

By Paul Stringini, March 31, 2009

Jesus Christ, is the Son of God.

1 John 5:20 And we know that the **Son of God** is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know **him** that is true, and we are in **him** that is true, even in **his Son** Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

What can be said of the nature of God, especially of Jesus Christ? His name is the one name whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, **invisible**, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

God has often been said to be "invisible" and that, "No man hath seen God at any time."

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

On the other hand, there have been several occasions on which God has been seen.

Exodus 33:20 "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live...23...thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen. "

Can God's face be seen, or not?

Genesis 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

Jacob saw God's face and expected that he should have died, and the Lord himself told Moses that "No man," could see his face and live (I don't care what anyone says, God makes exceptions)

Judges 6:22 And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. 23 **And the LORD said unto him**, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

If there was any question whether the term "an angel of the Lord" refers to God himself, this passage makes it clear. When verse 23 begins, "And the Lord," the term Lord is, "YHVH," the ancient name of God, so clearly here, Gideon has seen YHVH, God to the face. Here God preempts Gideon and assures him, "thou shalt not die."

That leaves us in a bit of a mystery. I purposely left out some of what God said to Moses in Exodus 33.

Exodus 33:20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. 21 And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: 22 And it shall come to pass, *while my glory passeth by*, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: 23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

2Corinthians 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of **the glory of God** in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the face of Jesus Christ is given the knowledge of the Glory of God, the glory which Moses was shielded from as God passed by.

Hebrews 1:3 Who being **the brightness of his glory**, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power,

Again, God is invisible, he cannot be seen. Jesus Christ is God in visible form. Which one do you suppose Moses saw the back of? I have never read anywhere of the Father being seen, as a person, in any capacity (Jesus Christ did see the Spirit descend in a visible form)

Colossians 1:13 ..his dear Son... **15** Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Jesus Christ is the image of that which cannot be seen, of that which it would kill you to see. Interestingly, he is also called the "firstborn of every creature." Which implies that he is a creature, created by God

Revelation 3:14 ...These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

A second witness. Yet, surely, Jesus Christ is divine. Let's continue in Colossians:

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: **17** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. **18** And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. **19** For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

There is a sort of dual implication here, on the one hand the Son is spoken of as being creature, and, in such a state, as having been creator of all other things. And verse 19 seems to be saying that he is under the authority of the Father, who, by implication, has caused all this fulness to dwell in him.

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, **2** Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; **3** Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; **4** Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

There is a lot said there. But notable are these facts, Jesus Christ was appointed heir, he has obtained his current position by inheritance. Jesus himself declared that he was not equal to God.

John 14:28 ... for my Father is greater than I.

Yet, on the other hand, this is written of Christ:

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: **6** Who, being in the form of God,

thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

What exactly does it mean to be "in the form of" God. Form is "*morphe*" and it means shape. And he thought it not "robbery" to be equal with Him. Usually this is interpreted to mean that he did not see equality with God as something that he needed to take hold of. (It was previously stated as his birthright, his inheritance.) So this means that he was equal with God.

Philippians 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: **8** And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Looking at it in context, this scripture is clearly saying that Jesus Christ was equal to God, he was in God's form, and needed not to steal Godhood. These divine characteristics were not a barrier to him humbling himself and becoming a man.

But what does the Father say of all this?

Hebrews 1:8 But unto the Son **he saith**, Thy throne, **O God**, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. **9** Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. **10** And (unto the Son **he saith**) , **Thou, Lord**, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: **11** They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; **12** And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

According to Hebrews, the Father calls the Son, "God," and even, "Lord." Yet still, the Son says, "My Father is greater than I."

A Key From Melchisedek:

This is a person in the bible who, it has been suggested, *may have been* the pre-incarnate Christ:

Hebrews 7:1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; **2** To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

Paul does not at any time declare that this "Melchisedec" is Christ, still, if we look at the things that are said of Melchisedec, they are very revealing as to the nature of the Son of God:

Hebrews 7:3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

Having **no beginning** of days? Above, it was implied that the Son of God was *the beginning* of God's creation. Yet here this Melchisedec is said to have have no beginning at all. As doesn't someone else...

Important Note: "but made like unto the Son of God." That is **the key** here, Paul is comparing the Son of God to Melchisedec, and you can argue all day whether or not Melchisedec is indeed Christ. The point is that Melchisedec is *like the Son of God*, in that he has *neither beginning nor end*. So this is also saying that the Son of God has neither beginning nor end, yet he proceeds, and comes forth from the Father, he is the

beginning and first born, implying a start, yet declared to have **no beginning at all**.

