

ULTIMATE ALLEGIANCE

-MESSY (BUT BEAUTIFUL) CHRISTIANITY, WEEK 26-

1 Corinthians 8:1-6 (NIV)

I. OUR ULTIMATE _____: _____, NOT _____

^{8:1} Now about food sacrificed to idols:
We know that “We all possess knowledge.”

But knowledge puffs up while **love** builds up.

² Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know.

³ But whoever **loves God** is known by **God**.

II. OUR ULTIMATE _____: ONE _____, ONE _____

⁴ So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols:
We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world”
and that “There is no **God** but **one**.”

⁵ For even if there are so-called **gods**,
whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “**gods**” and many “**lords**”),

⁶ yet for us there is but **one God**, the Father,

from whom **all things** came and **for** whom we live;

and there is but **one Lord**, Jesus Christ,

through whom **all things** came and **through** whom we live.

COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH:

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The **LORD** our **God**, the **LORD** is **one**.

⁵ **Love** the **LORD** your **God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Romans 11:35-36

³⁵ “Who has ever given to **God**,
that **God** should repay them?”

³⁶ For **from** him and **through** him and **for** him are **all things**.
To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Colossians 1:15-17

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible **God**, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him **all things** were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; **all things** have been created **through** him and **for** him. ¹⁷ He is before **all things**, and in him **all things** hold together.

PAUL'S VIEW OF JESUS' DIVINITY AS SEEN IN 1 CORINTHIANS 8:6

1. Paul does not abandon Jewish monotheism, but emphasizes that there is only one true God. Jesus is thus not a second god in any sense; God remains one (1 Cor 8:4-5; see 1 Tim 2:5).
2. Paul takes the central creed of Judaism, the *Shema* (Deut 6:4-5) and re-writes it, including Jesus within the unique identity of the one God of Israel. Whereas in Deuteronomy, "Lord" was a substitute for God's name (YHWH), Paul "plugs Jesus into that slot" and understands "Lord" in the *Shema* to refer to Jesus and "God" in the *Shema* to refer to God the Father. This is an amazing claim about the man, Jesus.
3. In case we missed the point, Paul describes Jesus as also being involved in the creation of all things, which is something in Judaism that only God accomplishes (e.g., Isa 40:18-26). Paul thus shows Jesus acting as God (Col 1:15-17 strengthens this, because it says there that all things are also created *for* Jesus [compare to Rom 11:35-36, where this is said of God, not Jesus]).
4. Paul also understands Jesus to be the messiah, the royal savior of Israel, calling him "Christ."
5. Paul also understands Jesus to be the Son of God; this is implied in calling God "the father."
6. All of this means that allegiance to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ demands that the Corinthians reject anything having to do with the worship of false gods and idols.
7. When the plurality of Father and Son within the one God of Israel is combined with what Paul also says elsewhere about the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:10-11; 2 Cor 13:13), we see the lines of evidence that ended up being articulated as the doctrine of the Trinity (God is one in nature and essence, but has always existed as three persons).

THE BOTTOM LINE

_____ that Jesus Christ _____ and _____

...by recognizing the _____ of the _____ is the _____, One _____ in _____.

...by recognizing that the _____ was central to early Christian _____.

...by maintaining _____ Jesus and rejecting all forms of _____.

BONUS 1: KEY PASSAGES FOR PAUL'S VIEW OF JESUS AS DIVINE (WITH REFERENCE TO MONOTHEISM)

- A. **Central passages equating Jesus with YHWH (God's name in Hebrew) in some sense:** Rom 9:5; Phil 2:6-11 (cf. Is 45:23); 1 Cor 8:6 (cf. Deut 6:4; Rom 11:36); Titus 2:13; Col 1:15-20; 2:9
- B. **Indications of Jesus as a preexisting being** (having an existence which began before he was born as a human): Rom 8:3; 1 Cor 8:6; 10:4, 9 (?); 15:47; 2 Cor 8:9; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:6; Col 1:15-20; 2:9; 1 Tim 1:15; 3:16; 2 Tim 1:9-10
- C. **Christ's role in creation:** 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:15-20
- D. **Christ's role in sovereign rule and judgment:** 1 Cor 4:4-5; 15:24-25; 2 Cor 5:9-11; 1 Thess 3:13//Zech 14:5; 4:6; 5:2, 4-10; 2 Thess 1:9-10//Is 2:10; 2:8//Is 11:4; 2 Tim 4:1
- E. **Possible Echoes of Jewish "divine wisdom" traditions when described Jesus' exalted status** (Judaism sometimes spoke of God's Wisdom figuratively as assisting God in creation, almost like God's Wisdom was a separate entity from God [see Prov 8:22-27; Sir 24; Wis 7; 11:2-4]. 1 Cor 1:24, 30; 8:6; 10:4; Col 1:15-17
- F. **Triadic texts** (texts which speak of God in some sense as three, an early indication of what will be called the Trinity): Rom 1:3-4; 5:5, 8; 8:1-4, 9-11; 1 Cor 12:3-7; 2 Cor 13:13 (14); 1:20-21; Gal 4:4-6; Eph 1:3-14; 2:18; 4:4-6; 2 Thess 2:13-14; Titus 3:4-6

