1. **Jesus Divinity and Power Over Spiritual Evil**

Mother’s play a particular role in our lives. Our parents are the first people that we observe and model ourselves on. For most of us our mother’s are our earliest and most significant part of our physical, social and psycho development.

Most of us experience the love of a mother but even that love is partial and marred by character flaws. All of us have been hurt by the effects of sin on our world, our parents, our friends, our church and most of all ourselves.

The gospels down throughout history, when read properly are a guide to how to be fully human like Jesus. How to experience the covenant relationship with God, and our kingdom responsibilities front and centre.

In the last 200 years the gospels have often been read as proof texts for Jesus divinity. That of course in one of the points the gospel writers are making and todays text is fairly explicit.

The point needs to be however not just that Jesus is divine but that this is “good news” when placed in the larger story of the God’s redemptive plan.

Human experience of love is a pointer to God’s love, it is a flawed and incomplete version of God’s love.

God is gazing at us.

1. But the question of Jesus divinity is not unimportant. C.S. Lewis in Mere Christianity says of the claims of Jesus that we have to take them seriously. It is often said that Jesus was a good moral teacher. But that is the one thing we must not say. Either he is what he said he was:

A liar about himself – blasphemed like the Pharisees claim in our passage today or

Lunatic – insane on the level of your brother telling you is a poached egg. Or

Lord – proving that what he said about himself was true by rising from the dead.

So let’s read our passage.

1. **John 10:22-39**

**22**Then came the Festival of Dedication[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=JOhn%2010&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26504b)] at Jerusalem. It was winter, **23**and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. **24**The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

**25**Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, **26**but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. **27**My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. **28**I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. **29**My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=JOhn%2010&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26511c)]; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. **30**I and the Father are one.”

**31**Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, **32**but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”

**34**Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are “gods”’[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=JOhn%2010&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26516d)]? **35**If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be set aside— **36**what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’? **37**Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. **38**But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.” **39**Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

The key phrase here is “I am the father are one.” Jesus says it twice. Jesus is making a claim about his ontological nature. Jesus is making a claim to divinity and that is what they religious leaders are so upset about. They accuse him of Blasphemy.

6. Jesus appeals to Psalm 82 and in particular vs 6 as his proof text for defending his claim.

God presides in the great assembly;
    he renders judgment among the “gods”:

**2**“How long will you[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2082&version=NIV#fen-NIV-15236a)] defend the unjust
    and show partiality to the wicked?[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2082&version=NIV#fen-NIV-15236b)]
**3**Defend the weak and the fatherless;
    uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.
**4**Rescue the weak and the needy;
    deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

**5**“The ‘gods’ know nothing, they understand nothing.
    They walk about in darkness;
    all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

**6**“I said, ‘You are “gods”;
    you are all sons of the Most High.’
**7**But you will die like mere mortals;
    you will fall like every other ruler.”

**8**Rise up, O God, judge the earth,
    for all the nations are your inheritance.

There is what is called the mortal view – in this view the “sons of God” are either the Jewish elders or maybe the children of Israel at Mount Sinia receiving the Law. They are called Sons of God, but they can’t live up to it, but Jesus can.

The problem with this view, which is quite common, is twofold.

1. The context of Psalm 82
2. It doesn’t make a lot of sense given Jesus other words. If Jesus is saying “Look there are other places where people are called sons of God, so calm down.” It seems odd that they continue to want to harm him except that He says, “The Father and I are one.” And when he does that doesn’t seem to be arguing that humans are sometimes called “Sons of God”. That seems to be saying something quite different.

Regarding the context of Psalm 82 The word of God comes to the “gods” in Psalm 82. The setting is not Sinia. Humans are not called Elohim because that is the word for spiritual beings.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBxOZqtGTXE&list=PLH0Szn1yYNeef2AIszbltRK15dgoxA_57&ab_channel=BibleProject>

till 4:35

8. If you look at Deuteronomy 32:8 it seems to make it clear that

**8**When the Most High assigned lands to the nations,
    when he divided up the human race,
he established the boundaries of the peoples
    according to the number in his heavenly court.

