

Deity of Christ

By L.R. Shelton

I.

IT HAS BEEN UPON MY HEART FOR SOME TIME now to bring a series of messages on the Eternal Sonship of Christ, His Deity and His place in the Holy Trinity as God the Son. So, believing that the Holy Spirit is leading to deliver these messages at this time, we bring before you the first of these series.

To me, the subject of the DEITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD, and His ETERNAL SONSHIP is a subject that is higher than the heavens, deeper than the deepest sea, and one that we who are God's people will continue to learn about throughout all the ages to come. It is a subject that has been preached about for millenniums, rejoiced in by God's people for ages, and something into which the angels have looked with amazement from the beginning; yet it is also a subject that is hated, scorned, belittled, denied, and laughed at by Satan and his followers since the beginning of creation.

At the outset of these messages, I want to emphatically state that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is all that the Scriptures represent Him to be: THE SECOND PERSON OF THE HOLY TRINITY, GOD INCARNATE, Who is to be worshipped and obeyed by *all men*. Therefore, any hope that any poor sinner has for heaven and complete salvation from the penalty, power, and presence of sin, must of necessity rest wholly and completely upon the *Deity* of Jesus of Nazareth, Who is the Christ of God; for the Scriptures plainly declare that He, *and He alone*, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life: and no man cometh unto the Father, but by Him (John 14:6). I say, the Scriptures declare that without His perfect humanity, we would have no perfect offering for our sins before the thrice-holy God against Whom we have sinned. Further, the Scriptures declare that without His *Deity* we have no perfect blood that would speak forgiveness for our sins; and without His *Deity*, we have no one who could bear the full weight of the wrath of a sin-avenging God against our sins, for Scripture plainly declares that He, the Christ of God, bore our sins in His own body upon the cross, and by Him and Him *only* poor sinners are reconciled unto God.

I will make another statement that is also true and undeniable (except by those who are so blind that they cannot see!) JEHOVAH GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IS JEHOVAH JESUS, THE CHRIST OF GOD, OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. The same divine names, the same divine attributes, the same divine offices and the same worship are given to both. To say that Jehovah God of the Old Testament is not Jehovah Jesus of the New Testament, or that Jesus of the New Testament is not Jehovah God of the Old Testament, is to declare that we have two Gods and this is blasphemy; for Isaiah 42:8 reads, "I am JEHOVAH: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another." And Deuteronomy 6:4 states, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one LORD." Therefore I declare upon the authority of God's Word today that the 66 books of the Bible, the Holy Word of God, presents to us the ONE True and living God.

I acknowledge that the doctrine of the *Deity* of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is denied by every cult, every false religion, and every false teacher, because they deny the Scriptural teaching of the "Trinity in Unity" of the ONE true living God as He is manifested to us in His three Personages: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But this only shows their spiritual blindness to the eternal Word of God, which from Genesis to Revelation speaks of the one true and living God, Jehovah, revealing Himself unto His people as their Father, their Saviour (the Son), and their Comforter (the Holy Spirit) "Trinity in Unity, or Unity in Trinity" ONE God, Who alone is all in all.

Now in the light of Isaiah 42:8, which reads, "I AM JEHOVAH: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another," let us apply the great principle of Scripture set forth in I Corinthians 2:13 [the comparing of spiritual things with spiritual], by giving the witness of the Scriptures to the attributes, the majesty, and the claims of *Jehovah God* (God the Father, or God Absolute) of the Old Testament and the

claims of *Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God*, of the New Testament, thus showing that they are ONE and the same.

In Psalm 90:2 we read, “From *everlasting to everlasting*, Thou art God.” My friend, this portion is speaking of the God of the Old Testament. Now this same statement is spoken of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, in Micah 5:2, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, *from everlasting*.” This is quoted in Matthew 2 by the chief priests and scribes when they were asked by Herod where the Christ of God should be born:

Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel (vv 2-6).

Therefore, this is proof that these words speak of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God.

In Psalm 93:2 we read, “Thy throne is established of old: Thou art from *everlasting*.” This speaks of Jehovah of the Old Testament. This same statement is spoken of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, in Heb. 1:8: “But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is *for ever and ever*.” I ask, Do we have two Gods spoken of here? No, only *one* true and living God as revealed to us in the eternal Son Who “was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” for His people (Phil 2:7,8). “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (vv 9-11). Oh how *plain* the Word of God is as to who Jesus the Christ of God is! He is *the Eternal God Incarnate!*

Again, in Isaiah 44:6 we read of Jehovah God of the Old Testament speaking of Himself, saying, “I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God.” The same words are spoken by Jesus of Nazareth in His resurrected body, to John on the Isle of Patmos in Revelation 1:17,18: “I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen.”

I ask you, my friend, would the God of the Old Testament Who said, “I will *not* give My glory to another”—would He ask you and me to worship, adore, sing praises to, pray to, and give up ourselves completely to Jesus of Nazareth, if He were not God, the equal to Jehovah of the Old Testament? I say NO, because He tells us in Exodus 34:14, “For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.” He is the one true and living God, Jehovah, the Great I AM.

We read in Malachi 3:6 where the God of the Old Testament is speaking, saying, “I am Jehovah, I change not.” Then when we turn to the New Testament, we read the same thing of Jesus of Nazareth—listen to Hebrews 13:8 as it is declared of our blessed Lord Jesus! “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” These Scriptures, in both places, are speaking of *the same God* Whom we should love with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength (Mark 12:30).

The same words are spoken in regard to creation about Jehovah God of the Old Testament and Jesus of Nazareth of the New Testament. In Genesis 1:1 we read, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” So in John 1:1-3 we read, “In the beginning was the Word... *all things were made by Him*.” Also in Isaiah 44:24 we read, “I am Jehovah that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by Myself.” Then as we turn to the New Testament, in Colossians 1:16,17: we read of the same creation accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, in these words: “For by Him were *all things* created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: *all things were created by Him, and for Him*: and He is

before all things, and by Him all things consist.” I ask, Is the Scripture speaking of two Gods? NO! It is speaking of the same, *one* true and living God as He is manifested in all of His Personages.

