

Knowing God

Trinitarian Theology – discovering God in Jesus (Part 2)

Picking up where we left off in Part 1, “The Bible confronts us with a God who has chosen to make himself known IN JESUS CHRIST¹.” To get an accurate picture of God, therefore, we need look no further than Jesus, and Jesus supports that with a statement of his own in **John 14:9** “[Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.](#)”

So what’s Jesus all about, then? – or, as Paul asked when he was struck down by the resurrected Jesus on the Damascus Road - “Who are you Lord?” (Acts 9:5). That’s the question, isn’t it? Because if we know who Jesus is we know who God is. And note that “[Paul spent the REST OF HIS LIFE answering this question](#) and then sharing the answer with all who would listen. The answer, revealed to us in Scripture, is the HEART OF THE GOSPEL and the focus of Trinitarian Theology².”

So what do we learn of Jesus in Scripture? That, first of all, he’s our Creator, **Colossians 1:16** “[For by him all things were created.](#)” He’s also the Sustainer of everything, **verse 17**, because “[in him all things hold together.](#)” That’s because “[God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,](#)” **verse 19**. “So when we say ‘Jesus Christ’ we are also saying ‘God’ and ‘Creator’³.” No wonder, then, Jesus could say “See me you see the Father” – because Jesus was God too!

BUT wasn’t Jesus also HUMAN? So:

- 1) Did he stop being God and Creator while he was a human being? And -
- 2) Did he become God and Creator again only after he ascended back to heaven?

No, Jesus never stopped being God and Creator at any time. “The Word became flesh,” yes, but he NEVER STOPPED being the eternal Word while in the flesh. Jesus was fully God and fully human at the same time. There’s been no one else like him. He’s one-of-a-kind. All those other human leaders of religions that people so revere, like Buddha,

¹ Northern Light magazine, January to March 2010, page 2, left column

² Ibid, page 3, right column

³ Ibid, page 4, top left column

Mohammed, Confucius, Baha'u'llah and Moses, are nothing compared to Jesus, because none of them would even have existed - OR been "held together" – if it wasn't for him!

But, a leading Muslim once asked me, how could I prove Jesus was both God and human at the same time? Jesus answers for himself in **John 10:38** "Even though you do not believe me, BELIEVE THE MIRACLES, that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." In other words, judge who he was by what he did. For example:

- 1) He healed people stricken from birth
- 2) He cast out evil spirits
- 3) He resurrected people back to life
- 4) He had power over the elements, eg:
 - a) He stopped a storm simply by shouting at it
 - b) He walked on water
 - c) He fed thousands of people on scraps
 - d) He changed water into wine

Aren't all these clear evidence of Jesus as God and Creator STILL BEING IN CHARGE OF HIS CREATION? He's giving orders that demons and the elements obey. Nothing limits or contains him. He's the Lord of birth, Lord of death, Lord of the spirit world and Lord of our world. He has all the powers of God in him. He never ceases being Creator while being human, proving he was both fully human and fully God.

And there were people at the time who saw him doing these amazing things and they took notice, enough to consult with him personally, **John 3:1-2** "Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who HAS COME FROM GOD. For NO ONE COULD PERFORM THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS YOU ARE DOING if GOD were not with him.'"

Nicodemus accepted the obvious. Only God could do the miracles Jesus was doing. But that's what the miracles were for, **Hebrews 2:3-4** "This salvation was confirmed to us by those who heard him. GOD ALSO testified to it by SIGN AND WONDERS AND VARIOUS MIRACLES." God himself was at work in Jesus, and proving it by the miracles.

And Nicodemus had the sense, at least, not to deny the obvious, which (I believe) is why Jesus immediately went at him with news about the Spirit, because it's only by the Spirit that we grasp anything about who Jesus is, **John 16:14** "He (the Spirit, verse 12) will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." Clearly, the Spirit was already working with Nicodemus for him to recognize and accept that

something extraordinary was going on in Jesus' miracles - whereas most people see Jesus only as a great teacher, a wonderful example perhaps, or a prophet.

Christians, however, see much more than that in Jesus, because he clearly DEMONSTRATED he's God and Creator. He has all the credibility he needs, therefore, to show us who God is - because HE IS God!

That being the case, Jesus takes on enormous importance for humanity. "Because Jesus is both Creator and Sustainer of the entire cosmos (all humanity included), when he died, all creation (all humans included) 'went down' with him - 'therefore all died' (2 Corinthians 5:14). And when he rose, we all rose; and when he ascended, we all ascended. Jesus includes everyone ('all') in his incarnation, life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension⁴."

Whatever Jesus did, HE INCLUDED US IN IT. Why? Because "all things were created by him AND FOR HIM," **Colossians 1:16**. As God and Creator, Jesus created us for himself. We are everything to him. So when Paul asks, "Who are you, Lord?" this is what he came to realize, that we are utterly safe in Jesus' hands because everything he did (and does) is for us. We are his baby! Meaning, of course, that what he created us for he will make happen. And what better proof of that could he give us than his willingness to die for us AND raise us with him in his resurrection and ascension?

