



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

John 10:32-42

“The Charge of Blasphemy Refuted”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We’re turning to John chapter 10 for our Scripture reading, and it is important for us as we look at John 10:32 through 42 to make note of the statement the Lord made in verse 30 of chapter 10 because that has bearing on the section that we’re going to read. After the Lord Jesus had been speaking about himself as the shepherd and had given those wonderful promises in verse 27 through 29 he had concluded the discourse on the shepherd with the statement, “I and my Father are one,” and we had made the point that that statement is a statement in which he expresses his absolute unity with the Father. “I and my Father are one.” That one is a neuter and so it is literally I and my Father are one thing. But at least absolute unity is referred to and of course that would establish his deity. Not that he has to establish it, it’s already been established in the Gospel of John, but it is another affirmation of it. That is why we read in verse 31, “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him” because they sense that this was a claim that involved, in their minds, blasphemy. So in verse 32 we read,

“Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for

blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?”

Now you will find that statement in the Old Testament in Psalm 82 and verse 6. It is a Psalm in which reference is made to unjust human judges, and they are called gods. So there is some kind of union that exists between unjust human judges and the Lord God. We know from reading the New Testament that the magistrates, the Governor, the President, the Mayor, and the Chief of Police, all of our public magistrates are in biblical terms ministers of God, that is they serve under God. They serve with delegated authority. There is a union between them and a representation by them of the Lord God. So that is why they may be called gods with a little “g.” That is they are representatives. There is a union of sorts between the human authorities and the divine authority under whom they are supposed to serve. Now the Lord Jesus continues, “

“If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.”

Now notice again that affirmation of the unity that exists between the Father and the Son. So the dominate thought of the paragraph is the unity that exists between the Father and the Son and of course the consequent deity of Christ.

“Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand, And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. And many

resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.”

May the Lord bless this reading of his inspired word.

[Prayer removed from audio]

[Message] When one thinks of the Bible and its message as a whole, one of the things that surely makes its impression upon us is that the design of the revelation contained in the word of God is the salvation of men. Truth is in order to holiness, as Charles Hodge used to like to say. God does not make known to men his being and attributes in order to teach them science merely, but to bring them to the saving knowledge of himself. The doctrines of the Bible therefore are intimately connected with the life of God in the soul.

One of the doctrines of the Bible which is designed to lead to holiness is the Doctrine of the Trinity. It is peculiar to the religion of the Bible. It is unique to Christianity. There is no doctrine of the Trinity anywhere else. There are a few things that are counterfeits of the Trinity, but there is no Christianity doctrine of the Trinity anywhere else than in the Bible. Sometimes people feel that we should not stress something like the Trinity because after all the term Trinity is not in the Bible, which of course is true. But sometimes it's useful to use a term that is a convenient way of saying a great deal.

Now it would be nice if people would pay attention and listen in detail to an explanation of the doctrine of the threeness and the oneness of God, but it's much easier to speak about the doctrine of the Trinity. It is not a biblical term, but it's a convenient designation of the one God, self-revealed in Scripture as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Neither three gods, for Christians are not tri-theists, nor do we think of three modes of manifestation of the one God as monarchianism has done in the past. It's a great mistake to regard the Doctrine of the Trinity as a mere speculative truth.

If you think about it for a few moments as a Christian you'd come to understand that it underlies the whole plan of salvation. The plan of salvation demands the divine creator, just and holy. That's one of the easiest doctrines for us to comprehend, but then when we read in the Bible in Genesis chapter 3 that man has fallen, then we have a difficulty. We have a God who is just and holy, but we also have man in sin. And one of the effects of sin is that he has now become separated from God. He is unable to respond to the things of God. He is infected with original sin. And furthermore he is headed for the experience of the wrath of God, unless a way of deliverance is provided. So a divine creator is what the Bible reveals and that is important, but we also need a divine redeemer, a divine redeemer, not simply a man. For a man even if he were perfect could only represent himself, but we need a divine redeemer whose person is of such value in the sight of God as to be able to stand for men and to stand for them in a sacrifice of infinite value sufficient to cover the sins of all men.

