

Christ Deity in John

Miracles and Witnesses

John is writing to show that Jesus is God. It is interesting that he only records seven miracles (Jesus did many more, 21:24-25). Each of these highlights a different aspect of His deity. The characteristics of Jesus' miracles are:

1. They are instant
2. When He heals it is a total healing
3. He has the power to heal birth defects
4. He heals everyone that he attempts to
5. He has the power to raise the dead.

<u>Passage</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Need Met</u>
1. 2:5-10	Transformed Quality	Absence of resource
2. 4:6	Removal of distressing elements	Human Weakness
3. 5:1	Reversal of atrophy	Powerlessness
4. 6:5	Multiplication of quantity	Limited resources
5. 6:15	Transcends laws of nature	Exhausted efforts
6. 9:1	Heals birth defect	Incompleteness
7. 11:1-45	Gave life	No life

7 Witnesses of Christ

1. John the Baptist-1:6-7
2. Works- 5:36
3. Father – 5:37
4. The Scriptures- 5:39
5. Holy Spirit- 15:26
6. The Disciples- 15:27
7. John- 21:24

Adapted from
THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST INCARNATE
The Upper Room Discourse
By Lewis Sperry Chafer, D.D., Litt.D., Th.D.
Bibliotheca Sacra, 109, 1952.

NOTE: The full article is available upon request, 25 pages

The third and last of Christ's major discourses is recorded in John, chapters [13](#) to [17](#), and though given to His disciples, as are the other two, this is even more distinctive in character and purpose than the two already considered. The attentive and discerning student must become aware upon consideration of this portion that he is confronted at once with that form of doctrine which belongs only to the Church in the present age, and that it, unlike the Sermon on the Mount or the Olivet Discourse which look backward to the Old Testament setting, looks forward into the following portions of the New Testament, which was then unwritten. This address—termed a conversation by some—is the seed plot of all grace teachings, and it is asserted here that in no portion of the Scriptures is Christian doctrine is more clearly announced.

In view of the habit of some theologians calling all Biblical doctrine Christian, it is pointed out again that that which is Christian in character is distinguished from Judaism and is confined to God's purpose in the present age, namely, the outcalling from both Jews and Gentiles of those who having been transformed through redeeming grace are the Body and Bride of Christ. The truth related to the Church, this heavenly people, is found in the latter portions of the New Testament, or, more definitely, all that follows the Synoptic Gospels. Since this heavenly company is to be distinguished from all other peoples of the earth by differences which are immeasurable, it is to be expected that there will be a body of revelation specifically addressed to and designed for them. There is such a body of truth and its first pronouncement was made by Christ Himself in the upper room. The Upper Room Discourse is, therefore, the voice of Christ and is the foundation of that which constitutes the positions, possessions, and privileges of the Christian.

Attention is called to the great difference which obtains between the three major discourses of Christ—so great, indeed, that they would hardly be attributed to the same speaker; but the Sermon on the Mount and the Olivet Discourse, since related directly or indirectly to the oncoming Messianic kingdom, have that much in common. Over against this, it will be seen that there is no bond of truth whatsoever between the two discourses already considered and the Upper Room Discourse. These far-reaching declarations should be attested by every student; and it is confidently believed that to identify the varied character of these discourses is to reach the foundation of a right understanding of the Sacred