Then in speaking of the blotting out of sin, it is spoken of Jehovah of the Old Testament in Isaiah 43:25, “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake.” Now listen to these two Scriptures in the New Testament that speak of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, performing the same thing: “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth us from all sin*” (I John 1:7) and, “When He [the Son] had by Himself *purged our sins*, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3). Again I ask, Are the Scriptures speaking of two Gods when they state that the same act of the blotting out of our sins is attributed to both Jehovah of the Old Testament and Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, of the New Testament? NO, a thousand times NO! That would be blasphemy! The Scriptures are speaking of *the Triune God* in the Person of His Son as performing this blessed act in both the Old and New Testaments.

We will have time for only one more Scripture in our message today, and it will be Isaiah 43:11 where we read, “I, even I, am the LORD: and beside Me there is no Saviour.” Listen to that expression, “Beside Me... no Saviour.” “Beside Me there is no Saviour;” and yet we read in the New Testament concerning Jesus of Nazareth, “Thou shalt call His name *Jesus*: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt 1:21). Here this Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is the One Who is our Saviour.

“BESIDE ME...NO SAVIOUR” — yet we read in I Timothy 1:15 that “Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*.”

“BESIDE ME...NO SAVIOUR” — yet we read in Acts 15:11, “We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be *saved*.”

“BESIDE ME...NO SAVIOUR” — yet we read in Hebrews 5:9 that Christ “became the author of *eternal salvation* unto all them that obey Him.”

“BESIDE ME...NO SAVIOUR” — yet we read in Hebrews 7:25 that Christ “is able also to *save* them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.”

“BESIDE ME...NO SAVIOUR” — yet we read in II Peter 3:18, “Our *Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*.”

“BESIDE ME...NO SAVIOUR” — yet we read in Acts 4:12, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” than the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God.

“BESIDE ME...NO SAVIOUR” — yet we read in Titus 2:13,14: “Looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of *the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

So we see then, that the whole Bible speaks of the same Saviour, Who is God Himself, manifested in the flesh as Jesus of Nazareth the Christ of God, Who died to put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself. And we can close this first message by declaring plainly that by comparing Scripture with Scripture, which is the great principle of the Bible, we *know* without the shadow of a doubt that Jesus is all that the Scriptures represent Him to be: THE SECOND PERSON OF THE HOLY TRINITY, GOD INCARNATE, GOD THE SON, WHO IS TO BE WORSHIPPED AND OBEYED BY ALL MEN.

We have in no way exhausted all the Scriptures that bring out this blessed truth, but have only touched a few to show you that the Bible plainly declares that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is *God manifested in the flesh*, and therefore we must believe Him, obey Him, worship Him, follow Him, and give Him all our praise and thanksgiving, for He alone is worthy of our praise.

II.

This series of messages entitled THE DEITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD, I firmly believe to be very timely. For I do not know of any time in the history of the Christian church when

the foundations of our faith are being attacked as they are today. False cults, false teachers, and false preachers who are driven and possessed by Satan, are tearing away at the foundation truths on which we base our assurance of salvation: of forgiveness of sin, of deliverance from the wrath of God, of our preservation to the end, and of our entrance into the blessings of heaven prepared for us by our blessed triune God before the foundation of the world.

In Psalms 11:3 the Psalmist asked, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" My friend, the answer to that question is that we can pray to our living God; we can trust in Him, and continue to hope in His mercies, grace, and love; we can continue to sing and give praise unto Him, for *He changes not*; we can continue to preach and teach the unsearchable riches of Christ and stand fast in the faith once for all delivered unto the saints; and we can adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, especially in holy and godly living.

Now as we pointed out in our previous message, the one foundation of divine truth that we hold dear in our faith, and the one which is most essential to our abiding hope and peace, is *the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God*. It is this divine truth that has been attacked by all false cults, false teachers, and false preachers. They do this because to acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as being God manifested in the flesh, means that they must also acknowledge that they are sinners, totally depraved, hopeless in themselves, and that only by Christ's precious shed blood and righteousness can they be saved, forgiven, and made suitable for heaven. This they will not acknowledge, because they still cling to their own righteousness, hoping to reach the higher life, the heavenly life, by the works of their own hands. They say, "We will not have this Man to rule over us," so they try to make Him a mere creature like themselves, hoping thereby to do away with His authority and their bowing to Him as Lord of their lives.

These false cults, false teachers, and false preachers tell us that because the Bible speaks of Jesus of Nazareth as being God's Son, then surely He cannot be equal to the Father, for He was begotten of the Father. They reason, that if He has been *begotten*, then He is not eternal; thus He cannot at the same time be the *eternal* Son and the *begotten* Son. But they fail to understand that the Father begat the Son in eternal generation; therefore, the Father cannot in any sense exist before the Son in eternal generation. In John 10:30 our Lord said, "I and My Father are *one*." This word "one" is in the neuter gender, which refers to *one substance*; it is not in the masculine gender, which would refer to one person. Thus, the relation of Christ to the Father is an unanswerable argument for Christ's Deity: He is a Person equal with the Father. He is the Second Person of the blessed Godhead, the Son of God; and as Colossians 2:9 tells us, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Listen further! In Bible language, the terms "Father" and "Son" carry with them, not our ideas of source of being and superiority or subordination and dependence, but rather the Semitic and oriental idea of likeness or sameness of nature and equality of being. Now it is the Semitic consciousness that underlies the phraseology of Scripture, and wherever the Scriptures call Christ the "Son of God," they assert His true and proper Deity. The title signifies a unique relationship that cannot be said about nor shared with any creature. As any human son is like his father in his essential nature, that is, possessed of humanity; so Christ, the Son of God, is like His Father in His essential nature, that is, *possessed of Deity*. The Father and the Son, together with the Holy Spirit, are *co-eternal* and *co-equal* in power and glory, and partake of the same nature or substance.

Listen to Hebrews 1:3-6, as the writer there portrays the glory of the Son of God in eternity and in time: "Who being the brightness of His [God the Father's] glory, and the express image of His [God the Father's] person." All of this declares His pre-existent and eternal being. "Being made so much better than the angels...when He bringeth in the first begotten into the world." This affirms His manhood in time. He always had Sonship as God, but by inheritance He obtained it as man; thus, the Lord Jesus Who was eternally with the Father, was brought forth in time.

