

Jesus Declares His Father

By Nathan Warner

*“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, **He has declared Him.**”*

(John 1:18 NKJV)

“For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.” (John 3:34 NASB)

From the beginning of creation, Jesus has always declared His Father (or explained, or made Him known) – He is the declaration of God’s will. As God’s Son, Jesus makes known the thoughts, desires, and intentions of His Father.

To declare is “to say or state (something) in an official or public way” (Merriam Webster) and “to announce something clearly, firmly, publicly, or officially” (Oxford Dictionary of the English Language). This is why Jesus is called God’s Word. He firmly states the will of His Father publically. Jesus is the spokesperson of the Trinity (someone who speaks for another or a group), and the Holy Spirit is the “breath” of God that carries the Word into all creation. Because Jesus is God’s Son, the creation sees and hears God the Father when they see and hear God the Son. This is why Jesus said, “*He who has seen Me has seen the Father*” (John 14:9b), for “*you have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form*” (John 5:37b).

Jesus Declared His Father from the Beginning

Before the New Testament, Jesus was not an unknown spectator in the shadows. From the beginning, He has always declared His Father’s will in Words of power. The first recorded Words He spoke caused the creation of the Universe: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made*” (John 1:1-3 ESV). “*By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the Word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible*” (Hebrews 11:3 NASB). Jesus officially and publically spoke the commandments of His Father that brought everything into being: “*Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light*” (Genesis 1:3). In like manner, Jesus explained thousands of years later, “*The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works*” (John 14:10b).

From creation on, “the Word of the Lord” came mostly to individuals who were instructed to act on the Word or make it known to their fellow man in turn. In this way, the Word of the Lord came to Noah, Abraham, and Moses (to name a few). Just as God let His Son speak for Him, so the Son let men and women of Faith speak for Him, officially declaring the Father’s will to the nations. Over a thousand times in the Old Testament, “the Word of the Lord” came to someone, or the Lord “declared” something to mankind through a Prophet who declared, “Thus says the Lord” to their neighbors. Each and every time, the Words that were delivered were made known by Jesus on His Father’s behalf, and the Prophets wrote the Words down by the will of God, guided by His Spirit, so there would be a permanent record of God’s declarations. But the Father was going to use His Son in a new way to declare His will.

Jesus Declared His Father in the Flesh

In the fullness of time, the Father sent His Son and spokesperson physically to earth, to declare His will in person. *“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth”* (John 1:14). Now God would declare more about His nature and character in the life lived by His Son as a man in the world. Jesus came to preach the Good News of reconciliation to His Father through His own death and resurrection. *“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself not counting their trespasses against them”* (2 Corinthians 5:19a). Everywhere Jesus went and whomever He was with, *“He was speaking the Word to them”* (Mark 4:33b). These Words were not lost, nor just for the hearers in Israel, for just before He went to the cross, Jesus told His disciples, *“the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you”* (John 14:26). *“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning”* (John 15:26-27).

Believers Declare Jesus in Turn

The Words Jesus declared on earth, would be written down as Scripture by the Apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, just as the Old Testament declarations were, so that there would be an eternal record of God’s will to mankind: *“Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, but at the proper time manifested, even His Word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior”* (Titus 1:1-3). God *“has committed to us the Word of reconciliation”* (2 Corinthians 5:19b). Just as Jesus declares His Father’s will, we are entrusted to declare Jesus’ Word to the world. Therefore, we are to *“preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction[...], be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry”* (2 Timothy 4:2&5).

The Holy Spirit Breathes the Word

But Believers today cannot literally hear Jesus speaking, like the Apostles could. Speech is much more effective at conveying meaning than written words. So have we lost the meaning of the Word? Absolutely not! *“‘For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him?’ But we have the mind of Christ”* (1 Cor. 2:16). God’s written Word, the Scriptures, can be “heard” and understood, through the inspiration (or breath) of the Holy Spirit as Christ’s mind in you. Elihu rebuked Job’s friends rightly when he observed, *“I said, ‘Let days speak, and many years teach wisdom.’ But it is the Spirit in man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand”* (Job 32:7-8 ESV). When it comes to God’s Word, it is not education or experience that makes us understand but the Holy Spirit of God. We see in God’s Word that breath most often signifies life from God, and *“all Scripture is inspired [God-breathed] by God”* (2 Timothy 3:16a). God’s Spirit breathed His Life-giving Word into the Prophets and Apostles to write it in the Scriptures, just as He breathes it to Life from the Scriptures into Believers by His Spirit.

Just so, you must be “in Christ” to have understanding of His Word: “*by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God*” (1 Cor. 1:30a). Jesus told the Pharisees: “**He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God**” (John 8:47). He spoke this to the teachers of the Scriptures, who read them daily, but they could not “hear” the Words of God, because they were not “of God.” You must “be of God” to “hear the Word of God.” This means you have His Spirit in you – you are born-again, changed into a new creation by the Holy Spirit through the Salvation in Jesus Christ: “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*” (Revelation 2:29). Anyone can read the Scriptures, but without the Spirit of God they cannot understand it. This is why “*the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God*” (1 Corinthians 1:18).

Jesus promised the Spirit to His disciples: “*But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you*” (John 16:13-15). Jesus declares His Father’s Word and the Holy Spirit breathes the Word to Life in those who know Jesus.

Jesus Reveals God Intimately to the Church

“*The Word of the Lord endures forever.*’ *And this is the Word that was preached to you*” (1 Peter 1:25). Jesus has been, is, and always will be God’s revelation of Himself to all creation. Through Jesus, God reveals Himself more and more intimately to mankind.

Through Christ’s atonement, the Believer is adopted as a son of the Father, “*born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God*” (1 Peter 1:23). “*Beloved, NOW we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we WILL be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is*” (1 John 3:2).

Yes, God will reveal Himself even more to us in Jesus. Now we are betrothed to Jesus as His Bride (the Church), “*so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word*” (Ephesians 5:26). But we are physically apart from Jesus until He comes to take His Bride away to her heavenly wedding (Revelation 19:7) when we will see Him face-to-face and never leave His side, “*and so we shall always be with the Lord*” (1 Thessalonians 4:17b). We will know the Word of God intimately and become one with Him, even as we are spiritually one with Him now. Jesus prayed, “*The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me*” (John 17:22-23). “*By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit*” (1 John 4:13), for “*the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him*” (1 Cor. 6:17).

Therefore, while we watch for our Lord’s return for us, “*let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God*” (Colossians 3:16). Even so, amen.