



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Luke 1:26-38

“The Son of God”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] We are grateful to Thee for the privilege of the study of Thy word again. And we thank Thee for the revelation of the truth concerning the Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to understand exactly what it means to have the Scriptures say of him that he is the Son of God. Enable us also to understand the relationship that we have to him and also what it means to us to be sons of God as well. We ask that Thy blessing may be upon us in this hour and may our Lord Jesus Christ be honored and glorified in our study. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] The subject for tonight is "The Son of God." And we're turning to Luke chapter 1, verse 26 through verse 28 for our Scripture reading. So, will you take your New Testaments and turn to this particular passage and let's listen as I read verse 26 through 28 of Luke chapter 1. Did I say 26 through 28? It's Luke 1:26 through 38.

"Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept

pondering what kind of salutation this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name, or shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Offspring shall be called the Son of God. And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her."

We're studying in this series of studies in Christology at the present moment some of the names and titles of our Lord. I know that many of these names and titles are very familiar to you. And perhaps you have wondered why we should bother to give studies in some of the very common names or titles by which our Lord is known. But a great deal of the teaching of the Bible concerning our Lord is bound up in the names and titles by which he is known in the Bible. And Son of God is one of those great terms which describes certain things about our Lord Jesus that are very important.

Gustaf Dalman, a very well-known New Testament scholar of a generation or so ago, once said, "Jesus never applied to himself the title Son of God, and yet made it indubitably clear that he was not merely a, but the, Son of God." You might be puzzled by that statement of Professor Dalman who was a very great scholar, though not a strong believer, because I'm sure that in reading through the New Testament you cannot help but see that our Lord did claim to be the Son of God.

His words are not true of the Gospel of John because in the Gospel of John our Lord does claim the term Son of God for himself. But the other gospels, the synoptic gospels, say surprising little by way of opposition to Professor Dalman's claims. In other words, our Lord does rarely ever use the term Son of God of himself. But as Professor Dalman said, he made it very clear, indubitably clear, to use his words, that he was not merely a Son of God but the Son of God.

A present scholar, Hans Konzelmann, who is still living and teaching in Europe, goes further than Dalman, and claims that the term Son of God was not one of the current Jewish designations of the Messiah, if it was used at all as such. All of the passages in the synoptics which use it fall under the suspicion of being formulations of the church, Professor Konzelmann has said. In other words, when you read in the New Testament that the Lord Jesus is called the Son of God, or that he himself refers to himself as the Son of God or accepts that designation of himself, we are not to think of this as something that has come from him, or from the apostles in the days of our Lord's incarnation, but rather these are terms that were used by the church later on and which in the writing of the gospels have now been written back into the New Testament accounts.

Now then, I think that that is wrong. And we want to look tonight at what the New Testament and the Old Testament, incidentally, have to say about the term Son of God and see if it really can be held that the term Son of God is something that Jesus did not apply to himself. I think contrary to both Dalman and Konzelmann, that Jesus did claim to be the Son of God, that he used this term of himself and that it was a current designation of the Messiah, that is, that when he said he was Son of God he was saying I am the Messiah even though he may not have said that as frequently as he said he was the Messiah or perhaps used other Messianic terms.

Let's look first at the Old Testament background of the term the Son of God. And I want you to notice right at the beginning that this term, the Son of God, or Jesus Christ as the Son, is a term that is derived from the Old Testament. Jesus did not invent it.

Capital A: The scope of the term. Now if you've read much of the Bible, reading through it. Incidentally, reading through the Bible, I say this all the time, but reading through the Bible is the best Bible study that you can ever engage in. But in your reading of the Bible, you probably will have noticed that there is a rather wide usage of the term son of God. For example, in Genesis chapter 6, verse 1 through verse 4, it is used of angelic beings, the sons of God. It is used of the angelic beings in Job chapter 1, verse 6 and chapter 2, verse 1. In fact, Job's passages, in which he refers to the angels as the sons of God, helps us to understand what Genesis means in chapter 6 when it speaks about the sons of God uniting with the daughters of men; so that, the term is used of angels.

