

God the Son

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[0 : 00] Keep your Bibles open to the John passage that Tim read out first. That would be really helpful. We are going to have a bit of a look at that. I am going to jump around a bit tonight, so consider yourself forewarned.

And it's okay. If you want to have a go at keeping up, you're welcome to. But if not, I'll let you know the references and you can have a look at them later on. I'm going to pray and then we'll get stuck into it.

Father God, we thank you for the chance to open your word tonight. We thank you for, so far in this series, being reminded that you're a God who wants to be known and that you're a God who is majestic and that you're a God for us.

There is just so much of you for us to discover. God, we pray tonight that as we look at Jesus, as we look at the Son, that you would give us eyes to see him clearly, that you would enable us to understand what it is we're wrestling with, but more importantly, that as we see him, that it would affect us and the people that you have made us to be.

Amen. I have to confess that writing this series that we've been working through for the last few weeks and that we're going through for the next couple of weeks has been a fairly difficult task.

[1 : 08] Not because I didn't want to write this series. I was involved in the decision to do it. But we are trying to take a look at God. We are trying to focus in and understand the distinction that is in God, the Father and the Son and the Spirit.

Later on in this series, we will focus more in on the oneness of God. But at the moment, we're trying to emphasize the distinction. And so we've got a distinction that's there, but at the same time, we've got a unity.

And so I found myself trying to write a sermon today and feeling like I was saying a lot of things that I said last week that were also true of the Father. And that is both the challenge and the wonder of God that there is distinction there and that distinction is important, but that that distinction exists in a perfect unity somehow.

Thankfully, as it's getting more difficult, I've handballed next week to the bishop so he can struggle to come up with fresh stuff as we look at the Spirit next week. But despite the difficulty in wrestling with this, the facts are the testimony of Scripture is that our God is Father, Son and Spirit.

And those distinctions are there. They exist. So it's worth trying to understand them. They wouldn't be there if they didn't matter or if they weren't helpful or if they didn't make a difference to us knowing God.

[2 : 28] And so it is worth us wrestling with them. Now, just like last week, I want to begin this week by telling you four things that we believe to be true as Christians.

Firstly, there is one God. Secondly, that God is three persons, Father, Son and Spirit. Thirdly, each member of that Trinity is equally God, eternally God and fully God.

And lastly, each member of that Trinity is a distinct personal expression of the one undivided nature. Now, if that sounds a lot and complicated, you're right.

God as Trinity is something that is incomprehensible, but it's important. It's something that is not easy, but it's true. And so we're going to wrestle with it.

Last week, we looked at God the Father, as Janet's already reminded us. We were confronted with His supremacy in all things. We were encouraged with His abundant love towards the Son and the Spirit and, of course, to us as well.

[3 : 27] And we were encouraged that He includes the Son and the Spirit in the Father's work and we have the joy of being included in His work as well.

But today, we get to the Son. What is it that makes God the Son distinct? Now, again, I want to qualify this sermon like I have so far to say that what we're going to look at tonight isn't everything. It's not exhaustive. It's not the whole list on God the Son, but it's a few things that I think might help us in understanding God the Son and how that affects us having a relationship with our God, who is Father, Son, and Spirit.

So keep John chapter 1 in front of you and we're going to try and look at four things that I believe John chapter 1 teaches us about God the Son. Firstly, and maybe this is a bit obvious, what makes God the Son God the Son is that He shows up.

What makes Him unique from the Father and the Spirit is that the Son is the one who becomes a man. The Son is the one who becomes human. God wants to be known.

[4 : 36] The Father wants us to know Him. In John chapter 1, we read this. Verse 1, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Down to verse 14, The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.

We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John goes on in this little section that was read out to make it really clear, if we've missed, because it's kind of some circular language, that the Word in flesh is Jesus.

The point of this first chapter of John's Gospel is to say, Jesus is more than an impressive guy. He's more than just a miracle worker. He is God. Now, when we talk about God the Son, we never mean less than Jesus, but this part of John 1 tells us that we mean more than Jesus.

I'll say that again. When we're talking about God the Son, we never mean less than Jesus, but we actually are talking about more than the man Jesus. Because God the Son was there before Jesus was born.

It's there in John in the first verse. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. God the Son who becomes Jesus was there when God the Father was creating.

[5 : 53] In fact, John 1 tells us that it was through Him that creation happened. Verse 3, Through Him all things were made. Without Him nothing was made that has been made. God the Son is more than just the man Jesus.