Text. Especially is it true that to comprehend the exact teachings of Christ in the upper room is to become aware of that which is purely Christian in its character. Likewise, attention is again called to the transition that evidently took place in the two or three days that intervened between the giving of the Olivet Discourse, which was addressed to the disciples as representative men of Judaism, and the Upper Room Discourse, which contemplates these men as no longer in Jewish law (cf. [John 15:25](#)) but as clean through the Word spoken unto them ([John 13:10](#); [15:3](#)); and no greater transformation could be indicated than is asserted by Christ when He said of these men, “They are not of the world [cosmos], even as I am not of the world” ([John 17:14](#), [16](#)) and these are now sent into the world (cosmos) as the Father sent the Son into the world ([John 17:18](#)). They are now vitally related to Christ as is indicated by the words, “Ye in me, and I in you” ([John 14:20](#)). They now form a new unity comparable only to that which exists between the Father and the Son. Of this unity Christ said, “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou has sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me” ([John 17:21–23](#)). To these same men the entire new body of doctrine was delivered and from that time forth they found their relationship in the Headship of the One who died for them and in whom they were raised to newness of life. This discourse is clearly dated with reference to its application. It was to go into effect only after His death, His resurrection, His ascension and after the descent of the Spirit on Pentecost (cf. [John 13:19](#); [14:20](#), [25](#); [16:8](#), [13](#)). In other words, these age-transforming events are required before this age could be inaugurated. These men must await the outworking of the plan of God. It was said by Christ to them that they would come into the knowledge of the truth and know their relationship when the Spirit came (cf. [John 13:7](#); [16:12–15](#); [17:13–14](#), [16](#)). No such doctrine had ever been introduced into the world before. It is foreign to those Scriptures which went before.

There are at least seven main doctrines presented in this discourse. These are not approached in a systematic and orderly teaching. The first twelve chapters of John declare the gospel of divine grace for the unsaved. Beginning with chapter [13](#), truth is presented which applies only to those who are saved; even [John 16:7–11](#), though defining the Spirit’s work for the unsaved, is not a message to them, but is a message of immeasurable value to the believer in directing his testimony and soul-winning activities. The major themes which are included in this discourse and which are so vital to Christian life and service are: (a) a new relationship to God through Christ, (b) cleansing unto unbroken fellowship, (c) abiding in Christ for fruit bearing, (d) a new relationship to the Holy Spirit, (e) a new relationship between believers, (f) a new ground of prayer, and (g) a new hope.

A. New relationship to God

In the Epistles—notably Romans—the supreme act of God which consummates all His mighty undertakings in the believer’s salvation is justification, and justification, which is God’s acknowledgment of the believer’s perfection being in Christ, is made righteously possible only because of the truth that the saved one has been so vitally and eternally joined to Christ that he partakes actually and fully of what Christ is. Christ, be it said, is the righteousness of God. To be in

Christ, then, is the greatest reality that can ever characterize a human being.

Justification, then, does not make the believer righteous; it is the divine acknowledgment or proclamation of the fact that the believer is righteous. The formula stands, namely, the believer is righteous because he is in Christ, and he is justified because he is righteous. God could not be just Himself and do otherwise than to justify the one who, being in Christ, is made the righteousness of God. What is declared to be a New Creation is that entity which is formed by the union of the resurrected Christ with those who are in Him. The term Church is applied to the Body and Bride of Christ. It represents the company of believers apart from or in distinction to the Head and Bridegroom; It incorporates the resurrected Christ and all that are in Him.

It is such knowledge-surpassing truth as this which advances the New Testament revelation over that of the Old Testament. It must be obvious to the most casual observer that no such relationship is contemplated in the Old Testament, the Synoptics, or even in John's Gospel until the record is given of this Upper Room Discourse. As before stated, the first twelve chapters of John—apart from the record of Christ's reasoning with the Jews—present the gospel of salvation by grace, and it is not until the record of the Upper Room Discourse that the word appears in the entire Sacred Text that the believer is in Christ. The first reference to this organic, vital union between Christ and the believer occurs in [John 14:20](#), which reads, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

B. Cleansing for Unbroken Fellowship

In the order of Christ's own approach to the themes which this discourse sets forth, this one respecting the cleansing of the believer unto unbroken fellowship with the Father and the Son is the opening theme. There should be no confusing of this doctrine with that of the salvation of the lost, which doctrine asserts that there is a complete removal of all condemnation for time and eternity from the one who believes. As it has been often stated, those who are in view in this discourse are considered as clean through the Word spoken to them and accepted as being in Christ. But, since sin continues to some degree in the Christian, there is needed a constant removal of defilement. This is not a renewal of salvation, but is rather a cleansing to the end that fellowship with the Father and with the Son may be unhindered

