

One Substance with the Father - John 14:8-31
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

At the Council of Nicaea the debate actually came down to a single letter, the letter “I” (iota in Greek). As they discussed the identity and essence of Jesus this letter (or lack thereof) made all the difference. Bishop Arius and his followers argued that Jesus, while being god-like, was created and not of the same substance as God the Father, but of similar substance. The Orthodox party, led by Alexander of Alexandria and his protégée, a young man named Athanasius argued from Scripture that Jesus is not just similar stuff, but the same substance, the same being as God the Father. Or as the Nicene Creed states, “God of God, light of light, true God of true God.” Jesus is not just like God, He is consistently identified in Scripture as the very God who created all and through whom we are saved. Yet, Jesus is also fully human.

So the debate came down to two almost identical words, except the “I”. The Arians proposed to include the Greek word *homoiosious*. The orthodox group countered by proposing the inclusion of the word *homoousios*. The suffix in both words, “ousios” comes from the Greek verb “to be” and refers to the essence, being, or substance of something. In other word, it is the stuff that makes up a being. The prefix “homoi (with the “I) means similar or of like, and therefore meant that Jesus is of similar or like substance or being with God the Father. The prefix “homo” means same, in this class exactly the same. The “I” really does matter. Is Jesus just like God in His being and substance, or is He of the same exact substance as God, uncreated Creator and Lord of All? Add the “I” in this case and the whole doctrine of Jesus crumbles, as He is little more than a glorified creation who has some of the stuff of God. But this Jesus is not infinite and therefore any sacrifice He would make is insufficient.

But the dropped “I” gets us a little further, as we are reminded that just as Jesus is the same substance as the Father, the Bible shows us that the Holy Spirit is as well. And here we have stepped into the glorious yet often confusing doctrine of the Trinity, God who is one being or substance yet three distinct persons. The concept sounds so mysterious, ethereal, and philosophical. While the Trinity might be true, we think, it doesn’t have any real meaning in my life.

Jesus interaction with His Apostles in John 14 indicates just the opposite. It is the last night of Jesus’ earthly life, He is going to the cross the next day. And Jesus knows it. So He set aside an evening to celebrate the Passover with his guys. The evening began with Jesus acting as a servant, washing their feet. He then shared the meal, and during the meal redefines the Passover around the sacrifice He was about to make. In doing so Jesus clearly declared his fate, and that the story would also include the betrayal of Judas, the outright denial of Jesus by Peter, and the abandonment of the rest. They would leave Jesus alone, and by the end of this they would be left alone. Their hopes dashed, their Messiah gone, and their lives in trouble. What will they do, how will they make it through this? Jesus answer, amazingly, is that their hope is the Triune God who will all come to them. Jesus will rise, and go to the Father, yet the whole time the Father has been in Him, and He in the Father. The works He has done were the Father’s works done in His authority. Yet the Father’s works are done in the Son. And the Father and Son will send the Spirit so they will not be left as orphans. They will get the Spirit, which also means they get the Son, which also means they get the Father. This passage affirms the beauty and glory of the doctrine of the Trinity, but it also brings it near to us. Jesus the Son is with them, and He is distinct from the Father and the Spirit. Yet, He is also the same God as the Father and the Spirit. The One God who revealed Himself to Israel has always existed as Father, Son, and Spirit. At

the core of His being God has always been unity and diversity, and has existed in an ever and infinite loving relationship. The Father glorifies the Son and Spirit, the Son glorifies the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit eternally glorifies the Father and the Son. The true God was never a needy God looking for a son and seeking someone to love. All that He has done has been an overflow of the love and glory flowing from the Trinity out of that relationship. But this glory and love overflows to all of creation, and ultimately to us, those who have seen the beauty of Jesus, repented of our self-salvation experiment, and trusted in Him. In this way, Jesus comes to us, and He gives us the Spirit who points us back to Jesus all the time. And the Spirit guides us into truth, for He is the Spirit of Truth. In our redemption, when we trust the Son we get the Spirit, when we get the Spirit, we get the Father, and when we get the Father we get the Son. Jesus said it this way (I am paraphrasing). He said, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me. And now you are in me and I am in you. And the Father and I am sending the Spirit to be in you." This love and glory becomes the center of our own existence. To Him be the glory.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Romans 11	Romans 12	Romans 13	Romans 14	Romans 15	Romans 16	Psalms 1

Reading from this past week's sermon: John 14:8-31

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Acts 13:26-41

Family Worship

Song - *House of the Lord*

https://youtu.be/R6l5T_rflfk?si=ghl5gFHemQOR1b6l

Gospel Project

Unit: The Northern Kingdom

Story: Hosea, the Prophet to Israel

Big Picture Question: Why do Christians continue to sin?

Answer: Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.

Scripture: Hosea

New City Catechism

Question 43: What are the sacraments and ordinances?

Answer: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Verse: Romans 6:4, Luke 22:19-20

John 14:8-31

- When you think of the doctrine of the Trinity, how do you feel? What comes to mind?
- Why is this doctrine so important to understand God and ultimate reality in the world?
- What is lost if we fail to believe that God the Father, Son, and Spirit are of the same being, substance, or stuff?
- How is our salvation fully Trinitarian? Why does this matter?

Prayer

*Rejoice in the Triune God who is eternally love and glorious.

*Pray for the Genesis Elders this week.