This same truth is set forth in II Timothy 1:9 in these words: God "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was

given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” Here was the Son’s eternal state as God; and to deny His eternal Sonship is to deny the eternity of our election, for our eternal election depends, as shown in this verse, upon His ETERNAL SONSHIP. Then, verse 10 reads, “But [God] is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” Here we have His *manhood in time*, as the only begotten of the Father.

Now we could continue giving Scripture after Scripture to support this truth, but we must go on to another truth that bears out as greatly as any other the *Deity* of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God: It is the testimony that the Scriptures give of the *Divine attributes* spoken *both* of the Father and of the Son. First, let us ask, “Is the Father *eternal*?” Scripture states that *the Son is eternal*. We find in Micah 5:2 that the city of Bethlehem was the predicted birthplace into our world, of One “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” This was quoted as referring to Jesus of Nazareth in Matthew 2:4-6. He was from everlasting, for He is *the eternal Son*.

In John 1:1,2,14 we read, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” Four great facts are presented in these verses: (1) WHEN the Word was—“In the beginning” (2) WHERE the Word was—“with God (3) WHO the Word was—“God” (4) the Word, the eternal Son of God, became God manifested in the flesh to show forth the glory of the Father. Therefore, He is eternal with the Father; and as I John 2:23 and John 5:23 tell us, “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father,” and “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him.” Therefore, he who denies the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is *not saved!* He has no hope of eternal salvation, for the Scriptures declare plainly that *there is none other name under heaven given among men* whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12); and as we saw in our message last week, only God can save a poor, hell-deserving sinner.

Again, is the Father *omnipresent*? Then also is the Son, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, *omnipresent*—everywhere at one time, filling all the universe. The Christ of God said in Matthew 18:20, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” He said, “*There am I,*” not, “There will I be.” He is referring to His divine presence at all times, in all places, even though two or three of His people be met together in ten thousand places upon the earth at one time! Another blessed Scripture that bears this out is John 1:18: “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him.” Jesus of Nazareth, as the begotten Son of God, even as He was speaking, was both on earth and in the bosom of the Father in heaven. How? *He is God*, therefore *omnipresent*, capable of being in all places at one time.

While we are looking at John 1:18, there is another blessed truth brought out here that proves the *Deity* of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God. Look at the word “Son.” The Greek uses two words for “son”; one refers to dignity of position, and the other to relationship by birth. Listen now! The second of these, relationship by birth, is never used with reference to our Lord Jesus in His relationship to the Father. The Greek word for “son,” in every verse of Scripture where it is used as referring to our Lord Jesus Christ, refers to His dignity of Person and authority; therefore He is co-equal with the Father and worthy of our worship, praise, obedience, and adoration.

Proceeding with these thoughts of His divine attributes then, I ask, Is the Father *immutable* (unchangeable)? So is the Son, for Hebrews 13:8 reads, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever”; therefore, *He changes not*, and for this I lift up my heart in praise.

Again, is the Father *almighty*? Then so is Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God. Creation demands omnipotence, so we read in John 1:3, “All things were made by Him”; and “By Him all things consist” (Col 1:17); and “Upholding all things by the word of His power” (Heb 1:3). Therefore, Jesus of Nazareth, could say in Matthew 28:18, “*All power is given unto Me* in heaven and in earth.” You see, He is one with the Father as *almighty*; He is the Almighty God.

Is the Father *infinitely good and holy*, as set forth in Matthew 19:17, “There is none good but One, that is God”; and in I Samuel 2:2, “There is none holy as Jehovah”? Then Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is set forth as being *infinitely good and holy*. In John 10:11, He Himself said, “I am the *Good Shepherd*.” And in Acts 3:14, Hebrews 7:26, and in John 1:14, He is called “the Holy One and the Just,” the One Who knew no sin, Who is without sin and without spot, “holy, harmless, and undefiled”; Jesus Christ the righteous, in Whom is no sin, “full of grace and truth.” Yes, He is the Almighty God, and we, as His blood-bought sons and daughters, cry like Thomas, “My Lord and my God!” because He is worthy of our worship, love, praise, and adoration.

Dear friend, have you bowed your knees before Him Who is King of kings and Lord of lords? Psalm 2:12 tells us to “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.” He and He alone, is the hope of every sinner from Paradise lost to Paradise regained. He was the Lord of glory Who cheered the heart of saintly Enoch. He was the living Redeemer on Whom Job rested his hopes of immortality. He was the Shiloh of Jacob’s dying hours. He was the Angel of the burning bush Who promised to lead Moses all the days of His life. He was the Captain of the hosts of the armies of God Who went before Joshua in conquering the promised land. He was the Child endowed with a name of lustrous Deity, as seen by Isaiah, for His Name is “Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” He is the Lord our Righteousness, as anticipated by Jeremiah. He was the Messiah announced by Daniel, Who should be cut off, not for Himself, but for all His people. And, praise His Name, He is the Sun of righteousness of Whom Malachi wrote, Who would bring healing in His wings. Oh how blessed is this gracious and wonderful Lord, before Whom we bow in love and praise!

Again I must say that we have in no way exhausted all the Scriptures about the blessed truths of this subject; but we have plainly showed from Scripture that the Bible declares Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, to be God manifested in the flesh, and therefore we must obey Him, believe Him, worship Him, follow Him, and give ourselves wholly and completely to Him in worship, praise, adoration, and love, for He is God blessed for ever (Rom 9:5).

III.

It is indeed a great joy to continue these messages on THE DEITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD. My heart has been greatly blessed in studying and meditating upon this great Scriptural truth which sets forth the eternal existence of the Son of God and His incarnation to become God manifested in the flesh in Jesus of Nazareth.

In waiting before the Lord in prayer, asking Him of what this third message would consist, I have been impressed to lay before our hearts the PRE-EMINENCE given to Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, in the New Testament, from end to end. Dear friend, I want you to remember Isaiah 42:8 as we go into this study today: “I am *Jehovah*: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another.” God is *not* going to give His glory to a creature of His own hands! Therefore, when we read of the pre-eminence given to Jesus of Nazareth in the New Testament, we are hearing and beholding God manifested in the flesh, and all glory, honour, praise, thanksgiving, and worship should be given unto Him, for *He is God*, and beside Him there is none other (Isa 45:22).

