

3 ways Jesus is Equal with God

Jesus claims equality in power

1. First, Jesus claims equality in power.

He starts back in verse 17.

But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."

>>>Skip to verse 19.

Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner."

What does this really mean? Does it mean that Jesus is inferior to the Father or that He can only imitate what He sees the Father doing? Some have imagined that Jesus is saying, "I have less power than the Father." The point is, Jesus is not stating His inferiority to the Father; He is declaring His unity with the Father. He is saying, "It is impossible for the Son to act apart from the Father."

We talk about Jesus giving up the independent use of His divine attributes while He was on earth. That is well and good. However, it might lead to the erroneous belief that Jesus, prior to and after coming to earth, acts independently of the Father and the Spirit. That will never happen. There is perfect unity between the three persons of the Godhead. They never act without a unanimous vote.

The truth is, the Father will never do anything without the Son, nor will the Son act without the Spirit, nor will the Spirit act without the Father and Son. In other words, whatever the Spirit does, He does with the agreement and fellowship of the Son and the Father; whatever the Son does, He does with the total agreement and fellowship of the Spirit and the Father, and so on.

2. Secondly, Jesus not only claims equality in power, He claims equality in position.

>>>Look at verse 22.

For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son.

>>>>Skip to verses 27 through 29.

...and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

Notes from John Ch 5 part B - Sept 30 2015

The nation of Jews believed and taught that only God could judge a man for his sins. Now, just what is this resurrection of judgment? We learn in Revelation, chapter 20, that there are two resurrections.

The two, mentioned by Jesus, are actually separated by a thousand years. Focus with me on the second resurrection that is explained in Revelation, chapter 20, verse 11. It refers to all those who rejected the testimony of the Messiah and refused to receive Christ as Savior. It is known as the **great white throne judgment**. No believer will be there.

And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

>>>Continue to verses 12 through 14.

And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

How do we know who is sitting on this great white throne? John, chapter 5, verses 22 and 27, tells us it will be the Son of God.

>>>Go back to John, chapter 5, verse 27, and notice the basis for His right to sit on that throne.

...and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

Jesus claims equality in receiving praise

3. So, Jesus claimed equality with deity in power and position, and thirdly, He claims equality in receiving praise.

Look at verse 23.

in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Four times, in this verse, the Greek verb "timaō" appears, which means, "to esteem, to honor". No mortal man would ever dare suggest that he is worthy of the same honor as God the Father, unless he was equally God. And, since Christ is, it is impossible to honor God the Father without honoring the Son.

John records for us, in chapter 20, that when Thomas fully realized the resurrected living Lord was indeed, standing before him, he fell to his knees and declared, in verse 28b,

. . . My Lord and my God!

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Jesus should have shushed him or corrected him, but instead, He accepts Thomas' worship. Jesus is equally deserving of praise.

Six Witnesses Jesus Calls

Now let me summarize the six witness's Jesus calls to the witness stand to speak on His behalf. The first witness – Jesus' own words

1. The first witness is Jesus' own words.

Look at verse 31, where Jesus said, If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. Now, the Jewish Mishnah said, "A man is not worthy of belief when he is speaking about himself."

Demosthenes, the Greek statesman, said, "The laws do not allow a man to give evidence on his own behalf."

And so it was. Even the Mosaic Law required two or three witnesses to establish a matter. So Jesus gives His own testimony, knowing that He would need to give more. And He does, not two or even three more, Jesus calls to the witness stand five more to testify on His behalf.

The second witness – John the Baptist

2. The second witness is John the Baptist.

Look at verse 33.

You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.

>>>Skip to verse 35.

He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, publicly declared, while pointing to Jesus, as recorded in John, chapter 1, verse 29b,

... Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!

The rabbis taught that only God could forgive sin. John said, "*There is the Forgiver of Sins.*" And they rejected his testimony.

3. The third witness to speak are the miracles of Jesus.

Go back to the prophet Isaiah and repeatedly he declares that, when the Messiah comes, the blind will see, the deaf will hear, and the lame will leap for joy. And what had Jesus just done? He had walked up to a man who had been lame for thirty-eight years and, in John, chapter 5, verse 8, had said to him,

... Arise, take up your pallet, and walk.

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It was an undeniable, irrefutable miracle! **What a witness!** But what happened? The Jewish leaders got upset because Jesus performed the miracle of healing on the Sabbath. They completely overlooked the miracle, blinded instead, by the minutia of their regulations. The “bottom line” was, they wanted to protect their traditions more than they wanted to discover the truth.

4. The fourth witness that Jesus calls to take the stand is God the Father.

Look at verses 37 and 38.

...And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form [face]. And you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

The Father gave direct witness to His Son at His baptism, in Mark, chapter 1, at the mount of the transfiguration, in Matthew, chapter 17, before His crucifixion, in Matthew, chapter 12, and in His resurrection, in Romans, chapter 1.

5. The fifth witness – the Scriptures

>>>Look at verses 39 and 40.

You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. The word “search,” in verse 39, could be translated “research”. The Jewish scribes and leaders studied the very letter of the Scriptures. Each line of text was analyzed so that they knew how many consonants were in each line.

They knew the facts of Scripture, but refused its truth. They studied the pages of Scripture, but refused the Author.

The sixth witness - Moses

6. The sixth and final witness was, no doubt, a surprise to the Jewish leaders. The final witness to take the stand is none other than Moses.

Listen to the startling conclusion of Christ’s message in verses 45 through 47. Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?

And, what does our Bible study do for us? Does our knowledge of the Bible give us a bigger head or a burning heart?

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Well, the nation of Israel refused Christ because He claimed to be equal with God and He broke the Sabbath.

Why do people refuse Him today? Why do you?

Because life in Christ is:

- too demanding,
- too humiliating,
- too costly,
- too disappointing,
- too irrelevant, or
- "I'll just save Him for a later time."

If you refuse Him, you will one day stand before Him as your judge and it will be too late – forever too late. Is your pride in yourself worth an eternal hell?

Are your passing ambitions worth an eternity apart from God? If you come to Him now, you will find He is a lamb, slain for your sins; a Savior, available to save you, not just from an eternal hell, but from an empty life and for an eternal heaven.

Come to Jesus Christ – He is God!

These points and comments are excerpted from a Dr. Stephen Davey Sermon preached in 1994 entitled "Motives for Murder".