



Old Testament Reading – Psalm 45:1-17
New Testament Reading – Matthew 16:13-17

The Pillar and Ground of Truth

“Displaying the Deity of Jesus Christ”

Mark 3:7-12

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While it should concern us that 52% of all adults in America believe Jesus was nothing more than a great teacher, moral leader, and a model for men to follow, what should drive us to our knees is that 30% of those who claim to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior agree with that statement, which means they are not saved.

- When John baptized Jesus, as a sign of Jesus’ humility, Matthew said Jesus ***“Saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly, a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*** (Matthew 3:16-17)

- Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus openly claimed equality with God, He allowed Himself to be crucified as the Savior sent from God, and the Bible says Jesus was raised from the dead and seen, ascending back into heaven to prove He was truly God.
- S. Lewis wrote: **“Jesus was either Lord, a liar, or a lunatic, and if He wasn’t truly Lord, on what basis do we say He was a great teacher or a good model for mankind?”**

God established the Church to serve as the Pillar and Ground of Truth. If there is a lack of biblical truth in our culture, there must be a deficiency of biblical truth being proclaimed by today’s churches.

- Everything we know about God, about Jesus Christ, about the Holy Spirit, about the Church, is limited to the divinely inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God, which we call the Bible.
- However, 58% of those who claim to be Christians today say even though the Bible was divinely inspired, it cannot be taken literally, and 16% say the Bible is a book of fables.
- The Bible declares that Jesus of Nazareth proved Himself to be identical with God in both nature and power in that He was able to perform works that only God could do.
- Colossians 2:9 – **“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”**
- Therefore, the deity of Christ is not just an essential doctrine of the Christian Faith; it is the primary doctrine of the Christian Faith, and to compromise His deity is to render the gospel of its power to save lost man from eternal hell

However, according to a recent study, the primary message from most pulpits today is not based on the truth of the Holy Scriptures, but on the merger of multiple religious beliefs under the heading of: **Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, which says:**

- *A God exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth. This God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, for God’s desire is for people to be happy and feel good about life. God doesn’t involve Himself in our daily lives unless we need Him, and all good people go to heaven when they die, even if they have not confessed Jesus Christ as their Savior.*
- Having abandoned the expository preaching of the Bible as the only source of truth about the Christian Faith, the people are left to form their own concept of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Church, and that is where we are in Christianity today.
- However, Jesus addressed such heresy in Revelation 2:4ff when He wrote to the church at

Ephesus:

- ***“You’ve left your first love! Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place.”***

While there are four gospels in the New Testament, and while each writer gave their account of their time with Jesus, the singular purpose for their documentaries was summed up in John 20:30-31.

- ***“Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”***
- To the Jew, the term “Son of God” meant Jesus shared the very nature of God; that He was, in fact, God Himself, clothed in the physical body of a man.
- Even those who didn’t believe Jesus was the Messiah did not deny His miracles for the evidence was right before them.
 - In Mark 8:29, Peter declared Jesus to be the Christ, which meant “Messiah,” but the disciples never referred to Jesus as the “Son of God.” However, Mark affirmed the deity of Jesus Christ:
 - Mark 1:2-3 – because He fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah.
 - Mark 1:4 – because of what John the Baptists called Him.
 - Mark 1:9-11 – because of the verbal testimony of God the Father.
 - Mark 1:12-13 – because of His victory over Satan.
 - Mark 1:14ff – because of the power of His call upon men, and His power over sickness, disease, and demons.
 - Mark 2:23 – 3:6 – because of the authority He exercised over the religion of Judaism.
 - Mark 15:37-39, when he heard Jesus’ cry out unto God the Father, that Roman soldier became the first man to declare, ***“Truly this Man was the Son of God.”***

Contrary to what is taught in most evangelical churches today, there is no such doctrine that says one can trust Jesus Christ as their Savior without, at the same moment, submitting unto Him as their Lord, i.e., there is no doctrine of “easy believism.”

- Our decision to receive Jesus Christ as our Savior is manifested by our sincere devotion to Jesus as our Lord, our Master, the Ruler of our hearts.
- We gather on the Lord's Day to review and renew our confession of faith in the absolute deity of Jesus Christ, that He is the Son of God, the Messiah, our Savior, and our Lord.