It is also used of earthly judges. The Lord Jesus cites one of the passages of the Old Testament, Psalm 82, "And ye are gods," in which the term sons of God is referred to the earthly judges. You know that the term son of God is referred to the nation Israel. "Out of Egypt have I called my son," God is speaking. Israel is the son of God, so the term is used of the nation Israel. And then also, it is used probably of some kings in the Old Testament times. Possibly in Psalm 2 or 2 Samuel 7, David may be typically called a son of God. I have my doubts about that, but it is generally felt by students of the Old Testament that the term is used of certain kings. Now we'll leave that for your own study and for your own determination.

The principal idea lying back of the term "son of God" as you look at these passages is divine creative election. So the term son of God is a term that is used of beings who have a special relationship to God. And that special relationship partakes of the ideas of creative election.

Now the source of the use of the term son of God in the New Testament is most likely the second Psalm. And I'm going to ask, if you will, to turn to the second Psalm so that you can see the passage that is probably the passage from which the New Testament occurrences of the term son of God is derived.

2 Samuel. 2 Samuel is the narrative section but the lyrical section referring to the same thing is Psalm 2.

Now let's begin reading in verse 1 of Psalm 2.

"Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the Lord and against His Anointed, "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!" (Notice the expression "Against the Lord and against His Anointed," that is, against the Lord and against his Messiah. Then the psalmist speaks of God in heaven.) He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. Then he will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, "But as for Me, (God says) I have installed (or have anointed) My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain." (He refers to his Messianic king as having been installed or anointed on Zion. Then the son or the king speaks,) "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. Thou shall break them with a rod of iron, Thou shall shatter them like earthenware.' "

So here is the source of the use of the term son of God. It is a reference to the Messianic king who says that the Father or God has said to him, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." And furthermore, since you are my son, I'm going to give you your inheritance, and your inheritance is all of the nations of the earth. So the 2nd Psalm then is the source of the term son of God. It also is likely the source of the term Messiah in the New Testament as applied to the king of Davidic origin.

Now notice then, from this psalm we can say that there is a son who is the son of God and he is the king or the Messiah. It is he who will come and shatter the nations

ultimately. It is he who will receive the inheritance of the nations as his own inheritance. And furthermore, he is of the Davidic root stock. So he is of Davidic origin.

Delitzsch, one of the leading students of the Old Testament and especially the Psalms, has said "The Old Testament knows no kingship to which is promised the dominion of the world and to which sonship is ascribed but the Davidic." Well, that's the source of the term son of God.

Let's look now at the New Testament revelation regarding the term. And I want to look at a series of testimonies given to the sonship of the Lord Jesus. Putting all of this together, it is evident that testimony to our Lord as the Son of God is wide. It's very definite. And I think it's very clear. It is much wider, much broader than the passages that we shall refer to represent. There are many, many passages to which we could have turned. I'm just selecting those that are, in my opinion, most prominent and will be most helpful to us.

First of all, the testimony of the heavens. Now when we think of the testimony of the heavens, what I mean by that is the testimony of heavenly beings. And, of course, you'll remember that at the baptism of our Lord Jesus, when the Holy Spirit came upon him, there came a voice from heaven after he had been baptized by John the Baptist which said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

Now that expression, "This is my Son," is derived from Psalm 2. So it was the testimony of the Father in heaven at the baptism of our Lord that he was the Son of God referred to in the 2nd Psalm, therefore the Messiah and of the Davidic stock. Then in the transfiguration account. Remember in the transfiguration account, as our Lord was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James and John, there also came a voice from heaven which interrupted the Apostle Peter. And this voice said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased; Hear him." And again the Father cites from the 2nd Psalm in identifying our Lord Jesus as the Messianic king.

Now those are two important testimonies from heaven, but I want you to look with me at Luke chapter 1 and verse 35 because that passage is not as often referred to, and I think it will be helpful to us in seeing some of the aspects of the sonship of the Lord Jesus.

Now this passage in Luke chapter 1 is a passage that gives us important evidence in the description of the manner of the birth of the Messiah. Look at verse 35, "And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Offspring shall be called the Son of God."

Let me make just three points. First of all, from this passage you can see that the Father is the father of our Lord's human nature by the Holy Spirit. Notice, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Offspring shall be called the Son of God."

