

CREDO: I BELIEVE



Faith and Life Series

5

Third Edition

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The Father and I Are One

“And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”

John 17:11



“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”

Matthew 17:5

In the last chapter, we learned that Christ taught people about the heavenly Father who loved them and offered them the way to eternal life. But there was another part of Christ’s teaching. It was so unusual, and so surprising, that Jesus did not even tell people about it at first. He only gave hints of it now and then. And sometimes, when people found out, Jesus would tell them not to tell anyone else.

What was this mysterious news that Jesus only let out little by little? It was the truth that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, fully God and fully man. The Jews were not at all ready for this truth. They thought the Messiah would be a man, a descendant of David who would restore the kingdom of Israel. They also thought the Messiah would be a holy leader who would show them how to become closer to God. But God’s Son? The idea of a man claiming to be God sounded like **blasphemy**, a sin against the Second Commandment. So you can see why Jesus had to be patient and careful about telling the people who he really is.

The first hints Jesus gave of his **divinity** were his miracles. With a word or a touch, he healed

people of blindness, leprosy, and many other diseases. On two occasions he multiplied bread to feed thousands of people. By witnessing these things, people could see that Jesus shared God’s power in a special way. Jesus could also heal people who were possessed by devils. (When someone is “possessed” the devil controls his speech and actions so completely that the person has no power to stop it.) The Gospels tell us that these devils knew who Jesus was, but that Jesus ordered them to keep silent. The time had not yet come for a clear statement of Christ’s divinity, and the devil was not the right one to make such a statement.

Jesus allowed his apostles to learn the truth sooner. They saw him stop a storm with a single command, and they wondered, “Who then is this, that he commands even wind and water, and they obey him?” (Lk 8:25). At another time, the apostles were again caught in a storm on the lake, but Jesus was not with them. Late at night, they were astonished to see Jesus walking across the water toward them. Peter asked if he might come to Jesus across the water, so Jesus said, “Come.” Peter was

able to walk on the water until he grew afraid; then he sank. Jesus pulled Peter back up and took him to the boat. The other apostles, says the Gospel, “worshiped him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God’” (Mt 14:33).

Later, Jesus asked the apostles, “Who do men say that I am?” They reported what people were saying: that Jesus was Elijah or one of the prophets come back to earth; perhaps John the Baptist. Then Jesus asked, “But who do *you* say that I am?” Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Jesus told Peter he was correct: “For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.” But still Jesus told the apostles not to tell anyone else that he was God’s Son (Mt 16:13–20).

Even with this new knowledge of Jesus’ true identity, it must have been hard for the apostles to understand. After all, Jesus looked so ordinary. When God visited his people in the Scriptures, there were often signs of his glory and power such as fiery clouds, thunder, or brilliant light. Jesus had kept his glory hidden, but one day, he revealed it to Peter, James, and John. He took them up a mountain,

And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. . . . A bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him” (Mt 17:2–5).

When the vision ended, Jesus again looked as he always did. This event is known as the **Transfiguration**. He told the three apostles to tell no one what had happened until after the Resurrection.

The time finally came for Jesus to proclaim his divinity to the people more openly. Once, in the temple of Jerusalem, Jesus said, “Before



Abraham was, I am” (Jn 8:58). Many were horrified and picked up stones to throw at Jesus. Not only did he claim to have lived before Abraham, but he took as his own the sacred name of God, “I AM,” that had been revealed to Moses. Those who hated Jesus considered this a crime. They plotted to kill him.

The poor and simple people of Jerusalem were more ready to believe. Jesus cured a blind man and later asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of man?” “And who is he, sir,” replied the man, “that I may believe in him?” “You have seen him,” said Jesus, “and it is he who speaks to you.” The man said, “Lord, I believe” and worshipped Jesus (Jn 9:35–38).

Jesus showed his divine power again when he raised Lazarus from the dead. “I am the Resurrection and the life,” said Jesus. The people knew that God would not give such wonderful powers to Jesus if he were telling a lie about being God’s Son.

The greatest proof of Jesus’ divinity would be his Resurrection from the dead. But that was yet to come.

Words to Know:

blasphemy divinity Transfiguration

Q. 71 *How was Jesus Christ known to be the Son of God?*

Jesus Christ was known to be the Son of God because God the Father proclaimed him as such at his baptism and his Transfiguration when he said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” During his earthly life, Jesus declared himself to be the Son of God (CCC 444, 535, 554, Mt 3:17, Lk 9:35).

Q. 72 *What is a miracle?*

A miracle is something visible to the senses, but beyond all the forces and laws of nature. It is, therefore, something that can be worked only by God (CCC 548).

Q. 73 *With what miracles did Jesus Christ confirm his teachings and show that he is God?*

Jesus Christ confirmed his teaching and showed that he is God by restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, health to the sick, and life to the dead. He also commanded demons and the forces of nature. Above all, he confirmed his teaching and showed that he is truly God by his Resurrection from the dead (CCC 515, 547–50, 638).