C. Abiding in Christ for Fruit Bearing

What is known as a spiritual life ([1 Cor. 2:15](#)) is the result or product of the unhindered energy of the indwelling Spirit ([Phil. 2:13](#)), who undertakes in connection with two major realities, namely, the suppression of evil in the life and the expression of that which is good. Though of great value in itself, a life is not spiritual in the fullest sense when only evil is overcome. Such an achievement is negative. The positive output of divine virtues sustained by divine enablement is required as well. A believer should not measure his spirituality by reckoning only the evil things which he does not do; the spiritual life is better measured by the God-honoring things which he does. In the preceding division of this thesis the removal of defilement has been in view and that discussion could have been extended to the control of those tendencies in life which engender evil conduct. In the present section, fruit bearing, effectual prayer, and joy are set forth as the result of abiding in Christ. The truth presented in the former division as disclosed in [John 13:1–10](#) represents a negative aspect of spirituality, while the truth set

forth in the figure of the vine and the branches presents a positive spirituality. This thought of abiding in Christ does not suggest the idea of remaining in a saved state, but it does indicate unbroken communion with Christ on the part of the one who through infinite grace has entered into an unchangeable union with Christ. This truth is established fully by Christ Himself as recorded in [John 15:10](#), “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.”

There is little need for the utterly new character of this body of truth to be pointed out. No saint of old, under any circumstances, ever sustained a perfected position in Christ, and apart from this perfected position there could be no rightful use of this figure. The saints of old had no vital union to Christ, hence they could sustain no vital communion with Christ

D. A New Relationship to the Holy Spirit

If a dominating theme is to be found in this discourse, it is Christ’s announcement of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world to continue the Former’s ministry as Παράκλητος throughout this age.

For three and one-half years Christ had been the All-Sufficient One to the disciples. He was about to withdraw, but they are not to be left unattended. Another Παράκλητος was to come, as He did come on the Day of Pentecost. The new Advocate was to be to men more than the bodily presence of Christ had been. It was better that Christ should go away and that the Spirit should come. That the present provision in which the Third Person indwells every believer is advantageous needs but a moment’s reflection. The Christ of the three and one-half years was not in all places at the same time. When Lazarus was ill, Christ was removed from the Bethany home by a two-day journey. Under the present relationship between the Holy Spirit and the believer, there is never a separation, nor is there occasion to share Him with others or to await available moments of contact. He the indwelling Spirit is the priceless heritage of every Christian in every moment of the Christian’s life. two age-characterizing realities: (1) That the Spirit should be given as an indwelling Person to each of the eleven men present. They, according to Old Testament usage, had been accustomed to think of the Spirit as bestowed only for very specific purposes by the sovereign will of God. That the Spirit might be given to all men of faith and without exception was wholly new to them. Thus was introduced one of the greatest features of the new dispensation that was then coming into view—a feature too often overlooked by theologians, that the Spirit is given to all believers from the least of them to the greatest of them. Though emphasized constantly in the Epistles, this fact of the indwelling Spirit is here announced by Christ for the first time. (2) The second age-characterizing feature is the truth that the indwelling of the Spirit in the child of God is an unchangeable fact. Christ prayed that the Spirit might abide with believers forever, and that prayer is answered as definitely and certainly as the prayer that the Spirit should come at all.

E. A New Relationship Between Believers

The devout mind must stand in awe and wonder when, having contemplated the ineffable mystery of unity in the blessed Trinity, it is told that, in answer to Christ’s prayer, believers are related to each

