

*JESUS CHRIST,
GOD THE SON*

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JESUS CHRIST, GOD THE SON

All sixty-six books of the Holy Bible give glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Old Testament books look forward to Him; the four gospels look at Him; the rest of the New Testament look back to Him, and forward to His coming again. Christ is the center of all the ages. As God He is the most important Person in the universe. As Man He is the most important Human of the whole world.

There are three great chapters in the New Testament which especially give glory to the Lord Jesus Christ:

John chapter 1

Colossians chapter 1

Hebrews chapter 1

We may call these chapters the three great First Chapters, because they are each one the first chapter in a book of the New Testament; but also they give the Lord Jesus Christ the first place. We will study these three chapters, or at least part of each one, and learn twelve great truths which they teach. We will also look at twelve other verses which some people today use when they try to prove that Christ is less than God the Son.

First read these portions of Scripture:

John 1.1-18

Colossians 1.11-23

Hebrews 1.1-14

Read these portions again, five times or more. Ask the Lord to help you to understand.

JESUS CHRIST, GOD THE SON

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Each lesson is divided into short sections. For example on page 5 you will see 1.1. That is the first section of the first lesson. Below that is 1.2, the second section of the first lesson. There are three sections in Lesson 1, nine in Lesson 2.

On Pages 51 to 55 is a list of verses which are used in this book, with the number of chapter and section where it is found. For example, Genesis 1.1 is referred to in Lesson 1, section 0 (which is before section 1); in Lesson 5 section 0; and in Lesson 5 section 4. This will help you to find an explanation of many verses in the Bible.

– 1 –

THE SON HAS ALWAYS EXISTED AND ALWAYS WILL EXIST

Eternity is something like a very long time. We count a hundred years of time and call it a “century”, but we cannot measure eternity. We can measure time since the day when God created the earth, but eternity was before that. No one created God. He has existed from eternity.

Notice these verses: (from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible)

Genesis 1.1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Deuteronomy 33.27 The eternal God...

Romans 16.26 ...the eternal God...

In John 1 we have a new name for the Lord Jesus Christ, the LOGOS or the Word.

1.1 *John 1.1 In the beginning was the Word.*

The beginning is when God created the heavens and the earth. The LOGOS was there. The Bible does not say “from the beginning”, which might mean that the LOGOS came into existence at that time. This would mean that God created Him. The LOGOS had no beginning, He was never created.

1.2 In Hebrews 1 also we read that He was there in the beginning.

Hebrews 1.10 ...in the beginning...

Time began when God created the heavens and the earth. God existed long before that. What will it be like after the end of the

world? God will continue to exist forever and ever. The word "age" is used in the New Testament for a certain length of time, but eternity is called "the ages of the ages".

The Holy Spirit led holy men to write the 66 books of the Bible and He tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ will continue to exist forever.

1.3 *Hebrews 1.8 ...for ever and ever...*

How long is eternity?

Think of one of your friends who lives one kilometer from your house. You can take a piece of string and stretch it from your house to your friend's house. Next day you see a small insect walking on this string toward your friend's house. It is very slow, it can walk only one meter a day. Your string is 1,000 meters long so the insect must walk for 1,000 days to reach the other end, nearly three years later.

Now let us pretend that your friend's house is 1,000 kilometers away. Then it would take the same insect 1,000 times as long: $1,000 \times 1,000 = 1,000,000$. One million days would be almost 3,000 years.

Finally let us pretend that you see another insect, very small, walking on this long string. It can only walk one millimeter a day instead of a meter. It would take this very small insect 1,000 times as long. $1,000 \times 3,000 = 3,000,000$, so it would need 3,000,000 years to make this long, slow journey.

Of course it is impossible, but we have here a picture of eternity. Is eternity 3,000,000 years long? No, we must say eternity is longer than anything we can think of. There is the past eternity, and God existed more than 3,000,000 years ago. There is also the eternity of the future. Again we must say that God will exist more than 3,000,000 years from now. He had no beginning and will have no end.

In this chapter you have seen that Christ existed in the past eternity, and will continue forever in the eternity of the future. He is eternal.

