

LESSON 3 Jesus, the Son of God

Some facts about God are easier to understand than others. For example, we can understand how God is like a father without too much difficulty. We can do this because fatherhood—actually being a father or having a father—is part of our experience. We have seen that good fathers provide for their children and love them.

Other facts about God are not as easy to understand. This should not surprise us! Our God is the great, eternal, and majestic Creator, and His thoughts and ways are far above ours. One of the facts about God that is hard to understand is the subject of this lesson—the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. God is one God, yet He has a Son who is equal to Him in power, might, and glory.

This lesson explains what the Bible says about the unique way in which Jesus is the Son of God. It is a very important lesson! Believing that Jesus was a good man is not enough. You must be convinced that He is God himself who came into the world. As you study this lesson, you will see why only Jesus has the power to free you from sin and evil now and always.

The Plan

- A. The Son's Relation to His Father
- B. The Son's Relation to His Followers

The Goals

1. Explain the unique way in which Jesus is the Son of God.
2. Identify what the Bible teaches about the relationship between the Son of God and His followers.

A. THE SON'S RELATION TO HIS FATHER

Goal 1. Explain the unique way in which Jesus is the Son of God.

Father and Son Are United Eternally

Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He had always been with God, His Father. In lesson 2, you read the prophecy of Micah from Micah 5:2. There Micah pointed to the ancient origins of the Messiah ““whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.””

The night before Jesus was crucified, He prayed: ““And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began”” (John 17:5).

Jesus was with God, working with Him, in the creation of the world. John calls Jesus the Word and begins his gospel by telling us:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:1–3)

There is a mystery in the Old Testament that has puzzled many readers. Genesis 1:26 records God saying, ““Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.”” To whom was God speaking? What John says helps explain this mystery. Jesus, the

Son of God, was with God at the time of creation. And as you remember from Lesson 2, Isaiah calls the Messiah “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father” (Isaiah 9:6). But there is more.

The Bible teaches that there is only one true God, the Creator. Yet, the Old Testament uses a plural name for Him—Elohim—over 2,300 times. Elohim, translated God, is sometimes used with plural pronouns and verbs to describe God’s work. They are used in the description of creation. Sometimes Elohim is used with a singular verb as if more than one person were acting as one. The Bible uses the word one to express either unity or number. The divine unity that we call God is made up of more than one person.

In the beginning God [Elohim] created the heavens and the earth . . . And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters . . . Then God [Elohim] said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.” (Genesis 1:1–2, 26)

As God’s revelation to man develops in the Old and New Testaments, we learn that three persons are called God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We call them the triune God, or the Holy Trinity—which means the sacred three persons in one. They are one in purpose, power, and nature. They have always worked together in perfect unison and harmony. They did in creation. They did while Jesus was here on earth. And they always will. The name God is used for Father, Son, and Spirit. To distinguish between them, we refer to the Father as God, call the Son by His earthly name—Jesus, and speak of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus spoke of His unison with his Father as being one, or as being in His Father and His Father in Him. John 17:21–23 records, “Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us . . . that they may be one as we are one: . . . I in them and you in me.”

God the Father answered Jesus’ prayer that we read in John 17:5. After Jesus died for our sins, God raised Him from the dead. Forty days later many people saw Jesus go back to heaven. Later, God let several people see Jesus there in His glory with the Father as Stephen did.

Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. (Acts 7:55)

Application

1 According to the Bible, the relationship Jesus has with His Father

- a)** began at creation.
- b)** has always existed.
- c)** started when He was born.

2 The Holy Trinity means

- a)** one God with three persons.
- b)** the sacred three persons in one.
- c)** three Gods, all equal to each other.

3 A Scripture which mentions all the persons of the Holy Trinity is

- a)** Micah 5:2.
- b)** John 17:5.
- c)** Acts 7:55.



Jesus Claims God As His Father

Jesus knew God was His Father and let others know it. He continually spoke of God as His Father (even when He was twelve years old). He addressed God as His Father in His prayers. Jesus told the people that God had sent Him to give eternal life to those who believe in Him.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

Jesus honored His Father by doing what God had sent Him to do. He taught the people how wonderful God is and let them know the source of His power. Jesus said,

“I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.” (John 8:28–29)

Application

4 Memorize John 3:16.

5 Something to think about. Some people say that Jesus was a good man but not the Son of God. However, Jesus himself said He was the Son of God. If Jesus were not the Son of God, but merely said that He was, He would be telling a lie! If He were a liar, could He still be a good man?

