

I. Proof of Jesus' deity

A. John 10:27-42 . . . "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; [28] and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. [29] My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. [30] I and the Father are one." [31] The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. [32] Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" [33] The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." [34] Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? [35] If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), [36] do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? [37] If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; [38] but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." [39] Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp. [40] And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. [41] Many came to Him and were saying, "While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." [42] Many believed in Him there.

B. Pray

II. Accusing Jesus of blasphemy gives the Jews the opportunity to fulfill their desire to get rid of Jesus.

A. John 10:30 . . . I and the Father are one. In response to these words, the Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus.

1. Now you may be wondering why they were so upset by words we find affirming and encouraging. After all, in the earliest days of the church, Paul wrote these words about Jesus being divine.

a. Colossians 1:15-19, "[Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. [16] For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things

have been created through Him and for Him. [17] He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. [18] He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. [19] For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness (*of deity*) to dwell in Him.”

- b. And in addition to that, we were raised on a theology of the Trinity that clearly teaches that God is One yet three. So for us, it is easy to hold Jesus' words as true.
2. However, imagine being a Jew. Imagine being raised on the scripture truth, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” (Deuteronomy 6:4). Imagine treating your Jewish theology as the only acceptable basis for understanding scripture. Imagine treating some scripture portions as being of utmost importance and other portions as if they don't exist. Imagine settling for this approach to God and His word rather than choosing to think, ponder, pray for insight and understanding, and wrestle with the hard to understand portions of scripture and those portions that seem to contradict your theology.
 - a. If you can imagine all this, then you can begin to understand why the Jews who were talking with Jesus were so upset at these six, clearly stated words: “I and the Father are one.”
 - b. However, there has always been and I expect there will always be those who seek the truth, who seek to live by the truth, and who are open to a larger perspective of God then they are capable of grasping or defining or explaining. And it is just such as these that Jesus gathered around Him as His disciples, and which we find scattered here and there in our world today.
 3. But within the context of this story, there is a more important truth conveyed by these words, and that more important truth relates directly to Jesus' words that no one can snatch His sheep out of His hand, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.
 - a. And this more important truth is simply this, once you have become one of Jesus' sheep, you are just as secure in His keeping as you are in God's keeping because Jesus and God are one and the same being.
 - b. As Jesus said back in John 6:40, “This is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself (*Jesus Christ*) will raise him up on the last day.”

- c. Let me give you an example from one of John's stories. The religious leaders might threaten and even excommunicate the blind man for praising Jesus as sent from God, but all their threats and actions against the blind man are no threat to his assurance of eternal life, for he is in Jesus Christ's hands which means He is in God's hands – and as such he is secure!
4. There are two more considerations concerning Jesus' statement that He and the Father are one, that I want to address.
 - a. First, It is possible for one who is merely human to be so Spirit filled and Spirit led as to authoritatively say, "The promises I make, God will fulfill, the prayers I pray, God will answer, and the things I say are acceptable and/or unacceptable for Christians, God will support."
 - (1) But is it possible for a mere human, no matter how godly and Spirit filled, to adequately represent the fulness of God to unbelievers? Is it possible for such a one to make the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame to walk, and the dead to rise? Doing one of these would be phenomenal, but to do all of them – and repeatedly? Can a mere human do that? Can a mere human give eternal life to anyone?
 - (2) The point here is that the works Jesus did verified that He was God, even though He was housed in a human body. And this is such an important truth that in this story Jesus is relentless about pointing to His works as proof He is divine.
 - b. Second, the OT at least inferred that the Messiah would be divine and not a mere human.
 - (1) For example, we read in Isaiah 9:6, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."
 - (2) And we read in Jeremiah 23:5-6, "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. [6] In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD (*Jehovah*) our righteousness.'"
 - (3) The Jewish religious leaders could have taken these statements into account when dealing with Jesus, but they chose not to. Therefore, these Jews were not unbelievers who

needed to hear truth and see God-empowered works to believe in Jesus. They were biblically knowledgeable religious leaders who were rejecting parts of God's truth as stated in the Prophets, and so rejecting Jesus was just one further step in that "rejection" direction. And so –

- B. John 10:31 . . . The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.
1. John uses the word "again" because this is the second time the Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus. The first time is recorded in John 8:58-59 when Jesus said to them, "Before Abraham was born, I am."
- C. John 10:32 . . . Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?"
1. As I have already stated, Jesus continues to make His good works the primary basis of proof that He is both human and divine. This gives us two truths to consider.
 2. First, there is an old axiom that came from Ralph Waldo Emerson, and it says, "Your actions speak so loud I cannot hear what you say."
 - a. Far older than this axiom is a quote from Jesus which says, "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. [16] You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:15-16).
 - b. And long before that, we read in Proverbs 27:19, "As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects man." And how do we know what is in a person's heart? By what they say and do.
 - c. The truth here is that our actions reveal our thoughts, our desires, our fears, what we believe and value, and who we trust. In other words, our actions reveal who we are. And this was as true for Jesus as it is for us today.
 - d. To see the reality and power of this truth in your own life all you need to do is take note of the times when you want to impress someone and to do so you hide your true self by acting better than you usually would if no one were around that you wanted to impress.
 - e. Which brings me to the truth I want to get across today. If you want to get a better grasp on what and how you think, what you desire, what you fear, what you believe, and who you trust – in any given situation – then honestly look at your deeds, that is, honestly examine and carefully consider what your deeds say about who you are and what you value on the inside.

