

## 1. He is Eternal

- a. "In the beginning was already existing the Word"
  - i. Genesis 1 – before anything that has been created was created
  - ii. V2 – "This one was being in the beginning with God"
- b. This person, this Word who became flesh, shows up before the incarnation numerous times
  - i. He is the rock that followed the Israelites in the Exodus (1 Cor 10:4)
  - ii. He is the LORD almighty high and lifted up in Isaiah's vision (Isa 6/John 12:41)
  - iii. He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18)
  - iv. He was before Abraham (John 8:58)
  - v. He had glory with the Father "before the world began" (John 17:5)
- c. The Word which became flesh is uncreated!
  - i. This means that the Son of God, Jesus, the Word-made-flesh, is God

## 2. He is in Relationship with God

- a. "the Word was with God"
  - i. In the beginning there was "withness"
  - ii. God is relational in His very nature
  - iii. This truth gives us hope that we, too, can attain from the Seed of Eve, the Son of Abraham, the true King, the Son of God, a joyful relationship with a perfect Father
    - 1. A perfect, glorious, true, warm, relationship of joy and delight in the ring of love that has always been
    - 2. John 17:22-26 "that they might see my glory which I have since you loved from the foundation of the earth"
- b. "With" – face to face
  - i. When related to persons, this word connotes relationship of some kind
  - ii. Intimacy and personal relationship
  - iii. "in the bosom of the Father" (v18) – near to one's vulnerable heart
    - 1. How many people have a "right" to be in your bosom?
      - a. My wife and my children only!
    - 2. This is a phrase of intimacy, so intimate it is incredibly uncomfortable if someone were to snuggle up to your breast, near your vulnerable heart, if they are not closely loved, trusted, and near in spirit.
    - 3. Yet, God has no physical body, the Son and Father had not actual breast, thus this language means a spiritual oneness, nearness, intimacy of soul
- c. The Son of God, the Word, then, is not merely God manifesting Himself in a different way in the incarnation (Modalism, Sabellianism)
  - i. Not like water in steam form, liquid form, and ice form
  - ii. Rather, God has *always existed* in a relational community of interacting, communicating, and loving distinctions
  - iii. This is rather difficult to grasp because we see nothing like it in creation, for God is utterly unique
    - 1. However, we do see the concepts of unity and diversity within creation, although not in the same way as God Himself
    - 2. The closest icon, or image, of this relationship is within marriage (two persons, one flesh), and the Church (one body, many parts)
      - a. Yet, even in the best marriages, there is not true oneness of spirit or perfect communication/understanding
    - 3. Yet, even these icons fall short of the full expression, and always will, for there is only one God
- d. So, Jesus is both eternal and in a relationship with God

### 3. He is God

- a. "the Word was being God"
  - i. Not "God was being the Word"
  - ii. The Word is Godness, but the Word *alone* is not God
- b. This Deity of Christ Jesus makes multi-faith cooperation nonsensical
  - i. We are not speaking of the same God, nor working for the same God, and certainly not worshipping the same God
  - ii. This does not mean that there is not some shared values, but the nature of God is not one of them – Trinitarian is not Monism – thus the very nature of God vastly different
- c. Not only is the Word distinct from God in some way, it is also God existing in some way
  - i. These "ways" must be different, or it would be non-sensical, a logical impossibility
  - ii. Thus, the Word is distinct from God in one way and the same God in another way
  - iii. The Son is not the Father is not the Spirit – Yet, the Son is God, the Father is God, the Spirit is God – And, there is only one God
- d. This means that "the Word" is not an idea, or a force, or a mere expression, but PERSON in relationship with God
  - i. Thus, we see the orthodox teaching of God's triunity – God is a uniquely uncreated God existing as one God in a relationship of Father, Son (Word), and Holy Spirit
  - ii. So, the Word is distinct from God (not separate), and also God Himself