God Claims Jesus as His Son

We know that Jesus is the Son of God because God himself has made this very clear. God honors His Son. Jesus said,

“My other witness is the Father, who sent me . . .
. . . If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing.
My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the
one who glorifies me.” (John 8:18, 54)

God honored Jesus and testified that Jesus was His Son. The testimonies came through: (1) angels, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) supernatural signs.

Angels. God sent His heavenly messengers, the angels, to let people know that Jesus was His Son. Angels told Joseph and Mary that the baby to be born of the virgin would be the Son of God. Angels announced to shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem that the Savior was born. At two times of great crisis in Jesus’ life, angels came to strengthen and reassure Him. Angels rolled away the stone from Jesus’ tomb and told His followers He had risen from the dead. And when Jesus was caught up to heaven, angels appeared to the watching crowd. They said that just as Jesus had gone to heaven, He would come back again someday.

The Holy Spirit. God sent His Spirit to honor Jesus and let people know who He is. The Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth, Zechariah, Simeon, Mary, and Anna, and spoke through them. They told people that the child Jesus was the Messiah. God filled John the Baptist with His Spirit and sent him as a special messenger to introduce Jesus as the Son of God and Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The Holy Spirit came down on Jesus like a dove when He was baptized. The Spirit anointed Jesus for His ministry as the Messiah—the Anointed One—full of the wisdom and power of God.

Supernatural signs. God used many signs to testify of His Son. A star guided the wise men to the infant Jesus. On three occasions, the people heard God speak from heaven honoring Jesus. When Jesus officially began His work, God affirmed, “‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased’” (Matthew 3:17).

At another time, God gave the followers of Jesus a glimpse of His Son’s glory. Jesus was transformed before them, and His face became as bright as the sun. God spoke from heaven again: “‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!’” (Matthew 17:5).

God’s voice was heard on a third occasion. This happened when Jesus was speaking about His death. John 12:28 records Jesus speaking: “‘Father, glorify your name!’” Then a voice came from heaven, “‘I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.’”

All the miracles of Jesus during His life on earth were God’s testimony that Jesus was who He said He was—the Son of God. When Jesus died, God also gave many signs. The earth shook. Darkness covered the sun. The veil in the temple, which hung as a barrier in front of the holy place, was torn in two.

Three days later God honored His Son by raising Him from the dead. Later God took Him home to heaven bodily in the sight of a great crowd. Afterwards God allowed several people to see Jesus in heaven beside Him. And when the disciples prayed to God in Jesus’ name, He answered their prayers and worked miracles. Surely all those who believe in God should believe His testimony about His Son Jesus.

Application

6 Memorize Matthew 3:17.

7 Suppose a friend asked you, “How do I know that God said Jesus is His Son?” The best response would be to

- a)** describe three ways in which God showed that Jesus is His Son.
 - b)** explain that Jesus did many good things when He was here on earth.
 - c)** tell the person that he or she just needs to believe.
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B. THE SON'S RELATION TO HIS FOLLOWERS

Goal 2. Identify what the Bible teaches about the relationship between the Son of God and His followers.

You have seen how both the Father and the Son recognize and claim each other. In the same way, the Son and His followers also recognize and claim each other. The result is that those who follow the Son of God have eternal union with Him.

The Followers Recognize the Son

Those who followed Jesus when He was on earth did so because they believed in Him. They recognized that He was who He said He was—the Son of God. And they openly expressed their faith in Him.

For instance, Simon Peter confessed to Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). And John 20:28 records Thomas’s acknowledgement of Jesus: “My Lord and my God!”

What about Jesus’ followers today? How do we recognize Him? Just by becoming a member of a church? Or by being called a Christian? To be real Christians, we must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—recognize Him as both the Son of God and our Savior. How do we do this? We turn our lives over to Him, trust in Him, and follow wherever He leads us.

John wrote his gospel to prove that Jesus is the Son of God, so that we could believe in Him and have eternal life. In his epistles John repeats God's message that the only way to have this life is in His Son.

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31)

God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:11–12)

Application

8 According to 1 John 5:11–12, the eternal life God gives us is in the

- a)** good works we do.
- b)** ideas of holy men.
- c)** Son of God.

