**Who Is This Jesus Whom We Serve?**

Matt. 1:18-23

Introduction:

1. Jesus was a man 100% human, but more. He is also 100% deity.

2. I believe that his deity is established both in the O.T. and in the N.T., and I believe that his deity is absolutely critical to the saving work that he came to do.

3. If he is not “God with us,” as Matthew interprets his name, “Immanuel,” (1:23) then he is an insufficient sacrifice for sins; he has no power to defeat death and Satan; and he cannot give us the life that we so desperately need.

4. So who is this Jesus whom we serve? Is he a mere man or is he “God with us?”

Discussion:

I. The O.T. predicted the coming of God into the world.

 A. Isaiah was prolific in writing about him.

 1. He would be “a **Redeemer**” to deliver his people (59:20).

 2. He would be a **King**: A child would be born that would reign on David’s throne (9:6-7).

 3. He would be YHWH’s special **Servant**. Smitten and afflicted and pierced through for

 our transgressions (53:4-5).

 4. Micah 5:2-4 identifies him as a **Ruler** and a **Shepherd** who would go forth from

 Bethlehem.

 B. Isaiah identified him as God.

 1. He predicted that God would come and comfort his people (40:3). Matthew, Mark,

 Luke and John all quote this passage and apply it to Jesus (Matt. 3:3; Mk. 1:3; Lk. 3:4-

 6; Jn. 1:23). Note the word LORD here is from the Heb. YHWH, the proper name for

 God. Note Mk. 1:3: “Make ready the way of the LORD (YHWH, Heb. “kurios” in

 Greek).”

 2. In Isa. 9:6 he is identified as “eternal Father.” To be eternal is a quality that only

 belongs to deity. To identify him as “eternal Father” even more closely ties him to

 God as we know him.

 3. Isa. 9:6 goes further and identifies him as “Mighty God.”

 C. Mal. 3:1 is a passage connected to Isa. 40:3 by Mark 1:2. It is a phenomenal passage

 with powerful language.

 1. Verse 1 says in the voice of God, “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he

 will clear the way before Me.” Cf. Matt. 11:10.

 a. Mark interprets this of John the Baptist as the messenger.

 b. Applies to Jesus “the way made clear before Me.” John prepared the way for

 Jesus, but who is speaking in Mal. 3:1, but God himself?

 2. The text continues, “’And the Lord, who you seek, will suddenly come to His temple;

 and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,’ says

 the LORD (YHWH) of hosts.”

 3. Who spoke this? YHWH. And who did Mark apply it to but Jesus?

II. The N.T. validates God’s arrival in the world.

 A. Thomas addressed him as “my Lord and my God” (Jn. 20:28).

 B. The title “Son of Man” probably refers more to his deity than his humanity.

 1. The phrase comes from Dan. 7:13-14. Jesus used the phrase to identify himself.

 2. It applies to the Messiah who is given everlasting dominion, glory and a kingdom

 which will never be destroyed. He receives universal worship.

 3. Stephen identifies Jesus as the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God with

 authority and dominion previous to his stoning. Probably this was the “straw” that

 could not be borne by the Jews and lead to the execution of Stephen (Acts 7:56).

 4. The High Priest had asked Jesus, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?”

 Jesus said, “I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power,

 and coming with the clouds of heaven.” At this he accused him of blasphemy and

 condemned him to death. See Mk. 14:61-62.

 C. The title “Son of God” is used of Jesus.

 1. There is a sense in which Israel was God’s son (Ex. 4:22-23; Hos. 11:1); angels were

 “sons of God” (Job 1:6; 2:1); Israel’s kings were God’s sons (2 Sam. 7:14; Psa. 89:26-

 27).

 2. But this is not the use that Jesus made of the title. For him it was an identification of

 Deity (Jn. 5:18; 10:31-39).

 3. In such circumstances Jesus never denied his deity.

 4. Remember Jesus was asked at his trial, “Are you the son of God?” His response, “Yes,

 I am.” See Lk. 22:70; Mk. 14:61ff; Jn. 19:6-8.

 5. The voice from heaven declared “This is My beloved son” (Matt. 3:17; 17:5).

 D. He is called God.

 1. “The Word was God” (Jn. 1:1).

 2. 1 Jn. 5:20 identifies him as the true God.

 3. Titus 2:13 Identifies him as “Our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”

 E. He is equal with God.

 1. Phil. 2:6 says, “he did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped (held on

 to)” as if he might loose it.

 2. Col. 2:9 says, “In Him all the fullness of deity dwells.”

 3. Heb. 1:3 says, “He is the exact representation of His nature.”

 F. He works the works of deity.

 1. “The works that I do testify of Me” (Jn. 10:25).

 2. Creator (Col. 1:16; Jn. 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Heb. 1:2).

 3. Forgives sins (Mk. 2:5-12).

III. If Jesus is not deity. . .

 A. He cannot be a sufficient sacrifice for sin.

 1. Heb. 9:14 says he offered himself through the eternal Spirit.

 2. Created spirit (human spirit) cannot provide sufficient sacrifice for the sins of all time.

 3. One perfect person might qualify as a sacrifice for one sinner, but Jesus is a sacrifice

 sufficient for the many (Matt. 20:28).

 B. If Jesus is not deity it is unfair for him to pay the penalty of divine wrath.

 1. If he is not deity he would constitute a third party paying the penalty for sin.

 2. If indeed he is deity God himself pays the penalty for his own divine wrath.

 C. Without the authority of deity Jesus could never have arisen from the dead.

 1. Others were raised by God, but Jesus was not a mere recipient of God’s life giving

 power.

 2. He is the source of the power. He has all authority and there is a day coming when

 all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and will come forth either to a

 resurrection of life or a resurrection of judgment (Jn. 5:25-29).

Conclusion:

1. Jesus is “God with us.”

2. His humanity and His deity together qualify him as our Savior.

3. No other is so qualified and no other can deliver us.