other in a unity comparable only to the unity between the Father and the Son. When in the Scriptures a truth is stated twice it assumes important emphasis (cf. [John 17:14, 16](#); [Gal. 1:8–9](#)). Should it be declared three times the emphasis is extreme; but, when presented four times in the same context, all human measurements with regard to relative importance are surpassed. It would seem, too, that when speaking to the Father all repetitions on the part of the Son would be superfluous; yet in His High Priestly prayer Christ prays four times for this unity between believers to be wrought by God. In [John 17:11](#) it is recorded that He asked “that they may be one, as we are.” In verses [21–23](#) He repeats this petition three times—“that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee . . .,” “that they may be one, even as we are one,” and “that they may be made perfect in one.” No human mind can comprehend the importance of this fourfold petition voiced by the Son to the Father. The unity desired is that which the Father alone could accomplish; for Christ not only appeals to the Father for its realization, but He indicates its super exalted, divine character—even as the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father. That believers should be thus related to each other is a disclosure which staggers the minds of men. In addition to the unity within the Godhead and the unity between believers, the passage—[John 17:21–23](#)—presents still a third unity, that which exists between the Persons of the Godhead and the believers.

F. A New Ground for Prayer

The unique character of the Upper Room Discourse is especially seen in its new revelation regarding prayer. A moment’s thought respecting the new relations between the Persons of the Godhead and the believers will suggest at once the necessity, arising from those relations, of an entirely new reality in prayer. In other words, the dispensational feature of prayer—so little considered by theologians—is, nevertheless, of paramount import and its recognition is imperative if the scope of the entire field of prayer is to be comprehended. Not only the general significance of prayer but also its new ground is indicated by the fact that Christ returns to this theme five times in this one discourse (cf. [14:12–14](#); [15:7, 16](#); [16:23–24, 26](#)). The new ground of prayer is seen in the truth that all efficacy depends upon the prayer being presented in Christ’s name. Since all depends on the power of that name, it concerns every Christian to understand what is involved in this new basis of prayer. At least two vital relationships are involved: (1) that the believer, being in Christ, must ever pray from that position. He may pray what would of itself prove to be an unworthy prayer; but still he could not pray outside of his position in Christ, and his voice in prayer is heard by the Father even as He hears the voice of His Son, whose every prayer is assuredly answered. As the believer is accounted righteous since he is in Christ ([Rom. 3:22](#); [2 Cor. 5:21](#)), and accepted because he is in the Beloved ([Eph. 1:6](#)), and loved as the Son is loved ([John 17:23](#)), in like manner he is heard as Christ is heard, being in Christ. (2) It is also to be recognized that the Christian, being in the partnership with Christ, may expect that his prayer, if prompted by the Spirit, will be indited by Christ Himself. It is as though Christ offered the prayer; and that, again, assures the answer.

G. The Promised Return

141-3, Perhaps the student has been reminded of the wide difference between two great events which, though in no way related, are each in their turn rightly styled a coming of Christ. The first in the chronological order is the signless, timeless, and prophetically unrelated coming of Christ into the air to

gather the Church, His Body and Bride, to Himself; and that event, which might occur at any moment, marks the termination of the Church's pilgrim sojourn on the earth. By their removal the way becomes clear for the concluding of that portion of the Mosaic age which, as represented by Daniel's seventieth week, yet remains to run its course. The period of Daniel's seventieth week is clearly the time of Jehovah's judgments in the earth and the moment of His fulfillment of all His covenants with His earthly people, Israel. This leads to the second coming of Christ per se, which is His glorious appearing. This event constitutes a major theme of Old Testament prediction, itself continued on into the Synoptics and other portions of the New Testament. It is not until the very end of Christ's ministry, as recorded in the Upper Room Discourse, that the first event—that which concerns the Church alone—is introduced. Since this event is an important feature of the future experience of the Church, it is to be expected that Christ would anticipate it in this discourse. This He did as recorded in [John 14:1–3](#), quoted above. In the main, the passages which relate to the first (in their chronological order) of the two events may be distinguished by the fact that in them the movement is from the earth into heaven (cf. [John 14:1–3](#); [1 Thess. 4:16–17](#)), while the movement in the second event is from heaven to earth (cf. [Matt. 24:30](#); [2 Thess. 1:7–9](#); [Rev. 19:11–16](#)). With this general distinction in mind, the words of Christ recorded in the Upper Room Discourse should not be misconstrued. He said: "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." As revealed in [1 Thessalonians 4:13–18](#), He comes only to the upper-air spaces and the believers are gathered together unto Him (cf. [2 Thess. 2:1](#)).