9 John's purpose for writing his message about Jesus was to

- a)** prove that He is the Son of God.
 - b)** describe all the miracles He did.
 - c)** tell interesting information about Him.
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The Son Recognizes the Followers

Long before we were born, Jesus knew us. Before the world was formed, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit saw us in their plan for the human race. They saw us created in the image of God, God's children, sharing His love, enjoying the good things He would prepare for us, living with Him in perfect happiness.

But God saw something else too. He saw that the human race would turn away from Him in rebellion and would choose the paths of sin and death. God saw us suffering the results of sin in the world and condemned to eternal death. Rebellious and

ungrateful as we were, He loved us with a perfect love. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit worked out a plan for our salvation.

While we were yet sinners, the Son of God chose us to be His followers. He saw our guilt and took the sentence of death in our place. He saw our weakness. He accepts all those who come to Him and sets them free from the power of sin.

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will. (Ephesians 1:4–5)

The names that Jesus used for His followers when He was on earth show us His love for all those who follow Him. He refers to them as His little children, sons of God, light of the world, salt of the earth, His bride, His witnesses, those whom God has given Him, His little flock of sheep, His chosen ones, His church, His brothers, and part of himself as branches in the vine.

Do you recognize Jesus as your Savior and Lord? If so, He recognizes you as His own.

“Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.”
(Matthew 10:32–33)

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)

Application

- 10** Ephesians 1:4–5 says that God chose us to belong to Him
- a)** at the same time Jesus was born.
 - b)** before the world was made.
 - c)** when we believed in Jesus Christ.

11 God planned to bring us to himself through

- a) giving us better rules to follow.
- b) Jesus Christ, His Son.
- c) new religious ceremonies and rituals.

12 Write the number of the name Jesus uses for His followers in front of each phrase that describes the idea it teaches about their relationship to Him.

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| ... a Loved and treasured | 1) Vine branches |
| ... b Sharing His life | 2) Bride |
| ... c Having God for their Father | 3) Brothers |
| ... d Under His protection/care | 4) Flock of sheep |
| ... e Pledged to unite with Him | |



The Son and His Followers Are United Eternally

Jesus wants us to be with Him because He loves us and knows that our life, happiness, and future depend on our union with Him. He gives us new life for body, soul, and spirit. In Him we find real happiness, fulfillment, and power to overcome evil. All those who walk with Him day by day now will live with Him forever in heaven. John the Baptist testified of Jesus,

The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him. (John 3:35–36)

Jesus later testified, “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

Our union with Jesus is so close that all who believe in Him are in Christ and He is in us. Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are

the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing'” (John 15:5).

Paul describes our union with Christ as being members of His body. Jesus is the Head. His church is His body. All the rights and privileges of the sinless Son of God, all of His riches in glory, all of the love and fellowship between the Son and His Father become ours, too, as members of His body! Paul writes,

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. (Colossians 1:17–18)

Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim him, . . . teaching everyone . . . so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. (Colossians 1:27–28)

Application

13 Memorize John 14:6.

14 Circle the letter before each TRUE statement.

- a)** For us to share in the glory of God, Christ must be in us.
- b)** Jesus said that some people can go to the Father by a different way than by Him.
- c)** The source of life for the church is in following the commands of the people who lead the church.

15 In the previous exercise, there are two false statements. Write the letter of each statement and the reference to the scripture portion which shows that the statement is false.

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You have learned that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Because He is, we share in His divine life when we are united to Him. But Jesus also became a man. Why? We will study the reasons in our next lesson.

Check Your Answers

- 9 a)** prove that He is the Son of God.
- 1 b)** has always existed.
- 10 b)** before the world was made.
- 2 b)** the sacred three persons in one.
- 11 b)** Jesus Christ, His Son.
- 3 c)** Acts 7:55.
- 12 a)** 2) Bride
- b)** 1) Vine branches
- c)** 3) Brothers
- d)** 4) Flock of sheep
- e)** 2) Bride
- 5** No, He could not. If you believe Jesus was a good man, you must also believe that He told the truth about himself. He is who He says He is—the Son of God.
- 14 a)** True
- 7** The best response is **a)** describe three ways in which God showed that Jesus is His Son. Though **b)** is true, it does not point directly to what God did. Response **c)** is not helpful because it does not use the evidence God has given us in the Bible.
- 15 b)** John 14:6.
- c)** Colossians 1:17–18.
- 8 c)** Son of God.