

Last week we looked at John the Baptist's example of humility from John chapter 3 -

²⁵Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification. ²⁶And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him." ²⁷John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven. ²⁸You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.' ²⁹He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. ³⁰He must increase, but I must decrease.

John the Baptist's example of humility in making way for Jesus and being focused on pointing others to Christ is a challenge to us all. As he fades from the scene of history he leaves a remarkable testimony to who Jesus is. He stands as a transitional figure. As the last Old Testament prophet he is tasked with pointing to Christ and with the beginning of the New Testament.

As John transitions out (*I must decrease*), he tells his disciples that Jesus must increase. He understands the Jesus MUST eclipse him. In the next few verses he explains to his disciples the superiority of Jesus.

"He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. ³²What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. ³³He who has received His testimony has set his seal to *this*, that God is true. ³⁴For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure. ³⁵The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

- Jesus is Superior Because He is from Heaven
- Jesus is Superior Because He has Heavenly Knowledge
- Jesus is Superior Because Heaven Affirms Him

- **Jesus is Superior Because He has the Spirit without Measure**
- **Jesus is Superior Because He has Heavenly Authority**

Jesus is Superior Because He is from Heaven (v 31)

Jesus is the only person to come from Heaven. All other men and women have an earthly origin. Christ alone comes from Heaven having lived there as God.

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God (John 1:1)"

Beginning with His birth in Matthew chapter one we are struck with the fact that He is no ordinary baby. Mary is told by an angel that she will have a son conceived by the Holy Spirit and He will be called Emmanuel which means God with us.

John chapter 6 has several references to the fact that Jesus comes down from heaven. In verse 33 Jesus tells the crowd "for the bread of God (meaning himself) is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world." Verse 38 – "for I have come down from Heaven." Verse 50 "down from heaven", verse 58, "down from heaven."

Jesus is the incarnate Christ (John 1:14), he is not from earth like everyone else. John and everyone else are earthly, but Jesus is above all.

Jesus is Superior Because He has Heavenly Knowledge (v 32)

Again, Jesus alone has firsthand knowledge because He is God and comes from Heaven. He does not just get His message from God as other prophets like John the Baptist. He has seen and heard it Himself.

Jesus is the only person who never needed to take information from anyone else. He could and did put self-imposed limits on His omniscience while on earth but that does not mean it wasn't available to Him.

In John chapter 2 we learn that He knows everything. "He knew what was in the heart of man" and then that is illustrated to us as He reads Nicodemus's heart in chapter 3.

Also, in Chapter 3, Jesus says, "We speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen."

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This is firsthand knowledge. In John 8:38 He says “I speak the things which I have seen with My Father.” Because Jesus is from heaven He has all Heavenly Knowledge.

Jesus is Superior Because Heaven Affirms Him (v 33)

The truthfulness of God is bound up in the affirmation of Christ. “No one received His testimony” is a general statement and speaks to the fact that though many people (crowds of 20 thousand) flocked to Him few put their faith in Him. Those that believe in Jesus set their seal (sign their name) to the fact that what God says is true.

God is true, He can-not lie. He is truth personified. Jesus said “I Am the Way, **The Truth**, and The Life.” God sent an Angel to declare this child is Immanuel. When John the Baptist baptized Jesus God declared from heaven “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Again on the Mt. of transfiguration God declared “this is My beloved Son.”

We cannot say we believe in God and reject Jesus. By doing so we call God a liar. God spoke through the prophets in the Old Testament giving specific prophecies about the Messiah. Jesus is the fulfillment of those prophecies. Those that believe “set their seal that God is true,” those that reject Jesus call God a liar.

Jesus is Superior Because He has the Spirit without Measure (v 34)

John the Baptist was indwelt with the Spirit from his mother’s womb. In other words John’s ministry was powered by the Holy Spirit, but not to this extent. Jesus had the Spirit immeasurably, to the infinite level of His Deity. A sign of this occurred at Jesus’ baptism when John saw the Spirit descending and remaining on Jesus.

Colossians 2:9 states: “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.” As part of the trinity He is fully God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

There is a story in Matthew 12 where those who opposed Jesus claimed that the miracles He performed were by the power of Satan. Jesus reply was that they blasphemed against the Holy Spirit (by whose power H really performed miracles).

Jesus is Superior Because He has Heavenly Authority (v 35)

Jesus was God incarnate – John 1:14 – And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw

His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

He is revealed as the agent of creation in John 1 “All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.” And in Ephesians 1:20 we are told that Jesus is “²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

John gives five reasons why Christ is superior and why He MUST increase. Upon ending his short but profound treatise on the Christology of Jesus John leaves us with this invitation and warning: “**He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.**”

Believing in Jesus is a command from God. Those who obey and believe have eternal life. Those who do not obey will not have eternal life and will experience the wrath of God.

The question is which one are we?



Bible Studies:

7:00 am Tuesdays – Bible study – Governor’s Large Conference Room – Open to All: Legislators, Constitutional Officers, Lobbyists, Staff

8:00 pm Tuesdays – Legislator Only Bible Study – Perkins

