

John 14: Jesus' "Father" Theology

Jesus' "In" Teaching

John 14.11-14

Jesus' "in" theology

¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?

The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority.

Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work. > "in-living"

¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me;

or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. > "in-believing"

¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, > "in-asking"

so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

> "in-glorifying"

¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

> "in my name"

How does Jesus speak and work?

“Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work.”

Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

JOHN 5.19

- ❖ People often marveled at the works (and words) of Jesus, speculating how he had the ability to do such miracles (cf. Matthew 7.28; 9.33; 13.54). In response to Philip’s request that Jesus show them the Father, Jesus elaborated on the dynamic of “in” and addressed the flawed understanding of the disciples.
- ❖ While the disciples believed in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God, they had failed to truly comprehend the “in” relationship that was at the heart of everything that Jesus said and did: *“it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work.”*

- ❖ Jesus characterized this “in” dynamic with a negative and a positive:
 - ▶ He did not speak on his own authority;
 - ▶ His works were the result of the Father’s indwelling presence and influence.
- ❖ Jesus has clearly identified himself as the Son of God, making himself equal to the Father—so why does he insist that he can do nothing by himself? In our previous study of this passage, we examined the principle of *indivisible unity*:
 - ▶ This indivisible unity is found in their shared essence and deep mutual relationship. Jesus is *God-the-Son-One-and-Only* (P^{14, 18}), sharing the same essence and nature with the Father. In Jesus, the Father is both revealed and expressed, an expression that is infinitely complete (“*glory . . . full of*”)—in truth, grace, life, judgment. Jesus speaks for the Father and the Father executes His explicit will and purposes through the Son (14.10c).

It is not a matter of inability or inferiority; it is a principle of union and glorifying.

- ❖ Jesus had previously elaborated on this in his discourse with the Pharisees after the healing of the lame man at the pool. It will be the culminating emphasis of his intercession for his disciples this evening when he will pray:

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in me and I am in You. I have given them the glory that You gave me, that they may be one as We are one — I in them and You in me — so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that You sent me and have loved them even as You have loved me. Father, I want those You have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory You have given me because You loved me before the creation of the world.” (17.20-24)

- ❖ In contrast to Lucifer who sought his own glory, Jesus, who came to destroy the works of the devil, sought only the Father’s glory. In contrast to Lucifer who exalted himself, Jesus, while equal with the Father, in order to reveal Him here on earth, humbled himself and lived in absolute union with the Father. It was through that “in” union that the will of heaven was made known on earth.

- ❖ This dynamic has been on display throughout the life and ministry of Jesus. As an essential and transferable truth, it was on display earlier this evening as Jesus washed the feet of his disciples (13.12-17) and gave them the new imperative (13.33-34).
- ❖ Jesus will build on this truth as he extends this “in” theology to the relationship of his disciples to him and their ability to “glorify”—

‘Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.’ (15.4-8)

- ❖ The disciples must comprehend this “in” theology—and so must we, for it determines our *viability* as followers of Jesus Christ and our *ability* to reveal him to this world with an effectiveness that can transform lives.