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An Autobiography John 16:28-30

Intro: We have been looking at the summary statements delivered by Jesus Christ to His disciples at the conclusion of His final teaching session with them the very night He was arrested, tried and executed. I say these comments are summaries because these are all topics that He has spoken of many times and this deliberate repetition combined with the critical timing of the delivery points to the great importance Jesus ascribes to each of these subjects. Keep in mind that these are virtually the last words of teaching Jesus will speak to His disciples before His death. Last time we looked at the topic of prayer again and discussed 11 important reasons why we as believers should pray. We also looked at the nature and privilege of prayer, the conditions of effective prayer and the new, two-fold promise Jesus gave us in regards to prayer. Clearly, Jesus believed the exercise of prayer to be of the utmost importance.

The next topic Jesus mentions is found in **vs28** and it concerns His ultimate origin and destination. On the surface, it appears to be a very simple and basic declaration but those 2 sentences pack a multitude of theological truths.

28-30- What Jesus says about Himself in **28** is a deeply profound statement that concerns His true nature, His heavenly origins and His heavenly destination. At the same time, His comment was so simple that not only did the disciples understand it; they believed they now understood a lot more than they actually did. They apparently feel that whatever doubt or difficulty they might have had about Jesus has suddenly been cleared up. Obviously, they didn't understand everything Jesus had been saying. On that side of the cross, no one but Jesus could have known what all was involved in His leaving the Father and then returning to Him again. Also, if the disciples had really had a handle on what Jesus had been telling them, they would have reacted differently when the real crisis came.

The truth is; we can't fault the disciples for all they didn't know, even if they should have known. But, in the final analysis, what we see here is the disciples moving out of their spiritual stupor and making a tremendous

affirmation of faith in Jesus. They might not know everything but they have full confidence that Jesus does and that's saying a whole lot. These men were still messed up: their claim of spiritual knowledge was presumptuous; they couldn't grasp the reason or meaning of His promised resurrection and even after it happened, they were still bewildered as to the future of Israel. These guys were messed up but God still used them mightily. Why? Faith in Jesus Christ. It wasn't the fact that they had faith that made them useful, but who they had faith in. Faith is only effective for salvation and service when it is placed in Someone deserving of our faith. That Someone can only be Jesus Christ.

We've roasted the disciples long enough. Let's back up and take a closer look at what Jesus is really talking about in [vs28](#). What we have here is the great movement of salvation (macro). This movement has 2 parts: from heaven to earth and back again and both movements are critical. Jesus' heavenly origin is important or else He couldn't be our Savior. His heavenly destination is also important as it is evidence of the Father's approval of His saving work. There are 4 specific theological truths in this verse that we must unpack if we are to understand what Jesus is saying.

1) His heavenly origin: "I came forth from the Father..." This is mostly what the disciples understood as [30b](#) confirms but what did they actually believe Jesus was saying? No doubt they understood Him to mean He was the Messiah. This was the common phrase people used to refer to the Messiah – He had come from God ([3:2](#)) or had come into the world ([6:14](#); [11:27](#)). So, this phrase at least identifies Jesus as the One sent into the world by God to accomplish the work of redemption. But, is that all it means? No, It means much more than just that. Jesus was not just a special servant of God's; He was with God from all eternity and was God Himself. We've already seen this in His teaching.

For example, His declaration to the religious leaders in [John 8:58](#) (Before Abraham was, I am) is a direct reference to His heavenly existence before His virgin birth. His hearers took this as blasphemy because they immediately wanted to stone Him. Jesus also told Nicodemus, "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven" ([3:13](#)). He also said, "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?" ([6:62](#)) and, "I have come down from heaven, not to do My will, but the will of Him who sent Me"

(6:38).

These are claims to both preexistence in eternity and deity, and they're so frequently found in the public and private teaching of Jesus that we can honestly say: if we don't know this about Him, we don't know anything. Jesus claimed to be God and to have come forth from God and did so unapologetically. Is He? This can only be a true statement or a devilish lie? Alexander Maclaren "The meekest, lowliest, and most sane and wise of religious teachers made deliberately over and over again this claim, which is either absolutely true, and lifts Him into the region of the Deity, or else is fatal to His pretensions to be either meek or modest, or wise or sane, or a religious teacher to whom it is worth our while to listen." This claim to deity is simple but stupendous. There can be no honest assessment of Christ that does not result in committing ourselves either to the truthfulness or falseness of those statements.