Now he has just described the origin and destiny of John the Baptist, but John's origin and destiny are worlds apart from our Lord's. Look at verse 13 of Luke chapter 1, "But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John." Notice, Zacharias is really the father of John. He says, "Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John."

And then look at verse 15, "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb."

What a difference between the origin of John the Baptist and the account of the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ and the conception by Mary. In the case of John the Baptist, Zacharias is his real father. In the case of our Lord's birth, Joseph is not his father really, legally his father, but not really his father. In the case of John the Baptist, he will be filled from his mother's womb with the Holy Spirit. But in the case of our Lord, he

is conceived by the Holy Spirit. This account is written in just such a way that we will make the important distinction between this supernatural birth of John the Baptist and the birth of our Lord Jesus by which the conception takes place in the womb of the virgin Mary through the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.

Now the description that is given of what is to take place is given in figurative words, and consequently, we do not understand the biology of what transpired. The facts are that we would be unable to understand it. And that is why, in my opinion, it is given to us in figurative ways. But the words that are used are very expressive. "The power of the Most."

Well, first of all, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you." That word is used of the coming of a whirlwind, kind of like that whirlwind we had the other night which took off a few roofs, in my neighborhood at least. So, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you." And you have the sense of the impressive power of God, like a whirlwind.

And then we read, "And the power of the Most High will overshadow you." And the term is used of the casting of a shadow over her like the Shekinah glory of the Old Testament. What he is saying is that the power of God, reminiscent of that which produced the shekinah glory that overshadowed the mercy seat in the tabernacle, we shall have something similar to that in the conception that will take place in the womb of the virgin Mary. So, the Holy Spirit shall come in this way and energize her womb's embryo.

Now that's the first thing. The Father is the father of his human nature by the Holy Spirit. It is not Joseph who is the father of the human nature. It is the Father through the Spirit.

Now the second thing. Mary is the mother of his human nature by the Holy Spirit. It is said, of course, that she will conceive. This passage states that. And so she has communicated to our Lord Jesus her human nature. Now she was of the seed of David. That's why our Lord Jesus was of the seed of David according to his human nature. He

also, as the legal heir of Joseph who was too of the Davidic line, inherited the legal right to the Messianic throne through Joseph.

Now we must not get the impression that Mary, because of the fact that she is the instrumentality for the conception of our Lord Jesus, is to be thought of as any other than a sinful human being. The Scriptures make it very plain that she is. And if you want a testimony to it, the best testimony is her own testimony. In verse 47 of Luke 1 we read in the Magnificat, "And my spirit (Mary is speaking) my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." So she recognized that she needed a Savior, that she was a sinner, that she needed a Savior. So we have the work of the Holy Spirit in the conception of the human nature of our Lord, but at the same time preserving him supernaturally from any participation in the sinfulness of Mary's human nature.

When we speak of, or when the church historically has spoken of the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary, that is not a biblical doctrine. Incidentally, immaculate conception is a term that refers to Mary's own conception, that is, the conception of Mary when she was born. There is no such doctrine taught in the word of God. Mary was a sinner. She was not immaculately conceived.

When we speak, or when it is said, of Mary that she was the mother of God, that is confusion. She was not the mother of the person of our Lord. She was the person through whom our Lord's human nature came into being through the conception of the Holy Spirit. Yet at the same time, we should not in our avoiding of false doctrine concerning Mary, fail to appreciate first of all that she did truly conceive. Our Lord is a true human being. And also, that Mary was a godly woman. And no doubt because of her godliness, that had something to do with the relationship that she has with our Lord Jesus. That seems to be the statement, the point, of these accounts.

So the Spirit is the active efficient cause in our Lord's birth, and the virgin Mary is the passive physical cause, if we may put it that way.

Now all the processes of generation took place in our Lord. There was first the embryonic stage, then the fetal stage, then the infantile stage, then the stage of childhood, youth, manhood. Our Lord went through all of these stages so far as his human nature was concerned.

Now the third thing. By the virgin conception, the body of our Lord becomes a fit habitation for his holy nature. Look again at that 35th verse, "And for that reason the holy Offspring." The Greek text has "That holy thing being born shall be called such a thing as the Son of God."