Well we have a divine redeemer in the Lord Jesus Christ, but he must be a divine redeemer. We can take salvation from no demigod. Atonement would not be accomplished if the Lord Jesus were not God as well as man, man to be our substitute, God to give his sacrifice infinite value. And in fact we could not even know God with certainty if Jesus Christ were not divine. Only an incarnate God can give authentic tidings to men concerning the Godhead. One might think, “Well the prophets told us a lot about God, but the prophets could only tell us a lot about God because the prophet was coming.” And in fact if he had not come we could never be sure that the prophets were right. It was finally our Lord Jesus who authenticated the Old Testament revelation. The Holy Spirit gave men assurance of it in ancient times because of what would happen. But only an incarnate God can give us authentic tidings from God. We must have a word from God, from God himself and the Lord Jesus in his ministry served that among other purposes.

One striking thing also about the Christian doctrine is that while we have a divine creator, and we need a divine redeemer and we have one in Jesus Christ, we also need a divine sanctifier, one who will preserve us in the salvation that we have and also conform us to the image of the Lord

Jesus Christ completing the work of redemption which the Lord Jesus has accomplished on the cross at Calvary. And it is the work of the Holy Spirit sent by the Son and the Father into our hearts who works sanctifying the saints, applying the doctrine to the unsaved, bringing them into the family of God, conforming them to Christ, and seeing together with the Father and the Son that the work of redemption reaches its intended conclusion. It's a striking thing, but a true thing that wherever the doctrine of the Trinity has been abandoned or obscured every other characteristic doctrine of the gospel has gone with it. One can see this in some of the modern cults. So familiar to so many of you, they knock on your door. They seek to bring you into their particular fellowship of worshipers, and characteristic of them is their denial of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

Now often they will make statements like, “Oh, yes we believe that Jesus Christ is Son of God.” And they will also obscure the teaching with other comments, but when it comes right down to it they don't believe in the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit in the unique sense in which they are set forth in Scripture. They do not believe in one God who subsists in three persons, co-equal, co-eternal, Father, Son and Spirit.

Now when those doctrines go, when that doctrine goes all other doctrines inevitably go with it. And so they will teach a doctrine of salvation by works, and many other errors along with it. The Doctrine of the Trinity is of the greatest importance, to you as an individual Christian and to the church as a whole. Sufficient to say, we can never hope to be Christians who truly glorify the Lord God if we do not understand, know and experientially appreciate the doctrine of the Trinity.

The passage that we are looking at is important with reference to the doctrine of the Trinity because in it the deity of the Lord Jesus comes before us. And that is one of the important planks in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. We believe that there is one God and that the one God subsists in three co-equal, co-eternal divine persons, Father, Son and Spirit. And so the deity of the Lord Jesus is one of the essential parts of the doctrine of the Trinity. That is before us here.

The Lord Jesus has just given his great discourse on the shepherd and the sheep, and he has concluded it by making a statement in which he claims absolutely unity with the Father. In the 30th

verse of the 10th chapter of the Gospel of John, we read, “I and my Father are one,” are one thing as if to say one in essence, absolute unity as Professor C. H. Dodd put it. At the least that text says that.

Well to claim to be absolutely one with God is to claim to be equal with God. And so we read then, “The Jews took up stones again to stone him.” Now implicit in that is the charge of blasphemy which they will make in just a moment, but they have already made up their minds, so they “Took up stones again to stone him.”

Now these stones that they took up were not ordinary little pebbles like up pick up in order to shoot that squirrel in your back yard, as I did again this week with unfortunate results. But at any rate, these stones are big stones because they intend to kill. And in fact the Greek term that is used for taking up is a term that means something like to carry. So they were carrying some big stones with which to stone the Lord Jesus in order to stone him to death. He’s just made this amazing statement, “I and my Father are one.” And so they take up stones again to stone him.” They sense that when he says, “I and my Father are one,” that he is making the claim of deity.

This statement, “I and my Father are one,” we said last week is a statement that in itself refutes several ancient heresies. It refutes Arianism and Arianism’s denial of the eternal Sonship and thus deity of the Lord Jesus and it also refutes Sabellianism and similar types of heresies in which the three persons of the Trinity are denied. It being claimed that they are only modes of divine manifestation. When he says, “I and my Father are one thing,” he delivers Christians from the heresy of Arianism because if the Father and he are one in substance then it’s obvious that he is an eternal person which the Aryans could not bring themselves to confess. There was a time when he was not, they said, but the Lord Jesus says, “I and my Father are one thing,” one in essence, there was never a time when the Son was not. Otherwise there was a time when there was no Father for to be a Father one must have a Son. And so, by the very fact that the Father is called Father must be an eternal Son.

