feast that Jesus made this bold claim to deity.
 2. However, as we come to the second half of John chapter 10, we come to a completely different event that takes place approximately two months later – during the Feast of Dedication.
 - B. The Jews celebrated three great feast days – The Feast of Tabernacles, Passover, and Pentecost.
 1. But later they also added two other feast days.
 - a. One is the Feast of Nicanor.

- b. The other is the Feast of Dedication – sometimes called the Feast of Lights – or as it's more commonly called today, Hannukah.
 2. These two feasts were added during the period we know as the 400 years of silence between the Old and New Testament – the time between the prophet Malachi and the days when John the Baptist began preaching in Judea.
 3. Although these two feasts were not specifically commanded by God, they held great historical significance to the Jews of Jesus' day.
- C. The actual place where Jesus makes His next bold claim is Solomon's porch, the elegantly roofed and colonnaded portico where rabbis walk with their students, discussing and debating the hot theological issues of the day.
 1. It is here where Jesus is confronted once again by His adversaries, the Jews – namely the Pharisees – who demanded to know if He was the Christ; the Messiah.
 - a. **John 10:22-24** – *Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. 23 And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. 24 Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."*

2. And so, Jesus picks up where He left off two months earlier by reaffirming His deity as the Son of God.
 - a. First, he appeals to His works and His words, claiming that only the Christ – the Messiah – could do the things He has done.
 - b. Then He reaffirms that He is the Good Shepherd, and explains why His sheep follow Him.
 - c. And finally, Jesus makes another bold claim to deity – claiming that He and the Father are One.
 - (1). Meaning, that Jesus and the Father are of the same divine essence, and of the same divine nature.
 - (2). In other words, Jesus is just as much entitled to be called God, as God the Father.
- II. So, let's turn our attention now to the actual teaching of Jesus.
- A. In answering the challenge of the Jewish religious leaders to once again affirm His deity, Jesus simply points again to His works.
 1. **John 10:25-26** – *Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. 26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.*

2. Jesus had already performed numerous undeniable miracles and signs that clearly pointed to Him as being the Messiah.
3. Even though these critics of Jesus may not have seen every miracle, sign and wonder He performed, no doubt word of these things followed Him wherever He went.
 - a. Jesus had turned water into wine (John 2:1-12)
 - b. Jesus then boldly entered the Temple and drove out all the moneychangers and those who bought and sold, calling the Temple, "My Father's house." (John 2:13-22)
 - c. While in Jerusalem on that occasion, Jesus did many signs (John 2:23)
 - d. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, recognized Jesus was a "man approved by God" for no one could do the things Jesus did unless God was with Him (John 3:1-2)
 - e. John the Baptist testified to the Messiahship of Jesus (John 3:28-36)
 - f. Jesus was able to tell a Samaritan woman things about herself that only she knew (John 4:16-29)
 - g. Jesus healed the nobleman's son from a distance of more than 20 miles (John 4:46-54)
 - h. Then He healed a man who had been unable to walk for 38 years (John 5:1-9)

- i. The Lord then fed 5,000 with just 5 barley loaves and 2 small fish (John 6:1-14)
 - j. He then walks across the water in the middle of a storm to join His own disciples in a boat (John 6:15-21)
 - k. Then the Lord heals a man born blind (John 9:1-12)
4. There are over 10 signs and wonders performed by Jesus in just the first 9 chapters of the gospel of John! How many more did these Jewish religious leaders want?
5. The problem with their disbelief wasn't for a lack of signs, it was due to them deliberately denying everything they had seen and heard about Jesus – they closed their eyes, their ears, and most seriously, they had closed their minds.
6. Therefore, Jesus replied: **John 10:26** – “. . .you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.”
- B. This brings us to the reasons why the Lord's sheep are willing to follow Him – and the reason why these calloused haters of the Lord would not.
- 1. **John 10:27-29** – *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."*
 - 2. It's here that Jesus identified four qualities of genuine believers:

- a. First, true believers are sensitive to His voice: *"My sheep hear My voice."*
- (1). The true believer wants to hear the voice of the Lord, not the voice of men who claim to speak for the Lord.
 - (2). Unfortunately, not everyone wants to hear the voice of Jesus, and instead, seek out those who will tell them what they want to hear.
 - (3). Again, this is the very thing Paul warned Timothy about:
2 Timothy 4:2-4 – *Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*
 - (4). You'll know if you're a true believer by whether or not you really want to hear the voice of the Lord, or find those who will teach you what you want to hear.
- b. Second, a true believer is obedient to the Lord: *"They follow Me."*

- (1). Later in the gospel of John, Jesus will challenge His disciples with this simple claim: **John 14:15** – *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."*
- (2). Then in the letter of 1st John, the apostle will repeat this test of loyalty five more times:
 - (a). **1 John 2:3** – *Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*
 - (b). **1 John 2:4** – *He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*
 - (c). **1 John 3:22** – *And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.*
 - (d). **1 John 5:2** – *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.*
 - (e). **1 John 5:3** – *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.*
- (3). Only a true, genuine believer will faithfully follow the commandments of the Lord.