CHRIST IS GOD

It would be good to read again these parts of the three First Chapters, John 1.1-18, Colossians 1.11-23, and Hebrews 1.1-14. Each of these chapters teach us that Christ is God.

We have seen that the LOGOS or the Word was in the beginning. The same first verse of John tells us that He was God. We will soon see that the Word is the Lord Jesus Christ.

2.1 *John 1.1 ...the Word was God.*

This verse says that the Word was in the beginning, and that He was God. This is almost the same thing, because only God created everything and so He alone existed in the beginning. The Word was in the beginning and so He must be God.

We know that God is the God of grace, 1 Peter 5.10, and He shows His grace to men. These verses also show that the Word was the same as God.

2.2 *John 1.14 ...The Word...full of grace... John 1.17 ...grace...came through Jesus Christ.*

The Holy Spirit taught Paul what. to say in all his letters to the churches and so we can be sure that Colossians 1 is perfectly true. There also we learn about Christ:

2.3 *Colossians 1.19 ...in Him all the fullness of God...*

This means that everything God is, Christ is; that Christ is fully God, not partly.

Again this chapter says that all things were made for Him, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2.4 *Colossians 1.16 ...all things were created... for Him.*

This means, for His pleasure, for His glory. He created the earth and the heaven for Himself and He will not give His glory to any creature.

Isaiah 43.7 ...whom I created for my glory...

Isaiah 48.11 ...My glory I will not give to another.

2.5 We do not know for sure who wrote the letter to the Hebrews, but we are sure that it is from God. The Holy Spirit came to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and no book in the Bible does this more than Hebrews. Chapter 1 teaches that Christ is God.

Hebrews 1.8 But of the Son He says...O God...

God was speaking in these verses about Christ, beginning with verse 5. In verse 8, He calls the Son "God".

2.6 Another thing we know about God, He is righteous, as well as gracious.

Daniel 9.14 ...the Lord our God is righteous...

John 17.25 ...righteous Father...

This is also true of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God.

Hebrews 1.8 ...the righteous scepter is the scepter of thy kingdom.

Hebrews 1.9 Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;

2.7 God wants all His creatures to worship Him.

John 4.23 ...for such the Father seeks to worship Him.

Yet He commands the angels to worship the Son.

Hebrews 1.6 ...Let all God's angels worship Him (Christ).

So we see from these three chapters that Christ is really God. However some teachers do not agree with this. In this lesson we will study also three verses which some people use when they try to prove that Christ is less than God. Others sometimes find these verses to be difficult to understand.

2.8 We agree that there are some verses in the Bible which at first are difficult because they *seem* to teach something different

from what we learn from the rest of God's Word. The 66 books of the Holy Bible are all inspired by God the Holy Spirit. (If you are not sure about this, you could get help from my book called "Can we know God?")

There were about forty different people who wrote the Bible, but the Holy Spirit led them to write nothing but the truth. We can therefore be sure that no verse really teaches something which is contrary to any other verse. If it seems to do so, we search and study more carefully to get the true meaning of both verses.

1. For example, read John 5.15-23.

John 5.19 The Son can do nothing on His own, or of Himself.

John 5.30 I can do nothing of myself.

Some teachers from these verses claim that:

Christ received all His power from the Father; or

Christ did not have any power Himself to raise dead people or do any miracles;

or Christ was not God at all.

It is very important to understand the context of any verse, so you should look back at the verses before and after verse 19. Note that:

The Jews were ready to kill the Lord Jesus Christ because He made Himself equal with God in verse 17. The Lord did not deny this charge. He had nothing to fear, because He knew that He could not die before God's time came, John 17.1. His answer was not to save His own life. He could have said, No, I am not equal with the Father. What did He say? Read the rest of verse 19.

He says He could do nothing except what He saw the Father do. The Father does nothing in secret to keep it from His Son, the Son sees all that His Father does. In other words, Christ could do anything and everything which the Father can do. Only God could say such a thing.