- G. **YHWH/[“lord”] texts with Jesus as referent instead of God** YHWH is God’s name in Hebrew, usually translated in English Bibles as “LORD”; Paul will quote these texts in the NT and instead of understanding “Lord” as referring to YHWH, he understands “Lord” as referring to Jesus. This means Jesus in some sense “takes the place of God” in these quotations. Note that Paul also cites 25 OT texts where he takes “Lord” in the OT to refer to YHWH instead of Jesus—so it is not simply that Paul always takes “Lord” in the OT to refer to Jesus.
1. **5 quotations including “Lord”:** Rom 10:13//Joel 2:32; 1 Cor 1:31//Jer 9:24; 1 Cor 2:16//Ps 23(24):1; 2 Cor 10:17//Jer 9:24
 2. **1 quotation where Paul adds “the Lord says”:** Rom 14:11 (see v9)//Is 45:23
 3. **1 quotation not including “Lord”:** Rom 9:33//Is 8:14
 4. **13 allusions including “Lord”:** 1 Cor 8:6//Deut 6:4; 1 Cor 10:21// Mal 1:7, 12; 1 Cor 10:22//Deut 32:21; 2 Cor 8:21//Prov 3:4; Phil 2:10-11//Is 45:23; Phil 3:8, 12//Hos 6:3; 1 Thess 3:13//Zech 14.5; 1 Thess 4:16//Ps 47:5; [2 Thess 1:7//Is 66:15; 2 Thess 1:9//Is 2:10, 19, 21; 2 Thess 1:12//Is 66:5; 2 Thess 3:5//1 Chron 29:18; 2 Thess 3:16//Num 6:26]
 5. **11 stereotyped OT phrases including “Lord”:** “*call on the name of the Lord*” 1 Cor 1:2, Rom 10:13//Joel 2:32, Zeph 3:9, Zech 10:9, Jer 10:25; “*the name of the Lord*” (other uses) 1 Cor 1:10, 5:4, 6:11, [2 Thess 1:12, 3:6, Col 3:17]//Gen 12:9, Mic 4:5; “*the day of the Lord*” 1 Cor 1:8, 5:5, 2 Cor 1:14, 1 Thess 5:2, [2 Thess 2:2]//Joel 1:15, 2:1, 11, 31, Amos 5:18, Is 13:6, 9; “*to serve the Lord*” Rom 12:11, 16:18, [Col 3:24]//1 Sam 12:20, Ps 2:11, 99(100):2, 101(102):22; “*word of the Lord*” 1 Thess 1:8, 4:15, [2 Thess 3:1]//Is 2:3; [*the Lord be with you*] 2 Thess 3:16//Ruth 2:4, 1 Sam 17:37, 20:13]; “*the fear of the Lord*” 2 Cor 5:10-11 (cf. Col 3:22)//Is 2:10, 19, 21, Prov 1:7; “*the Spirit of the Lord*” 2 Cor 3:17//Judges 3:10, 6:34; “*the glory of the Lord*” 2 Cor 3:18 (cf. 2 Thess 2:14)//Ex 24:16, 17, 40:34-35; “*the command of the Lord*” 1 Cor 14:37//Deut 11:27-28; “*the Lord is near*” Phil 4:5//Ps 34:18; 145:18 (cf. 119:151)
 6. **At least 1 text used for both YHWH and Jesus:** Is 40:13//Rom 11:34, 1 Cor 2:16
 7. **Calling Jesus “Lord” not Paul’s innovation:** 1 Cor 16:22 (cf. *Didache* 10:6); In this verse, “Come, Lord!” Paul writes not in Greek, but in Aramaic, the language of Jesus and the first Christians. This shows calling Jesus Lord and praying to him is very old, older than Paul, and belongs to the first era of Jesus’ followers. Calling Jesus the exalted title “Lord” never seems to be treated as disputed by Paul, but rather assumed (e.g., Rom 10:9-10; Gal 1:19).
- H. **Monotheistic statements** (statements that show Paul continues to believe in only one God...Jesus is not understood to be a second god): Rom 3:30; 1 Cor 8:4 (cf. 4:5-6); Gal 3:20; Eph 4:6; 1 Tim 2:5
- I. **Monotheistic “qualifiers” to Jesus’ high position** (qualifications of the supremacy of God the Father that Paul adds to high statements about Jesus, showing he maintains monotheism and the priority of God the Father): 1 Cor 3:23; 11:3; 15:20-28 (esp. 28); Phil 2:11c; similarly, God is called the God of Jesus: Rom 15:6; 2 Cor 1:3; 11:31; Col 1:3; Eph 1:3, 17; see also 1 Cor 3:23; 11:3
- J. **Exalted status of Jesus, often with connection to resurrection:** 1 Cor 15:25//Ps 110:1; Rom 1:3-4; 6:4; Rom 8:34; 14:9; 1 Cor 15:3-8; Phil 2:6-11; Col 1:15-20; 1 Tim 3:16; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1 (cf. Ps 100:1)
- K. **Jesus receiving prayer or worship:** Lord’s supper as meal honoring a deity: 1 Cor 11:20, cf. 10:21; hymns to Christ: Eph 3:18; prayers to Jesus: 1 Thess 3:11, 12-13; 1 Cor 16:22; 2 Cor 12:8-10; 2 Thess 2:16-17; 3:5, 16; 2 Tim 1:16, 18; 4:22
- L. **Son of God (messiah and eternal son):** Rom 1:2-4; 9:5; 1 Cor 8:6; 15:24-28; 2 Cor 1:3; 11:31; Eph 1:3; Col 1:13-20; Jesus’ sonship not a Pauline innovation: Rom 1:3-4; 8:15; Gal 4:6