He is eternal. He was there in the beginning. He always was. Part of who God is is that He never begun. He never started. And so God the Son too is fully God and has no beginning.

What happened 2,000 years ago and gave us a public holiday in December was not the beginning of God the Son. It was His arrival. It was His showing up so that we might see Him.

And so Jesus' birth in the manger is significant, but it's not the beginning. It's the showing up of God in human form. Now don't let the significance of that slip by you.

I'm not saying the incarnation is less impressive because God the Son always was. It actually makes it more important. When you understand that God the Son is eternal and all-knowing and all-powerful, it's the Philippians passage that was read out for us.

[7 : 00] It's poetic in that it shows this movement. God the Son is in very nature God. He is God. He is eternal, powerful, majestic, creator.

And in the birth of Jesus, He enters into human history for our sake. I mean, we get very excited around Easter and rightfully so as we look at the death of Jesus.

But the birth of Jesus is easily as significant. The eternal God becomes a man when Jesus is born.

I have said in sermons before that Christmas exists for Easter. What I'm getting at by that, obviously, is that Jesus came because He was going to die. But that plays down just how significant it is that God would enter into human history.

That the one who sits over all creation, the one who, it says, He created everything and without Him nothing was made, the fact that He would become a creature is more than significant.

[8 : 07] God the Son has this unique role within the Trinity of being sent by the Father to become a man so that we might call God the Father our Father.

First thing that we need to grab about God the Son is that He shows up. Second thing, God the Son reveals. The Son here in John chapter 1 is shown to be the revealer of God.

His task is to point us to God. Verse 18, No one has ever seen God, but God the one and only that's talking about Jesus who is at the Father's side has made Him known.

And maybe even more significantly, if you skip back to verse 11, He came to that which was His own. His own did not receive Him. Yet, to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.

Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Son reveals the Father so that we can become children of God.

[9 : 13] Before the Son comes and points us to the Father, we cannot know Him as Father. The Son is the only one, according to verse 18, who has seen God and who therefore is qualified to come from the Father's side as human and make Him known to us.

In John chapter 17, just before Jesus is about to face the cross, Jesus prays to His Father. And in His prayer, He explains that He has completed the work that He was given.

And His work, according to John 17, verse 6, is to reveal the Father to those who belong to Him. Now, don't get me wrong when I say that the Son shows up and the Son reveals.

The Father is absolutely committed to having a relationship with us. He cares about restoring the break that was forced by sin. The Spirit is absolutely committed to bringing people back into a relationship with God, but it is the Son who reveals the Father that we might know Him, that we might have a relationship with Him.

John 14, we looked at it a couple of weeks ago, verse 6, Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. I remember I was on a holiday a few years ago, just before, no, I turned 21, and for my birthday, I got given an overseas ticket and I was silly enough to take a credit card as well because I didn't have any savings.

[10 : 40] So I just went overseas and kind of made up my holiday as I went. And travelling through a bit of France and Paris in particular, basically what you can do there is the Eiffel Tower and galleries.

That's all there is. And so I wandered around doing it. Hey, I've been there twice. It's all there is. So I did the Eiffel Tower. That was covered.

And then I started going around a few galleries. And I was in the Louvre because that's the one you have to go to because it's got that tiny little unimpressive picture of that woman. But as I was walking through there, they had a power failure, which was very exciting, obviously, because they were panicking, thinking stuff might get stolen or damaged.

And there's certain rooms in there that have no windows, no skylights, no natural light whatsoever. And so in those rooms, it was fairly dangerous trying to navigate your way while the power was out. And I was stuck in one of these rooms for a few minutes. I figured it was safer to just sit than maybe do some really, really expensive damage. So I was sitting, waiting for the lights to come on, completely oblivious to what was around me.

[11 : 45] I was literally within inches of world famous, really expensive, really impressive, detailed artworks. I couldn't tell you what they were, but I was very close to them and I had absolutely no idea.

The absolutely essential ingredient for me to appreciate those artworks and see the detail that was there was light. Without light, it doesn't matter how impressive they are, there is something that holds me back from being able to appreciate them and see them.

And the testimony of Scripture is that Jesus is the light of the world. Without Him, it doesn't matter how hard we look, it doesn't matter how close we come, we cannot see the glory of our Heavenly Father.

It doesn't matter what else you have, you need Jesus. You need the Son to come in flesh because He is the light that illuminates the Father in Heaven.