We will learn something about God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit in lesson 4. Here Christ is saying that He never does anything on His own authority, He always acts in perfect harmony with the Father and the Spirit.

Notice again:

John 8.43 ...You cannot hear my words.

The people were not deaf, they were listening but were not willing to believe what He was teaching them. The word *cannot* must sometimes mean "not willing to". So our Lord Jesus Christ was not willing to do anything apart from His Father.

Again, read Mark 6.5,6. The Lord had done great miracles in chapter 5, verses 13, 29 and 41. Why does it say He could not do any miracles in verse 5, except heal a few sick people? Surely He had the same power but He was not willing to use it because they had no faith. Again we see that *cannot* may mean "not willing to".

So we see that part of John 5.19 does not prove that Christ is less than God. We must read the whole verse and other verses before and after it; then we see that Christ was claiming to be equal with God. Christ could raise dead persons, verses 21,28,29; He will judge all men, verses 22,27; He gives eternal life, verses 24,25. He is God the Son.

The main lesson from these verses is that all men shall honor the Son as they honor the Father, verse 23. You cannot do this by teaching that Christ is not God at all.

2. Another verse is about the same.

John 12.49 For I have not spoken of myself..

2.9 Here again we must look at the whole verse, and what comes before and after. The Lord was saying that He always chose to say just what would please His Father perfectly, John 8.29.

Remember that the Most High God is sovereign and supreme, Genesis 14.18,19,22; Daniel 5.18,21; Acts 7.48; Hebrews 7.1. This means that no one is higher than God, no one can tell Him what He must do. He can do anything, but He only does what pleases Him, in keeping with His holy, righteous character. We may also say that He will not do certain things because it is not His will. Do not say, He *does* not because He *cannot*.

Christ is God, and we may say the same thing about Him. We know that Christ prayed to the Father; we read this eight times in Luke's gospel alone. Do not say, He had to pray; say, He *chose* to do so.

The Lord Jesus Christ chose the same words as the Father. Father, Son and Holy Spirit always act together in perfect harmony.

3. Some people use another verse to try to prove that Christ is less than God.

2.10 *John 4.22 We Jews know whom we worship.*

In this chapter the Lord Jesus Christ was speaking with a woman of Samaria. She thought she worshipped God, but she did not have the power to live a proper life. She tried to argue with Christ about where men should worship, in Samaria or Jerusalem. The Lord answered her by saying that the Jews worshipped Jehovah, the true God. He was speaking of Israel, not of Himself as an individual.

In the Old Testament the word for worship is translated about 70 times as "bow down", as an ordinary person to a greater. In the New Testament the wise men knelt down and worshipped the Lord Jesus, Matthew 2.11. Read also Matthew 4.9; Revelation 7.11; 11.16; 19.4; 22.8,9. In these verses falling down goes with worshipping.

Christ prayed, gave thanks to His Father, but it is never said that He worshipped Him. Some people will say praise is the same as worship:

Hebrews 2.12 ...I will praise you...

As High Priest, the Lord Jesus will lead the praises of His people, but praise is more like giving thanks than worshipping.

Others claim that the Lord Jesus Christ taught men to worship, Luke 4.8, and therefore He must do the same to give us a good example. We will consider Christ as the perfect Example in lesson 7, but here note that the perfect Teacher told Nicodemus that he must be born again from above, John 3.7, but the Lord did not give Himself as an example of one who is born again. Peter and Paul taught what women should do, but they were men and so could not give them an example, Titus 2.3,4; 1 Peter 3.1-6. Paul taught what rich men should do, but he himself was poor, 1 Timothy 6.17; 2 Corinthians 6.10. It is sometimes necessary to teach without giving an example.

The Lord Jesus Christ is God. He did not worship Himself.

You see that there are hard verses about the Lord but we can study them and understand them. We still must say He is God.

GOD THE SON

We have seen that Christ is eternal and therefore He is of necessity God. In John 1 and Hebrews 1 He is called God. In lesson 2 also we noted that there is only one God existing from eternity as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. We will now look at our three First Chapters and see what they teach about God the Son.

