

THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD

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The title of this message is The Son of the Living God. The part where we mention that God is living is very important. Let's go to Ephesians. We are very familiar with these verses.

Ephesians 4:11

And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers;

Ephesians 4:12

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:13

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

In this verse Paul tells us where we want to arrive. He could have just said *Till we all come in the unity of the faith* because we know the knowledge of the Son of God is a part of that, but he specifically mentioned *the knowledge of the Son of God*. Praise the Lord. Why would he mention that?

Somehow the Spirit of God inspired him to specifically look at that. Specifically as that is the *center and the foundation of the faith*. And we know that is the first thing the enemy attacked.

The enemy spent three hundred years slowly twisting and distorting that true revelation. Even John had to begin speaking about it in about 90 AD. And what is Christianity today? As far as traditional modern Christianity, they completely lack the understanding of who Jesus Christ is and who God is.

Now some have gone and looked at things that Brother Branham has said, and also what Brother Jackson taught. In this age, God began to restore back that understanding. Praise the Lord. This started somewhere between 1908~1912. God began to restore the understanding of baptism in the name of Jesus, because people were Trinitarians. He showed them how baptism was to be done correctly according to the Word. It was the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He showed them where Jesus said *baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. [Matthew 28:19] That is one name, not three titles. That name was *the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*. [Acts 2:38] But did they have a full understanding? They did not. They came to the conclusion that Jesus must be God. So we come to what we call the Jesus Only Doctrine: Jesus is God and God is Jesus, and really there is no distinction between the two.

There is a way *by revelation*, when we speak of the Lord Jesus Christ, to see him as *God with us* as it was spoken while he was here on the earth. But the Lord Jesus Christ himself as a being, he was a man. That's one of the first things we have to understand: Jesus Christ was and still is a man. That's the truth. Amen.

Paul said *there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*. [1Timothy 2:5] Amen. Praise the Lord.

Now yes there is a difference between him and all other men. First, he was born without sin. He did not have that sinful nature. But there was something even further than that: Jesus Christ never disobeyed his Heavenly Father. Praise the Lord. He was obedient from birth all the way to the cross which he did not deserve. He knew that it was the will of his Heavenly Father. Even if there had been another way, he said *not my will, but thine, be done*. [Luke 22:42] He was willing to suffer and die.

When we come to the time of Brother Branham, the Pentecostal movement, we could say they were in front. The ones that were in front were Jesus Only, but the majority of the denominations and Christendom in general was still Trinitarian.

God allowed Brother Branham to see the picture. He had a beautiful understanding of who God is and who the Lord Jesus Christ is. There are times he was praying and he would say something like: Heavenly Father, this morning you are causing a billion suns to shine light on a billion earths out in the universe. He attributed that power and that vast presence to Almighty God. Praise the Lord. Then he would come to the end of his prayer and he would say, we ask this in the name of your beloved Son, our Saviour and Lord, Jesus the Christ. Praise the Lord.

At the same time, he had a way of speaking that was not as everybody spoke. He spoke a lot of times symbolically and people did not quite catch that. At the end of the day, when you look at the Message movement today, they think Brother Branham was Jesus Only. He was not.

Now some have dug a little deeper and they can see Brother Branham was not Jesus Only. I have to say, you're doing good to see that. We have to go beyond just knowing what he said. We must be able to get into this Word. Praise the Lord.

