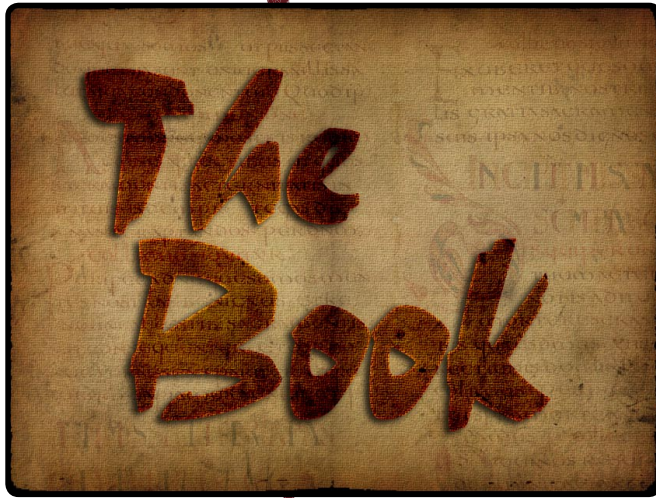


Son of God



The place for God's Word is not an outside place, but an inside place. It is infinitely better to have it hidden in your heart than it is to have many copies of it laid among the furniture of your house.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

THOSE WHO ARE IN OPPOSITION TO THE THINGS OF CHRIST like to display their ignorance of His Book by periodically announcing that Jesus—while possibly a good teacher, and all-around nice guy—was certainly not deity because not once, in all the New Testament, did He declare Himself to be the Son of God. I shrugged off this specious scholarship for years until, one day, I decided to see for myself if they were right.

My habit, when faced with the “wisdom” of this world, is to check it against the more reliable wisdom from above. What does God have to say about it? So applying the same method to this quandary I began by asking, Did God say Jesus was His Son?

“THIS IS MY SON!”

Before Jesus began His ministry He thought it necessary to be baptized—to, among other things, demonstrate publicly His willingness to take upon Himself the role of a servant for the redemption of man. So He came to the Jordan, where His cousin John was baptizing those who

were repenting of their sins. At first John, knowing that Jesus had no need to repent, demurred. But when Jesus insisted, John baptized Him, as he had the others, and then

Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; and a voice came out of the heavens: “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”

Mark 1:10-11

No matter what Jesus did or didn't say during His subsequent ministry, it began with the strong pronouncement from God the Father that Jesus was, indeed, His Son. Later on in Jesus' earthly ministry there was another supernatural occurrence atop a high mountain in which God reiterated His familial relationship.

And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for

Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

Matthew 17:2-5

THE SON OF _____

But what did Jesus say about Himself?

In His prayer, just before His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus was pretty clear about the relationship that existed between God the Father and Him.

At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

Matthew 11:25-27

The skeptic would demand that we make it more fair by taking away the editor's capitalization. Even so, Jesus states the case with clarity:

Who is "Father"? "Lord of heaven and earth." (Given this, it's doubtful that Jesus was praying to His mother's husband, Joseph.)

What relationship does Jesus have with the Lord of heaven and earth? "*All things* have been handed over to *Me*." (emphasis added)

By whom?

"My Father." (emphasis added)

And if that isn't sufficiently clear, He goes on to explicitly define the relationship He (Jesus) has with the Lord of heaven and earth: "...no

one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

Some unbelievers have said that Jesus refers to Himself as "Son of Man," but never as "Son of God." But in at least one exchange with His disciples, He associates Himself with both.

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 16:13-17

Finally, for those who are still unconvinced, there is the following brief exchange between Jesus and the high priest, Caiaphas.

The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" But He kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

Mark 14:60-62

Did Caiaphas believe Jesus was claiming to be the Son of God? Apparently so.

Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy;

how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

Mark 14:63-64

At another time during that same fateful night, someone else quizzed Jesus even more directly.

When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying, "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask a question, you will not answer. But from now on The Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "Yes, I am."

Luke 22:66-70

CONFIRMATION

You may ask me where I live. I might answer, "Look at the address on my electricity bill.

Where, then, do I live?" Looking at the envelope, you would answer, "Winterset, Iowa." And I would reply, "You are correct."

You might then turn to your companion and say, "Aha! He never said the words, 'I live in Winterset, Iowa.' Therefore, he must live somewhere else!"

You could say this.

And you would be a fool.

I can find no passage in the Bible where Jesus stands before a group of people and declares, in these exact words, "I am the Son of God." But what I find instead are gospel accounts where Jesus repeatedly confirms that conclusion of others. Everyone from His disciples and followers, the chief priest Caiaphas, members of the Sanhedrin—even the demons Jesus removed from the possessed—all either knew He was *claiming* to be the Son of God, or knew that He really was.

*Tell me the stories of Jesus
I love to hear;
Things I would ask Him
to tell me
If He were here;
Scenes by the wayside,
Tales of the sea,
Stories of Jesus,
Tell them to me.*

*First let me hear how
the children
stood round His knee;
And I shall fancy His blessing
Resting on me:
Words full of kindness,
Deeds full of grace,
All in the lovelight
Of Jesus' face.*

*Into the city I'd follow
The children's band,
Waving a branch of the
palm tree
High in my hand;
One of His heralds,
Yes, I would sing
Loudest hosannas!
Jesus is King!*

William H. Parker

concluded next week . . .