

John 14:8-14

by St. John Chrysostom

Jesus teaches that He and the Father are consubstantial, and that seeing Him is the same as seeing the Father.

Scripture: John 14:10-14

Topics: "Trinity", "Christology"

Description

John Chrysostom preaches on the profound connection between Jesus and the Father, emphasizing that seeing Jesus is equivalent to seeing the Father, highlighting the unity and Consubstantiality of the Father and the Son. Chrysostom explains how Philip's request to see the Father is redirected by Jesus to understand that knowing Him is knowing the Father, and that the Son reveals the Father's Essence. He further delves into the significance of belief in Jesus being in the Father and the Father in Him, and how this belief is validated through works and miracles.

Transcript

Philip says unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us. Jesus says unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me, has seen the Father. sayest thou then, Show us the Father? "N.T.}--> 1. The Prophet said to the Jews, You had the countenance of a harlot, thou were shameless towards all men. Jeremiah 3:3, Septuagint Now it seems fitting to use this expression not only against that city, but against all who shamelessly set their faces against the truth.

For when Philip said to Christ, Show us the Father, He replied, Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known Me, Philip? And yet there are some Who even after these words separate the Father from the Son. What proximity do you require closer than this? Indeed from this very saying some have fallen into the malady of Sabellius. But let us, leaving both these and those as involved in directly opposite error, consider the exact meaning of the words. Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known Me, Philip?

He says. What then? Replies Philip, Are you the Father after whom I enquire? No, He says. On this account He said not, have you not known Him, but, have you not known Me, declaring nothing else but this, that the Son is no other than what the Father is, yet continuing to be a Son. But how came Philip to ask this question? Christ had said, If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also John 14:7, and He had often said the same to the Jews. Since then Peter and the Jews had often asked Him, Who is the Father? since Thomas had asked Him, and no one had learned anything clear, but His words

were still not understood; Philip, in order that He might not seem to be importunate and to trouble Him by asking in his turn after the Jews, Show us the Father, added, and it suffices us, we seek no more.

Yet Christ had said, If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also, and by Himself He declared the Father. But Philip reversed the order, and said, Show us the Father, as though knowing Christ exactly. But Christ endures him not, but puts him in the right way, persuading him to gain the knowledge of the Father through Himself, while Philip desired to see Him with these bodily eyes, having perhaps heard concerning the Prophets, that they saw God. But those cases, Philip, were acts of condescension.

Wherefore Christ said, No man has seen God at any time John 1:18; and again, Every man that has heard and has learned from God comes unto Me. John 6:45 You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape. John 5:37 And in the Old Testament, No man shall see My face, and live. Exodus 33:20 What says Christ? Very reprovably He says, Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known Me, Philip? He said not, have you not seen, but, have you not known Me. Why, Philip might say, do I wish to learn concerning You?

At present I seek to see Your Father, and You say unto me, have you not known Me? What connection then has this with the question? Surely a very close one; for if He is that which the Father is, yet continuing a Son, with reason He shows in Himself Him who begot Him. Then to distinguish the Persons He says, He that has seen Me has seen the Father, lest any one should assert that the same is Father, the same Son. For had He been the Father, He would not have said, He that has seen Me has seen Him.

Why then did He not reply, you ask things impossible, and not allowed to man; to Me alone is this possible? Because Philip had said, it suffices us, as though knowing Christ, He shows that he had not even seen Him. For assuredly he would have known the Father, had he been able to know the Son. Wherefore He says, He that has seen Me, has seen the Father. If any one has seen Me, he shall also behold Him. What He says is of this kind: It is not possible to see either Me or Him.

For Philip sought the knowledge which is by sight, and since he thought that he had so seen Christ, he desired in like manner to see the Father; but Jesus shows him that he had not even seen Himself. And if any one here call knowledge, sight, I do not contradict him, for, he that has known Me, says Christ, has known the Father. Yet He did not say this, but desiring to establish the Consubstantiality, declared, he that knows My Essence, knows that of the Father also. And what is this? says some one; for he who is acquainted with creation knows also God.

Yet all are acquainted with creation, and have seen it, but all do not know God. Besides, let us consider what Philip seeks to see. Is it the wisdom of the Father? Is it His goodness? Not so, but the very whatever God is, the very Essence. To this therefore Christ answers, He that has seen Me. Now he that has seen the creation, has not also seen the Essence of God. If any one has seen Me, he has seen the Father, He says. Now had He been of a different Essence, He would not have spoken thus.

But to make use of a grosser argument, no man that knows not what gold is, can discern the substance of gold in silver. For one nature is not shown by another. Wherefore He rightly rebuked him, saying, Am I so long with you? Have you enjoyed such teaching, have you seen miracles wrought with authority, and all belonging to the Godhead, which the Father alone works, sins forgiven, secrets published, death retreating, a creation wrought from earth, and have you not known Me? Because He was clothed with flesh, therefore He said, Have you not known Me?

2. You have seen the Father; seek not to see more; for in Him you have seen Me. If you have seen Me, be not over-curious; for you have also in Me known Him.

John 14:10

Do you not believe that I am in the Father?

That is, I am seen in that Essence.