Our attitude should be like those in heaven, as they gave glory and honour unto the Lamb. This scene is described in Revelation 5:8-14:

[They] fell down before the Lamb...And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts [living ones] and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE

POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts [living ones] said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever.

Oh what a scene is pictured here of the pre-eminence of the Lamb, the Christ of God—God, very God, as He is worshipped and adored by all who shall be in heaven! As I behold this scene of which one day I shall be a part by the grace of God, my attitude as one of His blood-bought ones is to cry, “Alleluia, Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God” (Rev 19:1). He is worthy to receive all my praise, for He has loved me and washed me from all my sins in His own blood, and has made me, along with all His people, a king and priest unto God and His Father; therefore, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

You see, dear friend, as the Word of God unfolds before our searching hearts, one great truth stands out: **GOD IN ETERNITY PLANNED AND PURPOSED THAT ALL THINGS SHOULD HEAD UP IN JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD**, and that all things should come from Him and go to Him, for as Colossians 2:9 declares, “For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Also, in Ephesians 1:9,10: we read, “Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him.”

This blessed and most gracious truth of the pre-eminence of Christ is brought out more forcibly in Colossians 1:13-19:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son [speaking of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God]: in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and he is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church: Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.

Oh what glory is due our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Whom God the Father from eternity has made **LORD OVER ALL!** What honour we should bestow upon Him, Whom God—

raised...from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all (Eph 1:20-25).

Oh I ask you again, as I have so many times in this series of messages: Would all this glory and honour and pre-eminence be given to a mere creature, no matter how high and great and glorious he was? **NO!** for Isaiah 42:8 declares: “I am Jehovah: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another.” So all of this glory and honour and praise and pre-eminence that is set forth in these Scriptures is to none other than the Son of God, the second Person of the blessed Godhead, Who is “God blessed for ever” (Rom 9:5).

Another truth that springs out of all these truths is this: The eternal Son received all this glory and honour because He was willing to become incarnate in the flesh and tabernacle among men so He could redeem the people of God by His substitutionary death upon the cross. Listen to Galatians 4:4,5: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Therefore, our Lord could say in Hebrews 10:5,7: “a body hast Thou prepared Me: Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me), to do Thy will, O God.”

Then we read in Hebrews these precious words, which make my heart leap for joy and cause me to praise His holy Name for His coming to take my place and bear my sins upon the tree, paying to God's justice the full price due, and uniting me unto God:

We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one...Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted (Heb 2:9-11,14-18).

What pre-eminence the Scripture gives to Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God! Dear friend, all of this makes my heart sing, yes, sing praises unto my living God for His condescension to do all this for me. Surely *praise* and *honour* is due unto Him Who sits upon the throne.

There is yet one more portion of Scripture that declares this great truth, and it is found in Philippians 2:5-11. Let us read it and rejoice. Let us read it and bow our knees unto Him—

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore [because the eternal Son of God, Who was always in the bosom of the Father, freely gave Himself to this humbling task of becoming man, the man Jesus, and in His human body humbling Himself further to die the death of the cross as a Substitute for His hell-worthy people], God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus [Who as man has been taken up into the Godhead] every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, to the glory of God the Father.

What pre-eminence, what glory, given not to a creature, but to Him Who was from all eternity the Son of God, God the Son, and now the GOD-MAN, the Son of man, the one great and only Mediator between God and poor sinners.

Again, let me shout it from the housetops: "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God!" (Rev 19:1) All I can say is, What a Lord! What a Christ! What a precious God is mine in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God! Therefore, we can pray to the Father in the precious Name of Jesus, for the Father will not deny anything to His Son Who so glorified Him upon earth and in heaven.

Listen to the words from our Lord's high-priestly prayer of John 17:4, "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Oh how precious this is! Here as the Mediator, the man Jesus, He asks the Father to receive Him in His humanity, as the Christ of God, back into that essential glory which He had with the Father before the world was. And we know this prayer was answered, because *the Man Christ Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father* in the heavenlies, ever living to make intercession for us.

Now could a mere creature pray such a prayer and ask for such glory? No, only He Who Himself was God, very God, could pray such a prayer. So I say again that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is all that the Scriptures represent Him to be: the second Person of the Holy Trinity, GOD INCARNATE, Who is to be

worshipped and obeyed by all men, honoured and glorified, believed and trusted, for He alone is our Saviour God.

IV.

It is my heart's cry that in these messages on THE DEITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD, He would be exalted before the eyes of our souls, received into our understanding, loved with all of our affections, and that our wills would embrace Him in all of His offices as Prophet, Priest, and King.

Dear friend, to know the Lord Jesus Christ is to love Him. To love Him is to follow Him and abide with Him for ever in that living union of salvation. For you see, in salvation we are brought into that living, loving, and lasting union with Him and by faith know Him to be our Head, our Husband, our Lover, and our Friend. We find in Him a preciousness, for unto him who believes, He, Christ our Lord, is precious—precious in His life, precious in His death, precious in His resurrection, precious in His ascension into heaven, precious in His intercession within the veil as our interceding High Priest, and precious as we wait for our Lord from glory in His second coming.

To the true believer, the Lord Jesus Christ is our life, our hope, and our peace. I say, for the Scriptures say, *He is All and in All*. Listen! We see in His blood shed for us at Calvary's cross a cleansing from every sin. We see in His imputed righteousness a justification before God that leaves us perfect in His sight. We see in His redemption a complete deliverance from sin, Satan, the world, and the very presence of sin, and that for ever. We see in His resurrection a conquering of death, hell, and the grave, and an entrance into heavenly glory for every blood-bought child of God.

So if the Lord Jesus Christ is not God, as the false prophets and teachers tell us today, then you and I have no hope of heavenly life; we have no hope of sins forgiven; we have no hope of deliverance from sin, from ourselves, or from this present evil world. Therefore, like countless millions, we're shut up to nothing but confusion, sorrow, suffering, hell, and the fate of life with all its cruelty.

