

BC 10- The Deity of Jesus Christ- Matt. 16:13-20; John 1:1-5

I. Divine Name II. Divine Attribute III. Divine Work IV. Divine Worship

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, as Jesus said, who do men say that I am? This pivotal question touches the heart of our faith, and it distinguishes Christianity from every other faith. In our first reading, Jesus is walking and talking with His disciples, and He asks them, who do men say that I am? Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets. In other words, people say that you are a holy man of old, a prophet, or some teacher. Does this sound familiar? Almost every major religion today likes to think of Jesus as a kind and gentle good teacher. Even the Muslims and the Jews recognize that Jesus was a special person who was a good prophet. Even the Mormons and the Jehovah's Witnesses say that Jesus was a good man and we should live like Him. Our world today is just like the world when Jesus asked this question. People believe that He was a good and holy man- a wise scholar but nothing more. Then Jesus turned to question the disciples. Who do you say that I am? In response to this question, Peter steps up to the plate and says, you are Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus is not some traveling wise man with good ideas, no- He is Christ- the Messiah- the anointed One- the Son of God. He is more than a man, He is God Himself. This truth- who is this child- is very important to remember this time of year. We will consider this theme; the Deity of Christ demands total submission and worship.

### **I. Divine Name**

So first we are going to consider the names ascribed to Jesus that proves His divinity. In our Matt. 16, Peter calls Jesus the Christ and the Son of God. Being Christ means that He is the Messiah foretold of old. And as the Son of God, it was clear that Jesus was sent from God to rule on behalf of God. As our BC article states, according to His divine nature, He is the only Son of God. He is fully divine and one with the Father. Anything less than divine does not do justice to who He is! In John 1 we saw that He, the Word, was with God and was God. We can also consider the confession made by Thomas in John 20:28. Here Thomas had said that he would not believe unless he put his fingers in the holes made by the nails in Jesus' hands. 8 days after this doubting statement, Thomas sees Jesus Christ

with his own eyes. This brings about a confession of faith. Thomas says my Lord and my God! Thomas calls Jesus, my God – where Jesus does not deny that He is divine. Even the Pharisees understood what Jesus was saying. In claiming to be God’s Son- in calling Himself the I Am- Jesus was making it clear that He was not just a creature. It was for this reason that the Pharisees charged Him with blaspheme in John 10. He was making himself God! This profound statement is not a light thing, but the very cornerstone of what the church believes today. Or consider what Isaiah prophesied concerning the coming Christ. He is wonderful, counselor, and mighty God. The government will be upon His shoulders. Isaiah 7:14 calls Him Immanuel- which means God with us! In order for Jesus to redeem His people, He has to be able. He has to have the strength to stand under the judgment- and His suffering needs to be a worth of infinite value to save lost humanity. This ability is only possible through Christ’s divinity. Without this divinity, our salvation would be impossible. We must stand firm in this! The deity of Jesus Christ is not a matter up for debate! It is clearly stated and it is to be embraced and rejoiced in! Without the full deity of Christ, our hope and salvation would be in vain.

## **II. Divine Attribute**

In our next point, we consider his attributes. What was Jesus like? When it comes to attributes, we are talking about qualities or characteristics that belong to Him. One such quality is that He is eternal. As our Nicene Creed says, He was begotten of the Father before all worlds. God of God, light of light. Very God of very God. Begotten not made. There was never a time when the Son was not, and Jesus has always been the Son of the Father. As we read in John 1, He was with God in the beginning before anything had been created. Or as Jesus says in John 8, before Abraham was I am! The Son has always been the Son, the Father has always been the Father, and both are eternal God - without beginning or end. The word, “begotten” means that Jesus Christ is of sole descent- He is completely unique in His son-ship. We are children of God by adoption; Jesus is the Son from eternity. Chosen and sealed by the Father. As Micah 5:2 says, His going forth are from old, from everlasting. This is echoed in Hebrews 7:3, He has neither beginning of days nor end of life. Eternal, not made, as our article states. Only God can be eternal. Jesus is the alpha and the omega- the beginning and the end as Rev. 1