### 4. He Created All Things

- a. All things were created "through Him"
  - i. He is the agent of all that has been created
    1. "through"
    2. This word is a word of agency – that is that God the Father commanded it to be, God the Son is the Word by which this creation came to exist, and the Spirit of God breathed the Word's life into the creation (Gen 1)
    3. This word cannot mean, nor does it mean this anywhere else, "according to the Word" or "in line with the Word" or "with the Word in mind"
    4. The Word is the personal creative agent of all that exists
- b. This means that He preexisted anything that has been created, i.e. He is uncreated
  - i. This is very emphatic – "nothing that has ever come to be, has come to be apart from Him"
  - ii. John is very clearly claiming that "the Word" was pre-existent and uncreated, already existing before Creation, by using Genesis 1 language and referents
    1. And God said, "Let there be...and there was"
    2. The Word carried out this command of God, thus (**Psalm 33:6**) "By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host."
    3. This creative power and action of the "Word" is not surprising until you see v14, "and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."
  - iii. Thus, Jesus, as the Word made flesh, is the Creator of all that exists
    1. The all-sufficient God, not needing anything, but existing in eternity in perfect joy, perfect unity, perfect communication, perfect knowledge, perfect understanding, perfect love and power and life endeavored as one God to "Let us make man in our image"
      - a. This "image" of the relational, thoughtful, rational, knowing and known God
      - b. God created a race of creatures to participate in this unity community of God
      - c. To reflect like mirrors this great glory to Himself and to all other creation!
    2. Now the incarnation takes on a new note: the note of the almighty creating God, who created and creates *ex nihilo*, and yet submits himself to his own creation
    3. He submits Himself all the way to death, bearing the curse of His rebel image-bearers, in order to rescue them from His own justice and holiness

- iv. The Father and the Son and the Spirit delighted to create humanity, to judge humanity in righteousness, to redeem the elect, to rule the redeemed, to create for Himself a people of grace that His glory might be known throughout all creation

5. This Means That God is Relational *in His Essence*

- a. Community and Relationship is, by the nature of the Trinitarian God, the image of God
  - i. There has been eternal joy and love and righteousness and glory within this ring of persons as one God for all eternity
  - ii. Perfect love, perfect joy, perfect community
    - 1. And God worked and created to bring humans into this ring of perfect fellowship!
    - 2. He expands this ring of glory by sending His Son to redeem for Himself a people by His own working
- b. God loved before anything was created
  - i. For eternity the Father has loved the Son who loved the Spirit, etc.
    - 1. God is not dependent upon Creation in order to love, but He is love in His essence
    - 2. The only way that this is true is if God is trinity.
  - ii. Humans inherently know that Love and Relationship is at the root of existence
    - 1. Love is at the center of existence – we were made for joy, for love, for fellowship, for relationships that share in glory and delight and awe
    - 2. Naturalism has no reason for personal relational community except as it enhances your genetic likelihood to continue in meaningless existence
      - a. Love is just a chemical response in the brain, an illusion of affection and acceptance and understanding and delight due to adrenaline and synapses
    - 3. New Age spiritualism makes us all out to be god and part of an impersonal life-force that flows through all existence in which we flow back into when we die
      - a. The universe is fundamentally impersonal and personal bonds are the problem – they cause suffering and loss and pain and nirvana is the release of all such things
      - b. “God”, or this life-force, does not love, does not feel, does not desire, does not delight, does not communicate, and does not glory, does not covenant or work for your good
      - c. When you die, you are like a “dew-drop entering the ocean”, a melting into a universal consciousness by which you lose all sense of personality – there is no Father to hold you or brother to open His arms in anticipation of your arrival
    - 4. The fact that we cherish and hold sacred these personal relationships as sacred is most in-line with this Triune God of Christianity
      - a. At the bottom of reality is a personal relationship, a loving community, a delighting divine God – a family!
      - b. Nature is not god, but serves God; we are not a mere collection of impersonal atoms and molecules but are made to delight in the beauty of this personal God of triune fellowship
- c. God communicated before anything was created
  - i. The Father, Son, and Spirit communicated love, joy, righteousness, power, glory
    - 1. God is a communicator by nature, not by necessity
    - 2. He was knowing and being known for all of eternity
  - ii. We see this truth still stamped on the heart of humanity even after the Fall
    - 1. We long to share joy with others
    - 2. C.S. Lewis states that our joy isn't truly complete until we've shared it with others
      - a. So we're always trying to share our joy with others because it really isn't complete until it's shared by and participated with others

- b. Facebook? Clubs? Even guilds are just as much about sharing joy (music) as they are gaining skill.