But as we have seen, Jesus of Nazareth *is* GOD manifested in the flesh, and He brings sinners back to God in reconciliation by His blood-shedding at the cross. Therefore, having proved this from Scripture, we will not waver in our belief and proclamation that He is indeed the very Christ of God. Thus, those who know Him, those who have Him, have a hope that grows brighter even unto the perfect day. We are not left to "the cruelty of fate," as men call it, but walk in that blessed hope of the children of God.

I say it one more time: To deny the Deity of Christ is to deny God's Word plainly. To deny the Deity of Christ is to deny the *only way of salvation*; for none can be saved apart from living faith in the living Christ, the living God manifested in the flesh. The Bible says, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (I John 2:22,23). Then Revelation 21:8 tells us: "All liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Therefore, let every man be a liar who does not believe in the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, for *God's Word is true*, and God is true, for He has set His seal upon the works of Himself in the Person of His Son.

So continuing this precious subject of THE DEITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD, let us look together at our Lord's words in Matthew 4:10, where He was tempted of the devil in the wilderness. In answer to Satan's proposition that he would give Christ the kingdoms of this world if only He would worship him, our Lord said, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." He plainly says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve"; and yet He Himself received worship and honour while He was on earth, and surely since He has gone into heaven. Therefore if He be not GOD, then all who have worshipped Him and are worshipping Him today are idolaters; and we are told, as God's children, to "flee idolatry" (I Cor 10:14).

But being God manifested in the flesh, our Lord received worship and honour, heard the prayers and cries of those who called upon His Name, and never rebuked any for coming to Him with their affections

and petitions. He did not rebuke the ruler (Matt 9:18) when he came and worshipped Him, asking healing for his daughter. He did not rebuke His disciples for worshipping Him (Matt 14:33) when they had seen His power in quieting the stormy seas. He did not rebuke the women who came to the grave after His resurrection for falling down at His feet in worship and praise for His deliverance from the tomb (Matt 28:9; Luke 24:52). And I ask, Why? Because He was *God manifested in the flesh*, and therefore worthy of our worship and praise. In fact, Jesus of Nazareth, Who was God manifested in the flesh, encouraged men to worship and honour Him. Listen to John 5:23! “All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.” And then He went so far in the last portion of that verse as to say, “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him.” How plain could any Scripture be? Here our Lord was saying, “I the Son, am *equal to the Father*; we are *one*; I came to manifest the Father, and if you will not worship and honour Me, then it is proof that you do not know the Father and have not worshipped God the Father in spirit and in truth.” Also He said, “He that is of God heareth God’s words” (John 8:47).

Another Scripture that is very plain on this subject is in Acts 7. Here we find the martyr Stephen giving the truest adoration to the Son of God. Stephen, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and *the Son of man standing on the right hand of God*. Then they [of the council] cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him...And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep (vv55-60).

In quoting the words of Psalm 31:5, “Into Thine hand I commit My spirit: Thou hast redeemed Me, O LORD God of truth,” Stephen prayed not to God the Father alone, nor to the Father through Christ, but to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, worshipping Him with his last breath as very God, *the Eternal God*. Oh what greater proof do we need than this, that the Lord Jesus Christ is to be worshipped, honoured, and adored as God, very God, God manifested in the flesh!

Let us now look at another line of thought. Prayer, or calling upon the name of the Lord, is everywhere encouraged in the Word of God. Psalm 145:18 reads, “The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth.” Then in the New Testament we read in Acts 2:21, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved”; and “follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (II Tim 2:22). These Scriptures, showing us that we are commanded to pray and to call upon the name of our Lord Jesus, could be multiplied, but there is one in particular which shows that the name of Him Whom we are to call upon is Jesus Christ our Lord, Who is God—“to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place *call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*” (I Cor 1:2).

Let us note the setting: The Apostle is writing to God’s children, called *saints*. They are in the act of spiritual worship. They are worshipping Jesus Christ our Lord. They are not just a few in number, but all saints everywhere are calling unto the same Person. Think of it: *all saints in every place are calling upon the name of Jesus Christ!* Just think, if He were just a man, how many could He listen to at one time and know what they were saying? How could He feel sympathy for each of them, help them, answer them, and give them His undivided attention? If just one person were pouring out his heart to you, and then a second one came, then a third, how could you give your undivided attention to all of them? Then add twenty or fifty more—what would happen? You would give up in despair, trying to keep all their varied interests from becoming entangled! You would say, “All of this is beyond the power of one man.” And you are right.

But remember the words of I Corinthians 1:2—“Saints...in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” They are bringing unto Him matters of importance, pouring into His ears the deepest secrets of their hearts, crying for mercy, confessing their sins, supplicating for grace in their crises, asking for help in time of trouble. Some are praising Him; some are giving thanks to Him; some are adoring Him, but *He hears them all*. He comprehends all they say; He answers all of their requests. And remember, as

Revelation 5:11 tells us, the worshippers are “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” They are numbers without number, and yet He hears them all. Oh my friend, if a single cry of distress were disregarded, or a single note of praise unheard, then that act of homage would be vain and futile, and would be an appeal to an incompetent Deity. But no prayer is lost. There is no confusion, no entanglement, no weariness, no telling us to come back later because He is dealing with someone else. No, because He Himself has invited us to come, and all in every place who call upon His Name are daily proving the truth of His divine proclamation, “*Come unto Me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt 11:28).

All of this proves that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is not mere man or the highest of God’s creations, but is *God Himself*, Who knows all, sees all, and is everywhere present at the same time. Our God can hear the cry of all of His millions of people at one time and answer them all according to His divine pleasure and grace. I say, this is gracious and comforting; this is precious, to know this Christ Who is our Great High Priest and hears and answers us, though millions more of His blood-bought people around the world are crying unto Him at the same time!

Then, before we close, I must take you to the scenes of the Revelation which picture the redeemed ones in heaven. What do we find there? Read Revelation chapters 5,7,15,19,21,22 which picture them worshipping the Lamb of God, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, the eternal Son of God, Who is God over all, blessed for ever. Then if anyone objects to the fact that in many places it says that the Lamb was not spoken of as being on the throne but at God’s right hand, let him turn to Revelation 22:3 and see that when Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, has finished the work of the kingdom and has delivered it up to God (I Cor 15:24-28), then shall God be all in all and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the new heaven, and all of God’s children shall serve Him. You see, in eternity we will never see God in His essence as Spirit (I Tim 6:14-16), but we shall see Him in His Son, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, the Lamb, God manifested in the flesh; and we shall for ever adore Him, praise Him, worship Him, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes. Oh dear friend, do you know this Christ of God in that living, loving, lasting union of salvation? I say again, to know Him is to love Him and to follow Him.