I think of it like this:

John 1:1 In the beginning **was** the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word **was** God.

Rev 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

Jesus Christ is God, because Jesus Christ is the word of God, the word of God comes out of God and is secondary to God, (there is an almost "father-son" relationship between a person and the words he speaks) yet the word is no mere by-product of God or something less than God ("the Word was God") and God honors his word above all else, and his word is that which does everything God does, in His Word is power, honor, glory, and the word of God is also delivered by the Spirit of God.

Man begins to speak when he is very young, we have our, "First words." But God does not have a beginning. So can the Word of God be ever said to have a beginning? Was God ever dumb? God forbid, no, the word of God has no beginning. It **is** the beginning of everything. Yet it is a creation of God. Yet it is as much God as God himself because God himself has declared it so to be. In my opinion, this is a clue to the exact nature of the father-son relationship.

Preliminary Conclusion:

So, concluding, we see that Jesus Christ is declared by the scriptures to be God, yet he was also a man, created, yet, a the Son of God, without beginning. He is the beginning of creation, firstborn of creatures, appointed, by inheritance, to be God. (Just scroll up for all the scripture references for every phrase of that statement).

The Son of God seems to me to have the most revealed about him, and that is as it should be because the knowledge of Him is what saves us. God has given him preeminence, we look to him, he is the "brightness of his glory," and "the express image of his person," the "image of the invisible God." Jesus Christ is the focus.

I Corinthians 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

On the Nature Of the Father-Son Relationship. (And what of the Spirit?)

If there is a Son, there must be a Father, but what is the exact nature of that relationship? I see that there is a distinction between the Father and the Son, **and** there is a lack of distinction between the Father and the Son. I don't approve of characterizing the distinction (or lack thereof) beyond what the scriptures reveal. I think that is where all the trouble comes from, people want simplified explanations, that iron out all the profound aspects of God. They want their God described in ten words or less. That is error, I'd rather just stick with what is written.

I use the word "distinction" because I need a word to characterize the information I can gain from the scriptures without adding meaning to the scriptures. I would rather not use any words which I do not find in the scriptures, still, since the scriptures themselves do not attempt to place a general label on the facts concerning these relationships, I have taken a minimalist approach and chosen, very carefully, a word which does not bring intrusive ideas into the discussion of the information actually contained in scripture.

The Son as *distinct* from the Father:

Hebrews 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

It is clear from this passage, and others like it, that the Son is distinct from the Father. There exists a father-son relationship between Jesus Christ and God. Not merely a name distinction, but a real distinction by which they interact with one another. This distinction has its big moments and small, but the fact that God even uses the ideas "father" and "son" creates a distinction immediately because those words have to signify something, therefore the distinction between the Father and the Son is observed all throughout the New Testament.

The Son as *indistinct* from the Father:

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us **a child** is born, unto us **a son** is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty **God**, The everlasting **Father**, The Prince of Peace.

Even though, Jesus Christ is distinct from God, his Father, Christ is also spoken of on several occasions as though he were one-and-the-same with the Father, as if there was no distinction between them at all.

John 14:8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

The following verse is speaking of Christ and exemplifies this lack of distinction:

Colossians 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Distinct or Indistinct?

The principal errors that people make are in either denying that the Father and the Son are distinct or in denying that they are indistinct. This can be seen all over Christianity these days, as well as throughout history in various heresies and in the so-called orthodoxy. Men want to say one way or the other, or whip up a catch-all phrase, but God has not really given it to us in the word like that.

What of the Spirit?

The Same is true of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is spoken of as distinct from the Father and the Son, and the Spirit is spoken of as indistinct from the Father and the Son.

The Spirit as *distinct* from the Father and the Son:

Matthew 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The voice came from heaven, not from his shoulder, if the Father is indistinct from the Spirit then this passage

is highly misleading.

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The father sends the Holy Ghost in the name of Christ. If the Father is indistinct from the Holy Ghost, then should we read this passage: "But the Comforter, which is *the Father*, whom the Father shall send in my name...?" That would be kind of like saying, "For God so loved the world that he sent *himself*." Instead of saying, "his only begotten Son" (John 3:16)

John 15: 26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you **from the Father**, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth **from the Father**, he shall testify of me:

The Father does not send himself, he sends his Spirit (yet God is a Spirit), he sends his Son (here Jesus speaks of sending the Spirit himself, this can be viewed as another example of the indistinctness between Father and Son), these both come forth **from** the Father.