- c. Third, a genuine believer is confident of their destiny: *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish"*
- (1). True believers don't have doubts about their salvation, nor do they have doubts about their eternal destiny.
 - (2). There is none of this, "I sure HOPE I go to heaven when I die." Genuine believers KNOW they have eternal life, and will therefore never perish.
 - (3). We know this because we are able to say, with Paul:
2 Timothy 4:7-8 – *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*
 - (4). And that's because we have the same assurance Peter wrote about: **1 Peter 1:3-5** – *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who*

are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

(5). The true believer knows heaven will be their home – without any doubts whatsoever. Why? Because they are obedient to the Lord's commands.

d. And finally, the genuine believer knows they are sure and secure in the Shepherd's loving care: *"neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. . . no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."*

(1). **Romans 8:37-39** – *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

(2). **Hebrews 3:14** – *For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end. . .*

(3). **1 John 2:28-29** – *And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 29 If you know*

that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

3. These critics of Jesus could never be true, genuine believers for all the reasons we just mentioned:
 - a. They refused to hear His voice.
 - b. They refused to be obedient to His commands.
 - c. Therefore, they could have no confidence in their destiny.
 - d. And because they refused to follow Jesus as the Good Shepherd, they certainly were not safe and secure in the Lord's care.

- C. Finally, to once again make it crystal clear that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, Jesus boldly said:
 1. **John 10:30** – *"I and My Father are one."*
 - a. Jesus was not simply saying, "My Father and I are one in agreement" or "I and My Father are one in purpose."
 - (1). That should be true of everyone – we should all be in agreement with God the Father, and we should certainly be one with the Father in purpose.
 - b. Rather, when Jesus said *"I and My Father are one"* these Jews immediately knew Jesus was claiming to be equal to the Father in every way.

(1). They knew Jesus was claiming to be of the same divine character, the same divine nature, and the same divine essence as God the Father.

(2). They knew Jesus was claiming to be as much entitled to wear the name God as the Father.

c. And it was because of this bold and unashamed claim to deity that they immediately sought to kill Him.

III. And this now, brings us to the reaction of these calloused religious leaders to the things Jesus just said.

A. They were ready to murder Jesus on the spot.

1. **John 10:31** – *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.*

2. Therefore, Jesus replied: **John 10:32** – *"Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?"*

3. Therefore, to show that they had not misunderstood His claim to deity, the Jews replied: **John 10:33** – *"For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*

B. But notice the way Jesus responded.

1. **John 10:34-36** – *Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"'? 35 If He called them gods, to whom*

the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 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'?

- a. Jesus quotes from Psalm 82:6, where the Lord speaking through the psalmist called the magistrates and judges "gods" in the sense that they judged in Israel.
- b. They had received their right to exercise judgment over Israel only because the word of God had been entrusted to them.
- c. They were expected to carry out the commandments of the Lord without fail because they had been "sanctified by the Father" – or set apart by the Father – for that very purpose as judges and magistrates.
- d. Therefore, if the Lord called those judges and magistrates "gods", how could these critics of Jesus charge Him with blasphemy if He comes into the world with all the credentials and proofs of the Messiah, and therefore calls Himself "the Son of God"?
- e. In other words, if it was not blasphemy for God to call the judges and magistrates of Israel "gods" in Psalm 82:6, then how can these men charge Jesus with blasphemy when He called Himself, "the Son of God"?

2. However, to show beyond any doubt that Jesus had every right to call Himself "the Son of God," He points them one more time to the works He had done.
 - a. **John 10:37-38** – *"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."*
 - b. This was just another way of saying, "If you don't believe the things I say, at least believe all the miracles, signs and wonders I've performed in My Father's name."
 - c. Those miracles, signs and wonders should prove beyond any doubt to the good and honest heart that the Father is in Jesus, and that He is in the Father – meaning that they are of the same divine character and of the same divine nature.
 3. But the calloused hearts of these men would never allow them to believe – they had closed their ears and their eyes to all the evidence proving the deity of Jesus Christ.
 4. And that left them with only one course of action: **John 10:39** – *Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.*
- C. However, despite the calloused and hardened heart of these men, others could see Jesus for whom He really was.

1. **John 10:40-42** – *And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed. 41 Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true." 42 And many believed in Him there.*

CONCLUSION:

- I. Let me close by asking you if you're a true, genuine believer in Jesus Christ.
 - A. Remember, there are four things Jesus said identify those who truly believe in Him:
 1. First, the true believer is sensitive to His voice.
 - a. Do you listen to the Lord's voice as He speaks to you through His divinely inspired Word, or do you listen to the voice of those who say they speak for the Lord – without investigating to see whether or not the things they say are really true?
 2. Second, a true believer is obedient to His commands.
 - a. Are you truly obedient to the Lord's commands? Do you say you love the Lord and yet fail to keep His commands?
 3. Third, a true believer is confident of their eternal destiny.
 - a. If you were to die this very day, are you confident that heaven would be your home?
 4. And finally, a true believer is secure in the Shepherd's loving care.

- a. Are you confident that you're secure in the Savior's arms?
- B. If there is any doubt in your mind about whether you are a true believer in Jesus Christ, erase all doubt right now.
1. You can have that confidence by coming to Christ in faith, repenting of your sins, and by being obedient to the Lord's command to be buried with Him in baptism for the remission of all your past sins.
 2. Or you can have that confidence again by coming back to the Lord, repenting of the sins that have separated you from your Lord, and confess those sins to God so that you can be restored once again.