1. **The Popularity of Jesus – Mark 3:7-8 – “*Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him.*”**

- No person has been more popular among the people than Jesus of Nazareth. However, Jesus had to control the popularity of His earthly ministry to coincide with the prophetic timing of His death, burial, and resurrection.
- Even at the beginning of His earthly ministry, Jesus had to withdraw from the public many times to protect Himself and His disciples.
- However, because of His ability to heal the sick and the maimed, and to cast out demons, not only were the people able to find Him, they were constantly crowded around Him, and the crowds continued to grow each day, as each person tried to get ahead of the one in front of them, hoping Jesus might touch them and be healed.
- When Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves of bread and two fish, Matthew estimated ***“The number of those who ate was about 5,000, besides the women and children.”***
- Josephus, the Jewish historian, estimated the population of Galilee in that day to be around three million, but Mark said the people came from all over Israel.
- So, fearing the massive crowd would turn into a mob, Jesus asked the disciples to let Him stand in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, and He would still be able to teach the people.
- But the problem was they wanted Jesus' miracles rather than His messages about salvation – they didn't care about His theology; they just wanted to be healed.
- Jesus manifested His deity by His power over both the natural and the supernatural world, even the kingdom of darkness and the agents of hell, but they rejected Him as their Savior and refused to bow before Him as their Lord.
- At the end of His ministry, even many of those Jesus healed were in that crowd in Jerusalem

crying out for Jesus to be crucified – they called for the death of the One who gave them life.

2. **The Power of Jesus – Mark 3:10 – “For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him.”**

- Healing is a creative act and, therefore, is limited to God alone.
- The same God who created the limbs and organs of the first physical body created them anew before the people, and the people were drawn to the person who manifested that power.
- Mark 1:41, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched a man with leprosy, and the man’s hand was healed immediately.
- Mark 6:56 – from that point on, when the people heard that Jesus was coming to their area, they would lay the sick and maimed along the road and beg for Jesus just to touch them as He walked by.
- However, in Chapter 3:11, Mark said Jesus was so powerful He didn’t have to touch the demons He would cast out, for when they saw Him coming, they left the human body they had inhabited, and fell down before Jesus and cried.
- James 2:19 – ***“The devils believe in Jesus, and tremble.”***

3. **The Person of Jesus – Mark 1:24 – “You are the Son of God.” Mark 5:7 – The demon 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.”**

- This man was so possessed by demons he could not live among the people, even among his own family.
- Even though they bound him in chains and cast him away, he was so full of evil he could break the chains, and he was so full of wickedness that he screamed during the night and would cut himself with stones.
- Chapter 5:6 – When the demon-possessed man saw Jesus coming from a distance, the demon left the man, ran to Jesus, fell down before Him, and asked: ***“What do I have to do with You, Jesus, the Son of the Most-High-God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me.”***
- Jesus cast that “legion” of demons into a herd of 2,000 swine, and they ran violently over a cliff and drowned in the Sea of Galilee.

- The deity of Jesus Christ was verbally proclaimed by God the Father on the day Jesus was baptized by John.
- The deity of Jesus Christ was confirmed by His power over both the natural and the supernatural world.
- The deity of Jesus Christ was validated by those twelve disciples who walked beside Him for those three years and witnessed His almighty power, even to the point of raising the dead.
- In Mark 4, the disciples asked: ***“Who is this man who can control the winds and calm the sea?”***
- In Mark 8, they have no choice but to declare, ***“Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”***

There is no such thing as a divided Christ.

- Colossians 2:6 – ***“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.”***
- Acts 2:36 – ***“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”***
- In 1 Corinthians 12:3, the Apostle Paul said, ***“No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.”***
- Therefore, in Romans 10:9-10, the Apostle Paul penned what became known as a true, biblical confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. ***“If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.”***
- Saving faith begins with our confession and repentance of having rejected Jesus Christ as our Lord, and it continues with our decision to live in obedience to the One who delivered us from an eternity in hell through His death on the cross, and His resurrection from the dead.
- Christianity is not about adding Jesus to our self-focused life in the hopes of getting all of His earthly blessings, as well as the assurance of our home in heaven.

Christianity is about dying to self, and devoting ourselves to the Lordship of Christ, so much so, that our first, last, and only desire each day is to please the One who died for us, for that is the sole purpose for which He called me.