Now notice the connection of the Son of God because what is said here is that our Lord by virtue of this miraculous conception has become "such a thing as the Son of God." Incidentally, the anarthrous expression, that is, with the article in the original text, lays great stress upon the unique quality of his Sonship. "That holy thing being born." Notice holy. There is no sin involved. "That holy thing being born shall be called such a thing as the Son of God." So there is a definite connection between our Lord's nature and the divine nature. He is truly the divine Son of God.

Well now, let's quickly run through some of testimonies. This is the testimony of the angel who made the announcement concerning the birth to Mary. It is the testimony of heavens, and the testimony of the heavens is that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God.

The testimony of the demons. Look at Matthew chapter 8 and verse 29. Matthew chapter 8, verse 29. If Professor Dalman does not understand that he was the Son of God, or if Professor Konzelmann does not, the demons at least do. The demons are better theologians than a great many of our modern contemporary theologians, too. We read, "And behold they cried out, saying, "What do we have to do with you, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" So even the demonic beings recognized that our Lord is the Son of God.

The testimony of unbelievers. Well, let's look at John chapter 5 and verse 18. Capital C: The testimony of unbelievers. John chapter 5 and verse 18, "For this cause

therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God." They recognized, incidentally, that sonship implied equality. But notice he "was calling God His own Father." Now that is not son of God in so many words, but it is obvious that that is the meaning. He was calling God his own father and they recognized that. In other words, he was claiming to be the Son of God.

Turn over a page or two to John chapter 10 and verse 18. In John 10, verse 18 we read, "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down of My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down; I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." Now there is no question that this is a reference to God and he claims that God is his father.

John chapter 19 and verse 7. In John chapter 19 and verse 7 we read, "The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God." The unbelievers give testimony to the fact that what he was saying was in their eyes a claim to be the Son of God. And furthermore, involved in this is deity as we shall see.

The testimony of believers. Let's turn back to chapter 1 and verse 49. John chapter 1, verse 29. It is Nathaniel who says, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." We do not read that our Lord said, Now wait a minute Nathaniel. That's saying too much. I'm not really the Son of God. But Nathaniel said, "You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." And our Lord goes on to say he's going to see things even greater than what he's already seen.

The testimony of the apostles. Now among the testimonies that the apostles give are the following. First of all, Matthew chapter 14 and verse 43. Matthew chapter 14, verse 43. I hope you brought your Bible. Matthew chapter 14, verse 43. This is the account of the walking upon the water, and this is. [Laughter] Evidently, I've said

something that I didn't grasp. Matthew 14:33. What did I say? Forty what? Forty-three? Well it's just a few chapters added, fifteen chapters to the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew chapter 14 and verse 33. This is the account of our Lord walking on the water. And it was such a miraculous thing for them that we read in verse 43, "And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!" You might think that this was an anticipation of the great confession that Peter will make in just a short while when he says in answer to our Lord's question, "Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?" "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." That this is a kind of anticipation of the confession that Peter makes. But probably it was an involuntary recognition of the deity of our Lord, extorted from them by this overwhelming impression of his deity produced in this miracle of walking upon the water. And so we have in it a kind of ejaculation. It was something they spoke without probably fully understanding all that they were saying. So when they saw this mighty miracle of our Lord walking on the water, and then the miracle of Peter walking on the water, and then they saw the calmness of what transpired, and when he finally was in the boat, they said, "You are certainly God's Son!" And so they expressed out of the experience an evaluation of him that of course was very accurate.

Now let's turn over to John chapter 1 and verse 18. John chapter 1, verse 18. This is the last verse of the prologue of the Gospel of John. It contains an interesting statement concerning the Lord Jesus. "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."

Now let me say just a word about that text. It is possible that that text should read as you have it in the New American Standard Bible, "the only begotten God." If, of course, that is true; if that were the reading, some of the manuscripts have it, some of the ancient manuscripts. If that is the true reading, then of course, it's a very good passage expressing the deity of our Lord Jesus, the only begotten God.