The words that I speak, I speak not of Myself,

Do you see the exceeding nearness, and the proof of the one Essence?

The Father that dwells in Me, He does the works.

How, beginning with words, does He come to works? For that which naturally followed was, that He should say, the Father speaks the words. But He puts two things here, both concerning doctrine and miracles. Or it may have been because the words also were works. How then does He them? In another place He says, If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. John 10:37 How then says He here that the Father does them? To show this same thing, that there is no interval between the Father and the Son. What He says is this: The Father would not act in one way, and I in another. Indeed in another place both He and the Father work; My Father works hitherto, and I work John 5:17; showing in the first passage the unvaryingness of the works, in the second the identity. And if the obvious meaning of the words denotes humility, marvel not; for after having first said, Do you not believe? He then spoke thus, showing that He so modeled His words to bring him to the faith; for He walked in their hearts.

John 14:11

Believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me.

You ought not, when you hear of 'Father' and 'Son,' to seek anything else to the establishing of the relationship as to Essence, but if this is not sufficient to prove to you the Condignity and Consubstantiality, you may learn it even from the works. Had he, he that has seen Me, has seen My Father, been used with respect to works, He would not afterwards have said,

Or else believe Me for the very works' sake. And then to show that He is not only able to do these things, but also other much greater than these, He puts them with excess. For He says not, I can do greater things than these, but, what was much more wonderful, I can give to others also to do greater things than these.

John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father.

That is, it now remains for you to work miracles, for I go away. Then when He had accomplished what His argument intended, He says,

John 14:13

Whatsoever you shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in Me.

Do you see again that it is He who does it? I, says He, will do it; not, I will ask of the Father, but, that the Father may be glorified in Me. In another place He said, God shall glorify Him in Himself John 13:32, but here, He shall glorify the Father; for when the Son shall appear with great power, He who begot shall be glorified. But what is, in My Name? That which the Apostles said, In the Name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk. Acts 3:6 For all the miracles which they did He wrought in them, and the hand of the Lord was with them. Acts 11:21

John 14:14

I will do it, He says.

Do you see His authority? The things done by means of others Himself does; has He no power for the things done by Himself, except as being wrought in by the Father? And who could say this? But why does He put it second? To confirm His own words, and to show that the former sayings were of condescension. But the, I go to the Father, is this: I shall not perish, but remain in My own proper Dignity, and Am in Heaven. All this He said, comforting them. For since it was likely that they, not yet understanding His discourses concerning the Resurrection, would imagine something dismal, He in other discourses promises that He will give them such things, soothing them in every way, and showing that He abides continually; and not only abides, but that He will even show forth greater power.

3. Let us then follow Him, and take up the Cross. For though persecution be not present, yet the season for another kind of death is with us. Mortify, it says, your members which are upon earth. Colossians 3:5 Let us then quench concupiscence, slay anger, abolish envy. This is a living sacrifice. Romans 12:1 This sacrifice ends not in ashes, is not dispersed in smoke, wants neither wood, nor fire, nor knife. For it has both fire and a knife, even the Holy Spirit. Using this knife, circumcise the superfluous and alien portion of your heart; open the closedness of your ears, for vices and evil desires are wont to stop the way against the entrance of the word.

The desire of money, when it is set before one, permits not to hear the word concerning almsgiving; and malice when it is present raises a wall against the teaching concerning love; and some other malady falling on in its turn, makes the soul yet more dull to all things. Let us then do away these wicked desires; it is enough to have willed, and all are quenched. For let us not, I entreat, look to this, that the love of wealth is a tyrannical thing, but that the tyranny is that of our own slackmindedness.

Many indeed say that they do not even know what money is. For this desire is not a natural one; such as are natural were implanted in us from the first, from the beginning, but as for gold and silver, for a long time not even what it is was known. Whence then grew this desire? From vainglory and extreme slackmindedness. For of desires some are necessary, some natural, some neither the one nor the other. For example, those which if not gratified destroy the creature are both natural and necessary, as the desire of meat and drink and sleep; carnal desire is natural indeed but not necessary, for many have got the better of it, and have not died.

But the desire of wealth is neither natural nor necessary, but superfluous; and if we choose we need not admit its beginning. At any rate, Christ speaking of virginity says, He that is able to receive it, let him receive it. Matthew 19:12 But concerning riches not so, but how? Except a man forsake all that he has, he is not worthy of Me. Luke 14:33 What was easy He recommended, but what goes beyond the many He leaves to choice. Why then do we deprive ourselves of all excuse?

The man who is made captive by some more tyrannical passion shall not suffer a heavy punishment, but he who is subdued by a weak one is deprived of all defense. For what shall we reply when He says, You saw Me hungry and fed Me not? Matthew 25:42; what excuse shall we have? We shall certainly plead poverty; yet we are not poorer than that widow, who by throwing in two mites overshot all the rest. For God requires not the quantity of the offering, but the measure of the mind; and that He does so, comes from His tender care.

Let us then, admiring His lovingkindness, contribute what is in our power, that having both in this life and in that which is to come obtained in abundance the lovingkindness of God, we may be able to enjoy the good things promised to us, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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