There is some variation on the phrase heavenly court but many scholars believe that this is a divine counsel. It can be translated sons of God like in Psalm 82 or to add to the confusion the Masoretic texts (a particular group of ancient manuscripts) sons of Israel. But the Septuagint – the Greek translation and the dead sea scrolls both have sons of God. Some people believe maybe some scribe felt a little queasy about calling the gods of the nations sons of God and changed it. We don’t know.

But what was believed by 2nd temple Jews, we can find this in the book of Enoch and probably Moses by this text was that after the tower of Babylon, Elohim are allocated to take care of various nations. The problem is that none of them have the same value system as God the most high. Some have outright rebelled. Some are a bit week, some take worship for themselves.

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1rai6WoOJU&list=PLH0Szn1yYNeef2AIszbltRK15dgoxA_57&index=3&ab_channel=BibleProject>

till 5:46

To whom the word of God came to these lower case gods – Elohim the dinine counsel or heavenly host. God, Yahweh, creator, God of gods, asks the question of these Elohim.

9. – **2**“How long will you defend the unjust
    and show partiality to the wicked?

Then God goes on to instruct them what he does want.

Psalm 82 Elohim being judged God and he tells them “keep doing what you are doing and you will - die like mere mortals.

Jesus argument seems to be.

Psalm 82 there are other “gods” could I not one? God calls them sons. They are higher than humans. The divine council was a well understood concept in 2nd Temple Judaism. Then why is it completely crazy that I claim that I am one of those?

But Jesus also goes a step further by saying and I am one with God.

But what does Jesus claim and his death a resurrection have to do with his appeal to Psalm 82.

It goes back to the promise to restore all the nations that was given to Abraham – through you all the nations of the earth will be blessed

10. Genesis 22

**18**And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”

11. And it speaks to Paul’s claim to reconcile All things.

Colossians 1:20

and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ’s blood on the cross.

But……

12. Now and the Not Yet – The gods of this world have been judged at the cross. Those who usurped power have been disarmed. God has been put back to his rightful place as King of this world.

13. John 12

**31**The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. **32**And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.”

**14. Col 2**

**15**In this way, he disarmed[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29470d)] the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

15. But the “gods” and will be judged at the Day of The Lord.

16. Rev 20:10

And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Die like mere mortals

17. When Jesus defends himself against the accusation of blasphemy by appealing to Psalm 82 He is defending his deity. Jesus is saying he is Lord of the Divine Heavenly Counsel. He is saying I can call myself son of God and calling God father as divine heritage. He is claiming to be more than a mere man. He is claiming that He and God are one.

And to back up his claim he says

Look at the works. Normal humans don’t do what I do and you know it. The good works, the healings, show that I am more than human.

18. It’s not just that I am a god – The Father and I are one. I am in Him and He is in Me.

I am God in human form.

19. So, they sought to arrest him again. They didn’t believe and thought he was blasphemous.

But for us this matters because we claim to follow Jesus, who claims to be the son of God the most high.

We believe he is Lord.

It matters because the gods of this world – sex-pleasure, money, military power are still around as philosophies and ideologies, s the evil behind evil and corruption on Earth. They draw people away from serving the true God and following Jesus. We need to guard against them:

20 Colossians 2

**8**Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29463a)] of this world, rather than from Christ. **9**For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29464b)] **10**So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

This is the same chapter he goes on to tell us that

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**13**You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. **14**He cancelled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. **15**In this way, he disarmed[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29470d)] the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

It matters because Jesus demonstrated he great love for us:

22 Romans 5

**8**But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The ultimate proof of God’s love is in his demonstration of that love at the cross. God in human form – Jesus – giving up his life for us.

The ultimate demonstration of God’s power of principalities and powers is in the victory won at the cross.

The ultimate victory over sin and death is in his resurrection.

Even our own mother’s – as wonderful as they are could not do that for us and could not love us with a love so perfect.

23 Reflect.