

# I Am God's Son

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, this morning we're continuing the story of Jesus, told by John. So if you have your Bible with you, you can open it up to John chapter 10. John chapter 10.

We left Jesus last time at the temple in Jerusalem. The Jews had gathered around him there, and they were pressing him to make an outright claim to be the Messiah.

And after saying a few things to them, Jesus did them one better. He said, I and the Father are one.

And the Jews picked up stones in that moment and were ready to throw them at Jesus.

Well, Jesus managed to stay their hands for a moment by asking them this question in John chapter 10, verse 32. He said, I have shown you many good works from the Father.

For which of these do you stone me? And their response was, we are not stoning you for any good work, they replied, but for blasphemy.

[ 1 : 03 ] Because you, a mere man, claim to be God. And I imagine that again, they're about ready to let the stones fly. But then Jesus manages to keep the conversation going.

Verse 34. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I have said, you are gods? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and scripture cannot be set aside, what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world?

Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy? Because I said I am God's son. Now this is quite the response from Jesus.

Basically, Jesus tells them that there is some precedent in the scripture for men being referred to as gods. And then Jesus argues from the lesser to the greater, and puts a bit of a contrast in there, and suggests that since they were called gods, though we'll see in a moment what kind of gods, how much more can we speak of the one true son of God, who has been set apart by the Father as being God, and it's not blasphemy.

So let's explore this a little more. But before we do, let me just say this. There are some people out there who will say, Jesus never outright claimed to be God, or to be the Son of God.

[ 2 : 45 ] Well, if Jesus never meant to say that he was God, if he never meant to say that he was divine, now would be a perfect time to make that crystal clear. I mean, they're saying, we're stoning you for blasphemy, because you, being a man, claim to be God.

If Jesus had never intended to say that, he could simply have said, I'm not claiming to be God. I'm not claiming to be divine. From our human perspective, that would be the easiest way to ease the tension of this moment, and see the stones drop to the ground.

But Jesus doesn't say that, because it's not true. The Jews are right about one thing. What Jesus has said here, it amounts to, it is claiming to be divine, to be God.

And Jesus doesn't backtrack, not one bit. He doesn't say, well, I said I and the Father are one, but what I really meant, no.

He goes the other way. What he says here amounts to, yes, I am claiming to be the divine Son of God, and it's not blasphemy in my case, because it's true.

[ 4 : 08 ] So let's look at this in a little more detail. The first thing Jesus does, is quote from Psalm 82. He says, is it not written in your law, I have said, you are gods.

Let's go back to Psalm 82, and look at that. If you want to turn there in your Bible, you're welcome to. I'll have it on the screen as well. It's a short psalm. We'll read the whole thing. It's only eight verses.

A psalm of Asaph. God presides in the great assembly. He renders judgment among the gods. How long will you defend the unjust, and show partiality to the wicked?

Defend the weak and the fatherless. Uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy. Deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

The gods know nothing. They understand nothing. They walk about in darkness. All the foundations of the earth are shaken.

[ 5 : 13 ] I said, you are gods. You are all sons of the Most High. But you will die like mere mortals. You will fall like every other ruler.

Rise up, O God. Judge the earth. For all the nations are your inheritance. So, it's an interesting little psalm from long ago.

And what do we notice about the gods that are referred to here? Well, in verse 1 it says that God renders judgment among them. He renders judgment among the gods.

And our first wondering is, well, what gods is he talking about? Is he talking about false gods? Or so-called gods? Is he talking about those who people would refer to as gods?

Like the ancient pagan gods. Baal. Dagon. Asherah. Ra. And if he is referring to these pagan gods, how does he render judgment among them?

[ 6 : 19 ] Are each of these so-called gods merely idols? Whose existence is just a figment of people's imagination? Or do each of these gods refer to actual beings?

Perhaps fallen angels who've been masquerading as gods and trying to steal worship away from the one true God. Now, there are passages that could maybe tip us in either direction.

But as we continue to read this psalm, I think we see that Asaph takes us in a third direction. One maybe we wouldn't have considered at first. So what else does this psalm right here tell us about these gods?

Verses 2 to 4. How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Defend the weak and the fatherless.

Uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy. Deliver them from the hand of the wicked. These verses seem to describe the judgment that God renders among them.

[ 7 : 23 ] His verdict against the gods. They're guilty of something. They're guilty of defending the unjust. Of showing partiality to the wicked.

And then God, speaking through Asaph, seems to exhort these gods to stop doing that. And instead to start doing what is right.

To defend the weak and the fatherless. To uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. So we see here that these gods are guilty. They've been doing things that are wrong.

Which means that they're definitely real beings that he's talking about here. Then on to verse 5. He says, The gods know nothing.

