

TheoTalk

Engaging Theology that Matters

Who is Jesus?

Part 6: The one-and-only God-man — Fully God (according to His words)

In this lesson, we will continue unpacking the doctrine of the incarnation by considering how Jesus claimed equality with God through His words. In addition, we will celebrate the eternal covenant between the Father, Son, and Spirit to redeem a people who would enjoy communion with the communal God.

Key Takeaway: Jesus claimed to be equal with God and, therefore, God by nature.

Discussion

Read Exodus 3:1-6, Exodus 3:13-14; John 8:51-59; John 14:9

Given His Jewish audience's familiarity with Yahweh's interaction with Moses, what is Jesus claiming about himself in John 8:51-59? John 14:9?

How does Jesus describe His relationship to God the Father in each of these passages?

John 5:17-18

John 16:28

John 17:1-5

Read Isaiah 42:8; Compare with John 17:5

Why is it significant that Jesus claims to have shared the (eternal) glory of God?

The Deity of Christ flows from the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity, which states: "...There is one God who eternally exists as three distinct Persons — the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Stated differently, God is one in essence and three in person. These definitions express three crucial truths: (1) the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons, (2) each Person is fully God, (3) there is only one God."⁴

The ancient Creeds affirm the one-and-only God exists in and as a Divine Community consisting of three distinct, co-eternal, co-equal, consubstantial persons who, together, is the one God. The Athanasian Creed (c. 5th-6th Century A.D.), for example, affirms:

That we worship one God in trinity and the trinity in unity, neither blending their persons nor dividing their essence. For the person of the Father is a distinct person, the person of the Son is another, and that of the Holy Spirit still another. But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty co-eternal. What quality the Father has, the Son has, and the Holy Spirit has.

⁴ <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-doctrine-of-the-trinity>

The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is immeasurable, the Son is immeasurable, the Holy Spirit is immeasurable. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal. And yet there are not three eternal beings; there is but one eternal being. So too there are not three uncreated or immeasurable beings; there is but one uncreated and immeasurable being.

Similarly, the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Spirit is almighty. Yet there are not three almighty beings; there is but one almighty being. Thus the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. Yet there are not three gods; there is but one God. Thus the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord. Yet there are not three lords; there is but one Lord.

Just as Christian truth compels us to confess each person individually as both God and Lord, so catholic religion forbids us to say that there are three gods or lords. The Father was neither made nor created nor begotten from anyone. The Son was neither made nor created; he was begotten from the Father alone. The Holy Spirit was neither made nor created nor begotten; he proceeds from the Father and the Son. Accordingly there is one Father, not three fathers; there is one Son, not three sons; there is one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.

Nothing in this trinity is before or after, nothing is greater or smaller; in their entirety the three persons are co-eternal and co-equal with each other. So in everything, as was said earlier, we must worship their trinity in their unity and their unity in their trinity. Then who desires to be saved should think thus about the trinity. But it is necessary for eternal salvation that one also believe in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ faithfully.

To think more about the Biblical teaching of the Trinity, why God is a Trinity, and why this matters, review the resources in the [Additional Study](#) section below. For now, let's celebrate how all three the members of the Trinity made a covenant with one another to redeem a people to the glory of God.

Read Ephesians 1:3-6, 13-14; John 6:38-40

Before time began, God the Father covenanted with God the Son (together with God the Holy Spirit) to redeem a people for himself. Theologians refer to this as "The Eternal Covenant," or "The Covenant of Redemption." Remarkably, this means there was never a "moment" in eternity past when God was not thinking about redeeming you from sin and adopting you as His child, that you might know and flourish in an everlasting relationship with him. The promise of Genesis 3:15 and its culmination in the person of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, is the outworking of this eternal covenant or promise between God the Father and His eternal Son.

How does it affect you, knowing God chose in eternity past, not only to create you, but to suffer greatly to save you from your sins against Him, that you might know and enjoy Him forever?

How would your view of God change if you really believed this? Your view of yourself as His child?

Additional Study

To better understand the eternal Covenant discussed in this lesson, see:

- [What is the Eternal Covenant, also known as the Covenant of Redemption?](#)

- [What is the Covenant of Redemption?](#)

To think about the ramifications of the eternal covenant (Covenant of Redemption), see Grudem, *Systematic Theology, Election and Reprobation*, pp. 669-674.

The eternal covenant between the members of the Godhead assumes the doctrine of the Trinity, which is deeply grounded in Scripture and wholly fundamental to Christianity. To think more about God's Triune nature and why it matters that God is a Trinity, see:

- [The Doctrine of the Trinity: No Christianity Without It](#)
- [No Trinity, No Love](#)