Through Jesus and Jesus alone, we are given the opportunity to be called, verse 12, children of God. Through Jesus, we have this amazing gift that we are actually drawn into the relationship of the Trinity.

[12 : 59] We are going to get to that relationship more in a couple of weeks' time, but last week we talked about how the Father and the Son love one another and know one another intimately. What it means to be a child of God is to be drawn into that relationship where the Father loves us and cares for us and where we love Him back and we marvel and rejoice in His glory and majesty.

There is an amazing phrase in the prayer that Jesus is praying in John 17. He says these words in verse 20, My prayer is not for them alone, talking about His disciples. I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message.

That's us. Here's the bit. That all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

The relationship that God wants with you is not a distant relationship. Jesus came so that you might know the Father intimately. Jesus died and rose again so that we would be drawn into the relationship where He is our Father.

Not a distant God but our Father. Father. And the gift of Jesus and the other thing, the third thing that makes Him unique as the Son is that He shows us what it means to live as children of our Heavenly Father.

[14:19] He shows us what is required now that we have been drawn in to this relationship and the third thing that makes the Son unique is that God the Son submits.

Last week we were encouraged and excited to see the supremacy of our Heavenly Father and that's really easy to affirm. Of course God is supreme. Of course God is in control.

Of course God has authority. But in the Son we see that the God who is supreme also submits. The God who has all authority also humbles Himself.

God the Son eternally and perfectly submits to His Heavenly Father. In creation the Son submits to the Father and serves as His agent.

In His earthly mission He arrives with the Father's purpose of seeking and saving the lost. In every temptation He faces in every challenge He perfectly obeys His Father.

[15:21] That doesn't mean it was easy. There's this amazing picture in the Gospels of Jesus just before His crucifixion horrified by what comes next.

Crying out to His Father saying if there's another way please but He finishes that prayer by saying not what I will but what you will. It wasn't easy for the Son to perfectly submit.

Jesus in human form faced the temptations that we face but perfectly obeyed even to death and death on the cross.

Many scholars and atheists throughout history have referred to the sacrifice of Jesus by God as divine child abuse. They think it is unthinkable that a loving Father would send His Son His innocent Son to pay the price.

But this completely misunderstands the Son's submission. Last week we saw that the Father was supreme but only when we now look at the Son can we see that supremacy going hand in hand with submission.

[16:34] Submission for Jesus isn't a burden. He doesn't submit to the Father out of some sense of I'm supposed to because I'm the Son. He submits to the Father because He loves the Father.

Having explained that He gives access to the Father in John 14 Jesus goes on to say why He lays down His life. Verse 31 of John 14 The world must learn that I love the Father and I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

It is out of love for His Heavenly Father that Jesus submits. His submission is not a controlling thing where the Son is forced to go to the cross. In John 10 Jesus says this The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life only to take it up again.

Verse 18 No one takes it from me but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Did you catch that? It feels like a tension when you read it at first. It says no one takes it from me I lay it down of my own accord I have authority and then at the end this command I received from my Father.

[17:50] How does that work? For Jesus to say I do it but the Father commands me to do it. It's the Father's will that the Son comes and gives up his life for us to know him.

It is the Father's command that Jesus comes and lay down his life but it is out of love for the Son that the Father chooses him for this task.

I'll say that again it's out of love for the Son that the Father sends Jesus to the cross. The laying down of his life is the path to being exalted above all things on heaven and on earth.

Philippians 2 the end point of Jesus obedience and submission is that he is exalted above every other name. There is no greater honor and out of all that he could have chosen the Father chooses the Son in such a way that Jesus knows that the Father wants him to do for our sake but it's what he wants to do out of love for his father and out of love for us.

The Son looks at the plan that God has laid out for redemption and he says I want that. The cross and the sacrifice of Jesus is what the Son wants to do.

[19:27] What he chooses to do. As he says he lays down his life of his own authority. Even though fulfilling that mission was not easy it was a delight to Jesus.

It was his joy to perfectly obey his father and to draw us back into a relationship with God by his blood. It is what the son wanted as much as it is what the father wanted.

The amazing joy of the relationship between father and son is that they are so united and connected that the son loves what the father loves. And so the son loves you just like the father does.

And the son joyfully lays down the father and begin to know and rejoice in the forgiveness that only he can offer.

The submission of Jesus to his father is even more amazing when we remember where we started tonight. Jesus is the eternal son. Jesus is divine.