I will close with the last Scripture that for ever shuts the mouths of those who claim that the Son of God is not God, very God. Listen to I John 5:20: “We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD, AND ETERNAL LIFE.” Amen, and Amen!

V.

As we continue these messages on THE DEITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD, again it has been my heart’s cry that He would be exalted before the eyes of our souls, received into our understanding, loved with all of our affection, and that our will would embrace Him in all of His offices as Prophet, Priest, and King.

There is a great and precious truth upon the pages of Holy Writ that to me sets forth His Deity as God, very God, with undeniable proof, and it is this: In the New Testament, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, speaks of Himself as the Great “I AM,” which immediately identifies Him with the LORD GOD JEHOVAH, the Great “I AM“ of the Old Testament, and shows what He claims to be is true, that He is God manifested in the flesh.

Now as we go into this study, turn with me to Exodus 3 and let us read the story of how God revealed Himself unto Moses as the Great “I AM.” In verses 1-2 we are told that the Angel of the Lord appears to Moses in a burning bush; and in verses 3-4 Moses turns aside to see this great sight. Then verses 5-6, God said to Moses, “Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover He said, I AM the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face: for he was afraid to look upon God.”

We see further in verses 7-10 that God told Moses He had seen the affliction of His people in Egyptian bondage and had heard their cry for deliverance, so He was going to send Moses to be the human leader of His people to bring them out of their terrible bondage. In verses 11-12, God promises to be with Moses, which leads Moses to ask a question; and then God answers with the great revelation of His Name, "I AM":

And Moses said to God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you (vv 11-14).

Now when God spoke this great name I AM THAT I AM to Moses, He was explaining to him the meaning of the name JEHOVAH. Therefore, He was saying, "I was, I Am, and I shall always continue to be—the same yesterday, today, and for ever, for I am the Redeemer Who is the Covenant-making and covenant-keeping God, the Eternal Redeemer of My people."

My friend, this name sets forth *the very being of God* and is used by our Lord Jesus in the New Testament to establish His eternal Godhead and Deity once and for all. He sets this forth in John 8 in His conversation with the Jews: In verse 51 He said, "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. Then said the Jews unto him...Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? And the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" Our Lord answered and said:

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

You see, these Jews understood that He was saying—I AM JEHOVAH GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, for "before Abraham was, I AM." Therefore they took up stones to stone Him because He claimed to be God manifested in the flesh!

Now I ask, When He identified Himself as the Great I AM, Jehovah God, what was He claiming to be? My friend, He was claiming to be the Self-existent One, the Absolute Essential Deity, as it was written of Him in John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and THE WORD WAS GOD"; and He was that Word sent down from God. Again, as Absolute Deity, it is spoken of Him—this Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God—in Colossians 2:9 that "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He claimed to be THE ETERNAL ONE, the One Who inhabits eternity, "having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (Heb 7:3). He claimed to be THE INSCRUTABLE ONE, Whose ways are "past finding out" (Rom 11:33). He claimed to be THE UNCHANGEABLE ONE, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb 13:8); and also the One speaking in Malachi 3:6, saying "I am Jehovah, I change not." He claimed to be THE EVER-PRESENT ONE, which He stated in these words: "Lo, I AM with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt 28:20). He claimed to be THE ALL-EMBRACING ONE, "I AM Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty...I AM the first and the last: I AM He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I AM alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev 1:8,17-18). He claimed to be THE ALL-SUFFICIENT ONE, for He said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matt 28:18). He claimed to be THE ONLY ONE when He said "I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6), which corresponds to Isaiah 45:22 where He said, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I AM GOD, and there is none else."

Therefore, as use of this precious name I AM proves over and over again, and because the Scriptures cannot lie, I say with all my soul that Jesus of Nazareth, is God of very God, God the Son, the Son of God, the Second Person in the blessed Godhead.

But we have not exhausted the Scriptural proof of this name I AM! Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, used it over and over again. In John 8:24 He said, "If ye believe not that I AM he, ye shall die in your sins."

He is saying that—If you do not believe that I, even I, AM, ye shall die in your sins. If you believe not that I AM the Christ, the Messiah, the Holy One of God, Absolute Deity, and do not bow to My authority as Lord, you shall die in your sins. He was using the language of Isaiah 43:25, “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake”; and the language of Isaiah 51:12, “I, even I, am He that comforteth you.”

Wherever our Lord uses the expression or the name I AM, He uses it *emphatically*; and the Greek brings out exactly the same language of the Old Testament: “I, even I AM.” Therefore, it is impossible to resist the truth and force of these Scriptures such as John 8:58, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” He did not say, “Before Abraham was, I was,” but “Before Abraham was, I AM—I, even I, AM”; or as He expresses in Psalm 90:2, “Before the mountains were brought forth...from everlasting to everlasting, I AM GOD.”

Now let us use the emphatic expression “I, even I, AM,” with the seven I AM’s of the Gospel of John, and see how graciously and beautifully, and blessedly this brings out what our Lord Jesus is to His people. Let us look first at John 6:35 & 51. There He says, “I AM the Bread of Life—I, even I, AM the Bread of Life.” “I AM—I, even I, AM—the living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” I say this is precious, that Christ Himself is our salvation and there is none other; we must believe and trust Him, and feed upon Him, for He said, “I, even I, AM; there is none beside Me.”

Again, listen to John 8:24, “If ye believe not that I, even I, AM, ye shall die in your sins.” So my friend, if we believe not that Jesus of Nazareth the Christ of God, is Absolute Deity, God manifested in the flesh to take away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, we shall die in our sins; and where death finds us in our sins, eternity will hold us for ever and ever, to suffer for those sins in the flames of the lake of fire.

Listen now to John 8:12, “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I AM the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Here again used is that emphatic expression, “I, even I, AM the light of the world.” Only in Him is spiritual light and hope; besides Him there is no other light. It is emphatic: *He is the only light!* He is God, and came down as Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, to give us *light*—the spiritual light of salvation—and to cause His light to shine in our hearts, giving the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (II Cor 4:6).