I'm not at all certain that that is the genuine reading at this point. The great mass of the manuscripts and many of the older ones also have "The only begotten Son." And it does seem a little strange to say "The only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father." Son certainly seems very appropriate. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father. So I'm not at all certain that this should be only begotten God. At any rate it is a reference to our Lord Jesus without question.

And over in chapter 3 and verse 18 we do read this, "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Now I think I'm inclined to say that both of these passages are references to the Son of God, but here it's clear that we do have statement that our Lord is the only begotten Son of God.

Now the striking thing about this is that the term "only begotten" is a term that is capable of some misunderstanding by us. When we think of only begotten we are inclined to lay a great deal of stress on begotten. And so we think of a person being born and therefore having a beginning. But this word, this Greek term, monogenes, is a term that does not have its stress upon the born, but upon the only. In fact, in the translations of this word in Latin versions, frequently the translation is by a Latin word, unicus, which means, if you remember your Latin, only. Sometimes it will be unicus. Now sometimes, in the translation of this into English, you will find only son, but "only" in the sense of unique.

Now was there was a Latin expression, I don't have place to put it here on the projector. But unigenitus, that was a Latin word that means "only born." But that term was not used to translate the Greek expression monogenes because the translators recognized that the emphasis of only begotten is upon only. So the idea back of only begotten is unique. So when we read in the Bible, "No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son," we are to think of the only son in the sense of God's unique son who is in the bosom of the father. He has declared him. He's different from us who are

also sons of God. He is the unique Son of God. John uses that expression several times, but it is the unique son. And in this sense of the unique son, he does not have any brethren at all.

Isn't it interesting that our Lord never says with reference to others, Let's draw apart and let's pray to our Father. When he speaks that way, it's your father and my father, because he recognizes the distinction that exists between himself and us who may also be called sons of God. But in the sense in which our Lord is only begotten, he is only son.

Now let's turn over to Romans chapter 1, verse 3 and 4. Romans 1:3 and 4. The Apostle Paul writes as he begins his Epistle to the Romans that he's

"A bondservant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and was declared with power to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord."

So, while he was always the only Son of God, there was a time when he was appointed Son of God in power, and that was at his resurrection. And so when he came forth from the grave, he was appointed by God at that time "Son of God with power." He assumed fully his Messianic position as the Son of God who is to carry out all of the Messianic work.

Now let's turn to Galatians chapter 4. Galatians chapter 4. You can see that the New Testament is full of references to our Lord Jesus as the Son of God. Galatians chapter 4, verse 4 and following, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son." When we were going through Galatians we laid stress on the fact that the text says that he was sent forth. The implication is that he was preexistent.

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has also sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

Now when it says "God sent," his preexistence is implied. His deity is implied in the work that he does because only a God can redeem men. And so the Son was sent in order to redeem those that were under the law.

Now I want you to turn, in the light of this expression here in Galatians, I want you to turn back to Romans chapter 8 and notice a couple of expressions here that are rather important in order for us to see the distinction between our sonship and his sonship.

Romans chapter 8 in verse 3, "For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son." Now notice that, "God sending His own Son." In the Greek text there's a great deal of stress on "His own." In fact, that pronoun has the emphatic position. And when I read it this way, "And God sending His own Son" I'm being true to what Paul is saying. "God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

Now notice verse 32, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Now, I want to ask you a question. In the Old Testament there is a passage in which an individual gives up, does not spare, his own son. That's the way the Scriptures put it, "Has not withheld his own son." To whom does the passage in the Old Testament refer? Well, all of you would reply at once if I gave you an opportunity. Abraham. Remember when Abraham gave up Isaac, the statement is made by God, Now I know that you truly love me because "you have not withheld your only son."