[20 : 36] Jesus is all knowing, all powerful. He and the father are one and yet he willingly and joyfully submits.

I had the joy yesterday of being a part of Ange and Rob's wedding. Many of you guys were there. And I shared as I began to speak they gave me the passage in Ephesians 5 that encourages wives to submit to husbands.

And I expressed that I thought that was a hospital pass in our current culture. I did a bit of googling beforehand and found that around the whole idea of submission and particularly in our context of being Anglicans in Sydney.

We are known as being sexist. We are known as oppressing women and all sorts of other things because we expect them to submit to their husbands. It is amazing that the world around us is negative about submission even though it doesn't fully understand how submission works.

But I was also reflecting that in my time as a minister I am yet to go to a wedding. Actually there is one fantastic exception sitting in this room but other than that one exception I am yet to go to a wedding a Christian wedding where the husband and wife have wanted to articulate that submission would be a good thing in their marriage.

[21 : 56] Now that could be ignorance that could be a whole bunch of factors but I think the reality is even for us submission sounds demeaning. We're really nervous about a word like that.

Authority fantastic but submission there is a significant challenge for us tonight as we look at God the Son because tonight God is saying that submission is part of who I am.

Submission is not lowly or unimpressive submission is not negative submission is God like. We are called as his followers to be imitators of God and our God is a God who submits.

If we're unable to submit to the authorities that God has placed over us how will we submit to him in the way he deserves. If we cannot honour our parents if we cannot honour our leaders here at church if we cannot honour civil authorities if we cannot honour husbands if we cannot honour bosses then how will we begin to think that we can do it for God?

The submission that God requires of us as his children is a submission far beyond what we are capable of within ourselves. It is the perfect submission of the Son.

[23 : 17] God is a Father and a Son and a Spirit is that in that Trinity we find that the obedience that the Father requires is provided in the Son.

that God remains holy and supreme he sees our deficient and disobedient lives and he provides the Son as a substitute and the Son goes as a substitute joyfully God the Son takes our place he cleanses us by his blood he covers our lives with his perfect life and then in the eyes of our Father we are faultless and blameless dearly loved children relating to a holy and eternal God demands perfection the Son can know the Father fully because he is perfectly obedient but our Holy God has provided the perfect obedience so that we too might know him in part now but one day fully God the Son enables us to know our

Father God the Son enables us to call him our Father with confidence God the Son works forgiveness for us through his death and resurrection God the Son provides the perfect obedience required for those who call God their Father and in him we have the freedom to obey having provided what we need having provided perfect obedience we now are free not to do whatever we want we are free to obey free to live the full life that Jesus lived doing the will of our heavenly Father let me finish by reading to you a passage out of Hebrews chapter 10 which would have been the shortcut to tonight's sermon because I think it says it much more clearly in terms of the role of the son Hebrews chapter 10 and beginning at verse 12 when this priest Jesus had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of

God since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy the Holy Spirit also testifies to us about

this first he says this is the covenant I will make with them after that I will remember no more and where these have been forgiven there is no longer any sacrifice for sin therefore brothers since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way opened up for us through the curtain that is his body and since we have a great high priest over the house of God let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess for he who promised is faithful and let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the day approaching the sun purifies us the sun reveals the father to us the sun gives us a sure and certain hope the sun represents us as the great high priest the sun gives us confidence to call God our father and just there at the end the result of that not laziness not do whatever I want but in light of our savior and lord Jesus Christ let us spur one another on let us look forward to the day he comes back and with increasing eagerness and enthusiasm encourage one another that we may live those obedient lives that God has called us to let me pray now father God we want to thank and praise you that you are willing to send your son Jesus we want to thank you that you are willing to come willing to pay the ultimate price for the sake of your father's glory and so that we may know you God we want to ask that you would strip away the pride in us that makes us think we are too impressive or too valuable to submit to others may we be humbled to recognize that you yourself are a God who submits may we rejoice in the opportunity to submit so that you might be glorified so that others may see your worthiness father when we fail may we return to Jesus and in him find the assurance and confidence in your forgiveness father give us eyes to see the work that you would have us do may the hope and forgiveness that we have not lead to laziness but empower us and spur us on to serve you with greater fervor father we thank you that in the Son and through the Son we can know you and call you father amen let's put forward please please let's uh nove transforming forces especially truth

[29 : 39] Henderson have everyone