Let us move on to John 10:9, and there we hear the Lord Jesus saying, “I AM the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” Again, the emphatic “I, even I, AM the Door, the only entrance, for there is *no other way* back to God but by Me; if you do not come through Me, you shall be eternally lost.”

Then in John 10:11 He says, “I AM the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.” Again the emphatic “I, even I, AM the good shepherd; there is no good shepherd but Me, and as the only good shepherd, I laid down My life for the sheep. Only by My laying down My life and dying for the sheep can they be saved.” Oh, listen, dear friend! It is emphatic then that you must believe and trust the one and only Good Shepherd, or you shall die in your sins and spend eternity in hell. There is no other name under heaven by which you must be saved, than the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God!

In John 11:25,26: We hear Jesus saying to Martha, “I AM the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?” Yes, I believe it, for He emphatically says, “I, even I, AM the resurrection and the life.” There is no one else who rose from the dead for the justification of sinners but Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, Who was and is very God, manifested in human flesh. It is only by Him that we can ever be resurrected from the grave of sin and of death, to where the second death has no hold upon us.

Again: “Jesus saith unto him, I AM the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.” He says emphatically, “I, even I, AM the only way to the Father, for I, even I, AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Oh that the force of this great truth would grip our souls: *apart from Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, we are lost for ever*, for if we do not believe in Him—in His Absolute Deity—we have no way to the Father, no cleansing and forgiveness of our sins, and we yet abide under the wrath of God!

There is one more found in John 15:5. The Lord Jesus said, "I AM the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." Again, it is emphatic, "I, even I, AM the vine, and if you do not put your trust in Me and become part of Me as a branch bearing the fruit of the Spirit, ye can do nothing. Only by My life can you live, and abide with Me and My Father for ever."

Oh my dear friend, do you feel today the force of all these Scriptures? They are declaring to us the Absolute Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, and if we be not in Him by faith—if we have not trusted our souls to Him, trusting the whole man to the whole Christ—we shall for ever live in our sins, abiding under the just wrath of God!

Oh I cry unto everyone, *trust Him, believe Him, rest upon Him*, for apart from Him you are lost for ever. I pray that the Spirit of the living God will take His Word home to your heart, so that you fall down before Him in complete trust and faith, bowing unto Him as Lord and Saviour of your life.

VI.

We come now to the close of this series on the DEITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST OF GOD, and I will share this final message on—"What the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, means to me."

I often ask myself these questions: Do I just search out these truths from Scripture and expound them like an instructor would do in the classroom, without any experiential knowledge of them? Do I just accept these truths as being true because I find them in the Bible? Have they no practical end to them for me? Do I just acknowledge these truths because I have been taught them from my youth, and yet know nothing about the changes that take place in the lives of those who have made them their very own? Do I walk in the experiential knowledge of these truths? What does the condescension of God manifested in the flesh mean to me? Do I know Him? Is He mine? My friend, I love to examine myself in the light of God's Word, to see if I am in the faith—whether I have just a head knowledge of divine truth, or whether these truths have entered into my affection and have changed my life. You see, I do not want to be deceived, but to walk in the Lord day by day. That is why I desire to set before your hearts what this gracious subject of the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, really means to me as one of God's children, one who has been saved by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Will you listen?

First, my heart praises Him for His GREAT LOVE that moved Him to leave heaven's heights to come to earth's depths to save such a sinner like me. When I read in His Word that He became the Lamb of God before the foundation of the world, then I understand that He agreed to the terms of the everlasting covenant set forth in Hebrews 13:20, that He should shed His precious blood for my sins; for the Word declares in I Peter 1:18-20 that I have been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, to take away my sins by the sacrifice of Himself.

This He did not have to do. He did it out of free love; He did it out of free grace; He did it out of free mercy, or, as Isaiah 38:17 puts it, "Thou hast *in love to my soul* delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." I have no claims upon God, for you see, I deserve nothing but hell. All that God did for me in Christ, He did out of free love and out of free grace. He did it voluntarily because He loved me! This is what His Word tells me in John 10:17-18, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." And for whom did He lay it down? — for His sheep, who are poor sinners like me. Philippians 2:7-8 tells us that He "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Oh why would He love me so, that He would do this for me? Yet I praise God for the faith that He gives me to trust Him, and to say with the apostle Paul, "I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim 1:12).

You see, dear friend, the Lord Jesus Christ is God, very God, but HE CAME, born of a woman and made under the law, that He might redeem His poor sinful people from the curse of the law. He Who was the eternal Word, the eternal “Logos,” became flesh that He might spell out God, and declare Him unto His poor sinful creatures. For this my heart praises Him, that He took upon Himself a body and became Jesus of Nazareth, so in that human body He might die for the sins of His people, and satisfy the demands of His own broken law, that He might reconcile us back to God, as it is recorded in II Cor 5:17-21. Seeing and knowing My need, He came and met it! And beloved, I love that thought with all my soul—did you catch it? Seeing and knowing my need, He came and He met it! This is what He did for me, as Isaiah 53:5 says, He was wounded for *my* transgressions, He was bruised for *my* iniquities: the chastisement of *my* peace was upon Him; and with His stripes I have been healed from the hurt and the shame of sin.

I tell you, my dear friend, without Deity coming and assuming our flesh, there would have been no redemption. Romans 8:3,4 reads, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” You see, if Jesus of Nazareth were not divine; if He were not God Himself manifested in the flesh, then we would have no substitute; we would have no one who could fulfill the righteousness of the law for us. We would still be dead in our sins, heading for an endless eternity in hell without hope and without God!

But, I ask, Do you know this? Do you understand that without Deity coming and assuming our flesh, there would have been NO REDEMPTION?! You infidels and atheists; you cultists and unbelievers; you who do not believe in the Deity of Christ; you who do not believe that Christ is the second Person in the blessed Trinity, the Eternal Son—God the Son: I say unto you with all the love of my soul, my friend, you have no hope of salvation, no hope of sins forgiven, no hope of heaven! and you are quickly heading toward the very place you deny, which is hell! Oh how I praise God for revealing Himself to my soul! How I praise my blessed Lord that He knew my need and He came and met it by His condescension to this earth, to be made in my likeness, sin excepted, so He could put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself!

