
JOHN'S VISION OF GOD

The focus of this study is to discover John's vision of God. Who is God? If we found the five documents written by John on some remote island and had no other writing available to us, what could we discover about John's understanding of Father-Son-Holy Spirit?

As we review His writings, it is possible to draw some conclusions about God. What follows are the things I have come to understand.

WHO IS FATHER?

John views Father as the one who is greater than all. He states that Father is greater than Jesus and glorifies His own name. Father is truth light, and love. John states that Father is a Spirit and the source of love, life, grace, mercy, peace and the second birth. He is said to have a house, own a kingdom, and be a husbandman.

What flows from Father?

Father seeks those who worship Him in spirit and truth. He loves His Son. He has sent Him to save us and be our propitiation. He has manifested and bestowed His love to the human race and draws us to Jesus. According to John, Father raises the dead and gives everlasting life to all who honor Him and do His work of believing in Jesus. He has promised eternal life to those who believe in Him. He causes us to pass from death to life and rescues us from condemnation when we believe. He gives birth to those who do righteousness. Father seals those who receive eternal life. He keeps us from evil and no man is able to pluck us out of His hand. He sanctifies us through His Word.

Father bears record in heaven. He has sent the Holy Spirit to us and has given us His Spirit. John indicates that Father has chosen to dwell in us. He has given us a commandment and His word abides in us. He calls us 'Sons of God.'

As a husbandman, God purges us as branches. He has given us as sheep to the care of Jesus. Father gives us Jesus as the true bread from heaven. His wrath is on those that do not believe in His Son.

What Responsibilities Does Father Delegate?

Father has delegated many things to His Son Jesus. He has given Him power over all flesh and has given all things into His hands. All judgment has been committed to Him and all authority to execute it. He has given the Son to have life in Himself. He shows Jesus all things that He does and gives Him the Spirit without measure.

What is Our Responsibility to Father?

I believe in Father and that He sent His Son. I worship Him in Spirit and truth and honor Him by believing in His Son. I am in fellowship with and glorify Him.

I am sanctified through His Word and bear fruit. I do His will and abide forever. As I keep His Word, I am perfected by His love. My knowledge of Him is growing and I dwell in Him. I have perceived His love. I love others because He has given me birth. I love others because He dwells in me. I love others because I know Him. His love is being perfected in me. I keep myself to Him and overcome the world by loving Him. I do the good because I belong to Him.

WHO IS THE SON?

According to John, Jesus is the only begotten of the Father and said to be in His bosom. He walked out of eternity past and came into the world. He is the Word that was with God and was God. All things were made by Jesus. When He walked on the earth, the angels of God ascended and descended upon Him. When He was among men, the Spirit abode upon Him without measure. Jesus understood that He had come from God and that He would have to leave this world and return to Father. In Him was life and light and He was said to be full of grace and truth. Scripture indicates that only Jesus has seen Father.

What did Others Say about Him?

The titles used to identify Him included Rabbi, Master, King of Israel, Messiah, Christ, and Son of God. He is called Jesus of Nazareth, and son of Joseph. He is call our propitiation and is called the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

How did Jesus Identify Himself?

There are several ways in which Jesus revealed Himself. He referred to Himself as the Shepherd and Door of the Sheep. He called Himself the resurrection, the Life, the Light of the World, the Way, the Truth, the Bread of Life, Master and the True Vine

The Purpose of His Coming

There are many statement made in the writings of John regarding the purpose for which Jesus came into the world. When He appeared, He brought with Him grace and truth. He dispensed fullness to those who believe. He called us to follow Him and baptized us with the Holy Spirit. He came into the world as a light to save it. He did not come to judge; He came to rescue us. He came to destroy the works of the devil. He dwelt among us and gave us power to become sons of God. He was made flesh and took away our sins. He came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly. He gave His life for His sheep and gave us eternal life. Jesus loved his disciples to the end. He called them friends and demonstrated His love for them by laying down His life.

Claims of Jesus

As He interacted with the people of His time, He made some astounding claims regarding His relationship with Father. Often, it was these claims that became the source of much conflict.

