

BIBLICAL TRUTH ABOUT GOD THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson 11: Jesus is Truly God

Biblical doctrine is the study of what the Bible teaches about God and other important truths. This is the first of ten lessons about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and our Lord and Savior. We will explore what the Bible teaches about who Jesus is and what He did.

MAIN TRUTH, CENTRAL SCRIPTURE, AND OUTLINE

Jesus is truly God, which enables Him alone to be mankind's great Savior. Jesus is truly divine. He is the uncreated Creator who sustains all things by the word of His power. The identity of Jesus is central to the Christian faith, as made evident in Jesus' pivotal question to Peter: "Who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15). How we answer that question is just as important today. If Jesus is not God incarnate, then He is not the perfect substitute and powerful Savior we need.

Many religions hold Jesus in esteem—whether as a moral teacher or prophet. But what sets Christianity apart from other religions is that it recognizes Jesus as God incarnate (John 1:1; Col. 1:15). Why do other religions not recognize Jesus as God? If He is God then He has authority over every person and thing. Christians accept and celebrate this reality, which is why we refer to Him as Lord Jesus. Christ's deity is far more than a mere fact; it is an essential biblical truth that Christians confess and live by. (Hebrews 1:1-3; Titus 2:13)

1. Jesus Christ is God (Heb. 1:1-3)

- A. His divine nature – All people exist to glorify Christ because He is God.
- B. His divine works – Jesus performed His supernatural works through His own inherent, divine power and in His own name, because He is God.

2. Jesus is the sufficient sacrifice (Heb. 1:3; Tit. 2:13)

- A. He met God's legal demands – God's law must be kept perfectly in order to answer for the legal barrier man made by sinning against God. Jesus' perfect life of obedience removed for His people the legal barrier that Adam's sin had created.
- B. He is the great God and Savior – Jesus made a one-time purification for sins which is sufficient and complete. As Jesus died on the cross He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). After His resurrection and ascension to heaven He "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3), signifying that His work was done. Jesus paid in full the eternal punishment that all sinners deserve. This is why Scripture calls Him "the great God and Savior (Tit. 2:13). To proclaim Jesus as both God and Savior

is a crucial confession of biblical truth because it is Jesus' divinity that endowed His sacrifice with its infinite value. If Jesus were anything less than God, His sacrifice would be insufficient.

MEMORY VERSES

Hebrews 1:3 *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The following notes are taken from Pastor Stan's sermon, *The Superiority of Christ*, based on Hebrews 1:1-3 (preached 4-21-13).

Eight Ways that Christ is Superior:

1. Christ is *the ultimate Word from God*

God has spoken since the beginning of time. He speaks through the world He created, especially the heavens. **Psalms 19:1** *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.* He also spoke in Old Testament times through his prophets. He spoke at different times and in different ways. This is called progressive revelation. He spoke through visions, dreams, direct audible communication, signs, and events. But in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son Jesus. Notice that in Bible terminology we have been living in the last days ever since Jesus came to earth. He is God's full and final Word. He is God's complete and clear Word. Jesus was the Word,

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* **John 1:14** *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* Peter, James, and John went with Jesus into a high mountain and they learned a lesson they would not ever forget (Mt. 17:1-8). This was truly a mountain-top experience where they learned that Jesus was God's unique one-of-a-kind Son and in a class by Himself. The Father said, "Listen to Him." And they did and so should we.

2. Christ is *the appointed heir of all things*

What is this world coming to? It's coming to Jesus. He is the appointed heir of all things. It exists because of Him, is sustained by Him, and is coming to Him. **Romans 11:36** *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

3. Christ is *the great creator of all things*

God was the designer of creation and Christ was the agent of creation. **John 1:3** *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. Hebrews 1:2 says he made “the worlds” (ages). He not only created all things and people, but He created all time and all the events that have taken place in all the ages.

4. Christ is the visible expression of God’s glory

By nature God is spirit and therefore is invisible. No man has seen God in all His glory at any time. Jesus came to reveal God’s glory in a visible way. **John 1:18** *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* The word “declared” means explained or revealed Him. **John 14:9** *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?* He is the “brightness” of God’s glory. The Greek word is *apaugasma* and has been translated as “effulgence, radiance.” Just as we see the rays or the outshining of the sun, we see the glory of God when we see Christ. The rays of the sun are the same essence as the sun itself. Jesus is the very essence of God.

5. Christ is the exact representation of God’s nature

The “express image” is the Greek word *charakter*. It means the exact expression or representation of someone. It was used of the imprint or likeness of someone’s image on a coin. Everything about Christ represents God exactly because He is God. He is the only image of God that we are allowed to worship because He is the Second Person of God.