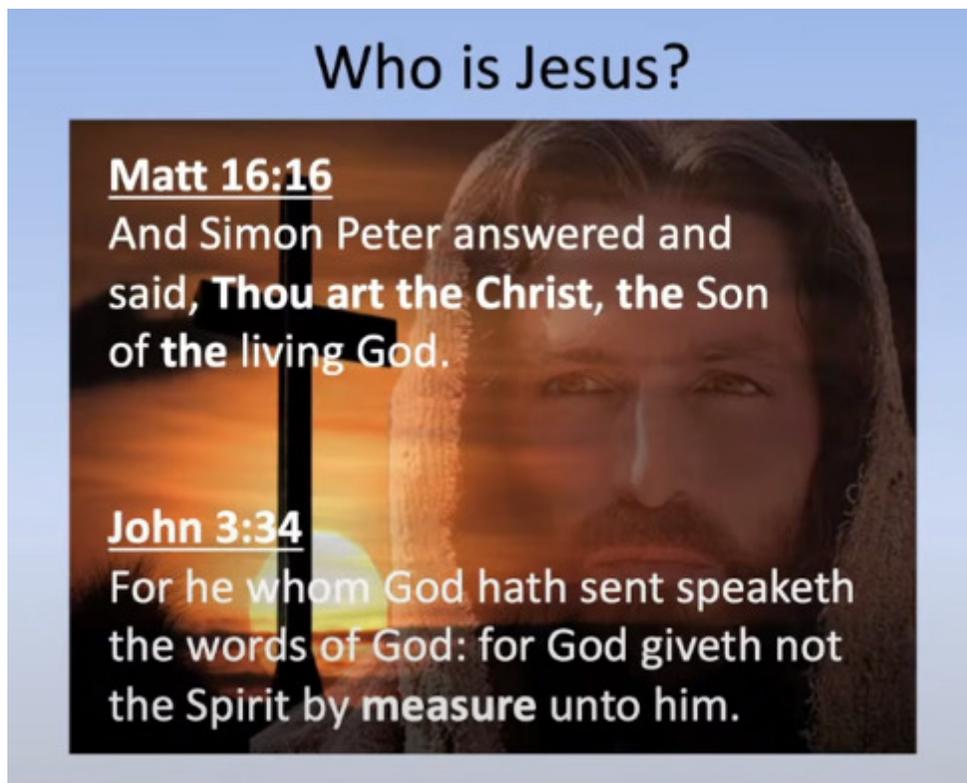
Remember the devil spent three hundred years twisting and distorting the true understanding of the godhead. After that we went another fifteen or sixteen hundred years in that darkness. So it was not something that Brother Branham would say here and there, and people would come to the full light of it. Can we understand that? Those who had a spiritual ear, yes they were moved forward in their understanding.

Then Brother Jackson came on the scene and how beautifully he explained it. It wasn't different than what Brother Branham understood, but God gave Brother Jackson an opening in the scripture and the ability to bring this out and present it to the church. Yes it was so beautiful.

As we see how Paul wrote it here *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God* [Ephesians 4:13] Brother Jackson himself said the full application of this would be the last thing fully restored.

But there are still some who have certain doubts and certain misunderstandings. There is still a part of the traditional concept with some people.

As we learn to trust the Word of God, and let the Word of God speak to us, it can be something to settle us and to rejoice our heart. To have a true vision of who is the Lord Jesus Christ and who is Almighty God. Praise the Lord.



This morning I'd like to go to the book of Matthew. Here Jesus is speaking to his disciples.

Matthew 16:15

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

Matthew 16:16

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now Paul said that we are to *come to the knowledge of the Son of God* [Ephesians 4:13] right? Amen.

Peter could have said, we say that you are the Christ. That would have been a safer statement, you know, I am speaking on behalf of us. And he could have just focused on the one thing that they felt the most sure about. But without any doubt the Holy Ghost anointed him, and he had a certainty in his heart. He said *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Amen.*

Now we can look at that word *living* and well you know God is alive, He's the Author of Life. Yes that is true. But why exactly use that word *living*? What does that really have to do with you and me? We see the very next phrase:

Matthew 16:17

Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

So Peter said *you are the Son of the living God*, and now Jesus said *my Father has revealed this to you. Amen.* God is a God who *reveals* His Word. He is the *Living God*.

You remember Brother Branham preached so much about how he was against organized religion. Why? Because organized religion says we are going to sit down, we are going to discuss what we believe, and we are going to write it down. As long as our ministry stays with this, then we are not afraid that we'll go in a wrong direction. Is that not right? And so they closed down the ability of God to reveal Himself through His Word. He no longer is the Living God to them.

The Branham movement did exactly the same thing: we have the books, we have the tapes, we have the messages. We are going to stay with that and we will not go outside of that. Then I have to say, He's no longer the Living God to you. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father is a Living God. Peter could see that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. God, who we know is our Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ himself mentions that.

Now let's go in the book of Mark to the very first verse.

Mark 1:1

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Amen. The Son of God. Now let's go back to the book of Matthew.

Matthew 1:18

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Now we read in Mark that he was the Son of God, and even Jesus himself said My Father which is in heaven. So that would make God the Father his father. Amen. But here it says that Mary was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Let's continue to read in verse 20.

Matthew 1:20

But while he [Joseph] was thinking on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

So that would make him the son of the Holy Ghost right? But we know he only has one father so that should help anybody who has a leftover understanding from the Trinitarian side.

But what do we have? God the Father and God the Holy Ghost? I have to say this morning, it's the same God but it's how He operates. As Father, He is the Giver of Life. He's the One who provides for us. Praise the Lord. As the Holy Ghost, He is our Redeemer. It's not a different God. It's not a different person of the godhead as they like to say. It's the same God and it's the same mind, but it's how He works with mankind.