They understand nothing. They walk about in darkness. All the foundations of the earth are shaken. So not only are these gods guilty.

[ 8 : 23 ] But they're also ignorant. Maybe even foolish or blind. They know nothing. Says Asaph. They lack understanding. They lack true wisdom and true knowledge.

And then finally we come to verse 6. The part of the psalm that Jesus quoted. I said, You are gods. You are all sons of the most high. But you will die like mere mortals.

You will fall like every other ruler. Now there are several different views of who these gods are. Some people see them as fallen angels. And they have some pretty good observations and supporting passages which seem to fit with that.

Others see them as men. Specifically corrupt leaders or officials in Israel. And I think this understanding fits just a little bit better.

I won't get into all the reasons. But I think when Asaph refers to them as gods, he does so in a bit of a tongue-in-cheek fashion. He's being a little bit facetious or sarcastic.

[ 9 : 30 ] These are corrupt men who conceive of themselves as being gods, as being sons of the most high, the untouchables, the all-powerfuls in the land.

And yet the truth, which comes from the Lord's judgment, is that they know nothing. They walk about in darkness. They can't even see what's coming for them. And even though they think themselves to be gods, to be untouchable, Asaph says they will die just like men do.

They will fall just like all the other rulers of earth do eventually. The psalm ends with Asaph calling on God to bring about the judgment that they deserve.

Rise up, O God. Judge the earth. For all the nations are your inheritance. There is in here a plea for the Lord to make things right.

Put these gods in their place. So now we come back to what Jesus said. And I'll read it again. Back in John chapter 10, verse 34.

[10:44] Is it not written in your law, I have said, you are gods. If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and scripture cannot be set aside, what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world?

Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, I am God's son? So Jesus is basically saying there is some precedent in the scriptures for men being referred to as gods.

Long ago, God spoke through Asaph and called the corrupt leaders of Israel gods. He even called them sons of the Most High or translation, sons of God.

But there's a big difference between those corrupt leaders of Israel of Israel who think that they are untouchable, hint, hint, and the one whom God has specially set apart for himself and sent into the world.

Jesus is setting up a brilliant contrast here. He's not saying, well, they were truly divine back then and so am I. No.

[12:00] He's not saying that. Rather, he's inviting them to reflect on those men in Psalm 82, those gods, and see that actually they were not.

look at their works. Look at what they did. They were corrupt. They were unjust. They were partial to the wicked. They were blind and their fate was not that of a true God.

Their fate, they died just like every other man dies. They fell just like every other ruler falls. And so it's clear in that Psalm where God speaks of them as gods that they are not gods.

It's clear that their conception of themselves, those men back in Psalm 82 was blasphemous and false. But will you now accuse me, says Jesus, the one whom the Father has specially set apart for himself and sent into the world of blasphemy because I claim to be the Son of God.

It really is brilliant what Jesus has done and said here. He's pushing them to acknowledge that there are two different categories. There are those who claim to be God like those in Psalm 82 and obviously the title does not fit.

[13:21] And then there is the one whom the Father has specially chosen and set apart and sent into the world. He comes also claiming to be a Son of God, the Son of God.

and will you accuse him of blasphemy? In the case of those corrupt rulers of Israel long ago, it was obvious.

Look at their works. Look at their behavior. Did the title of gods or sons of God fit for them? Obviously not.

but now look at the works that I do says Jesus and does the title fit me? Verse 37 Do not believe me says Jesus unless I do the works of my Father.

If I'm like them in Psalm 82 don't believe me says Jesus. Don't listen to what I'm saying. Don't take me seriously. But if I'm not like them and instead I do the works of my Father, the works of God, believe me.

[14:36] In the case of Jesus it's so obvious. Look at his works. The grace and the goodness the kindness and the compassion the miracles the signs the wonders the sick healed the injured and diseased restored the corruption and the wickedness of people's hearts exposed the people in the wilderness provided for the raging storm calmed the call to repent and turn to God proclaimed the call to live righteously and love God with all your heart declared help for the widows for the outcast and the oppressed given all things that God did throughout the Old Testament time and time again Jesus does the exact same things and therefore the title of God and Son of God fits perfectly it's not blasphemy because Jesus is the one specially set apart by the Father and sent into the world from heaven the divine

Son and Jesus continues to plead with them that they might see it that they might have a change of heart and recognize just who he is he says in the next verse but if I do them if I do the works of my Father even though you don't believe me believe the works that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I in the Father look at the evidence of the works I'm doing says Jesus there's a path here right now they have an aversion to Jesus they don't believe in him they are not his sheep and yet Jesus is aiming to draw their attention yet again to the things that he has been doing to his works he says believe the works there's something about the works of Jesus which if people will really just look at them and consider them may lead to a change of mind about who