The Spirit as *distinct* from the Father, yet *indistinct* from the Son:

Jesus came in the name of the Father, he never came in his own name, but the Holy Spirit does come in the name of Jesus Christ, and is in fact, at times, spoken of as indistinct from Jesus Christ (that is why people speak of having Jesus Christ "inside them").

Galatians 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

God did not "send himself into your hearts," he sends the Spirit of His son, yet previously Jesus had spoken of the Spirit as distinct from himself. The Spirit of God within us is even said here to make our nature like that of son's, compelling us to cry to God, as a son would, "Abba," which is an Aramaic word which means, "Father."

The Spirit as *distinct* from the Son, yet *indistinct* from the Father:

John 4:23 (The Son speaking) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 **God is a Spirit**: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Luke 24:39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

So we see here that the son can be shown as distinct from the Father and the Holy Spirit and The Holy Spirit and the father can be presented as indistinguishable.

The Spirit as *indistinct* from the Father or the Son:

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Here it is said that the presence of the Spirit in the believer is tantamount to the presence of the Father and the Son together in the believer, so that no real distinction between the two of them and the Spirit is seen. The

spirit dwells in the believer and that is treated here as the same as having both the Father and the Son dwelling in the believer.

The Spirit as *indistinct* from the Son:

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: **17** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Genesis 1:2 ...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

In the new testament it is made clear that Jesus is the creator of all things, but in Genesis it is clear that the Spirit of God, is what is said to be acting on creation. This again, blurs the distinction between the Son of God and the Spirit of God.

The Father, the Son, and The Spirit as all *distinct* from One Another:

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

To intercede is to act as a "go-between" A go-between cannot be a no-between, i.e. an intercessor must act between two parties, neither of which are him. If the Father and the Spirit were one-and-the same then the Spirit would be acting as an intercessor to himself. The Spirit is distinct from the Father in that he acts as intercessor on behalf of the saints, as is Christ:

Jeremiah 17:10 says "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins," In Revelation, Jesus lays claim to this power. **Revelation 2:23** ...and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts

Romans 8:27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

It makes sense to interpret this "searcher" as Jesus, because it also says that the reason he knows the mind of the spirit is because he (Jesus) acts as intercessor for the saints according to the will of God.

So, Romans 8:26 & 8:27, because he makes intercession for the saints, Christ knows the mind of the Spirit, and the Spirit makes intercession as well, but the son and the spirit are distinct here, because of the phrase "he (Jesus)...knoweth the mind of the Spirit)

If the searcher is the Father in verse 27, then the "he" in "he maketh intercession" must be the spirit.

However one looks at it, there is a definite distinction being drawn here. There are go-betweens going between God and man.

The Father, the Son, and the Spirit as totally *indistinct* from One Another:

I Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

We already established that both the Spirit and the Son make intercession to God on our behalf. Here Paul the Apostle states that there is only one mediator between God and man, making no distinction between the Son

and the Spirit, add to that the fact that God is a spirit, which already blurs that distinction, and then consider this:

Galatians 3:20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

God is one. A mediator, by definition, mediates between two parties. Also, a mediator, by definition, cannot be one of the two parties which he is acting as mediator between. A go-between cannot exist when there is no-between. But God is one. In Galatians 3:20 I believe Paul is acknowledging this paradox.

Conclusion:

So we see from these scriptures (and there are, in some cases, more examples in scripture than I have listed) that there is distinction between Father, and Son, and Spirit. And we also observe a lack of distinction between the same. Some people like to draw certain conclusions from these facts. I just accept the fact. This is the God declared to me in the scriptures.

There are many ways in which one might try to make all these scriptures in to a form which would be acceptable to man (or some men), but all such attempts are going to fail to capture the fullness of one that fills Heaven and Earth and is not contained by them. And such constructs are completely unnecessary. I accept all the scriptures I have presented and have reconciled them in faith.

I hope this has been enlightening to those who are curious as to my mind on this subject.

A closing thought to ponder:

I've never heard anything but conjecture about the following scriptures, and that is probably all I will ever hear from man regarding them.

Revelation 3:1 These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God...

Revelation 4:5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

[Return to Doctrine Page](#)