

Session 4

December 22, 2019

IS JESUS GOD?

Luke 1:26-35

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are really one God in three Persons. The members of the godhead are co-equal, co-eternal, and co-essent. That means that each is equally God. While they always operate together, each Person has a somewhat unique function. Jesus is unique in that He took on flesh and became a man like us, to dwell among us, and die for us (see Phil. 2:5-11). Jesus was “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Only God could provide a sinless sacrifice sufficient to restore our fallen condition. For this reason, Jesus had to be fully God. Every event associated with His birth affirmed that baby Jesus was indeed more than the Son of God; He was also God the Son. Three key evidences are found in these verses.

The miracle of His birth affirms His deity (vv. 26-29). Verses 26 and 27 are filled with details of Gabriel’s announcement to Mary, but all are furnished to identify Mary specifically and emphasize her virginity. She is clearly identified by the place where she lived (Nazareth); by her relationship to Joseph (engaged to him); by family lineage (of the house of David); and by name (Mary). She is referenced as a *virgin* twice in verse 27, a fact that is affirmed by Mary’s own testimony in verse 34. So what is the significance of all this? The virgin birth of Christ is more than miraculous; it is an absolute necessity! An earthly father, tainted by sin, would have fathered an earthly child, also tainted by sin. In fulfillment of His promise in Isaiah 7:14, God the Father sent His Son, born of a virgin, to redeem mankind. And His name? “Immanuel, which is translated, *God with us*” (Matt. 1:23).

The message of His birth affirms His deity (vv. 30-33). Mary’s troubled reaction to Gabriel’s unexpected announcement is certainly understandable. Gabriel’s response and explanation are meant to both calm her fears and fill in the details. In so doing, we are provided additional evidence of the Lord’s deity. While twice Mary is commended as finding favor with God (vv. 28, 30), it is important to note that the focus of Gabriel’s announcement moves quickly from Mary to the Lord Jesus. The Catholic notion that “favored by God” somehow means “full of grace” is not only an inaccurate translation, but the twisted basis for much of the Catholic church’s heresy regarding Mary. In reality, Mary was not chosen by God because she was blessed; rather she was blessed because she was chosen by God! Look at the description of Jesus that follows: He would be named Jesus (v. 31) which basically means “the Lord Saves.” He will be great (v. 32); the Son of the Most High God (v. 32), who would occupy the throne of David (see 1 Kings 2:4); a perpetual king reigning over a perpetual kingdom (v. 33). All of these characteristics indicate that Mary’s son would be the eternal God appearing in human flesh (see Phil. 2:5-7).

The method of His birth affirms His deity (vv. 34-35). Mary’s question, “How can this be?” is not one of disbelief, but rather logistics. The conception seemed to be imminent, yet she was young, unmarried, and a virgin. Gabriel’s explanation is both practical and mystical: the baby would be conceived by the Holy Spirit (see Matt. 1:20). The extraordinary might of the Most High God would accomplish this, yet in the gentlest of ways. The word “overshadow” in verse

35 means to *envelop* or *enfold*. I picture the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit hovering over Mary in much the same way He *moved* over the face of the waters in the creation account (see Gen. 1:2). This miraculous conception insured the sinlessness (and thus holiness) of the child (v. 35) and clarified any doubt regarding whose son He really was. Born of Mary? Absolutely; But His humanity never negated His deity. Indeed, Jesus Christ is Immanuel, *God with us*.