

Message #1 of Scripture Beneath the Surface
“How Can God Be Three Persons at the Same Time?”

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. For those of you who haven't listened to our program before, Let me give just a little bit of explanation. The messages we bring to you are not necessarily the most evident things of scripture. In all of scripture there is both the evident message on the surface, and also those things which underlie the surface. It is the underlying meanings of scripture which seem to be so difficult to comprehend, and they indeed are difficult to comprehend for those who have had little or no instruction of the symbolism of scripture. Jesus taught many things in parables, and even his closest disciples expressed difficulty in understanding them. But Jesus made one thing perfectly clear. The word he spoke was not meant to be understood by those who skimmed the surface, but by those who searched for the deep hidden things of God.

This doesn't have to be mystical, except in the sense that the wonderful power of God is a mystery to most, but powerful to those who seek God and his Son Jesus Christ with all their heart, as it says in Jeremiah 29:13.

Well, let's get on with today's message. Let me share something with you.

Once, when my wife Miriam and I were younger, in fact, we were not yet married, we went to a county fair with another couple. Among the several entertainments was a man who claimed to be able to tell you your age, within three years, or guess your occupation. Miriam had recently graduated from nursing school and was very elated with the fact that she had actually become a

registered nurse, for it had been a long hard climb to reach that pinnacle. That night she was wearing a sweatshirt with the logo of the nursing school on it, with an unzipped jacket over it. After walking down the midway and seeing everything, she decided she would pay her money and see if the man could guess her occupation. So she zipped up her jacket to hide the sweatshirt, and we all walked back to where the man was. Well, to put it bluntly, it was a hands down situation. The man took her money, and said, "Well honey, you're a nurse, aren't you!" A look of surprise came over her face, and she just replied, "Yup! That's right."

Afterward we all realized that the man must certainly be watching everyone as they went by, to see what clues he could gather, and that he must have seen Miriam's sweatshirt when we passed by him the first time. After all, if someone wants to know anything about a person, they have to pay attention to what they see and hear. In short, they must watch the image of the person, and listen to what they say, or else they will never know anything about the real person deep down inside.

If you stop to think about it, this principle was still in effect a couple of thousand years ago when Jesus Christ, God the Son, walked the earth - - - Which brings us up to our question for today:

How Can **God** Be Three Persons At The Same Time?

To answer that question, let's turn to the book of Colossians, chapter 1, verses 12-15.

It reads:

Giving thanks unto **the Father, who has** made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has **translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:** 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is **the image of the invisible** God, the firstborn of every creature:

In verse 15, notice which attribute is given to the Son of God, and which attribute is given to the Father.

It says that Jesus is the image, and the Father is invisible. Let's investigate this concept in a slightly deeper sense. Consider this:

A father is dominate over a son in any family relationship. It is no different with God than with us. Jesus, as the Son of God, was subservient to his Father. It is also no different within the triune perspective of God. God as three persons was still one God, but recognized and named according to the role that each part was to play.

Many people recognize the triune concept of God, and accept the fact that Jesus Christ was not only the Son of God, but was also God himself. There are many scriptures to attest to the fact that Jesus is God. The problem for some people who cannot conceive of this is that they can't

see how God can be three persons at the same time. But being three persons does not imply three souls. The word person only infers a distinguishing division whereby the parts of the whole can be individually recognized.

But to make it even easier to understand, let's take you for an example. You are also a triune person. If I were to look at you, I would first see your outward image. If I looked at your outward image and said, "O.K., now I know you. I know who you are, what you are, and what you are about," your response would probably be something like, "Oh no, you don't. You don't know me. Who I am is down deep inside of me, and nobody but God knows me perfectly. I know me, but you only see my outward image. You don't really know me for who I really am."

Well, if you replied this way, you would be correct, for it is impossible to know a person completely just by observing their outward person. Their inward person, their soul, who they really are, is only portrayed by their body. The body is an image that moves and speaks. It is a tool of the soul to represent what the real person feels about any given situation. The body has no will of its own other than its carnal nature, and can only respond to a given situation as the spirit of the man moves it. The body is not who you really are. Who you really are is called your soul. The soul of a person is the life of the person. It is where the existence of the person starts. Anything that has the breath of life is a living soul.

However, in order to understand the three part concept of God, look at it this way. The soul of the person can best be equated with the definition of 'father'. Just as God the Father was dominant over God the Son, our soul is dominant over our flesh, for our flesh, our body, is our tool to represent us. As it said in Colossians 1:15, Jesus was the image of the Father. The Father represents who God really is, the soul of God. Jesus, as the Son of God, is the body of God, and represents the manifestation of God, which means the outward showing of God. Now, the third part of God is the Holy Spirit. He is the 'mover' of God, and takes orders directly from God.