Jesus is this is why it's so critical that when we preach the good news of Jesus we preach the whole good news of Jesus not just his death and resurrection and ascension but also everything that he did in his life his works these words make me think again of Nicodemus Nicodemus had to come and see Jesus because even though Jesus knew that he didn't believe at first there was just something about these things that Jesus was doing that kept nagging at him I don't want to put words in Nicodemus mouth but it was almost as if he was saying I hate to admit this to you Jesus but we know that you are a teacher who has come from God for no one could perform the signs that you are doing if God were not with him sometimes we get all focused on Christian apologetics or Christian philosophical arguments or theological arguments but I believe that the greatest apologetic of all is simply to do what Jesus did right here and say to someone even though you don't believe in Jesus you've made that clear what about the things that Jesus did how do you explain those miracles how did he do that what about the undeniable goodness and kindness of Jesus that's woven through all the things that he did will you look at that one more time read the story of Jesus again how could a deceiver or a common man be so selfless how could an insane man do these kinds of things do you have loved ones who do not believe maybe who have even expressed to you that they don't believe in Jesus maybe who have even expressed that with a bit of hostility or even anger I want to encourage you this morning don't give up on them don't write them off encourage them yet again to read the story of Jesus for themselves tell them what you see that's so beautiful and glorious about Jesus maybe they'll misrepresent Jesus or mischaracterize Jesus take that opportunity to say that's not what I see in the Bible there was that one time that Jesus did this and look at the kind of person he is and what he did he's not like that there is a path here for the unbelieving for people to go from those who do not believe maybe are even ready to throw the stone to knowing and understanding the truth about Jesus and that path begins with a call and a plea for people to look again at the works of Jesus at what he did as he walked and lived among us if I do the works of my father he said even though you do not believe me believe the works that you may know and understand that the father is in me and I in the father this is another astounding statement from Jesus which confirms that

[ 21 : 13 ] Jesus is not backing down in the least with what he's claiming he said earlier I and the father are one and he meant it this is just another way of saying the same thing my father is in me God is in me I am in my father it's difficult to say much more about that what Jesus means when he says it but maybe we could say it like this in this man Jesus God the Lord Yahweh is here he walks among us he speaks to us he does works among us the father is in me and I am in the father and the response of the people is this again they tried to seize him but he escaped their grasp then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where

John had been baptizing in the early days there he stayed and many people came to him they said though John never performed a sign all that John said about this man was true and in that place many believed in Jesus so yet again we see a mixed response some try to seize Jesus as in grab him arrest him but he slips away and it's now time for Jesus to put some distance in between himself and them and so John tells us that he heads east out of Jerusalem all the way across the Jordan River to the place where John had been baptizing in the earlier days so not only some distance but also some geographical barrier with the river between where Jesus is and these Jews who are so hostile to him and while Jesus is out of their reach we get some good news here there were many who had been listening to

Jesus hearing what he had been saying and they actually went out looking for him and went to him they came to the place where he was on the other side of the Jordan and it says that many believed in Jesus in that place we don't know for sure but perhaps some of them had even been there in the temple courts this day maybe even some of them had had a stone in their hands but heard what Jesus said that day and realized there's something not right he's right look at the things he's been doing healing the blind the sick flipping the tables and driving the sellers out of the marketplace sellers out of the temple courts he is a good man is it possible that what he's saying is true that he really is divine God here among us the true son of

God what do we take from all this I think it's a good reminder that we ourselves never really know just where people are at in their hearts we don't really know why they're resisting or rejecting the truth of who Jesus is why they get angry or upset if we try to share with them but if Jesus pleaded with them like this even as the stones are in their hands and reasoned with them then we should too

we shouldn't grow weary or be discouraged with trying to share the good news with our unbelieving friends family neighbors co-workers whatever the cost will it not be worth it if because of what you say to them they say huh and they go back into the scriptures and they read and they look at the works of

Jesus and they huh and believe and are saved will it not be worth it is it not worth risking the relationship for that so let's not give up on our unbelieving friends and family and co-workers and neighbors no matter how resistant or antagonistic they seem let's just keep pointing people gently graciously humbly to the words and the works of Jesus because it's there that they may yet come to see the truth and believe and be saved let's pray father in heaven thank you for these words we tremble at the thought that your son was almost stoned in this moment and that at the same time he was revealing so fully so truly who he is i pray lord that none of us would grow weary of trying to share the good news of jesus that people need to hear and maybe if we have lord i pray that you would renew the desire to to to speak out to have courage would you put names of people in our minds this week and ready us and prepare us for conversations would you draw our attention to those things in the gospel that we most need to highlight to people as those conversations come up so that people might be saved and so that you might be glorified in us we ask this in

[ 27 : 35 ] Christ precious name amen