



LESSON THREE:

ONE GOD, THREE PARTS: SON (PART 1)

FACILITATOR NOTE

This is a foundational lesson, which continues our discussion of the Trinity (one God in three parts). In the prior lesson, we discussed God the Father. In this lesson, we begin our discussion of God the Son, manifested in the person of Jesus Christ. These notes are a suggested guide to keep the discussion on course. Feel free to adapt either in advance or in class if you think that it would be fruitful to the discussion. Your feedback is welcomed.

PRAYER

Spend time in prayer with the class. Allow for requests and center your prayer on this lesson.

FOCUS

Most people will say they believe in God and most even believe that Jesus was a true historical figure, a good man who preached and practiced that we should love one another and live at peace with everyone. But accepting Jesus as God in the flesh is something that is too difficult for many to embrace. How could God become a man, and why would He do that? Yet, that Jesus is the Son of God in human form is a fundamental tenet upon which our faith/salvation is based, so it is important that we are able to clearly articulate this to others.

Memory Verse: ¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-2,14)

- We believe in *God the Son*, Jesus Christ, who is God's Son and our Savior (John 1:14; 1 John 4:9; John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:18) and who:
 - Was born Jesus of Nazareth, both fully human and fully divine, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 21:11; John 19:19; John 1:14; Romans 5:15-17; Colossians 2:9; 1 John 1:1; Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:26-38)
 - Lived and taught the perfect life (John 13:14-16; Philippians 2:1-11; Hebrews 2:14-18; 3:1; 4:14-16; 12:1-3; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6)
 - Suffered and was unjustly crucified (Luke 23:1-46)



LESSON

I. WE BELIEVE IN GOD THE SON JESUS CHRIST WHO IS GOD'S SON AND OUR SAVIOR

A. God the Son exists, apart from God the Father, but still as God

1. There is a plurality to God, i.e., God is one but also many (Gen 1:1-31, especially 26)
(Gen 1:26-27) Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."²⁷So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
2. The Word (Logos) is God but a separate part of the Godhead who was present at creation and participated in every act of the creation
(John 1:1-3) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.²He was with God in the beginning.³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
 - a) This implies that the Word was not created but already present
 - b) John begins his gospel like Genesis, to further emphasize the eternal nature of the Word

B. God the Son took on human form in the person of Jesus Christ

1. The Word (Logos) that was God became flesh, i.e., Jesus
(John 1:14) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
2. The Word, Jesus Christ, is the Son of God (John 3:16-18; 1 John 4:9)
*(John 3:16-18) 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.¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.
(1 John 4:9) This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.*

Note: God the Father has only one Son, not several (per John 3:16)

C. God's Son, Jesus Christ is our Savior

1. God sent his Son, Jesus, to be our Savior
 - a) *(Titus 2:11-13) For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.¹²It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,¹³while we*



- wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,*
- b) (1 John 4:14-15) *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God.*
 - c) (2 Peter 3;18) *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*
2. That the Savior would be God in the flesh was hinted at by the prophets
- a) (Micah 5:2) *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”*
 - b) (Isaiah 9:6-7) *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

II. GOD THE SON BECAME A MAN BORN AS JESUS OF NAZARETH FULLY HUMAN AND FULLY DIVINE CONCEIVED OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY

A. The Son of God was born as Jesus of Nazareth

- 1. Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth when they were pledged to be married (Luke 1:16-27) *In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.*
- 2. Due to the census, Joseph and Mary made the trek from Nazareth to Bethlehem to register, and while there, Mary gave birth to Jesus, but after the birth, returned to Nazareth (with a brief stay in Egypt while Jesus was a young child, per Matthew 2)
(Luke 2:1-7) *In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register. ⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.
(Luke 2:39-40) *When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰And the child**



grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

3. Pilate identified Jesus as being from Nazareth
(John 19:19) *Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

B. Jesus was born fully human and fully divine, conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary

1. (Luke 1:26-35) *In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." ³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.*
2. (Colossians 2:9) *For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form*
3. (Hebrews 1:3) *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.*
4. (Hebrews 2:14-18) *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*
5. That Jesus is God in the flesh is a deep mystery which is truly impossible to comprehend
(1 Tim 3:16) *Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.*
6. The virgin birth was foretold by the prophet Isaiah about 650-700 years prior to the actual event
(Isaiah 7:14) *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*



