

Digswell Parish
2023 Bible Study
The Gospel of John
The Fourth Gospel

“This Gospel is shallow enough for a baby to bathe in and deep enough for an elephant to drown in”.
Witherington

Fourth Session: The Relationship between God & Jesus/Father & Son in St John

Monday 4 September 2023 at 7:30pm via Zoom

Meeting ID: 886 5170 4821

Passcode: 263914

A great deal of John’s Gospel deals with the inter-relationship between the three parts of the Trinity Father, Son & Holy Spirit

The interaction between the three is much more developed in John than in the Synoptics.

Bearing in mind the Gospel as a whole, think for a little while about the characterisation of each of the following – in other words, how does John teach the church about

GOD the Father ?

GOD the Son ?

GOD the Holy Spirit ?

The promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit we will look at later.

To start our discussion on the relationship between the Father and the Son reflect on John 1.1 a little bit more.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God with God, and the Word was God,

- The deeds and words of Jesus are the deeds and words of God.
- They have the same divine nature.

Another interesting question, however, is the question of dependency and obedience.

The two are described as interdependent.

But the Son is sent from the Father and seems to be dependent on the Father and is obedient to the Father.

Reflect then also on this verse.

Jesus answered: ***I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.***

John 14.6

In the Gospel of John, it is obvious that Jesus is trying to explain who he is and what his mission is as part of God the Father and the promise of the coming of his Spirit.

Watch this video presented by the theologian Paul Williams who reflects on the work of of the late Professor JDG Dunn who we were privileged to hear in the parish a few years ago:

CLICK HERE TO WATCH

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_Ir4pX4e3A

Jesus calls God the Father 100 times in John.

Quoting Jimmy Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, Williams suggests that John gives us a clearer window in Jesus' understanding of himself.

What is John's intention? See above.

What would the title Son of God have meant in the First Century?

Can St John's Gospel come to our help to give us clearer answers?

From 9 minutes in on the video – we listen particularly carefully.

Final Questions.

What does the phrase **Only Begotten Son** mean? We say it but why was it constructed for the Creed?

Before Abraham Was. I Am. 8.58 in John. We discussed this last time. Does this session help further?

Dodd compared Synoptic and Johannine material and concluded that John is so much different not least because of the discourse style.

How does our understanding of a standard biography differ from what John is writing?

Jeremias highlights the importance of God the Father in John. Jesus calling God Father is developed in John and may have been a later tradition.

There is a trajectory of increasing references to the relationship between Father and Son in the First Century.

Late and highly developed rather than historical? Does this sum up how things seem?

The Revd Canon Dr Rob Marshall Digswell August 2023