6. Christ is the powerful sustainer of all things

He not only created all things but He upholds all things in the created order. He is involved with His creation, keeps everything in its proper place, and guides all things to their predetermined end or goal. **Colossians 1:17** *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

7. Christ is the perfect sacrifice for all sins

Through His sacrificial death on the cross He purged (purified, took away) our sins, that is, the sins of His people. He did this once for all and He did it “by Himself.” The book of Hebrews will have much more to say about this later. His sacrifice for sins laid the foundation for all the blessings we have in salvation: justification, sanctification, glorification, redemption, and reconciliation. Jesus is the propitiation (satisfying sacrifice) for our sins. His sacrifice completely satisfied the wrath of God against sin once for all.

8. Christ is the exalted Son at the Father’s right hand

After He completed His work of purging our sins on earth Jesus ascended to Heaven and sat down at the Father’s right hand. He is now seated as King and High Priest. He occupies the highest position in the whole universe. The book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus “sat down” in contrast to all the Jewish priests who offered sacrifices and stood in the Tabernacle and Temple. The Jewish priests never sat down because their work of sacrifice was never finally done and had to be repeated day after day, week after week, year after year. Jesus offered Himself once for all because it was the all-sufficient sacrifice. Lewis Sperry Chafer said, “The

only thing left to be determined now is whether man is satisfied with the sacrifice which satisfies God.”

The following notes are taken from Pastor Stan’s sermon, *The Eternal Christ*, based on John 1:1-5, 10-14 (preached 12-15-19).

John’s Gospel is unique in many ways. There is no genealogy or birth story as we find in Matthew and Luke. John starts in the beginning, even before the creation of the world. These verses contain simple words, but they also contain profound truths.

1. The Greatest Truth

The greatest truth is about Jesus Christ and it concerns who He is and what He does. John tells us that the God who made us came into this world and became like us.

- A. Christ is eternal – *in the beginning was the Word*
- B. Christ is God – *and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*
- C. Christ is the Creator – *all things were made by him...*
- D. Christ became a man – *and the Word was made flesh*
- E. Christ revealed the glory of God – *and we beheld his glory...*

All of these are amazing truths and all are foundational to the Christian faith.

If Jesus is not eternal, then He is not God.

And if He is not God, then there is no divine Trinity.

If Jesus is not eternal, then He made false claims and He was self-deceived.

John 8:58 *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

John 17:5 *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

If Jesus is not eternal, then Scripture is misleading and can’t be trusted.

Micah 5:2 *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

This verse is the only place in the OT where the birthplace of Christ is revealed. It was Bethlehem, a small town just like the song says, “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” But though it was small in size, it was great in honor. John Maxwell tells about visiting a small European village where he asked one of the local men: “Sir, have any really important men been born here?” The man replied, “No, only babies.” Jesus was born as a baby, but He was no ordinary baby. Micah 5:2 says He was destined to be Ruler in Israel and that His goings forth (activities) are from of old, from everlasting (lit., from the days of eternity).

Spurgeon: "You may study, look, and meditate, but Jesus is a greater Savior than you think Him to be, even when your thoughts are at their highest."

2. The Greatest Tragedy

The eternal One entered time and the Creator came to the world He created, but most people didn't welcome Him, and some didn't even know who He was.

- A. The world didn't recognize Christ (vs. 10)
- B. The world didn't receive Christ (vs. 11)

The prophet Isaiah predicted this response:

Isaiah 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

What was the problem? They did not recognize Him and they did not receive him for two reasons: they were ignorant, and they were arrogant. They were not looking for a Suffering Servant as their Messiah. They were only interested in a Reigning Ruler. They wanted a Messiah who would meet their physical needs, but they didn't want a Messiah who would make any spiritual demands. When Jesus came and preached repentance and told them the demands of discipleship, they were not interested and rejected Him. They didn't want Jesus messing up their religious system.

3. The Greatest Transaction

To receive Him is to welcome Him with an open heart. We come to Christ not just for what He can do for us, but for who He is. We don't just receive salvation, we receive a Savior.

To receive Him is to believe on His name. The name of Jesus stands for all He is and all He does. To receive Him means to acknowledge His claims, trust Him completely, and surrender our lives to Him. "Receive" is the same word used in John 14:3.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

When we receive Christ we become the sons of God and we are born again. The new birth is something that God does in us and for us, not something we do for ourselves. It is not of blood (family descent), nor of the will of the flesh (human desire), nor of the will of man (human determination), but of God. Being born of God means a new life, a changed life.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Christ came from eternity into time. He came from heaven to earth, so that we might go from earth to heaven. He gave us physical life and He gives us new life, eternal life.