7. The virgin birth is consistent with the discrepancy between the genealogies of Jesus presented in Matthew and Luke
 - a) Matthew’s genealogy, presents the kingly line of David through his son Solomon, and includes the key figure, Jehoiachin (aka Jeconiah or Coniah), the son of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah. This is the genealogy of Joseph, Mary’s husband. (Matt 1:1-17)
 - b) Luke’s genealogy presents a different line of David through his son Nathan. (Luke 3:23-38)
 - c) Per God’s curse in Jeremiah 22:30 on Jehoiachin’s natural line, the Matthew genealogy cannot be Jesus’ ancestral line, and thus, it must be Joseph’s while the Luke genealogy must then be the ancestral line of Mary.
 (Jeremiah 22:30) *This is what the LORD says: “Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah.”*

C. Jesus lived/demonstrated the perfect life, a life without sin, a model for us to follow

1. (Hebrews 4:14-16) *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,¹⁰ Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.*
2. (1 Peter 2:20-25) *... if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²²“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” ²³When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” ²⁵For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*
3. (John 13:13-17) *“You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.*
4. (Philippians 2:5-11) *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even*



death on a cross!⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

D. Jesus suffered and was unjustly crucified

1. (Luke 22:66-23:46; Matt 26:57-27:50; John 18:28-19:30) The gospel accounts of the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus demonstrate the injustice and brutality he endured. Note the following facts from the account:
 - a) The chief priests and whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence they could find/use to have Jesus executed, and false witnesses were produced, but nothing consistent/believable could be created (Matt 26:59-60).
 - b) Pilate and Herod both questioned Jesus but could find nothing wrong with him, no violation of any civil/criminal law had been committed (Luke 23:4-22; Matt 27:19-24)
 - c) The Jews (chief priest, members of the Sanhedrin) found him guilty of one thing: blasphemy – for claiming to be the Messiah, the Son of God. (Luke 22:66-71; Matt 26:62-68; John 19:7)
2. It was God's will/plan that Jesus be treated unjustly and suffer horribly, and God announced it more than 700 years ahead of time through the prophet Isaiah:
 - a) (Isaiah 52:13-15) *See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. ¹⁴Just as there were many who were appalled at him — his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness— ¹⁵so he will sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.*
 - b) (Isaiah 53) This chapter is probably the most well-known prophecy concerning the Messiah and his life and sufferings. God gave him no advantages in life, from his birth to his death, and laid on him the guilt for every person's sin, and the responsibility to pay for those sins through suffering and death, so that forgiveness could come to all who put their hope in him.
3. (1 Peter 2:20-25) See II.C.2 above
4. Why did Jesus have to suffer? Was it really necessary?
 - a) The writer of Hebrews provides an answer:
 - (1) (Hebrews 2:10-11) *In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. ¹¹Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.*



- (2) (Hebrews 2:14-18) *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. ¹⁷For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*
- (3) (Hebrews 5:7-9) *During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him*
- b) Jesus said it would draw us to him: John 12:32

REFLECTION

- Where do we find evidence for God the Son?
- Describe the Trinity (Godhead).
- Discuss different activities attributed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (creation, redemption, ongoing sanctification).
- If God is omniscient and Jesus is God, is Jesus omniscient? (Consider Matt 24:36)
- What’s our relationship with God the Son?
 - Christ the redeemer (Gal 4:4-6)
 - Christ the Lord (Philippians 2:9-1)

PRAYER

NEXT WEEK: ONE GOD, THREE PARTS: God the Son (Part 2)