Now not only does that one deliver us from Arianism, but the “are” delivers us from Sabellianism which affirmed really only one God but three modes of manifestation. Christians say

only one God but three persons, quite a bit different from modes of manifestation. So they denied the three persons. But the text says “I and my Father are one,” plural. So the little neuter pronoun “one” denies Aryanism, “I and my Father are one thing,” where as the plural of the verb “to be” denies Sebellianism which affirms they are not three persons. “I and my Father (are to be distinguished as persons, we) are one.” Magnificent little statement, oh if people would only pay attention to what the Bible says. We don't realize often that the Bible is God-breathed. Therefore its words are significant and important. It will repay the closest observation.

Strange some people can read the Bible like they read a novel, in which they get only general ideas of what is there and then there are others who read it so minutely that looking for the aorists and the perfects and the future perfects and the prepositions and the adverbs and the various types of usages that when they come up they haven't gotten anything either. We should read the Bible carefully, grammatically, historically, but we ought to pay attention to what it says, the concepts that it is communicating. And here it's important to be precise, but also to notice the implication and inferences that one reasonably draws from it. “I and my Father are one.” The Athanasian Creed put it, “We worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons or dividing the substance.”

Well, “The Jews took up their stones again to stone him,” and so Jesus asks them a question. In the 32nd verse we read, “Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?” Incidentally the word for good is the word that was used for the good shepherd above, noble, excellent. “Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?” Now they could have replied with many incidents. They could have replied, “Well because you healed the impotent man on the Sabbath day, or gave sight to the blind man on the Sabbath day. Many excellent works the Lord Jesus had already done. Those are just two of the many, but they don't acknowledge any good works. They say to him, “For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” To them for the Lord Jesus to say “I and my Father are one” is to make the claim of deity,

and to call him his own Father as he had done frequently was to say that God was his Father in a special sense, in the sense of the divine Son. They at least understood the claims that the Lord Jesus was making.

Some of our modern scholars do not. They can read these claims and still say Jesus never claimed to be the Son of God. The response of the Lord is not easy, and I must say that it's not easy to follow our Lord's response here. One must keep your senses about you as you try to think through the way in which he responds to them because in his response is involved a knowledge of a passage from the Old Testament and then some close and accurate reasoning from that particular statement in the Old Testament. It's in Psalm 82 and verse 6 that we have the words, “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.” This is a Psalm in which reference is made to unjust judges. And the Lord goes on to say, “But ye shall die like men and fail like one of the princes.” So he is talking about unjust judges, but nevertheless the Psalmist speaks of them as if they were gods, little “g”ods, gods. So the Lord Jesus refers to this rather isolated text in the Old Testament, certainly not one of the fundamentally important sounding texts of the Bible, but he refers to it. It's an indication of how well he studied the Old Testament. How well he pondered it and the minute knowledge that he possessed of it.

And let me say this too, the Lord Jesus' knowledge of Scripture was not simply because he was the divine Son. He gives us indication in the Old Testament that when the Messiah came that he would study the Scriptures. He would be taught the Scriptures day by day, and he studied those Scriptures. He made them his very food. And on the human level that is one of the reasons why he knew and used the Scriptures so effectively. He did what many of us know we ought to do. He made the word of God his primary food.

So, he replies to him, “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?” Now they probably knew the text to which he was referring. He doesn't say, “You remember Psalm 82?” He said, “But is it not written in your law?” Incidentally, law refers to the whole Old Testament here because this is a citation from the Psalm. “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?” Now inferring from

that the Lord Jesus said, “If he (that is God) called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (those unjust judges), (and he inserts a little parenthesis) and the Scripture cannot be broken.” Don't think that this is not true. It is true. The Scripture cannot be broken. It must carry out its teaching in reality, or reality must ultimately harmonize with its teaching. “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, (you blasphemers) Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” In other words, if in the Old Testament men are called gods who are unjust judges, then how can you say that I am blaspheming when I, the one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world should say, “I am the Son of God.”

Quite a bit of discussion has taken place over our Lord's response because it's possible; at least it has been in practice for men to take different viewpoints of our Lord's response. For example, one modern commentator has said that what our Lord is doing is simply using an *a fortiori* argument. That is for a still stronger reason if mere men may be called gods then surely I may be called the Son of God. And it's not blasphemy for me to be called the Son of God if mere men, unjust judges should be called gods. That's not a very convincing argument if that were our Lord's argument because after all they're accusing him of claiming deity, not simply that he's a God like other men are gods. That's not the point. He says, “I and my Father are one.” So he's claiming a great deal more than that he is just a mere man like judges and therefore has the right to be called a God. He's claiming a unique dignity, unique status. So we must say that interpretation will not satisfy.