Let's talk a minute about this part of the triune entity, the Spirit. It says in John 4:24 that God is a Spirit. You, as a human being, also have a spirit. Your spirit is the third part of you, just as God's Holy Spirit makes up a third part of the one true God. A spirit works by finding a concept within the soul that is in tune with its nature. If you have the Holy Spirit within you, it will seek out the deep hidden things within your soul, and when it finds that which is in accord with its Holy nature, it will move your flesh according to your convictions and beliefs, and your body will respond in acts and words of righteousness. An evil spirit also visits the soul, and will also seek out anything that is in tune with its wicked nature, and will then move the body in direct relationship with that person's convictions and beliefs. Only, in this case, the body will respond in wickedness instead of in righteousness.

A spirit's work consists in two things. It must first seek out the soul's true feelings and beliefs, and then it must move the body to respond exactly in conformity with the soul. An example of this is when we are 'inspired' to do something. We know that we sometimes get creative, and will say something like, "Well, I just got inspired, and this is the result." Inspiration is the spirit

within a person moving that person to action or words. An author can be inspired to write a book. When he can't write, when he has writer's block, he will look for something to inspire him, something that will click in his mind. When it does, his excitement will increase, and his hands will start writing down the thoughts and feelings. The word inspire comes from the word spirit. Think of the word inspire as in-spirit. To have inspiration is to be moved or stimulated to action by your spirit, just like a racehorse that is highly spirited. It doesn't take much imagination to realize that the prancing and dancing racehorse is excited. If you looked into its mind you definitely wouldn't see dullness. Its spirit rises because of the things it is seeing, hearing, smelling, and anticipating. Its spirit moves its body, and we see the manifestation of its inward feelings.

So, inspiration is taking that which is within you and moving your outward person, and the result is seen by all those around. If you want others to see Jesus in you, then your thoughts and beliefs must be in tune with Jesus, and then your spirit will move you accordingly, it will inspire you. You will move and act, and others will see Jesus in you.

In 1 Corinthians 2:9-11, it says,

“But as it is written, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love him. 10 But God has revealed them to us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man, except by the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God no man knows, but only the Spirit of God.”

Notice that we read in verse 10 that the Spirit searches the deep things of God. That's what the work of the Holy Spirit is, to search out the deep hidden things of God, that they might be 'revealed'. Now, the revealing of what is found deep inside of the person, deep within the soul, is accomplished by the body. But because the body is not allowed to operate on its own, it must be moved by something. That's why it must receive orders from the part of the person who is the authority. The authority of God is vested in the Father. The Holy Spirit seeks out the deep hidden things of the Father, and then by moving the body, reveals the thoughts and perceptions of God unto men.

It works the same way with you and me. When I experience any situation in which I must respond, my soul will already have a belief or a conviction of what is right or what is wrong. When you experience a situation, you don't immediately make up a belief, you already have knowledge within you, and you will respond according to that which you believe, that which you are in agreement with. The spirit in you looks into your heart and after finding out what your thoughts, beliefs, and convictions are concerning that particular situation, takes this authorization of the 'father' part of you, your soul, and does the job of transferring this knowledge to the body so that the body, the image of the three part person, can reveal it to men.

Let's give an example. Let's say you are standing around minding your own business and someone walks up to you in an argumentative mood, and slaps you in the face. Let's also say you have the belief in yourself that to turn the other cheek gives glory to God. Let's say you also have such compassion for others that the thought of self-preservation holds second place to the needs of others. In this regard, the spirit seeking the deep hidden things of your soul will be the

Holy Spirit this time, for your convictions and beliefs are strong enough to completely put down the carnal nature you were born with. In this instance, the spirit within you finds that your beliefs are in tune with God's beliefs, and it recognizes your authorization to it to manifest righteousness, and so moves your body, the image of you, to turn the other cheek.

This is how the process works, at least in a general sense. There are as many variables to this process as there are facets of your mind. But the essence of the process is that if you have righteousness in your soul, your spirit will be in tune with the Holy Spirit, and your response will be of righteousness. If your soul still has much of the carnal man in control, then your beliefs and convictions may not be able to bring about a righteous response. Either way, you, yourself, control what spirit has authority to move your body. As it says in 1 Corinthians 14:32,

“The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.”