God is the Eternal Spirit. When somebody says the word *God*, if in your mind you see the Lord Jesus Christ, then I have to say, you still have some growing to do in the Word. God fills the universe. You cannot see Him with your eyes as you can see the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul said *in Him we live, and move, and have our being*. [Acts 17:28] Praise the Lord.

When we breathe the breath of life, it's because God gives us that life. Our heart is beating this morning because God is giving that life. Praise the Lord. God is the One who has given that spirit of life to every creature that is alive. And God is the One who has created this physical universe that we live in. Praise the Lord.

I hope we have an understanding of these two verses: he's called *the Son of God* [Mark 1:1] and at the same time *Mary was found with child of the Holy Ghost*. [Matthew 1:18] That perfect cell of life was placed in Mary's womb in a supernatural way. God put the egg and God put the fertilization of the egg.

Today we know about genetics but that egg was not from Mary's body. Amen. She had not yet been together with Joseph so that fertilization was not from Joseph. God overshadowed her and placed that embryo in her womb. No sin, no serpent seed, praise the Lord, but the only begotten Son of God.

Now let's notice something going back to verse 18.

Matthew 1:18

When his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph,

Notice when Matthew writes this he says Mary was his mother. Amen. Now I just said that cell of life was from God and the Bible itself says that which was conceived in her was of the Holy Ghost. So what does Matthew mean when he says that Mary was his mother? Well she was his mother in the same sense that any mother would be a mother to her child. What do I mean by that?

First of all she watched over him when he cried, she would see what he needed. She was the one who breastfed him, she was the one who changed his diapers. She was the one who cared for him as his mother. She was the one who was concerned where he was. How many can understand my point?

Now let's think about this because there is still the question for some: did he have a pre-existence? The first thing I would say is this: did you and I have a pre-existence? If he was a man then we should be able to answer that question by looking at any other man.

Paul says *He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world*. [Ephesians 1:4] In that sense we had a pre-existence, if that's what you want to call it. But you and I did not exist as a person with a conscience and with a spirit as a living soul until we were manifested here on this earth. Amen.

Let's think about why Jesus would need a mother if he had a pre-existence. Why did he not come as Melchizedek? Or as when the angels appeared to Abraham and God appeared to Abraham? Why did he not come already as a fully grown man? What was the purpose? We have to remember God has a purpose for everything He does. Amen. So what was the purpose?

In the book of Luke we'll read about Jesus as he was still a baby and a child.

Luke 2:40

And the child grew,

Now some will say yes Jesus is not God Himself. They will say the body was Jesus but God dwelt in that body. I will say once we get to the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ, yes God dwelt in the Lord Jesus Christ. But we are well before that here and it says *the child grew*.

A child is not just a body. Amen? If it is, it's a dead child. But it says *the child grew*. This child had the spirit of life in him that we all have from God. This child had his own soul and his own mind just as any other child would.

The thing that was different about this child was *his nature*. He didn't run around when his parents weren't looking and pull his sister's hair. He didn't go off and start a fire in the bedroom or things like that. He had a nature: he was obedient, he wanted to learn. You say well that's just your idea. Well let's keep reading.

Luke 2:40

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Luke 2:52

And Jesus,

Notice it does not say Jesus Christ. Why? He was not yet the Christ. The anointing of God had not yet come upon him in the sense of the Holy Ghost dwelling within him but nonetheless he is still God's son. Praise the Lord.

Luke 2:52

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Praise the Lord. He grew in favour. Now either Luke wrote this wrong or Jesus Christ did not have a pre-existence in the traditional sense that Christianity speaks it as they have him sitting up in heaven. According to them, he created the universe, and now God the Father tells him he needs to go down and be born.

It says here *Jesus increased in wisdom*. Amen. If he had pre-existed for thousands of years, would he not already have that wisdom? Let's think about that seriously. Would he not already have that wisdom? And it says he grew in favour with God and man. He grew *in favour with God*. We would think after thousands of years if he hasn't found favour with God by then, when is it going to happen? Amen.

If we can look at what Luke is writing here in verses 40 and 52, we have to be able to see that Jesus was a child who was growing. He had to learn how to walk and he had to learn how to talk. He had to learn how to read and it rejoiced him when he had the opportunity to read the Word of God.

We see that from twelve years old Jesus was in the temple. He had questions but at the end of the day, the teachers saw that *he* was answering *their* questions. He left that as he realized he could not look to them for the answers he needed. But God still opened up his Word and continued to do so even as we get to the book of Revelation. Let's read that.

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him,

What does that mean? God revealed what's in this book to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:1

to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.

Let's remember that when John wrote this, all of the twelve original apostles except for John himself, had already passed off the scene. Paul had already been martyred. As far as the apostles, John was the only one left.