Now those words, "You have not withheld your own son" are the words that lie back of verse 32 in Romans chapter 8. Paul was thinking about that incident. He used the language. In fact, the very verb that is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament in Genesis 22 is the verb that is used here translated spare. "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"

Now, it is clear from that fact that this expression "His own Son" means more than just an ordinary son such as our sonship is because where would be the force of the comparison with a human father who withheld not his only son? In other words, he's comparing Abraham's giving up of his human son Isaac, and he's saying now God has not withheld his Son. But if Abraham gave up a human son, and if God has done something greater, it's obvious he's not just given up a human son. He must have given up a divine son. So the expression "He that spared not His own Son" is an expression that refers ultimately to the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ as given up by God the Father. And thus, the greatness of the gift of the Son is compared with the great gift of Isaac. But it's compared as the greater to the lesser. "He that spared not His own Son, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Incidentally, that text is one of the great passages of the New Testament on the definiteness of the atonement of the Lord Jesus because, if he gave himself for all men, then how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Therefore the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing men to salvation must also be given too. Because if he's given the greatest gift in the gift of his Son for everyone, he will surely give lesser gifts. That's the argument of the passage. He that spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? So if it's true that he died for all, then all must have all of the other gifts that God gives. And those gifts are the gift of the Holy Spirit in conviction and in the efficacious grace implied in regeneration and faith and salvation.

Now the fact that universalism is not taught in the Bible is evidence then of the fact that that "delivered him up for us all" is a reference to the definite atonement of the Lord Jesus. He came to die for his own, and it is true of them. He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for all of us who are his children, his elect ones, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? He'll bring us all to salvation through Christ.

Isn't that a great text? I got off the subject a little bit there. Such a great text.

Now, I won't say anything about 1 John chapter 4, verse 9 through verse 15 or chapter 5, verse 10 through 13. You can put them in your notes. I want to turn to the testimony of the Scriptural authors.

Hebrews chapter 1, verse 1 through verse 3. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to the Lord Jesus as the one through whom the revelation is come. We read, "God, after" This is the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, (or in such a person as the Son) whom He appointed heir of all things, (Notice, he's son and heir, the reference is to God) through whom also He made the world."

You can see from this that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of our Lord as the Son of God. And then in the remainder of chapter 1, he brings forward seven passages in the Old Testament in order to prove that he's greater than the angels because he is the Son of God.

Listen to what he says in verse 5, "For to which of the angels did He ever say, "Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee"? And again, "I will be as a Father to Him And He shall be as a Son to Me"? " and so forth.

Now the testimony of our Lord. Let's turn back to Matthew chapter 11 in verse 27. We're getting you to use your Bibles tonight. Matthew chapter 11 in verse 27. This is

without doubt one of the greatest statements that our Lord ever made. In fact, some have said that it's the greatest claim that Jesus ever made.

Listen to it, "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father." He possesses all authority over nature, disease, Satan; the context supports all of these things. "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; (now) and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son," an incomparable mutual intimacy with the Father.

How is it possible for anyone to know the Father fully? To put it another way, how could any person be so great that you would have to say the Father knows him?

Now of course God knows us. He takes a quick look at us and knows everything about us. But in the case of the Son, it's only the Father who knows the son because he's an infinite being. And it takes an infinite being to know the Son. And an infinite being to know the father. So these two infinite beings have an incomparable mutual intimacy. They alone know each other. And they each are required to know the other.

And finally, he says, "And anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." That's the sovereignty of the Son of God in the revelation of the Father. If you know the Father, it is because Jesus Christ has determined that you know the Father.

Those are great words. That's a tremendous claim that our Lord made. You can see when he says "Father" and "Son" he's claiming he's the Son of God. And in this claim to be the Son of God, there is the claim of a nature that is like the Father's nature. There is an incomparable intimacy that can only be the product of an equality of essence.

Now turn over to chapter 26, verse 63. The Lord Jesus is standing before the council, and he has been asked by the high priest, "'Do you make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?' But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, 'I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.'" Jesus said, "You have said it yourself. '" And we talked about that when we talked about the term Messiah. But it's evident that this is an affirmative reply.

Now let's read on here, " Jesus said to them, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his robes saying, "He has blasphemed! ""

Now wait a minute. Was it blasphemy to claim to be the Messiah? Not in Israel at that time. They thought of the Messiah as a human being. They thought of the Messiah as a descendant of the seed of David who would sit on the Davidic throne and deliver them from the Romans. But these Jewish men have said, You have blasphemed. Why? Because he claimed to be more than their kind of Messiah. As he said, "Tell us whether you're the Messiah, the Son of God." "You've said it yourself."