introduces Him. The Son is co-essential and co-eternal. Every creature has a beginning. Although this is when the Son took on flesh; when Jesus was born of Mary, this was not His beginning because He always was. Everything in heaven and on earth was created, but not God. There is such great comfort in this attribute. Because God is eternal, he is never changing. With Him, our salvation is secure because He will never leave us or forsake us. He never sleeps nor slumbers- He has always been and will always be. The same God who created everything created us- and still holds all things in His hand! He also has life in himself as he states in John 5. He is free to lay His life down and take it up again. No one could take his life from him. As John 1:4 says, in Him was life! Jesus is also called good in Matt. 19:17. Here Jesus is called good teacher, and Jesus responds by saying, why do you call me good? There is only one who is good. Being called good is an attribute of God. Jesus does not deny that He is good, rather he points out the truth of what he has been called. Being good means that there is no fault or stain of sin. To be perfect in all your actions and attitudes. Jesus was good, and only God is good; therefore, Jesus is God. The divine knowledge of the future and also knowledge of man's motives is given to Christ. Nothing is hidden from His eyes. In John 21:18-19, Jesus tells Peter what kind of life he will have. Jesus even tells Peter about his future and death. Only God can know the future and see all things past and future. This point is continued in John 1:48 where Jesus calls Nathanael to follow Him. Jesus saw Nathanael and knew Nathanael even before these 2 men met. This gives rise to the confession of Nathanael, you are the Son of God. Only God can know the heart of a man. Many times, when Jesus was confronted by Pharisees, He knew exactly what the Pharisees were thinking. This is something that only God can do, and Jesus displays this power multiple times. As the perfect and holy prophet, He could know events and facts that no one else could. These attributes can also be seen in the Work that He has done.

### **III. Divine Work**

We can see the deity of Jesus when we look at His work in this world. In Genesis 1, Moses tells us that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. For God, creation is strictly making something out of nothing. We can create a piece of art, but we have to use pre-existing material- only God creates

from nothing. This thought is proven in John 1:3 where Jesus as the Word is credited with the creation of the world through Him. Without him, nothing was made. If the world was made by God and only God can create; and Jesus created, then Jesus must be God. Only God can call something out of nothing, and that is what the Father did through the Son. Not only did the Son already exist during creation, but He was also active in that creation. By Him all things were made as Col. 1:15 . The Work of Christ is continued in Col 1:17, where it says, He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. By His hand of continual providing, all creation is continued and cared for. Providence is also attributed to the Son in that the Son holds all things together. The Father wills it, the Son carries it out. Jesus not only holds all things into being, at the final trumpet sound, Jesus will also bring all things to an end. As Matt. 25:32, He will separate the sheep from the goats. He will send the goats to eternal condemnation and take His sheep into everlasting glory. He- as Col. 1:20 says- makes peace by His blood. As you can see, Jesus is powerful to work and save! He has an intricate role in all our life, death, and resurrection. The fullness of God dwells in Him- and by Him we are reconciled to God! We could add to this list of Jesus works- His ability to heal, raise the dead and forgive sins. Only God can do works like this!

#### **IV. Divine Worship**

Finally we consider the worship of Jesus as God in the NT. In our text from Matt. 16:16, Peter calls Jesus Christ the Son of God. Jesus does not reject this worship, because this worship as God is rightly placed upon Him. Whenever men fall down and worship angels in the OT, the angels would always stop them and say; I am a creature, a servant just like you. Worship God alone. Yet here we find no rebuke, because worship as God is rightly placed on the Son. The confession that Jesus is God is the foundation of the NT church and all of our worship here today. Jesus Christ is divine and He must be worshiped as God. As our article concludes, He is the true God whom we invoke, worship and serve! He alone is the way to salvation- no other name- no other prophet can save! It was necessary that He be divine so that by His divinity, He might bear the wrath placed upon our sins. Outside of this divine mediator, there is no other way to be saved. After Jesus rose from the dead, He came and met His

disciples. In Matt. 28, Jesus appeared to them and said greetings. At the very sight of Him, the disciples took hold of His feet and worshiped (Mt. 28:9). We can consider all the proof contained in Scripture, yet if our heart is not changed it does us no good. As God, we are compelled worship and serve Him alone. Since the eternal Son is the one who has redeemed us, He must be the object of our prayers and our worship. This worship also includes worshiping Him in a way that is pleasing to Him. We are to call upon Him, honor Him, and revere His name because He is our God!

To conclude, we have to ask ourselves a few questions. The first question is, what happens if Jesus is not divine? Many have disputed and denied these facts over the years. Some say that He became God at His baptism; others say that He was just another good teacher. So what do we lose? Well, if Jesus is not divine, then we have no hope for salvation, our faith is in vain, and we are still in our sins. If Jesus is not God, then our prayers in His name are no prayers at all. He is not powerful- thus He cannot save! As you can see, this is serious truth that needs to be believed and embraced in faith. He is not only a good teacher, He is Thee good teacher. Rejecting His deity is no small act; rather it is the sin of the anti-Christ. As I John 2:22 says, those who deny that Jesus is Christ has the Spirit of the anti-Christ and the truth is not in him. Those who deny this truth are outside of the church, and are still in their sins. If we believe that He is God, we must come to Him and believe in Him immediately. Our lives must reflect what we believe! The deity of Christ demands total submission and worship. At the name of Jesus, every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess Him as the King of all glory.