BONUS 2: AN ACRONYM TO REMEMBER JESUS' DIVINE ROLE AS DESCRIBED IN PAUL: HANDS

(from *Putting Jesus in His Place: the Case for the Deity of Christ*, by Bowman and Komoszewski (2007))

1. THE DEVOTION REVOLUTION: JESUS SHARES THE HONORS DUE TO GOD

(EXAMPLES)	LORD God	Lord Jesus
Worship	Deut 6:13, cf. Matt 4:9-10; Ps 97:7; Isa 45:23; Rev 19:10; 22:8-9	Phil 2:10-11
Prayer	Gen 4:26; 1 Chron 16:8; Ps 65:2; Isa 44:17; 45:20-22; Joel 2:32	Rom 10:12-13; 1 Cor 1:2; 16:22; 2 Cor 12:8-9
Fear	Deut 6:13; 10:20; Prov 1:7; 2:5; 9:10; etc.; Isa 8:12-13	2 Cor 5:10-11; Eph 5:21; 6:7-8; Col 3:22-25

2. LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON: JESUS SHARES THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

(EXAMPLES)	LORD God	Lord Jesus
Eternal	Pss 90:2; 102:25-27	Col 1:16-17;
All	Exod 8:10; 9:14; 15:11; 2 Sam 7:22; 1 Kings 8:23; 1 Chron 17:20; Ps 86:8; Isa 40:18, 25; 44:7; 46:5, 9; Jer 10:6-7; Mic 7:18	Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:13, 15, 19 (cf. Ps 68:16); 2:9
Omniscient	Gen 28:15; 1 Kings 8:27; Ps 139:7-10; John 4:20-24	Eph 4:10-11

3. NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES: JESUS SHARES THE NAMES OF GOD

(EXAMPLES)	LORD God	Lord Jesus
Lord (YHWH/Kyrios)	Gen 2:4; Exod 3:15-18; Deut 3:24 LXX; 6:4; Pss 34:8; 118:25; Isa 8:12-13; 40:3, 13; 45:23; Joel 2:32	Rom 10:9-13; 1 Cor 1:2, 8, 31; 2:16; 4:4-5; 5:4; 6:11; 7:17, 32-35; 8:6; 10:21-22; 16:22-23; Phil 2:9-11
God	Deut 4:35; 2 Sam 22:32; Isa 37:20; 43:10; 44:6-8, plus many others	Rom 9:5; Titus 2:13

4. INFINITELY QUALIFIED: JESUS SHARES IN THE DEEDS THAT GOD DOES

(EXAMPLES)	LORD God	Lord Jesus
Creating and sustaining all	Gen 1:1; 2:7; Neh 9:6; Pss 95:5-7; 102:25; 104:24-30; Isa 44:24; Jer 10:16; 51:19; Acts 4:24; 14:15; 17:25, 28	1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16-17
Forgiveness of Sins	Exod 34:6-7; Pss 51:4; 130:4; Isa 43:25; 44:22; 55:7 Jer 31:34; Dan 9:9	Col 3:13
Judging all people	Gen 18:25; Deut 1:17; Pss 7:9-11; 50:4, 6; 62:12; 75:7; 96:12-13; Prov 24:12; Isa 40:9-11; Jer 25:31; Joel 3:12	Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 4:4-5; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Thess 1:7-8; 2 Tim 4:1

5. THE BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE: JESUS SHARES THE SEAT OF GOD'S THRONE

(EXAMPLES)	LORD God	Lord Jesus
Ruling over all things	Isa 44:24; Jer 10:16; 51:19	1 Cor 15:27-28; Eph 1:22; Phil 2:10; 3:21
God's highest possible throne	Dan 4:34-35; Rom 14:10;	Rom 8:34; 1 Cor 15:25; 2 Cor 5:10; Eph 1:20; 2:6; Col 3:1