Now when he said that he was the Son of God, they recognized that he was claiming that his nature and the Father's nature were the same. That would make it blasphemy, because he would be claiming deity.

Now you can see from this that they understood him to make a claim to be the Son of God and further, that they understood that the term Son of God implied deity. So, he does make the claim to be the Son of God. He does claim to be God.

Now I won't turn back to chapter 21, verse 37 for the sake of time. But you can look at that parable which our Lord tells of the householder. And you will see that he distinguishes himself from all other servants, all of the prophets of the Old Testament, when he tells the story about the man who went off and finally said, Then I will send them my son and they will say, you know, he's the heir, we'll destroy him.

Now let me conclude by just making a few comments concerning the New Testament confirmation of his dignity. When you look at the miracles of our Lord, you notice immediately that they are not miracles like other miracles performed by other men in the Scriptures. There were other men who worked miracles. The prophets performed miracles. The apostles performed some miracles. But our Lord's miracles throw the work of others into the shade. If you'll look at the impressiveness of his commands, and

compare them with the miracles performed by other men, they pale in comparison with his.

Many of the others acknowledge that their miracles also were derivative, that is, they received power to perform them from others. Take the Apostle Peter when he stood before Aeneas and was getting ready to heal him from his disease, he didn't say, I, Peter, bishop of Rome, first pope, head of the church, heal you. He didn't say that. He didn't say that the white smoke has given me my authority. But, remember what he said? He said, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ healeth Thee." In other words, even in his miracle that he performs, he acknowledges that the power to perform it is derivative. It does not come from him. He conveyed overwhelming impressions of the presence of God. When he performed his miracles, people fell down before him and began to worship him. And some of them said, Depart from me because I'm a sinful man, O Lord.

Peter, when the miracle of the fishes took place thought that the Lord God of Israel was in the boat with him. And that's why he said, Depart from me, I'm a sinful man. That's the impression anyone gets who studies the Scriptures in the presence of our Lord. The holiness of God makes its greatest impression upon us not from the Ten Commandments, but from the presence of God himself as he is seen in holy Scripture. I do not denigrate the Ten Commandments when I say that, of course.

There are the testimonies of the sayings of Lord. He's the supreme revealer of truth. He's familiar with the scenery of the invisible world. He knows about heaven. He knows little things about it. He knows what the angels do in heaven because he's been there. And then, of course, his claim to forgive sins, that's a prerogative of God only. Only God can forgive sin. And he performs the miracle in the visible to prove that he has power in the invisible realm in the 2nd chapter of Mark when he healed the man who was the paralytic on the pallet.

Other divine prerogatives are his too. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel and lo I am with you always even to the end of the age." Who could say that? I

will be with you all the days, every part of every day. All the days with everyone of you, not some of you, with everyone of you. What a tremendous claim that is! What a four-flusher if that is not true. If God did not become flesh, then flesh became God, someone has said.

P. T. Forsythe was right. He said, "He never prays with his disciples, much as he prays for them; and the Lord's Prayer was given by him but not used by him. There is a line between him and them, delicate but firm, often as fine as a hair, but always as hard as a diamond."

He is God's own son, unique, only begotten. We reply then to the question, Who was Jesus Christ? The centurion has given the right answer; truly this was the Son of God. May God help us to appreciate the dignity of the Son and the greatness of our salvation. And if we remember one thing as we close, remember that Sonship was probably the basic relationship that our Lord lived out in his life on the earth. And since we are called sons of God, there is a sense in which that is the basic relationship that we have to God too. In all of the experiences of life, the difficulties, the trials, the heartaches, we all have them. If we haven't, we shall. That basic relationship of sonship, we are the sons of God, that is the sustaining force and power in our lives. May God help us, following our great Savior, to recognize something of what it means to be a son if not the son. Shall we bow in prayer?

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the truths of holy Scripture. We thank Thee that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And because we're sons, there has been sent forth into our hearts the Paraclete to comfort, to sustain, to encourage, to take us on into the presence of our great God. We worship Thee. We adore Thy name. Use us for Thy glory, Lord. Touch through us those whom thou dost desire to bring to thyself. For Jesus' sake. Amen.