3.1 John 1.14 ...glory as of the only Son from the Father.

This chapter has brought before us the LOGOS, the Word, who is the Lord Jesus Christ. John and the apostles saw part of His glory; it was the glory of the only Son of the Father.

What did they see? Some people make beautiful pictures of the Lord, but no one on earth knows what He looked like. We can be sure that He did not have a circle of light around His head, because the Jews would have known that He came from God. Instead they put Him to death. But the apostles saw His power when He did great miracles, John 2.11. They heard His teaching about the God whom they knew in part from the Old Testament. They saw both the grace and the holiness of God in everything which He did and said. They began to understand that this Man Jesus was revealing to them the glory of God.

Even so, it was only part of His glory. He laid aside most of His glory when He came into this world, and the Father restored this to Him when He went back to heaven, John 17.5.

He is the only Son. In the Old Testament God calls believers His sons, Deuteronomy 14.1; Hosea 1.10; and in the New Testament the Spirit calls Christians the sons of God, 2 Corinthians 6.18; Galatians 3.26; Hebrews 2.10; 12.7. But we are quite different from the Lord Jesus. He was God the Son from eternity,

we become sons when we accept Him as Savior and are born again from above, Galatians 4.6. The Spirit calls Him the only Son from the Father.

3.2 *John 1.18 ...the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father...*

Many Bibles say...the only God, who is in the bosom of the Father, or at the side of the Father. This makes it still more clear that Christ is God. The bosom is the place of love, where a mother puts her dear baby. There is no way to measure God's love for the Son.

Colossians also speaks of the Son and the love of the Father for Him.

3.3 *Colossians 1.13 ...the kingdom of His beloved Son...*

This verse tells us that He has delivered us; we will study this in lesson 11. We will read more about His kingdom in lesson 12. Here note His name, *Son*, and that God loves Him.

In Hebrews 1, this word is used four times of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3.4 *Hebrews 1.2 ...He has spoken to us by a Son...*

In early days God spoke by many prophets of the Old Testament. Now He has spoken in One who is His Son. In John 1.14, the apostles saw the glory of the Father in the only Son; in John 1.18, the only Son has made the Father known. So here. God has spoken in the Son.

3.5 *Hebrews 1.5 ...Thou art my Son... ...He shall be to me a Son.*

In the New Testament the Spirit often used words from the Old Testament to show that He meant the Lord Jesus Christ. This verse comes from Psalm 2.7 and 2 Samuel 7.14. Here the Spirit is showing that the Son is greater than any angel, He has a more excellent name than theirs, Hebrews 1.4. The Spirit also shows something about the relation between the Father and the Son. God calls Him, *My Son*.

3.6 *Hebrews 1.8 ...But of the Son He says...O God...*

This verse comes from Psalm 45.6 where the Spirit was speaking about the coming King or Messiah. The Spirit used these words again here to show that Messiah is the Son. We considered His righteousness in lesson 2, and noted His kingdom in Colossians 1.13. We will think about His throne in lesson 12.

3.7 *Hebrews 1.5 ...today I have begotten thee.*

OR today I have become your Father.

We ought to think about these words in verse 5, because some teachers use them to argue that the Son was not eternal, or that He was less than God. These words are so important that the Spirit used them in Acts 13.33 and again in Hebrews 5.5. We have learned that the Son is eternal God, lessons 1 and 2, and we know that He became a Man, see lesson 7. What do these words mean?

Mary became the mother of the Lord Jesus before she was married to Joseph. She became pregnant by a special act of God the Holy Spirit, Matthew 1.20; Luke 1.35, so God in this way was the Father of His Son. He did not have to tell the Son, but He announced to the angels of heaven in these words that God the Son was becoming a Man, but was still God.

The Spirit also used in verse 5 the words to David in 2 Samuel 7.14. These words were true of Solomon, and still more true of Christ, who is also called the Son of David, or the Descendant of David, or sometimes, David's greater Son. He was certainly a descendant of David, and far greater than Solomon, Luke 3.23,31; 11.31.

