

# PLAIN SPEECH

Volume 1 – Issue 40 – 20 July 2008

**“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)**

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## DID JESUS DENY HIS OWN DIVINITY?

The betrayal would soon occur (**John 18:1-3**). The Kangaroo Court was on the horizon (**John 18:12; Matt. 26:57-66**). Spit and a beating were near (**Matt. 26:67**). The brutal scourging and senseless mocking were just hours away (**John 19:1**). The cross loomed (**John 19:13-18**). Mankind’s ugliest side was about to manifest itself upon their very creator (**Col. 1:13-16**). On the precipice of humiliation, Jesus lifted His eyes to heaven (**John 17:1**) and prayed.

In that prayer Jesus said something that has become a “sugar stick” for people who strive to deny His deity. The verse they look to is **John 17:3**. I’ve underlined the phrase they quickly key in on: **“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”**

The “deity deniers” make their twisted argument (**2 Pet. 3:16**) as follows: **“Jesus, in praying to the Father, made it clear that there is only one true God, and that one true God was not Him but was/is the Father in heaven.”** Several key points are dismissed by the wicked (**2 Pet. 3:17**) who jump on this passage and attempt to rob Jesus of Godhood. Let’s consider some of them lest any of us fall from our own steadfastness (**ibid**).

- i. The wolves (**Acts 20:28-30**) who use **John 17:3** as a proof-text to deny the deity of Jesus “forget” to point out to their disciples (**ibid**) that they cannot honestly reconcile their position with the fact that time and again the deity of Jesus is stated throughout the Bible (**Isaiah 9:6; Rom. 9:1-5; 1 Tim. 3:16; John 1:1-3, 14; 12:41 {cf. Isaiah 6:1ff}, et al**).
- ii. The wolves who use **John 17:3** as a proof-text to deny the deity of Jesus seem not to grasp the fact that although Jesus was/is divine (as proven above), Jesus understood **Proverbs 27:2**. He most certainly was not given to bragging and seeking the limelight (**Matt. 11:14-20; John 6:38; Mark 10:45**). Instead, He subjected Himself to the role of a servant who glorified the Father (**Philippians 2:5-8; John 17:4**). The statement in His prayer is consistent with that of a servant.
- iii. The wolves who use **John 17:3** as a proof-text to deny the deity of Jesus fail to consider that Jesus was not repudiating His own deity, but was simply expounding on the Father’s divine status.
- iv. The wolves who use **John 17:3** as a proof-text to deny the deity of Jesus fail to understand that Jesus was not denouncing His own deity by calling the Father the only true God. Instead, He was making a distinction between the Father (the one He came to glorify) and a pantheon of false gods. The same language is used throughout Scripture (**2 Chronicles 15:3; Jeremiah 10:1-11; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 John 5:20-21**).
- v. The wolves who use **John 17:3** as a proof-text to deny the deity of Jesus fail to notice that the context on both sides of the verse clearly show that Jesus was talking about **His mission** (part of which was to glorify the Father), not whether or not He was divine (**John 17:1-2, 4-5**).
- vi. The wolves who use **John 17:3** as a proof-text to deny the deity of Jesus fail to note that in the very same context of **John 17** it is stated that Jesus claimed He and the Father were/are one (**vs. 11, 21**). Is the Father divine?
- vii. The wolves who use **John 17:3** as a proof-text to deny the deity of Jesus find their logic proving too much. For example: Jehovah is called the only true God (**John 17:3**). He is also called: (1) the only saviour, (2) the only wholly just one (**Isa. 43:11; 45:21; Hosea 13:4**), and (3) the only king who reigns (**Zech. 14:9**). Thus, if **John 17:3** excludes Jesus from being divine, then consistency demands that Jesus must also be unjust ; one who is neither a saviour, or reigning king. I suppose we’d all better rip **Acts 3:14, 1 John 4:14, Rev. 17:14, and Acts 2:30** out of our Bibles... not!

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Godhead, The Lord Jesus Christ, is often a target. Sadly many seek to make Him less than divine. As we have seen, **John 17:3** offers no help to advance the vain efforts of those who wish to demote Jesus.

And by the way, for those of you who do wish to divest Jesus of His rightful attributes, you’d do well to reflect long and hard on **John 8:24**. The words of Jesus Himself read this way: **“...if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.”** Read it without the italicized word and draw the conclusion (**Exodus 3:7-14**).