

How to See the Unseen God

by Ian Paisley

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in Jesus Christ to see the unseen God and understand the mystery of God's works.

Duration: 28:01

Scripture: John 14:1-21

Topics: "Trinity", "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as one God, just as reason, memory, and will are one soul. The preacher then discusses the reality of God's works in both the natural and spiritual worlds, highlighting the undeniable evidence of sinners being converted to God throughout history. The sermon also explores the attainability of believers to do the works of Christ and even surpass them through the power of the Holy Spirit. The preacher concludes by urging listeners to know Christ intimately and to seize the opportunity of inheriting eternal life through faith in Him.

Transcript

You will find an authorized version of the Word of God in front of you in the pew, if you pick it up and open it at John's Gospel, chapter 14. Our reading tonight is the first verses of this great chapter in John's Gospel. John's Gospel, chapter 14.

Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord show us the Father, and it suffice of us.

Jesus said 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? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but

the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works sake.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also. And greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father. But whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And God will stamp with his own divine seal of approval this reading from his very own infallible book.

I take the promised Holy Ghost, the blessed power of Pentecost to fill me to the uttermost. I take, thank God, he undertakes for me. And the people of God said, Amen.

You may be seated. My subject tonight is seeing the unseen God. And I would refer you to the portion of Scripture which I read to you.

John chapter 14, verse 8. Philip saith unto him, that is our Lord Jesus Christ, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Verse 9. Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you? And yet thou hast not known me, Philip. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.

And how seest thou them? Show us the Father. To see the unseen God is the miracle of all miracles. Is it possible we might ask for real blind human beings to see the unseen God? To think of such an experience is it blasphemy or bliss? That I, a creature of the dust, a sinner from the pit of sin itself, a piece of real humanity, can have my blindness cured so that I can see God face to face and live.

Is it reality or delusion? That this is humanly impossible is surely a fact that is incontestable. But that it is miraculously possible is a fact that is also incontestable. My authority for making that bold assertion is simply the authority of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

His bold and blessed assertion as the Son of God is this. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Our ignorance about God and of God is something we should continually mourn.

This indictment of Philip, one of the apostles by Christ, is simply shattering. Here is an apostle who had the greatest of all privileges of being with the Christ of God for a great and prolonged season of time. Yet from the lips of Christ comes this rebuke from the all-forgiving and all-pitying Son of God incarnate.

Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? Philip acted so often like ourselves, spoiled and foolish children. Think of it, for years, for at least almost three years, Philip had been in the closest possible relationship. He had listened to his words, the words of the teaching of the greatest of all teachers.

And yet he had not come to know the teacher himself. One would have thought that being so long a time with Christ, Philip would have known Christ. But alas, the answer is no.

What a tragedy we see before us when we look at Philip. Being with Christ for years, having heard the one who speak as never another man speak. Having witnessed the great miracles that no one else could perform.

Having partaken of the Saviour's love and understanding, yet he did not know Him. Christ's name may be very familiar to us, yet alas, we can still be aliens. Think of Judas Iscariot, how close he came to Jesus, yet

he remained the bosom child of hell itself.

Are we all need to be taught of God? Be alarmed tonight at this heart-shattering truth. You can keep company with Christ for years, yet never know Him as He really is. Judas never loved the Saviour.

He never knew the Saviour. That is why he betrayed Him with the kiss of a murderess. What a wonderful thing it is, in contrast, to really know Him.

To know Him lovingly, to know Him instructively, to know Him intimately, and to know Him eternally. Remember how Christ complimented Peter on such knowledge. He said, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

The great Apostle to the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul prayed earnestly that his hearers might have that experience. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, Paul prayed, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened. What sad, sad words of the Saviour are these? So long, so long, I am not speaking, Philip, of minutes, or of hours, or of days, or weeks, or months.

I am speaking now of years. I have been with you so long, and yet you have not known me. Oh, thank God this very hour, so long time can end, and your unseeing of Christ can finish, and you can see God.

Remember Christ's great affirmation here, He that has seen me, has seen the Father. Having learned the lesson of identity from that word, He that has seen me, has seen the Father, let us move to the next part of my text, which is the lesson of mystery. Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? This calls for faith.

The mystery of God is not known by earthly cleverness, but only by a heavenly imparted faith. Believe, believe, believe is the call of Christ to the sinful soul. The test of faith is the true test.

Note the divine relation. I am the definition of God's name, Jehovah. I am in the Father, and the Father in me.

This is a revelation of the undivided Trinity of God. Old Thomas Watson, the Puritan, put it well when he said, The Trinity is purely an object of faith. The long line of reason is far too short to fathom this mystery.