6. God, in Christ Jesus, Has Made a Way for Us to Join Him in Participating in This Astonishing Love

- a. When we decided to be our own masters, and entrust ourselves to our own wisdom, we broke fellowship with God (Adam and Eve)
  - i. This self-mastery brought the curse of sin and death – brokenness and alienation rather than relationship of love and delight with God, with each other, with ourselves, and with the rest of creation
  - ii. Thus, sin permeated all our relationships and broke them – we can’t love rightly and are enslaved to self-destructive self-rule
- b. The Father, Son, and the Spirit determined from all eternity that the Father would send the eternal Son to become His only-begotten in flesh, to reveal Him to humanity, to bear our curse of death by becoming sin for us
  - i. God agreed in Himself, in His own counsel, before anything was made that has been made, that the Father would forsake the Son, that eternal joy would give way to wrath, and that the Spirit would strengthen and raise the Son from the dead victorious
  - ii. God did this so that a fallen, cursed, broken, rebellious humanity might join His perfect ring of fellowship, love, and delight!!
- c. You see, what God has done in sending the Son as a sacrifice for our sins is not merely a type of impersonal transaction of ledger balancing, but a deeply personal, intimate, relational transaction of transferred joy to us by forsaking the Son as sin itself.
  - i. The Father gave the SON, not a mere payment
  - ii. The Father willingly gave up His Son, who was in His soul’s bosom, to redeem you and bring you into His joy with the Son and the Spirit
    - 1. How would it feel to give up your *son or daughter* to death? Your *beloved* to destruction?
  - iii. The Son willingly was rejected by His Father – REJECTED – to redeem you and bring you into His joy with the Father and Spirit
    - 1. If you reject me after this sermon, it will grieve me, because I don’t like to be rejected
    - 2. But if my wife or daughters reject me after this sermon, it would grieve me beyond words, because she is in my bosom
    - 3. If I only know my wife in part, and my children for less than 15 years have been in my bosom, think about the devastation that the Father and Son sent through who had eternal bliss, perfection of union, absolute love and communion and delight
    - 4. George Herbert, “The Sacrifice” (excerpt)

But, *O my God, my God!* why leav’st thou me,  
 The sonne, in whom thou dost delight to be?  
*My God, my God* -----

Never was grief like mine.

- d. This is what the birth of Jesus means – God displaying His glorious grace at immense personal cost – that He might bring you into the infinite joy of the eternal three-in-one fellowship of Himself for His glory and your participation in the delight of His glory
  - i. Can you look into the face of this God who loved you with such tremendous affection and chose to redeem your rebel heart with such unbounded willingness for you and not be moved to repent?

“With clubs and staves they seek me, as a thief,  
 Who am the Way and Truth, the true relief;  
 Most true to those, who are my greatest grief:  
 Was ever grief like mine?

Such sorrow as, if sinfull man could feel,  
 Or feel his part, he would not cease to kneel.  
 Till all were melted, though he were all steel:  
 Was ever grief like mine?” (Herbert)

Behold the brave little boy in the manger! Brave because he became a boy, a boy destined to die for the salvation of sinners whom He spoke into existence. Don't be mesmerized or numbed by the plastic little cherub in your nativity scene. That swaddled lowly child has an ancient glorious history and casts a long and bloody shadow of exclusion that you might be included. The eternal Son of God, Himself uncreated and supreme over all, poured Himself out to become the servant of His enemies, to die in our place and bear the curse for our sins that we might join Him in the eternal communion of joy in the very bosom of God! That's what Christmas means!

Behold the Joy-giver today! This is a God like no other who has come in such detriment to save you from your sins. Every other god in history worked to better himself or herself. The pagan gods always act with self-centered ambition and passion. The Father sent His beloved Son for you! Jesus poured Himself out to forsaken death *for you!* Turn from trusting yourself and entrust yourself to Him for all things. The Lord of all Glory, *in excelsis*, has come down to redeem you! Call out upon His name and trust in Him for salvation. He went all the way to ransom you back from His own just wrath, He will heed your honest call for salvation, for He was raised from the dead to forever intercede for you. May this truth of the God who gave at His own great personal cost melt your heart and fulfill your joy today.