Jesus often declared that He knew Father and that Father knew Him. He informed his listeners of the fact that He held a continuous and open dialog with His Father. He told His disciples, I am in My Father, He is in Me and I am in you. The religious community became outraged when he declared "My Father and I are one." No man, he declared, can come to the Father except through me. He that sent me is "greater than I." He spoke of being glorified by God and God being glorified in Him. He informed His listeners that Father loved, spoke and worked through Him. Jesus received by commandment from Father the things that He should speak. There are a few other statements that stirred the religious. Jesus said,

- If you see me, you have seen Father.
- If you receive me, you have received Father.
- If you believe me, you believe Father who sent Him
- If you hear me, you have heard Father.
- If you love me you love My Father.
- If you hate me, you hate My Father.
- If you love me, you will keep my word

There are also various claims that Jesus made regarding His relationship to others. As a Shepherd, Jesus often spoke of believers as His sheep. He laid down His life for those who belonged to Him and gave them eternal life. He declared that His sheep followed Him, knew Him and that he knew their voice. He said that no man could pluck His sheep out of His hand. He stated that He was the door of the sheep. He claimed that he would save anyone who entered into the fold through Him. He declared that no man could take His life from Him and that He had the power to lay down His life and take it up again. When speaking of His death, He said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to myself." He spoke of being glorified by Father and returning to the place from where He came.

There are several things that Jesus promised those who would believe in Him. These statements were also the source of bitter strife. He promised those who believe the following:

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- If you believe in me, though you were dead, you will live.
 - If you believe in me, you shall see the glory of God.
 - If you live and believe in me, you shall never die.
 - If you serve me, my Father will honor you.
 - If you believe in me, you will abide in the light.
 - If you love me, I will manifest myself to you.
 - If you love me, Father and I will come to you and make our abode with you.
 - Because I live, you shall live.

Jesus promised His disciples that if they would abide in Him their prayers would be answered. Jesus declared that He had ordained that His disciples would bring forth much fruit. He stated that He was responsible for choosing His disciples. When he was about to leave this world, Jesus told His disciples that He was leaving to prepare a place for them and that He would return in order to take them to the mansions or dwellings He has built. He also warned His disciples that if they failed to abide in Him, they would be cast into the fire and burned.

How are we to respond to the Son?

John indicates that we are to comprehend Him, believe in, receive His fullness and bear fruit. As believers, we are to follow Him, know Him, and receive Him. We are called to behold His glory and believe that Father dwells in Him and that He dwells in Father. If we believe in Him, we shall never die. We are to serve Christ by following Him. We are to receive both Jesus and the One who sent Him. We also receive those that Jesus sends to us. We are called to demonstrate our love to Him by keeping His word and commandments. Love Jesus and love Father. If we love Jesus, He will manifest Himself to us. Now that Jesus has gone to heaven and sits at the right hand of God, greater works shall we do because we believe in Him. Love Him and both He and Father will abide with us. Ask in Jesus name that Father may be glorified. If we abide in Christ, anything we ask will be done for us. If we abide in His word, our prayers will be answered.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

John declares that the Holy Spirit is a comforter given by Father and sent to us in Jesus' name. The Holy Spirit proceeds from Father. He is said to bear record in heaven and give life to all men. John indicates that the Spirit speaks to the churches. John also makes mention of Seven Spirits before the Throne of God.

What has the Holy Spirit come to do?

The Holy Spirit is the source of my new birth. He gives me life, teaches me all things and reveals those things to come. He guides me into all truth, dwells in and abides with me forever. He reminds me of the words of Jesus. The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself. He testifies of Jesus and glorifies Him. He receives from Jesus and reveals it to us.

The Holy Spirit reproves the world. The Holy Spirit protects me from the second death, gives me hidden manna to eat, and grants me a white stone with my new name written upon it. The Holy Spirit invites me to drink of the water of life freely.

The Holy Spirit was transferred to His disciples by Jesus. Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." All who believe on Jesus will receive the Holy Spirit

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