But where reason cannot wade, there faith can swim. There are some truths in religion which can be demonstrated as that there is a God. But the Trinity of the Persons and the unity of the essence of the Godhead is wholly supernatural and must be received and can only be received by faith.

This secret doctrine, though it is not against reason, is far above reason. Our narrow thoughts can no more comprehend the Trinity in unity than a little nutshell could hold the water of the seas. Christ brings us to another step here, the step of originality.

He says, The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. The origin of the Son's words are his Father. Christ does not speak of himself.

Christ is the channel through which the divine oil of God's operation and impartation flows. Note carefully the relationship between words and the works. Just as the words of Christ are the words of the Father, the works of Christ are the works of the Father.

This is the wonder of originality. Christ then leads us on to unity. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me.

The Father and Son are one in the unity of the Godhead. What is true of the Father is true of the Son. What is true of the Father and Son is also true of the Holy Spirit.

This is the one true God, God in Trinity and Trinity in unity. Like as the Son of the Firmament had three distinct and sundry things, of which every one differed from the other, as the globe, the light, and the heat. Although every one of these keeps severally their properties, yet it is but one Son, and it is not divided into three sons.

So in the deity the unity of the essence is not taken away by the distinction of the persons, and yet for all there is there no confounding of persons or changing of one into another. For as there is but one Son, and that one Son is through the whole world, so there is only one God. As the Son showeth Himself by His beams, even so God as Father doth show Himself by His Son Jesus Christ, who is the Eternal Word and the Eternal Wisdom.

And as the Son by His heat doth make us feel His force, even so God maketh us feel His virtue by the Holy Spirit, who is His infinite power. As reason, will, and memory are not three souls, but one, and the same soul, so Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three distinct in their property, but yet one God. But Christ takes us on another step.

He takes us to the step of reality. Else believe me, for the very work's sake. Here is something you can see with your own eyes.

The reality of God's works in the natural world can be examined and they can be tested. The reality of God's work in the spiritual world can be examined and can be tested. The demonstration of sinners converted to God in every generation is an incontestable fact.

Deity brings forth its fruits. Christ then calls us to take another step, the step of attainability. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, he that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also, because I go unto my Father.

What attainability we have here! The works of Christ when on earth will be surpassed by his work for us in heaven, and the baptism of his church on earth with power from on high. Christ finally brings us to the last step of opportunity. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in.

If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. The world has yet to see what prayer can accomplish. Ask, and ye shall receive.

Sinner, ask for salvation, and ye shall receive, dear wandering soul. Ask for the rest of pardon, peace, and life everlasting, and you shall receive it. Saint of God, ask for renewal and strength, and ye shall receive it.

Whatsoever ye require is because of the reality and blessing of God held out to you as a golden opportunity to receive what you need for the betterment, the eternal betterment of your soul. We come, dear Jesus, to thy throne to open all our grief. Now send the promised mercy down, and grant us quick relief.

Ne'er didst thou say to Jacob's seed, Seek ye my face in vain. And canst thou now deny thine end when burdened hearts, the same of thy power, thy love the same, unmoved the promise shines? Eternal truth surrounds thine ear, and guards the precious lines. O Satan, rage, and flesh rebel, and unbelief arise.

We'll wait around his footstool still, for Jesus hears. Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will answer thee, and thou shalt look. Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. The outstretched kneel-pierced hand of the praying Savior is extended to you tonight.

And in the depths of your soul, you can seize the opportunity of inheriting eternal life by sympathy in the Son of God. The door of God's mercy is open. The invitation to God's mercy from the lips of Christ rings in your ears.

Now is the time to step out of death into life, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God. I trust tonight, dear sinner friend, you will take that step, and step from the darkness of being a lost soul to the eternal light of being a saved soul forevermore. He that has seen me has seen the Father.

Look to Christ and to Christ alone. He will save you. Hallelujah! He will save you now.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Father in heaven, we thank thee for thy good and holy word. Write it upon all our hearts, and grant that none may leave this meeting house tonight until they have found Christ freely offered to them in the gospel.

O may they come in the simplicity of heart and mind and soul, pleading that great promise, he that has seen me has seen the Father. And grant us by looking to Christ, their soul might be reconciled through Christ to the Father of the Holy Spirit. And the great trinity of the Godhead will reside in their hearts and in their minds and in their souls forevermore.

Write thy word upon our hearts. May we obey it in the fullness of joy and rejoice in its saving and satisfying power. For Jesus' sake and the people of God's sake, amen.

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