In Hebrews 1.4 and 5, the Spirit is teaching that Christ has the name "SON" which is far better than any angel had, even the archangel, Jude.v.9.

**THE TRIUNITY:
THE ONE GOD, THE THREE-IN-ONE**

We have seen that we can think of God as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

The Bible teaches everywhere that God is One, for example, Deuteronomy 6.4; Mark 12.29; 1 Corinthians 8.4. How then can we speak of Three? Is God one Person or three? Does 3=1? No, and the Bible does not really use the word Persons for the Triunity of God. This is a great mystery and the human mind cannot understand it all. But we can and must believe what the Bible says, so the question is: Just what does the Bible say? It is better to know what the Bible says than to try and bring it all together by our own minds.

4.1 God is eternal, Isaiah 57.15; 1 Timothy 1.17; Revelation 10.6; 15.7.

The Christ is eternal, Revelation 11.15.

The Holy Spirit is eternal, Hebrews 9.14.

4.2 We have learned that Christ is God, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, Ephesians 4.30. The Bible brings the Three together:

Matthew 3.16,17: The Spirit came down on Christ, and the Father called Him His Son.

Matthew 28.19: we should baptize new disciples in the name (not names) of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

John 14.26: The Father sends the Holy Spirit in the name of Christ.

John 15.26: Christ sends the Holy Spirit from the Father.

(These two verses show that the Father and the Son are One, they both send the Spirit.)

2 Corinthians 13.14:

the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit...

1 Peter 1.2:

...the knowledge of God the Father,
made holy by His Spirit,
to obey Jesus Christ...

So we see that God is really Three-in-One. This is often called the Trinity, but the word Triunity may be just a little better because it includes the word unity and God is One, James 2.19. We can be sure that neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Spirit ever acts alone or independently One of Another. There has never been any conflict or struggle between the Father and the Son, the Father and the Spirit or the Son and the Spirit. They always act together in perfect harmony. There is only one God.

4.3 We have seen that God is One and Christ is God, yet there are verses in our three First Chapters which teach that Christ is in some way distinct or different from God, from the Father and from the Holy Spirit.

John 1.1 ...the Word was with God...

This same verse says plainly that the Word was God, yet He was with God. This shows the mystery of the Triunity.

John 1.18 ...the only Son...is in the bosom of the Father.

He could not be in His own bosom, so we must say that the Son is God but not the same as the Father, He is at His Father's side.

4.4 ***Hebrews 1.9 ...God, thy God, has anointed thee...***

In verse 8, the Son is called God because He is God. In the next verse He is distinct from God, because God is His God, and God anoints the Son with oil. Again He could not anoint Himself; God does something to God the Son, He anoints Him with oil.

Another verse seems to be difficult to some people: John 14.28. Look first at:

4.5 *John 10.30 The Father and I are one.*

In verses 27 to 30 the Lord Jesus Christ says that He would take care of His sheep and give them eternal life. The Father is greater than any enemy who might want to steal or kill Christ's precious sheep whom He loves and for whom He has died. No one could steal them from the Son, nor from the Father. Father and Son care for the sheep. Father and Son are one, one God.

Later the Lord Jesus Christ says that His Father is greater than He.

4.6 *John 14.28 ...the Father is greater than I.*

Does this mean that the Son is less important than the Father? Is the Father more fully God than the Son?

It is always necessary to look at the verses which come before and after the verse we are studying. Here the Lord has been telling His disciples that He would leave them and go back to His Father. They felt sad to learn that He was about to go away, but they should have thought of the joy of the Lord in going back to His Father. It would be far better for Christ to be back in heaven. Consider these things:

Christ on earth

rejected by men insulted,
spit upon,
crucified, put to death

The Father in heaven

adored by angels
glorified by all
Giver of life to all

The Lord Jesus Christ had a perfect right to be in heaven and He was soon going back to the Father's presence. The Father was greater in glory than the Son. The verse does not mean that He was superior or more completely God than the Son. This would disagree with many other verses we have read.

4.7 Some teachers say that every father is greater than his son.

For example, they say that Abraham was greater than Isaac, therefore God the Father is greater than God the Son. We must never transfer an idea from human life to God and say, This is true for men, it must be true for God.

