The Father and I are One

The Jews had gathered around Jesus in the temple hoping that he would tell them he was the Messiah. Instead, Jesus declares, “The Father and I are one” (John 10:30). This was incomprehensible and they thought he was committing the sin of blasphemy.

“The Jews again picked up rocks to stone him.” (John 10:31). They are applying the Old Testament Law from the Book of Leviticus that “whoever utters the name of the L ORD in a curse shall be put to death. The whole community shall stone that person; alien and native-born alike must be put to death for uttering the L ORD’s name in a curse” (Lv 24:16). They do not stone Jesus at this time, but they will use the same justification in front of Pilate on Good Friday in order to have him tried, convicted, and crucified.

It is impossible for those who are set on stoning Jesus to understand that he is the Son of God. They falsely believe that he is blaspheming by saying he is the Son of God. The opposite is true. Jesus would blaspheme were he to deny that he is the Son of God. Recognizing that they cannot wrap their mind around this, Jesus tells them to judge based on his works.

“If I do not perform my Father’s works, do not believe me; but if I perform them, even if you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may realize and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father” (Jn 10:37-38).

In the Gospel of John, there are 7 signs that Jesus performs in order to help people believe:

1. He changes water into wine at Cana. Jesus revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him (John 2:1-11).
2. Jesus heals the royal official’s son in Capernaum and acknowledges that, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe” (John 4:46-54).
3. He heals the man who had been paralyzed for 38 year at Bethesda on the sabbath (John 5:1-15). “My Father is at work until now, so I am at work” (17).
4. Jesus feeds the 5000 (John 6:5-14) and those who are eye witnesses believe in his works.
5. Only his disciples in the boat witness Jesus walking on water (John 6:16-24). In the story of Creation, man learns of God’s power as he creates the heavens and the earth. God speaks and creation happens (Gn 1, Jn 1).
6. God heals the man born blind on the Sabbath that he may believe in the Son of God (John 9:1-7).
7. Jesus raises Lazarus who had been dead in order that Jesus’ followers might believe (John 11:1-45).

In the modern world since the Enlightenment of the 18th century, man has had increasing difficulty seeing through the eyes of faith. The scientific method has helped us send a man to the moon and back. In the age of the digital revolution, we are connected with people around the world in an instant through cell phones, and the internet. With each advance, some find it more difficult to believe.

Some governments have boldly proclaimed there is no God. The sin of blasphemy comes from the lips of men who believe themselves god. Just as in the age of the bible, many today have trouble believing that Jesus and the Father are one.

And even more unbelievable is the concept that just as Jesus and the Father are one, God has an amazing plan for humanity. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit want to share their divine nature with us. They want us to be united with them in heaven for all of eternity after a life well lived that we may share in the divine nature.
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So how do we get from disbelief to belief. Let us look at the 7 signs once again:

1. At Mass, the priest adds water to the wine and says a silent prayer. “By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.”

2. Jesus told the royal official, “Your son will live,” and just at that moment the fever left him. This occurred on the sabbath. Through our penitential rite at Mass each Sunday, we ask for healing and the forgiveness of sins. And the priest responds, “May almighty God have mercy on, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.” Truly the Father wishes for all of his sons and daughters to live with Him eternally.

3. In the third sign, Jesus heals a man paralyzed for 38 years at a pool of water and tells him to sin no more. In the waters of baptism, we are set free of our sin. In the gift of reconciliation, God gives us pardon and peace and forgives us of our sins.

4. 2000 years ago, Jesus fed the 5,000 by multiplying the loaves. Jesus feeds more than 5,000 each Sunday as the bread that is offered is transformed into the Bread of Life.

5. In the 5th sign, the disciples in the boat are worried as the sea stirs up and a strong wind blows. Pope Francis has reminded us that with the global pandemic, we are all in the same boat together.

   And Jesus calls to us: Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Lord, you are calling to us, calling us to faith. Which is not so much believing that you exist, but coming to you and trusting in you. This Lent your call reverberates urgently: “Be converted!”, “Return to me with all your heart” (Joel 2:12). You are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a time of choosing. It is not the time of your judgement, but of our judgement: a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord, and to others. (Urbi et Orbi March 2020)

6. In the 6th sign again on the sabbath, God heals the man born blind that he may believe. God speaks to us through the Word proclaimed at Mass that we too may see and believe.

7. In the 7th sign, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus returned to life on earth. And what awaits us after Jesus calls us out of death. “He has bestowed on us the precious and very great promises, so that through them you may come to share in the divine nature, after escaping from the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire” (2 Pt 1:4).

Life does not end with death, the just are reborn to eternal life where the Father and Son are one, and we are invited to be one with them.

Believe! Believe in Jesus the Son of God who is one with the Father.