In other words, we're in the hands of a powerful Being who loves his creation so much he carries us with him wherever he goes. We're included in everything he does, meaning, of course, we can put our total confidence in him. He's our Creator and Sustainer. He'll save us. He'll hold us together. He'll never fail us. What he started in us he will complete.

And Jesus is so thankful that his Father gives him people who believe who he is and trust him, **Matthew 11:25-26** "I praise you, Father, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

The "wise and learned" ignore the obvious, unfortunately, that God has made himself knowable through Jesus the Creator, ignoring even the most basic facts of his creation. And God gets angry, **Romans 1:18-20**, "since what MAY BE KNOWN ABOUT GOD is plain to them." How? "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his

⁴ Northern Light magazine, January to March 2010, page 5, middle column

eternal power and divine nature – have been CLEARLY SEEN, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

Why “without excuse,” though? “FOR although THEY KNEW GOD, they neither glorified him AS GOD nor gave thanks to him,” **verse 21**. Oh, they know better, but they still won’t accept the Creator Jesus “AS GOD.” Instead, **verse 25**, “They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things RATHER THAN THE CREATOR.” And that’s what God doesn’t like. It’s the refusal to face the obvious, plain fact that creation proves a Creator and that Creator is Jesus, and Jesus is therefore God, who therefore should be glorified. Through his creation and his miracles while human it’s clear who Jesus is. He clearly demonstrated both the power and nature OF GOD, so that in him we humans can clearly see WHAT GOD IS LIKE AND TRUST HIM.

But it’s hard for the “wise and learned” to accept that. Instead, highly intelligent humans “exchange the truth of God into a lie,” saying it isn’t God we see in creation at all. They say our universe is some “bizarre freak” that just happened to come into existence, despite the fact that the best minds in science and cosmology still can’t answer how something can come from nothing.

They know it’s God, though, just as Paul said, and occasionally we get a glimpse of that when a great scientist like Stephen Hawking drops his guard and states, “in physics YOU GET TO KNOW THE MIND OF GOD.” That’s right. In creation you see God’s power AND DIVINE NATURE, just as Paul said in **verse 20**. So many great minds study the universe, however, and refuse to accept it’s an obvious window into the power and mind of God. They see the exquisite precision of laws governing the universe, the beauty of how everything works together, but they love their mathematical formulae explaining how it all works far more than the God who created how it all works in the first place.

The time has now come, though, when science and scientists are being pushed into the one domain that’s most embarrassing for them, the place where all their brilliant mathematical formulae don’t work anymore. It’s how things began. What happened BEFORE the “Big Bang”? – or as one person asked, “What banged?!” Science dribbles to a halt at the point of creation, the one thing that so strongly and plainly hints at a Creator God.

And that’s embarrassing because science has been so exact when it comes to nailing down WHEN the universe began, but it can’t go back any further and still be exact. Two questions plague the best that science has to offer:

- 1) First, what banged? And –

2) Second, why such an eerie silence from the rest of the universe?

For all our great technological and scientific advances, we've found no evidence yet of intelligent life or any life-forms like ours anywhere else in the universe. Oh, it's not for lack of trying. For years we've sent up every possible signal that other life forms could pick up on, but there's nothing but an eerie silence in return. To admit, however, that we just might be the only life forms in the universe - because we are the apple of Jesus our Creator's eye - is still objectionable, naïve and unscientific to the likes of those who prefer to call themselves Atheists.

It's a great pity, because God's provided a bridge to knowing him in Jesus Christ, the first step across which is the obvious proof of the universe. But Atheists won't take that first step. Some do and become Theists, meaning they DO accept the possibility of God behind the universe, but then, unfortunately, they stop short of the NEXT step across the bridge, that the God being revealed in the universe is also their Creator and Saviour, in whom their lives are utterly safe forever. Atheists, therefore, never step onto the bridge, but Theists stop too soon!

So that's where Theology comes in. It becomes the science that fills the gaps that classic science, quantum physics and cosmology can't and won't fill. Theology looks at the universe in light of a Creator who clearly revealed himself in Jesus Christ, and proved it in his life here on earth by living BEYOND the bounds of the laws governing the universe. He couldn't be explained by any mathematical formula, as proof he'd come from God.

God's given us "little ones," therefore, the chance to fill the gaps in the world's knowledge of God that the "wise and learned" cannot and won't fill:

- 1) We can show how the universe started – the Creator did it
- 2) We can show who that Creator is – Jesus Christ
- 3) We can show what he created it all for – for him

AND we can prove it all SCIENTIFICALLY, using the same means and methods of scientific research that scientists use. Theology is a science too, coming to conclusions based on obvious facts.

For now God's given the science of theology to babes, so that it's not by the wisdom of men that we know God, it's by wisdom from another world. It's a pity, though, that science and theology don't work closer together becomes when it comes to creation:

- 1) Science is brilliant on the WHAT and HOW, like what happened when and how the universe operates, whereas –
- 2) Theology is brilliant in the WHO and WHY, like why the universe even happened in the first place and who did it (and for whom).

Science describes the wonders of creation, Theology describes the wonders of the Creator. Together they help us see the power and nature of God. Look at creation we see our Creator. Look at our Creator we see God. “See me you see the Father,” Jesus said, and first of all, in his creation. It’s the first and easiest step across the bridge to knowing God.