Surprising, that modern commentators should accept an explanation like that and then go on to say it's not convincing. It would seem that people after all these centuries would realize that the Lord is a more perceptive reader of the Bible than modern commentators. But that's part of the blindness of modern commentators. They don't realize who our Lord is and how well he reads the Bible. I always say to my students in theological seminary that the apostles understand the Bible a whole lot better than their modern commentators. Usually my students will ultimately agree because they will see that that is true. The New Testament authors understand the Bible a whole lot better

than the professors of Old Testament and New Testament today. And I would like to say as a former professor of New Testament and a professor of systematic theology that so far as I'm concerned that's true. Whenever I've studied in detail the use of Scripture it is only impressed me again with the fact that the authors of Scripture knew their Bibles, and our men of today cannot even compare with them.

We have men who are teaching on theological faculties who cannot remember exactly where a verse is in the Bible. I hear them frequently saying, “Isn't there a verse somewhere that says such and such?” and they're a professor of Old Testament or a professor of New Testament. They don't know exactly where the text is. It seems familiar to them in some way but isn't it somewhere? Well there is only one writer in the Bible, who talks like that, and he's one who knows the Bible very intimately, but maybe to condescend to the weakness of men the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says occasionally, “Someone has said somewhere.” But then he cites the text in great detail to show he knows exactly where it is and not only that it's written but all of the details of it.

Well, others have said, “No, that's not the reason our Lord replies as he does. He's just simply repelling the technical charge since it's not blasphemy to call someone God who may fitly receive the designation. And he can because he was sanctified and sent by the Father into the world. So if you can call human judges gods then surely you can call someone who is sanctified and sent into the world the Son of God.

Well that may be [the] sense that our Lord intended, but it seems to me like a rather incomplete defense. It might be called adequate. Some very fine believing students have thought that it is adequate. I'm going to suggest to you something a little deeper, something a little better I think. I think our Lord is arguing from the less to the greater, or from the lesser to the greater. But basic to the Lord's thought is the idea of the union of God and man. Now what I mean by that is that I want to ask a question. Why were judges called gods? Now that's not the only place. In a couple of other places in the Old Testament they're also called gods. Why are they called gods? Why is a judge called a god in the Bible?

Obviously it's not God in the sense of one who possesses full deity, but yet there is some relationship. There is some form of representative unity that exists between a human being called a god and the great Triune God in heaven. Well, judges did have a relationship of limited union with God because they were their divinely delegated representatives. In Israel a judge was one who should judge under God, and should judge with the judgment of God. In that sense they were in limited union with God, very limited union, similar to Paul's statement in Romans 13 when he calls the magistrates of the cities ministers of God.

Think of all of our political men. Of all of the titles that you would think that are least applicable to them what would stand out most? Well, I won't ask you to reply. I'll just reply for myself. What is the least applicable title that I can think of for Senators, and Congressman, and Mayors, and Governors, ministers of God, and yet that's what they are, and yet that's what they are, ministers of God. By the providence of God they serve in their office. They may not realize it, but the Senators from Texas are Senators from Texas because God has determined that they should be. So relax you Collins supporters. You couldn't overthrow the providential will of God. You see they are magistrates of God. There is limited sense of union in that they serve ideally and responsibly before God as representatives of him. They talk about representing the people, but they really are ideally the representatives of God. That should be their first responsibility. So there is a limited union then between a magistrate and the Lord God. In this sense they are types and shadows of a deeper union to come. All of these things were arranged by God so that they would lead up the great union that exists between the Son and the Father, the mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is absolutely one with the Father. So the germ of the union between God and man existed in the law, even in unjust judges. But the Lord Jesus is the one who has perfectly realized the union of God and man in his incarnation and atonement. And that is indicated by the words, “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world.” He perfectly realizes union between man and God.

