

## WHAT IS THE RELATION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO HIS FLESH AND BLOOD?

***John 1:1*** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

***John 1:14*** *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

We first need to understand that God cannot be made into anything; his word was made flesh. John never stated that God was made flesh because the Bible declares, “For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Malachi 3:6). We must understand that God in his essence is Spirit: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). In addition, God creates through his word. “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth” (Psalm 33:6). Hence, in God there is both Spirit and word through which he created the world in the beginning. God’s Spirit moved on the face of the waters and he commanded things to appear through his word. There is a reason the Spirit of the Lord inspired the apostle John to write “the word was made flesh” and not “God was made flesh”. The word made flesh is capable of dying but God cannot die.

***1Timothy 6:16*** *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*

The scripture above is speaking about Jesus. How can Jesus have immortality when he died on the Cross? The answer is that when we say “Jesus”, we are speaking about the Spirit in the flesh. Hence Jesus has immortality in his Spirit, but not in the flesh. It was the word made flesh that was mortal and died on the Cross, not the Spirit. “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Romans 8:11). We must not conflate the two or several scriptures will become meaningless. For instance: “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19). The temple that could be destroyed is the physical body of the Lord, but the Lord makes it clear that he (i.e. his Spirit) will raise his dead body from the grave. In fact, 700 hundred years earlier, the prophet Isaiah declared that God would raise up his own dead body together with ours.

**Isaiah 26:19** *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

How should we understand the word of God? Simply put, God creates and communicates his identity through his word among others. The Bible is the word of God because it communicates to the reader who God is, what he has done among us, and what he expects from us among others. The word of God is often equated with God himself. “And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden” (Genesis 3:8). Even the Lord Jesus is called the word of God: “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God” (Revelation 19:13). While this is true, the word of God was also made flesh and died. This means that the word of God which is capable of mortality (death) clearly must be distinguished from God as the eternal Spirit who can never die; how can one touch a Spirit that fills the entire universe? Returning to the flesh of the Lord, let us beware of old heresies which are making a comeback.

**1John 4:3** *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

**2John 1:7** *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

It is extremely important that we the word of God was made real, tangible flesh. Marcionism and Docetism were early Christian heresies that offered divergent views on Jesus Christ's nature, particularly regarding his flesh. Marcionism, founded by Marcion in the 2nd century, espoused a dualistic worldview, distinguishing sharply between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament. Marcion rejected the manifestation of God in the flesh, positing that Jesus was a divine being who only appeared to have a physical body, thus denying the reality of Jesus' corporeal body. This view challenged the Christian belief in Jesus as a genuine man. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:39).

Docetism, deriving from the Greek “dokein” meaning “to seem” or “to appear”, argued that Jesus only seemed to possess a physical body and to undergo suffering and death. This doctrine aimed to preserve the divine purity of Jesus by asserting that his bodily form was an illusion, directly contradicting the teaching of the Apostles. “For there is one God, and

one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 2:5). Both Marcionism and Docetism were deemed heretical for undermining the core doctrine of the Bible and the essential Christian teaching that salvation comes through Jesus’ life in a physical body, death, and resurrection. Clearly, the same spirit of the antichrist the apostle John warned about is still here and seeking to exploit any confusion or doubt in the church. We would do well to heed the advice of John. “Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father” (I John 2:24).

As an extension of the last point above, it is also important to point out that the flesh and blood of Jesus is not “spirit flesh”, as some argue. Firstly, there is no scripture to support such a view and secondly this would mean Jesus never really died on the Cross. “Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day” (Luke 9:22). The Lord kept repeating the fact that he was dead. “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (Revelation 1:18). Remember that it is always the Spirit of God that is the life of the body – the flesh alone has no power. “Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19). “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only” (Matthew 24:36).

When a Christian repents and is baptized in Jesus name, the Bible commands the same to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Why is this the case? Simply because without the Spirit, there is only a lifeless body. It is wonderful to put on the body of Christ through baptism in Jesus name, but the life of the flesh is the Spirit of God. “He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost” (Acts 19:2). “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). We wholeheartedly affirm that the body of Jesus was of the word of God and no of corrupt human origin. We also affirm that without partaking of his flesh and blood we have no life in us. However, let us remember that even the flesh and blood of the Lord was dependent on the Father for its birth and existence, as Jesus testified. Let us not reduce the Spirit of God to the flesh and blood of God alone, and let us not reduce the flesh and blood of God to the Spirit of God alone – that would be a heresy. “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a

workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).