

LESSON 284

GOD THE SON OF GOD

Related Scripture: John 1:35-51

KEY VERSE: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."
—Colossians 2:9.

Lesson Scripture: John 10:22-39

Introduction:

Unwillingness to recognize the deity of the Son of God is generally thought of as a mark of "modernism," but it is not at all modern. Careful study of the New Testament makes it clear that it was His claim to deity that brought upon Jesus the utmost hatred of the God-haters of His day. If His claim had been false, they might have forgiven or ignored Him; but He was too convincing to be tolerated by religious rulers who had a vested interest in traditions contrary to God's word.

Human nature has not changed, nor is the nature of Gentiles any different from that of the sons of Jacob. Religious people destitute of divine grace still reject both the doctrine and person of God incarnate, the historical Christ of the New Testament.

Human needs also have not changed. Believers now as always find everlasting salvation in the everlasting God, manifested to us in the person of His Son.

For an outline of the lesson this week we may note:

1. Derogations, John 10:22-24
 - a. God unrecognized, 22
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2. Declarations, John 10:25-30
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3. Disputations, John 10:31-33
 - a. God condemned, 31
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4. Demonstrations, John 10:34-38
 - a. God in the scripture, 34, 35
 - b. God in the Son, 36-38
5. Determinations, John 10:39

Notes on the Printed Text:

Derogations, John 10:22-24.

When the lowly Carpenter of Nazareth left His humble trade to become a traveling Preacher and Miracle Worker, there was nothing in His outward appearance or circumstance to mark Him as the Messiah. His power and wisdom were of the Spirit; His followers were not seeking earthly fame or position, but eternal truth and salvation. While His closest disciples became more and more sure that He was the promised Messiah, the official leaders of His nation had generally only the most derogatory opinions of His claims.

God Unrecognized, 22.

Jesus walked as a man among men, a Jew among Jews, observing the customary feasts of His people, and ordinarily subjecting Himself to changes of weather and seasons. He could have arranged things for greater personal comfort, but He was voluntarily living the life of a servant, and so was not easily recognized as God.

God Undesired, 23, 24.

Yet the truth is that then as now men did not desire to know God. Even when He walked in the temple, even when He had made known His claims and had demonstrated the power of God in human life, they chose not to believe. "How long dost thou make us to doubt?" But there was no good reason for them to doubt, except that they wished not to believe; they wished not to be bothered with the presence of God.

Declarations, John 10:25-30.

Questions of infidels do not arise from any failure of Jesus to declare the truth. Here He spoke to unbelievers words which are recorded for the instruction and comfort of believers.

God Reminding, 25.

"Tell us plainly," they said. But He had told them, again and again, and they refused to believe. His miraculous works, such as no man could do in his own power, bore witness of His divine relationship.

God Rejected, 26.

In sober fact, our beliefs are based less on objective evidences than on subjective preferences. The unbelief of the religious leaders, then as now, was rooted in their own sinful nature, in their unwillingness to accept the truth. They were not what Jesus called the sheep of the good Shepherd. This too He had told them before. The figure is not flattering to fleshly vanity.

God Received, 27.

Christ must be recognized as Lord before He can be received as Savior. He cares for His people as a shepherd cares for his sheep, and those who truly are His people submit to Him as sheep submit to their shepherd. They hear attentively His voice; He knows them individually; and they willingly, lovingly, confidently follow Him.

Sometimes these spiritual sheep go astray, but habitually they trust and obey their Shepherd. This is the teaching of Jesus, no matter what may be the pretensions of hypocrites.

God Redeeming, 28-30.

True believers in the Christ of the Bible have eternal life as a present possession. (Jn. 6:47.) Second, they have it as a permanent possession: "they shall never perish." Third, they are secure in that possession, because they are in the hand of God, and no power on earth, in hell, or in heaven can take them out of that almighty hand. Father and Son, one in essence and purpose, are united in this redemptive work; and so is the Holy Spirit, Who never leads anyone to contradict the doctrines of His word.

Disputations, John 10:31-33.

Certainly there is a continuing controversy between the truth of God and the deceptions of Satan. Let him who chooses to dispute the teachings of Jesus realize that in so doing he puts himself among the enemies of Christ and of God.

God Condemned, 31.

Little did these unbelievers realize that in taking up stones against Jesus they were lifting their hands against God. Sinful creatures whose rebellion has brought upon them the condemnation of God the Judge of all are seldom conscious of the enormity of their sin. But in their hearts they condemn Him for condemning them, and if they had the power to do it they would destroy their Creator in order to have things their own way.

God Computing, 32.

With magnificent sarcasm, Jesus stayed their hands for a time by seeming to compute, as it were, His "many good works." Which of those works had so aroused their hatred?

God Contradicted, 33.

It was an embarrassing question. The implication must be contradicted. His enemies had no case against the character or works of Jesus. They must assume a zeal for God which their own works belied in order to accuse Him of blasphemy—the charge on which He was finally condemned by the sanhedrin. But this charge involved a contradiction of His claims, which were blasphemous only if untrue.

Demonstrations, John 10:34-38.

Again, for all whose minds are receptive to truth, Jesus demonstrated that He was Who and What He claimed to be. His argument here is based upon the words of God in holy scripture and the works of God in His own holy person.

God in the Scripture, 34, 35.

"Ye are gods" is a quotation from Psalm 82:6. The reference is to the governing authorities in Israel, who were appointed to administer justice according to God's word. So it was not necessary for the enemies of Jesus to interpret His claims as blasphemous, even if they did not believe Him. Holy scripture provided precedent for applying the term "gods" to mortal men. "And the scripture cannot be broken."

God in the Son, 36-38.

One point at a time. Old Testament judges were called "gods" because of their official position in earthly government, but Jesus held no such earthly position. His enemies were right in understanding that He claimed much more. His position was one held in heaven before the Father sent Him into the world, having sanctified Him for an office higher than any earthly authority. His claims were not blasphemous, because they were true.

Proof of the deity of Christ is to be found in His own person, His own works, His own life of perfect submission to the will of God, His perfect fulfillment of the word of God. Not only the miraculous works of Jesus, but also His works in teaching and example, proclaim Him to be indeed the true and living God, the Son of God.

Determinations, John 10:39.

Enemies of God were determined to destroy His Son, but God had determined before when and how He should die (Acts 2:23), and so "He escaped out of their hand" until the appointed time. Wicked men may conspire against God, but they can accomplish only what He is pleased to permit.

Key Verse:

"For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."—Colossians 2:9.

"Godhead" here means "Godhood" or deity. The scripture is plain enough. Today, as always, people who do not believe in the deity of Christ simply do not believe the word of God. The historical fact that the Son of God took on a human body, which He still has in resurrection glory, does not in the least diminish His eternal deity. All the fullness of deity dwells in that body.