

Biblical Common Sense about Who Jesus Is

by Ron Shockley

Part 1 - What is it & why is it important?

Common Sense, what is it? Well according to Merriam-Webster the proper definition is as follows:

Common Sense: sound and prudent judgment based on a simple perception of the situation or facts.

Wow. What an easy to comprehend definition. The very definition of common sense almost seems like “common sense”. To be able to make a sound and prudent judgment based on a simple perception of the situation or facts sure sounds right. It sounds like what we should always strive to do. And people do exactly that all the time, everyday. When we drive to work and see that the sky is overly cloudy and looks like it might rain, we know it wouldn’t be wise to leave our car windows down. If your battery powered flashlight starts getting dimmer, you understand that you might need to put new batteries in it. Part and parcel of common sense is paying attention to the obvious. It is using the knowledge and experience of life to see and comprehend accurately what is right in front of us. Again, common sense is plain ordinary good judgment that is not based on any specialized knowledge.

For me, common sense has always been something I’ve prided myself in having. A lot of it was instilled by my father who himself had a strong common sense approach to life. A lot of it though just came naturally. Ever since I was a child I had a need to understand and make sense of things. I remember driving my mother crazy at times by not being able to simply accept things without a proper explanation that made sense to me. Whenever she would tell me to do something or not to do whatever I might have been doing, I would always ask WHY? Of course this is something that children are wont to do, but for me it wasn’t just a delay tactic, but something that truly mattered to me. I wanted to know the reason. A “because I said so” answer from my mother was something I could never accept. That drove me crazy! And it wasn’t because I didn’t respect her as a parent. I just had to make sense of why I was being told this. When an answer was given to me that did make sense, I could accept it. I could move on. I still might not have liked doing it, but at least I understood it. The common sense aspect of my thinking was appeased.

Ever since those early years trying my mother’s patience, I’ve always had a strong common sense approach to life. This has served me well over time in most every aspect of life and I believe it also serves me well in my Biblical studies. Like everything else in life, I try to use a

common sense approach to Scripture. I feel that it has to make sense at the most basic level. If God is communicating to humanity throughout the generations of time through the written word (which I firmly believe He does through The Bible), then having it make sense to people is of primary importance. Of course right here the skeptic or the Atheist could chime in and say that the Bible defies common sense. They would say that tales of the supernatural and miracles are contrary to logic and rational thought, much less common sense. From the viewpoint of a non-believer that can appear to be true. But once the existence of God is recognized and faith in Him and His Holy Scriptures becomes your axiom, then miracles and other supernatural occurrences become not just possible, but entirely logical. However the point of my presentation is not a defense of theism or The Bible, but is that within the framework of God's written word, what practically all of believers of Scripture feel is the truth given to us from God, common sense still must be applied to it in order to properly understand what God is communicating to us. What God articulates to us as rational cognitive thinking beings must make sense to us in order for us to understand Him. Common sense is a part of how we think and make logical judgments about life and the world around us. That is how God created us. Common sense was made into our mental makeup by God. Hence the popularly heard term "God-given Common sense" is very accurate. And if God gave it to us, we should definitely strive to use it as a proper guide through his written word. His instructions throughout the Bible – beginning to end, should be read using God's gift of common sense.

Part 2 - Jesus: God's son

Understanding who Jesus is and how the Bible presents him is not all that difficult when one stops and uses good ol' common sense to recognize the meaning behind many of the words of Scripture.

As a child growing up in a strong, Bible-believing family I learned about Jesus from a very early age. Frequently my mother would read to me from my storybook bible and from it I came to learn about all the great characters of Scripture. From the start, I recognized that of all the characters in The Bible, Jesus was extremely important and special. After all, he was said to be the Son OF God. And this is the beginning of where God-given common sense comes into play. Like every other child who learns that Jesus is the Son of God, I had no problems figuring out that Jesus and God were two different beings. The very words Father and Son let me know that God was the Daddy and Jesus was His son. Human fathers and sons do share being related, but they are ALWAYS two different individuals. Using father and son as descriptor nouns is incredibly easy to understand because we have that example provided for us in our own lives. A father and a son (or a mother and daughter if you're female) are two different individuals. This is easy to see and is simple common sense!

Another detail that is easily grasped is that a Father is ALWAYS older than his Son. When one hears that this person is the father and this person is his son, no one would think for a second that they both have existed for the same amount of time. Fathers are always older than their sons

because fathers bring them into existence. Sure a young child doesn't get all the nuances of this and parents hope the reproductive details of how human fathers "create" their sons & daughters is something that comes when the child reaches an appropriate age, but it is still something that registers in the brains of children as a part of common sense. Fathers are older than children because once again that is how the example works. Throughout all of humanity, not to mention all of the animal world, fathers are older and are in existence longer than their sons because in order for a father to have a son, he must already be in existence and then be able to conduct a creative act to bring a son (or daughter) into existence. This is how God designed things. For God to make such a design and then use the easily identifiable terms "Father" and "son" to communicate to us in a way that totally contradicts His design defies common sense at its most basic level.

Part 3 – Jesus: "This is MY son"

There are two different events recorded in the New Testament where God himself vocally indicates that Jesus is His son. First at his baptism we have the accounts the three synoptic gospels.

Matt 3:16-17 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "**This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.**"

Mark 1:10-11 Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; and a voice came out of the heavens: "**You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.**"

Luke 3:21-22 Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "**You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.**"

The second account occurs at the transfiguration and is also recorded in the three synoptic gospels.

Matt 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "**This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!**"

Mark 9:7 Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "**This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!**"

Luke 9:35 Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "**This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!**"

In these six accounts of the two different events, we have a voice calling Jesus “His son”. Common sense should tell us here that this voice belongs to God and that Jesus is NOT that God doing the speaking. The voice of God calls Jesus His Son. The overall aspect of these two events much less the words given “My beloved Son” should easily provide common sense clues that Jesus and God are two separate entities. If not we have a deception on our hands of the highest order. If Jesus was God – especially in an Oneness/”Jesus Only” sense then we are being tricked by a great act of ventriloquism. God would be performing an outright ruse to fool everyone into thinking that God and His Son were separate Father and Son entities. It would be a charade performed for the audience’s benefit (both to the people present to those events and to the many more who have read the record of those events since then in the written form of Scripture.