Now if you can call those little fellows gods, how much more is it proper and right for him to whom all of those limited unions pointed to call him Son of God? They all pointed forward to

him. The prophets in the Old Testament had a limited union with God, but they pointed forward to the prophet. The priests of the Old Testament had a limited union with God, but they looked forward to the priest, the eternal priest, the kings likewise to the King. And the judges looked forward to the judge, and the judge who would do exactly what Psalm 82 said, “But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes,” when you do not respond to the truth of God. It was a very affective thrust because it reminded them not only of the fact of his right to be called the Son of God, but also of his right to be the ultimate judge of all men including the judges, and especially the judges among the Pharisees and Sadducees who were before his face at this present moment.

It’s a magnificent reply. It of course was one to which they could not respond at all. They’re mouths were shut as is so often the case. He displayed his understanding of the Scripture that was so far above theirs as to bring them to abject silence before them. Here they were seeking to stone the one who was one with the Father and doing it without due process, incidentally. But he reminds them of who he is and also that he is the ultimate judge of all men.

There is one other point I think we ought to notice. And that’s that little statement, “And the Scripture cannot be broken,” in John 10 verse 35. That gives us some idea of our Lord’s view of the word of God. The Scripture cannot be broken. It is of indefectible authority. It cannot fail and the things that it teaches cannot fail either. All of the designs and purposes of the word of God shall be accomplished, just as all of the designs and purposes of the Son of God shall be accomplished. The Scripture cannot be broken. That’s striking isn’t it? And he’s not appealing to the whole of the Bible here, but to one word. His argument rests upon the use of one word, the little word gods. He says, “If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” one word, one little word, and furthermore as Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield pointed out many years ago, this text itself is in a rather usual place in the Old Testament. It certainly is not an unusual passage, Psalm 82. Most people are not very familiar with it. And furthermore in one of the casual clauses of Psalm 82, we have “I said, Ye are gods.” So in

this rather casual clause in a very unexceptional part of the Old Testament the Lord Jesus grounds authority for his deity. It's just an evidence of the fact that for the Lord Jesus every word of the Bible was important.

Now in the New Testament we have many arguments that depend upon the words of the Bible. Arguments that depend upon the case of words, arguments that depend upon the number of words, number in the sense of singular or plural, arguments which ultimately depend even upon the writing of words in the sense that the Lord Jesus to explain how completely the word of God must be fulfilled in its jots and even in its tittles. In its little horns by which one letter in the alphabet's distinguished from another. The Scripture is going to be fulfilled in that detail. Nothing could be stronger in affirming the indefectible authority and inspiration of the word of God. Oh how we ought to study the Bible. How the Bible ought to be our food, all day, all day long, all of the weeks, all of the months of the year. It is the Scriptures that should be the object of our meditation. They should be the first things for us. Who cares how the Cowboys came out yesterday? I really mean that. Who cares really in the final analysis? What great human event or human significance does what happened in Washington yesterday have? Nothing.

Now the Lord Jesus continues, “If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.” I'm not uttering blasphemy. I'm uttering demonstrable truth if you would just observe my works you would see that the Father is in me and I am in the Father. Of course the Lord Jesus does not mean by this that you could do this apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Men are blind. Men cannot comprehend. That's why these men do not comprehend, but if they were really open to the things of the word of God they would see that no man could do the deeds that he has been doing. “Believe the works and you will know and understand.” You will come to know and you will believe. You will understand that the Father is in me and I in him.

“Therefore they began to believe his word and bow before him and received his salvation.”
No, “Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand.” Now perhaps

John has in mind a contrast between that statement and the preceding statements in this chapter remember? In verse 28 Jesus said, “I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. The Father which gave them me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” “Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand.” Why of course when you in the hands of the Father it doesn't make any difference whose hands are seeking to lay themselves upon you. If you're in his hands, you will escape out of the hands of all of the others. The New American Standard Bible unfortunately misses the connection translating it “Out of their grasp,” but the text simply is “Out of their hands.” Of course, he the mediator is in the hand of the Father. We are in the hand of the Son and the Father. Satan cannot lay his hand upon us. We're in his hands.

And finally the historical conclusion follows and there is a great deal of significance in what follows. And we read, “He escaped out of their hand, And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.” So he left Judaea. He went over to Peoria. “And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle.” John you see was a testimony. He was a witness to the Lord Jesus. He was the Lord’s forerunner. He was the ambassador of the King. And he spoke of the Lord Jesus and he acknowledged his greatness. He said, “He must increase. I must decrease.” They acknowledged that. They said, “John did no miracle.” John you know was from that part of the country and he still evidently had disciples over there. And they remembered what he said and they compared the two and they said, “John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.”