3. The second truth that comes from Jesus words in vs 32 is this: because Jesus' works are of a nature that no mere human could consistently do any of them or even do some of them once, we can rationally and rightly conclude that Jesus' works are a dependable way to determine if Jesus is divine or a mere human.
- D. John 10:33... The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."
1. These Jews were using scripture "selectively" in order to promote their own agenda rather than God's purposes. God explicitly said in Leviticus 24:16, "The one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death."
 - a. To blaspheme in this way is to speak about or make claims that show unholy irreverence for God. It is to speak disrespectfully about God and degrade His nature and character – as if He were not perfectly holy, just, and loving.
 - b. And so these Jews were saying Jesus had committed blasphemy by claiming to be one with God.
 2. What should be of interest to us is that, like too many in the church today, they were selectively using scripture to justify their own unbelief and therefore their own ungodly behavior.
 - a. And it is not that they were using a wrong scripture, for God, himself, put these words from Leviticus 24:16 in the OT.
 - b. The problem is that they were committed to using one portion of scripture to accomplish their goal – while ignoring other portions of scripture and refusing to thoughtfully look at the works of Jesus to see if they were from God, and done by the power of God, and therefore could support the fact that Jesus was divine.
 - c. My point is this – we are prone to use those scriptures that we think support what we want or what we deem important while ignoring other scriptures that, if taken into account would balance our desires, choices, and behavior so that we would live a truly godly life rather than an unbalanced, self-serving religious life.
 - d. Therefore, beware of following the ways of the Jews of Jesus day. Make it your aim to live according to the whole word of God, not just those portions that make you feel comfortable, or justify your behavior, or serve your purposes.

- E. John 10:34-38 . . . Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? [35] If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), [36] do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"
1. This portion of scripture has been used to make the claim that Christians are "gods" (*little g*). And those who make this claim often refer to the writings of the early church which state that those who pursue genuine godliness will in time become so godly as to become "gods" (*little g*).
 - a. However, I am not comfortable with this teaching, though I understand why some of the writers in the early church spoke about Christians becoming "gods" (*little g*) as a result of pursuing godliness over a period of time.
 - b. But this is not what Jesus is talking about. He is using these words from the OT to make a point about accepting Him as divine.
 2. So like the Jews of Jesus day, we too run into the temptation to use selected portions of scripture while ignoring others in order to come to the conclusion we want or support what we would like to be true. However, it is always wise to include the immediate context, the context of the chapter, the larger context of the book, and the rest of the Bible when examining any particular portion of scripture.
 3. According to the context of these words, Jesus is talking with the religious leaders of His day. These are the leaders in Israel who have been entrusted by God with the task of teaching and judging Israel in a way that exalts God, leads their fellow Jews to love, worship, and obey God, and promotes and protects justice in the land.
 - a. However, like those referred to in the OT reference that Jesus is quoting, the religious leaders of Jesus' day were failing to do their job in the way God expected and had entrusted them to do.
 - b. Listen as I read the reference Jesus is quoting, and you will see what I mean. Psalm 82:1-7, "God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. [2] How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? [3] Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute. [4] Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them out of the hand of the wicked. [5] They (*the rulers in Israel, religious and otherwise*) do not know nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. [6] I said, 'You are gods, and all of you (*leaders*) are sons of the

Most High. [7] Nevertheless you will die like men and fall like any one of the princes.”

- c. You can see what God expects from those who lead His people, and when they fail, you can see what God will do.
 - d. But the important point here is that God referred to those serving Him in leadership positions in Israel as “elohims (small e),” that is, as gods (*small g*). And the reason for this is because they both represented God and had the God-given power to teach the people, judge them, protect life by preserving justice, and take life by enforcing the God’s Law.
4. Therefore, in this story, Jesus is calling His accusers to consider more than one scripture in deciding what they ought to do in this situation.
- a. And in doing this, Jesus is appealing to a portion of scripture that they would have known.
 - b. And Jesus used it to make the point that if God ordained and used human beings to do His work of teaching and judging, and hence called them “gods” (*little g*), and if the Jews of old and the Jews in Jesus day did not condemn them to stoning for being called gods (*small g*), then why would they condemn Jesus as blaspheming for claiming to be the Son of God when God set Him apart as divine and sent Him into the world to do the kind of works that reveal His deity?
 - c. Once again, Jesus makes His works a primary source of proof for His being divine and for having the right to call Himself the Son of God and to claim that He and God are one.

III. Conclusion

- A. We will end here because of the time, but I urge you to consider using Jesus’s works and God’s works – from creation through today – as useful means of evangelizing unbelievers. It seems to me that even without the Holy Scriptures, what God has done in creation – including giving humans abilities no other creature has, and what God has done in sustaining creation, and the what Jesus did – from feeding the hungry to healing the sick and beyond, these works ought to be enough evidence to convince anyone that God exists and that He is worthy of our trust, allegiance, and obedience.