2) His incarnation: "and have come into the world..." Note that He used the word "come" instead of "sent". It's true He was sent into the world by the Father but that's not the point He's emphasizing here. He's emphasizing the voluntary nature of His incarnation. He didn't have to be born in human flesh but He was because He wanted to be. How many other people can say that? But this raises an even bigger question. Why did He choose to be born as a human? Why did the eternal Son of God become man? 1st) He became a man in order to become our Savior, to die in our place and pay the penalty of our sins so that we might be saved from the penalty and power of sin and for heaven. This is the work of atonement mentioned previously. It's like the traffic court judge who saw his own son come before his bench, accused of reckless driving. The charge was clearly proven, and the judge fined the young man the full amount permitted under the law. Then the judge adjourned the court, stepped down from the bench, and paid his son's fine. Jesus Christ, as God, voluntarily came down off the bench to pay the fine He had imposed on us.

2nd) Jesus came into the world as a man to reveal God. This is also clearly evident in passages where Jesus speaks of having "come" into the world or of having been "sent" into the world by God. "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me" (7:16). "I speak what I have seen with My Father" (8:38). "The word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me" (14:24). The point is, Jesus possessed firsthand information about God the

Father and thus He should be trusted and believed when He speaks of spiritual things.

3) His voluntary departure “Again, I leave the world...” This statement provides the only proper light in which to view the nature of His crucifixion. This means that the crucifixion was not something thrust upon Jesus against His will. It was, instead, the conclusion His entire ministry was directed to and the result He joyfully embraced as He clearly stated in [John 10:17-18](#).

We hear a lot of talk about love and God is assumed to be the essence of love. But, where is God’s love most readily and obviously seen? It’s only at the cross of Jesus Christ, in His voluntary death for us, that we learn that God truly is love. Love is seen at the cross. That’s why there’s hardly a Bible verse which speaks of God’s love that does not speak of Christ’s voluntary sacrifice (same context / verse). [John 3:16](#); [Gal 2:20](#); [I John 4:10](#) “In this is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation (atoning sacrifice) for our sins.”

4) His destiny “and go to the Father.” What is the significance for us that Jesus has returned to the Father, having come to this earth and having died for our salvation? There are several answers. 1st) it shows us that the work of redemption is completed and that we can be *confident* as we come to God on the basis of Christ’s finished work. If the work wasn’t finished, Jesus would still be here completing it. But it’s done! So, Jesus has returned to heaven, where He’s sat down at the Father’s right hand. ([Heb 10:12-14](#)).

2nd) His return to heaven shows us He’s now in a position where He’s able to provide all spiritual gifts and blessings to us as He sees we have need of them. The first of these gifts was the Holy Spirit but there are other gifts too and Jesus gives spiritual gifts to whom He wills at the time they are needed for the advancement of His kingdom.

3rd) Christ’s position at the right hand of the Father is where He intercedes for us. It is Jesus’ present position in heaven that makes us confident of our salvation and our approach to God in our prayer and worship.

4th) His present position in heaven is a token that He’s coming to earth again, but this time He will show up in great power and glory and with His

holy angels. Jesus is coming. This is as sure as the fact that he has come once to die for our salvation. Are you ready to meet Him? Will you greet Him as your Savior, or will you have to greet Him as one whose love you have spurned, whose sacrifice you have repudiated? You will either greet Him as your Savior or you will greet Him as your Judge; which would you rather?

None of this information is new to most of us so why go through it all again? Because it is true (always has been/ always will be) and as such, it bears repeating, remembering and most importantly, it demands a response! There may be someone here today that believes Jesus was a great man and a great teacher. There's nothing wrong with that! It's actually a good thing but that belief is not enough to save you from the guilt of your sin. Why stop there?

Why stop with Jesus the man? Why not accept the whole truth about Jesus as is presented here in [vs28](#)? These 4 facts—the dwelling with the Father in eternity past; the voluntary coming to earth; the voluntary leaving earth; and, again, the dwelling with the Father in eternity future—are the indestructible walls of a strong fortress that we can run to for safety (spiritual, practical, eternal). These walls have withstood every assault from every side and have done so because they are undeniably true.

This means that if you think of Jesus as just a good guy, you can do so no longer. Logic and rational demand that if His statements concerning Himself are true, then you must see Him as God and respond to what God has for you in Jesus. Either Jesus is God, as He claimed to be, or He is a lunatic and a madman. There is no middle ground. Since He is clearly not a madman, He must be God and as such, we must respond to His offer of grace with acceptance and repentance. This is the only positive response a person can have with Jesus, any other response would be a rejection of the grace He offers and rebellion against the forgiveness of sins He died to secure.

For believer's, what do these truths have to teach us today? If we are truly God's people and have accepted Jesus for who He says He then these truths should compel us to approach the Father regularly in full confidence, to walk this Christian life with an unwavering faith and to serve our Lord with an unquestioning obedience. We must continue to trust Him to be exactly who He says He is and when we do, the Holy Spirit will have free reign in

our lives to accomplish His work of sanctification in making us more like Jesus.

Do we believe what Jesus has said about Himself? Our lives will give the accurate answer to that question. ☺