The spirit of a man does not act individually any more than the body does. It is the 'father' portion of you, the 'authority' portion of you, that the body and spirit must be subject to. Therefore, your spirit will only move your flesh in response to what is in your soul, what is really you.

So, you might ask the question, “But if I have a desire in my heart, can't I still do wrong? Because the apostle, Paul, said that it was no longer he that sins, but his flesh that sins.

This is true, but although we want to do good, and we will it to happen, our carnal nature, the beast nature, the animal nature in us, wars against the Holy Spirit. The control factor only changes over to righteousness as we are transformed by the renewing of our mind, as it says in Romans 12:2.

Now, Jesus was the only man who understood all things of God, and had all truth. But we humans don't. We lack the total understanding of God's truth, and therefore, we also lack complete control of the flesh. It is the 'Truth' that sets us free.

You, yourself, your 'father portion of you, cannot be seen, for this part of you is invisible to the physical sight of humans. Your soul, your inward man, cannot be discerned directly by the five senses of the physical body. Neither sight, taste, smell, touch, nor hearing can look into your soul. Only your spirit can look into your soul. When it does, it will move your flesh, and then your flesh can be understood by the five physical senses.

You and I have been created in the image of God. We have a soul, which is the 'father', or 'authority' portion of us. We have a body, the image of us. We have a spirit, which is actually the 'translator' to the body of that which the soul believes. Our spirit takes that which humans are not able to see or understand, and by moving the body, translates the information of the soul into recognizable form by using that outward physical part of us. Then, it becomes recognizable to other humans through the use of our outward actions and words.

Of course, God does not need your body to recognize what is within you. God is a spirit. He communicates in the spiritual realm. He doesn't need graphical imagery or sound waves to know you. He looks into your heart by assessing the reaction of your spirit. If your heart is in tune with his Holy Spirit, he will know it. But if your heart causes a quenching of his Holy Spirit, he

will know the wickedness that is in your heart also. 1 Samuel 16:7 tells us that the Lord does not look on the outward appearance of man, but on the heart. God is a Spirit, and can search out your heart by your spirit. This concept is born out in Proverbs 20:27, where it says, “The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly, or *inner man*.” This means that our real thoughts, beliefs, and convictions are not found on the outside of us, but are found down deep inside of us in our heart. And, it is our spirit which knows the thoughts, beliefs, and convictions of our heart, and that’s why God can know what our heart is really like just by knowing us by our spirit. We may be able to present a false outward appearance to other people, but that will never convince God of anything at all. God doesn’t look on the outward appearance of a man, and he doesn’t listen to what comes out of our lips. He uses our spirit to look on the inside of us, and to hear what our heart is really saying. In this way, he knows us better than we might think.

God is a triune God, made up of three parts. Each part can be recognized as the same God, but seen from a different perspective. We call God, “God,” because he is Father God. We call Jesus God, for the same reason that you would look at me and call me Randy, even though what you see is actually only my outward man, my ‘son’ image which is in subjection to my ‘father’ image. God’s Spirit, because it belongs to God, is also God, as in God the Holy Spirit. We also know that the Spirit of God is holy, for God is holy. Therefore, if that spirit comes into us, as Jesus promised in John 14:16, it is the Holy Spirit, which is God himself. In John 14:23, it says, “Jesus answered and said to him, If a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him.

Notice that this verse says that both God and Jesus will abide in the person. Therefore, when the comforter comes, not only does this mean that the Holy Spirit will abide in you, but God the Father, and God the Son will be present also. In other words, God will abide in you, and he will manifest himself in you by all three persons of the Godhead.

One last thing. If Jesus was the image, the body of God, and he did the Father’s will while on earth, don’t you think we should also take seriously the thought that we, the people of God, are the body of Christ now? The people of God are walking and talking in unison on the earth. At least, we should be. We are the body of Christ. Jesus Christ is the head of the body, and we should be manifesting him, who is the Word of God. Therefore, how can we manifest the Word of God if we are so busy living our own lives and doing our own things? As the true body of Christ, we need to be speaking the words that Christ would have us speak, and doing the works that Christ would have us do, just as Jesus spoke the words and did the works of the Father. If we don’t stop concentrating on ourselves so much, who will ever hear the word of God? Who will ever see the testimony of it? Matthew 5:12 says that we are the light of the world. How can we be light to those who walk in darkness if we fail to demonstrate in our words and actions that light from heaven? The lost will not be saved by watching us play our games, do our craft shows, build our big homes, or drive our fancy cars. The lost need to see Jesus, not us.