So what does it say here? *To show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.* Well who are those servants? What is that application of time? That is not John's time. John wrote but it was held in this book to be shown in *our day*, at the end of this Laodicean Age from the time of Brother Branham. *At this time* yes we can say *the things which must shortly come to pass.* God used John to write it, but John says this is *the Revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave to him.*

This morning, can we see that the Lord Jesus Christ was a man? And as a man, he was tempted. We read about that in the gospels. I'm not going to read it now but he was tested. As a man he felt pain, he felt sadness, and he felt hunger.

If we make it that God was the Spirit who dwelt in the body called the Lord Jesus Christ, what kind of test would that be? God the Eternal Spirit is not going to feel pain like you and I feel pain. He's not going to feel hunger like you and I. But Jesus was tested and the beautiful thing is: he was faithful. Amen.

Because of his faithfulness Jesus paved the way. He became *the way* by which you and I would be brought to redemption. God worked in and through the person of His Son and He brought us to redemption. God redeeming the world to Himself through the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Jesus was baptized, he received the gift of the Holy Ghost without measure and God worked through him. Jesus Christ manifested God to the world. He never did a miracle before he received the Holy Ghost, before his baptism or before his ministry, but as such he became worthy.

Jesus Christ is that King of Kings. He's the one who is going to sit upon the throne of David and has inherited the Kingdom. Everything of importance that we see manifested in his life was either foretold by the prophets or it was typed.

It is written that the firstborn was to receive the inheritance. Amen? When we read of the firstborn of Adam, his firstborn was Abel. But Abel was slain and it was Seth to whom the lineage fell. As we come to Abraham, the firstborn of Abraham was Ishmael, but the inheritance fell to Isaac. Then Isaac had twins. Esau was the first one. But to whom did the blessing fall? It was to Jacob. So why is that? In the beginning yes it should have been the firstborn.

In the beginning if Adam had obeyed God, this would have been his kingdom. The inheritance would have been given to Adam. But Adam fell, so it was given to the *second Adam* who is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who received the inheritance. Praise the Lord. He is the firstborn in the eyes of God. Just as God told Abraham, take your son, *your only son*, referring to Isaac. [Genesis 22:1]

What about Ishmael? When we see that Abraham was complete with Sarah, then Isaac was the true firstborn, even though he was the second offspring of Abraham. Even there we have a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The last thing I would say this morning, let's go in the Word to the book of John, because many times we have a tendency to read according to our natural understanding. In John chapter one, we could start reading from the first verse but when we get to verse six it says:

John 1:6
There was a man sent from God.

We read different times where the Lord Jesus said *I was sent from God*. Amen? If we think of that in a natural setting, we say, oh he was up in heaven. But it doesn't say this particular man was sent from heaven, it says he was *sent from God*. If we stop there we would probably think that he's speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ but it says:

John 1:6
There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

Yes verses one through five are pointing to the Lord Jesus Christ. And now John is going to speak of how John the Baptist declared the Lord Jesus Christ.

My point this morning is that John the Baptist did not have a pre-existence sitting up in heaven. Amen. And it's easy for us to understand when we read that, because we know John the Baptist was a man like you and I.

When Jesus Christ says *I was sent from the Father*, had he been up there in heaven? He had not. He was only there the same way you and I were, which is in the mind of the Father.

Again I would ask the question: what was God's purpose? You don't see one prophet who has a vision, or looks up, or addresses Jesus in the Old Testament sitting or standing in heaven. You don't see it. Everything is pointing future to when he would come to this earth as a man but without sin, obedient. Not only did he never sin, but he was obedient unto a death he did not deserve. And by that he bought you and me so we could also be part of this family. What family? *The family of the Living God*. Praise the Lord.

Not the God that caused you to be a Christian, but then you just sit down and say praise the Lord I'm saved. When somebody begins to speak to you about something beautiful in the Word that the Lord has shown, you say well I don't need that, I'm just glad I'm saved. At that point it's better to make sure you really are saved, because Jesus said man shall *live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. Amen.

Modern Christianity today, they can put hundreds of thousands of dollars into musical equipment. They can train and have years of lessons. They can compose something so beautiful and profound, and they can know every nuance of how to record it. But you go and tell them Predestination is in the Bible, they will say, oh I don't need to hear that. If you present something deeper about the Seals or something like that: oh all I need to know is I have been saved. Why is it that in the natural they can go so far, but not in the spiritual?

As it is written in the Old Testament [Deuteronomy 8:3] Jesus Christ himself said *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. [Matthew 4:4] But they don't want to hear that Word.

I'm thankful that we are a part of the people who desire that Word. Amen.