Now notice that last statement. “And many believed on him there.” In other words, not in Judaea where they had the Bible, where they had the priests, where they had the tradition, where they had the temple, where they had the knowledge, but many of them believed on him there. And in the original text there is a bit of emphasis upon that adverb. “Many believed upon him there.” One of the saddest things is to see a congregation in which the word of God is proclaimed in truthfulness, harmony with the Scriptures, in the Holy Spirit, accurately and the congregation is indifferent and

lethargic and cold and unresponsive and then to go to another assembly where the word of God is not preached very strongly, where there is no real depth of teaching. It's someone artificial and superficial, and yet there are hungry, spiritually hungry individuals who are responsive to the word. That's great, but what a condemnation it was for Judea that “Many believe upon him there” in Peoria, just as there might be no responsiveness in Believers Chapel but some believing on him in, I won't mention any local congregation here in Dallas, or anywhere else for that matter, but it's very possible that there is responsiveness to the word of God in places where they don't have really the opportunity that some of us have had. It's something to thank God for, but it's something also to weep over.

Now to conclude, it's obviously our Lord has spoken very strongly concerning his deity and therefore the doctrine of the Trinity comes before us again, the Son of God as the second person of the Trinity who possesses a full deity as well as a true humanity. If he were only a man when he died it would be simply a martyr's death, but if he is God, only God then there is no mediation for redemption because he must be of us in order to be our substitute. But if he is the God-man he is able to lay his hands upon God and is able to lay his hand upon us and is able to be the mediator to bring us under the judgment of God into fellowship with God. That's why we have a God-man.

John Chrysostom, one of the early church Fathers spoke on the two natures of Christ and in his exposition he said, “As man he was hungry, yet as God he fed fifteen thousand with loaves. As man he was thirsty, but as God he turned water into wine. As man he was carried in a ship in a storm, but as God he walked on the water. As man he died. As God he raised the dead. He not only rose from the dead, but he raised the dead himself. As man he was set before Pilot. As God he sits with the father on the throne and ultimately all men shall be brought before him including Pilot and receive judgment from him. As man he was stoned by the Jews, but as God he was worshiped by the angels. Oh the sufficiency of the person of the Lord Jesus, oh his greatness and oh the responsibility that men have before him. May God help us to respond as Thomas did, “My Lord, and my God.”

May I conclude with an illustration told by A. H. Strong, the well-known Baptist theologian? In his systematic theology which contains a great number of illustrations that are useful he says, “I have heard that during our civil war a swaggering, drunken, blaspheming officer insulted and almost drove from the dock at Alexandria a plain unoffending man in citizens clothes. But he also heard that the officer turned pale when the plain, unoffending man dressed in citizens clothes demanded his sword, put him under arrest after identifying himself as General Ulysses S. Grant with the result that the officer fell at his knees and begged for mercy from the General.”

So, we have our opportunity today. We can abuse the Lord Jesus Christ. We can offend him. We can pay no attention to him if we want to. We can forget him. We can ignore his claims. We can disobey his commands with temporary impunity, but it will seem a much more serious thing when ultimately we all stand before the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal judge of the universe whom we have abused and rejected, and hear the sentence coming from him who is not only the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, but the lion of the tribe of Judah. May God help us to respond to him.

If you're here this morning and you've never believed in Christ, let me remind you that he has offered an atoning sacrifice as the God-man, sufficient for sinners, sufficient for all sinners, designed for his sheep. And may God so work in your heart that by the grace of God you come to him. Come to Christ. Believe on Christ. Abandon your sin. Abandon your rejection. Flee to him while there is still time. Today is the day of salvation. There will be a time when there is no other day. Come now. Come to Christ. Believe in him. Receive the free gift of eternal life. May God in his wonderful grace move you to come, and if you've already come, study his word. Ask him to use you in your business, in your home, among your friends and family, among your acquaintances. May God make life for you exciting and interesting and thrilling and edifying as you represent him.

[Prayer] Father we are so grateful to Thee for these magnificent words from the Lord Jesus Christ. O Father, by Thy wonderful grace, enable us to be truly responsive to him. And Lord, may

“The Charge of Blasphemy Refuted” by S. Lewis Johnson
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we not waste the opportunities that we have. We pray at this moment if there are some who are thinking of a decision for Christ...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]