



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

A Systematic Study of Bible Teachings (Dogmatics)

Lesson 6.1.2 – The Doctrine of Jesus, Son of God, Messiah (Christology)

Jesus Does the Works of God

We recognize that there are certain things only God can do. We think of such divine works as creation, preservation, the giving and restoring of life – both physical and spiritual, the administration of final judgment, and the final destruction of Satan and all the forces of evil. In the Scriptures we read of Jesus doing all these divine works, or promising to do them in the future; therefore, we can conclude that Jesus must be God Himself, for no one other than God can do these works.

Jesus was involved in the creation of the world. We read in John 1:3: **“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”** The apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth: **“For us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live”** (1 Corinthians 8:6). Likewise, Paul wrote to the Christians in Colossae: **“By Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him”** (Colossians 1:16). The letter to the Hebrews says that Psalm 102 refers to the Son of God when it says: **“You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands”** (Hebrews 1:10).

Jesus remains involved in the preservation of the world. We read in Colossians 1:17: **“He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”** This means that all things are held together by Him. This is stated also in Hebrews 1:3, where we read that Jesus is at this very moment **“upholding all things by the word of His power.”** Jesus Himself referred to His work of preservation when He told His Jewish accusers: **“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working”** (John 5:17). They accused Him of working on the Sabbath, which contrary to the law. Jesus responded that He has never stopped working, just like His Father. He said: **“The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner”** (John 5:19).

Jesus is also the giver of life, as well as the restorer of life – both physical and spiritual. Jesus continued His discussion with His opponents in John 5 with these words: **“As the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will”** (John 5:21).

Jesus explained that He gives spiritual life to us through His voice, that is, through His word. On last day Jesus will give physical life to all who will have died, but Jesus first talked about spiritual life: **“He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself”** (John 5:24-26). In these verses, Jesus is talking about the spiritually dead, not those who have died physically. Spiritually dead people are given new spiritual life by the voice (the word) of Jesus.

In the following verses, Jesus talks about those who have died physical. He says that all those who have died from the beginning of the world to the end of the world will be given physical life through the voice of the Son of God on the last day. **“For the hour is coming, in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation”** (John 5:28-29).

Jesus later explained who those persons are who have done good and will receive the resurrection of life: **“This is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day”** (John 6:40). All who are in their graves, that is, all who have ever died physically, will rise from the dead on the last day. But only those who have been given spiritual life by hearing Jesus’ words and believing them during their physical life will be raised from the dead to enjoy everlasting life. The others will rise only to be condemned to eternal death.

Already in His earthly ministry Jesus showed His power over death. When He went to the place where His friend Lazarus was buried: **“Jesus cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth!’ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Loose him, and let him go’”** (John 11:43-44). Jesus foretold that He would even raise Himself from the dead, and this came to pass also. Jesus said: **“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again”** (John 10:17-18). Even Thomas was convinced by the risen Jesus that He must be God, and cried out: **“My Lord and my God”** (John 20:28). This same Jesus **“will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself”** (Philippians 3:21). Anyone who can subdue death itself must surely be God.

Yet another work of God that Jesus will do in the future is to judge the world on the last day. Jesus said: **“The Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father”** (John 5:22-23). The Father **“has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man”** (John 5:27). When Peter was invited to the home of the Gentile Cornelius, he told Cornelius and his guests **“that it is He (Jesus) who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead”** (Acts 10:42). Therefore, when that last day comes, **“we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ”** (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Jesus’ return to judge will also be the final fall of Satan. Satan was defeated already when Jesus died and rose again: **“He Himself likewise shared in the same (flesh and blood), that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”** (Hebrews 2:14-15). In this way God’s original promise of the Savior was fulfilled: **“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel”** (Genesis 3:15).

The contemporaries of Jesus had no excuse for not recognizing that Jesus is the Son of God – God Himself on earth. Consider the signs and miracles Jesus did before their very eyes. At least 35 of Jesus’ miracles, plus Jesus’ own resurrection, are recorded in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus did no miracles in His childhood or in His young adulthood. There are some false gospels that recount supposed miracles that Jesus did when He was young. But these were never accepted as true accounts by the early church. The Bible clearly says that Jesus’ first miracle was His changing of water into wine at a wedding in Cana when He was about 30 years old: **“This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him”** (John 2:11).

Jesus challenged those who spoke against Him: **“If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him”** (John 10:37-38). In a similar way Jesus told His own disciples: **“Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves”** (John 14:11). Indeed, Jesus’ enemies were without excuse for rejecting Him. Jesus summarized their situation by saying: **“If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause’”** (John 15:24-25).

Besides the miracles recorded in the Bible, Jesus must have done many more, for John writes: **“Truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name”** (John 20:30-31). While we may not know all the miracles Jesus performed during His ministry, the accounts we have in the Bible are sufficient for us to believe that Jesus is the Christ and have eternal life in His name.

Questions

1. List some of the works of God that Jesus did that prove that He is God.
2. To what extent was Jesus involved in the creation of the world?
3. How is Jesus involved now in the preservation of the world?
4. What is the difference between spiritual life and physical life?
5. How does Jesus give spiritual life to the spiritually dead?
6. How will Jesus give physical life to those who are physically dead?
7. How did Jesus show His power over death during His earthly ministry?
8. How did Jesus show His power over Satan during His earthly ministry?
9. What division will there be when the dead arise on the last day?
10. What kind of bodies will believers have after the resurrection?
11. Why are Jesus' enemies without excuse?
12. List as many of Jesus' 35 miracles as you can.
13. Why did Jesus do all these miracles?