Do you know something else I praise Him for? I praise Him that He sent the Holy Spirit to make this real to my soul: to convince me of sin, of righteousness and of judgment—of sin, because I had not believed upon God (my sin of unbelief); of righteousness, because I needed the righteousness of Christ; and of judgment, because I would have soon been judged and damned with Satan for ever and for ever.

Secondly, to me this blessed truth of the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, means that I have the God-Man seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high as *my Representative, my Head and my High Priest*, Who can be touched with the feeling of my infirmities. You see, the Scriptures declare, “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,” according to I Timothy 2:5. He is there! This one mediator between God and men—HE IS THERE, having been “made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted” (Heb 2:17,18). Therefore, being “GOD manifested in the flesh” (I Tim 3:16), and going through all the sufferings and temptations of this life, then He knows all about us and understands us in all of our changing ways. How precious also is Hebrews 4:14-16: “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” What a blessed, blessed truth: that He Who became flesh has passed again into the heavens and now pleads for us! “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

My friend, this is precious to me; precious indeed, this blessed truth: that I, Lee Roy Shelton, Jr., have a Great High Priest, that one Mediator—One Who knows and cares and understands, and watches over *me!* I, the least of all God’s children, have One Who cares for *me!* I have One Who understands *me* —even Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, Who has passed into the heavens, there to intercede for *me*. You see, my dear friend, He knows my downittings and my uprisings; He knows my thoughts afar off; He is acquainted with

all my ways; He is touched with my infirmities; He prays for me that my faith fails not. He receives my prayers and petitions and presents them to the Father as His own in my behalf; He runs to my aid when I am tempted; He holds me up by the strength He gives through His Spirit. This is GRACE UPON GRACE, that He would do this for ME, because He loved me and gave Himself for me! But if He had not been God, then He could not have satisfied His own law. If He had not been God, then He could not have satisfied His own justice and holiness, and thus be JUST in justifying a hell-deserving sinner like me, and bring me into His presence upon the basis of what He Himself has wrought for me in His death, burial and resurrection, and His intercession within the veil.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (v 16). He tells us not to stay away, but to come boldly, for the throne He sits upon now is no longer a throne of judgment for His people, but a throne of *grace*; it’s been turned into a throne of *mercy*. And that is what He says: He says *come* to that throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. And I say, dear friend, what a word that word GRACE is: God’s marvelous, matchless, omnipotent *grace*. Do you know what that means? *Grace* means that I deserve nothing, but I have been freely forgiven all of my sin in Christ. *Grace* means that I, a hell-deserving sinner, have been *freely given* all things in the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, I deserve hell; but *grace* means I have been given heaven, because of the free-will love offering of Christ in my stead at the cross. I deserve justice and wrath, but *grace* means that I have been freely pardoned from all my sins, because Christ left heaven’s heights and came to earth’s depths in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth; and when He came, He knew my need and met it. You see, knowing that I could not deliver myself from the grave of sin and hell itself, He came; and HE GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME, that by His grace, and by His blood, and by His power I would be delivered. In delivering me, He has set me free to be with Him, to be like Him, and to walk in the pathway of righteousness and true holiness all the days of my life until He takes me home. And He’s given me the promise that He’ll never leave me, He’ll never give me back over to Satan again, because having been *delivered* from the power of darkness, and from the power of Satan’s kingdom, and *translated* into the kingdom of God’s dear Son, I will for ever be in His arms, held by Him; and He’ll hold me till the last day, and then He’ll raise me up to walk with Him in that new body for ever and for ever. I say, that is what *grace* means! Do you know that grace?

Beloved, what a message we have been given to proclaim! “*Come boldly*”; “*Come without money and without price*”; “*Come, for all things are now ready*”; “*Come, for it is all finished,*” for God has been satisfied with His own sacrifice. His throne of judgment has been turned into a throne of *grace!* Will you come?

What a Gospel we have to preach!—that this God-Man receives sinners; He turns none away, for all that the Father giveth Him *shall come* to Him, and him that cometh to Christ, He will in no wise cast out. I say, come with all your sins; confess them before this throne of grace to Christ. Though they be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow when washed in His precious blood; and though they be red like crimson, He said they shall be as wool when He purges you from all of your sins by His precious blood. Come by faith, look away to Christ alone, trust Him to save you and keep you, and to bring you home at last. Will you hear those blessed words in John 3:16,17? “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.”

So dear friend, these are the reasons why I love, adore, and give praise to the God of heaven, for His condescension to take upon Himself human flesh so that in my nature as the God-Man He could die in my place and pay for all my sins by the shedding of His own precious blood, which was the blood of God. I praise Him because He arose from the grave and passed into the heavens as my great High Priest in His human, resurrected body, there to make intercession for me as I wait down here for His return from glory. And He promised He would never again give me over to Satan; He would hold me and keep me and deliver me and have mercy upon me, because He has given that Fountain for sin and uncleanness. Do you know what that means? For sin—that is the sin nature; He has given that fountain to cleanse my sin nature. And

then for uncleanness, that He might cleanse me from my daily sins, as I come back to Him in repentance and faith, believing Him and trusting Him.

But I say, this blessed hope is not only mine; it is the hope of all those who have come to Him in repentance and faith, and who have cast all their sins and care upon Him. You see, this is the hope of all the believing children of God, for He gives everyone He saves *the same hope*; and that hope is wrapped up in a Person, and that Person is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.

So I say that the Bible is *true* in all that it says of the DEITY of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God; and I praise Him that He is mine; for He is my hope, He is my salvation, He is my hope of glory, my ALL in ALL. He is my Lord, my Saviour, and my Redeemer.

Without beginning or decline,
Object of faith, and not of sense;
Eternal ages saw Him shine;
He shines eternal ages hence.

Of all the crowns Jehovah wears,
Salvation is His dearest claim;
That gracious sound well-pleased He hears,
And owns Immanuel for His name.
—Cowper

Oh glorious hour! it comes with speed,
When we from sin and darkness freed,
Shall see the God Who died for man,
And praise Him more than angels can.
—John Newton, 1779