Anyway it is not always true, or even often true, with regard to men, that fathers are greater than sons. Take Abraham and Terah, his father, Genesis 11.25. We only read about Terah in two verses after this chapter, but Abraham's name is found over 300 times in the Bible. Who was the greater? Take David and his father Jesse. Who was the greater? Who was Paul's father? Paul was a great man of God, but we do not even know the name of his human father!

Christ gave up His glory when He became a man. He never gave up being equal to His Father. He got back His glory when He went back to heaven.

4.8 Others say that the Father sent the Son, and therefore the Son is inferior to the Father. True, the Lord said many times that the Father sent Him, but He also said that God sent Him. You know that God is not always the same as the Father. Christ obeyed His Father because of love, not because He was inferior.

4.9 The Son will rule as King over the whole earth for a thousand years, but He will not try to become greater than God. At the end He will be subject to God the Triunity, and God will be all in all, 1 Corinthians 15.28. These same words are used of the Lord Jesus Christ in Colossians 3.11. So God the Son will always be God and equal to God the Father and God the Spirit. Father, Son and Holy Spirit will always work together in harmony, as they always have done.

Let us worship our wonderful God, the great Three-in-One!

THE SON CREATED THE WORLDS

In the Old Testament we learn that God created everything.

Genesis 1.1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Isaiah 42.5 ...God Jehovah...created the heavens... spread forth the earth...

In the New Testament we have seen that God is the Triunity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament we learn that God created the world through God the Son.

5.1 *John 1.3 ...all things were made through Him and without Him was not anything made...*

In verses 1 and 2, the Spirit repeats that the Word was with God. In verse 3, He repeats that everything was through Him. This is not contrary to what the Old Testament says, because the Word was God and existed in the beginning, before anything else.

Everything was created through the Word.

Nothing was created without Him.

5.2 The Spirit repeated this again in verse 10:

John 1.10 ...the world was made through Him...

This verse says that He was in the world, but the people of the world did not know Him. This was the Lord Jesus Christ, so we see that He was still God the Creator when He was in this world.

In Colossians also the Spirit repeated this truth.

5.3 *Colossians 1.16 ...in Him all things were created...*

...all things were created through Him and for Him.

Notice three little words: *in* Him; *through* Him; and *for* Him. We have seen that all things were created *through* Him, John 1.3,10.

Here the Spirit added that all things exist *in* Christ, v.17.

Still more, all things were created for Him, that is, for His pleasure, for His glory. Now God will not give His glory to another, certainly not to any created man, Isaiah 42.8; 48.11. This word for tells us again that the Son is equal to God.

The Spirit also here adds to the words *all things* which we read in John 1.3. "All things" includes what is in heaven and on earth. Today we cannot see things in heaven, but Christ created those who are there. There are four different ranks or levels of angels; Christ created them all, all must obey Him, 1 Peter 3.22. God is also in heaven and we cannot see Him. No one created God, He is the Creator of all else.

What does Hebrews 1 say about creation? Two things.

5.4 *Hebrews 1.2 ...through whom also He created the world...*

Here the Spirit tells us again that God created the world through the Son. But there are two differences: the verse really says He made the ages. To make is a little different from create. To create means to produce something from nothing. No man today claims that he can produce something from nothing. Only God could do that. We can make something out of material which already exists; for example, you could make a dress out of cloth; or a table, if you had some wood.

The Spirit used both words in Genesis and Isaiah:

Genesis 1.1 ...God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1.31 God saw every thing that He had made...

Isaiah 45.12 I made the earth and created man...

God created the earth and made man from the dust, Genesis 2.7. Both creating and making were through the Son.

In Hebrews we read that He made the ages. This means the world which we can see, Hebrews 11.3, but it more often means long periods of time. It is good to know that God has control of the history of men, and He will work everything out according to His own will.

Some teachers however try to explain these verses in John 1, Colossians 1, and Hebrews 1, by saying that God created Christ first, then God created everything else through Him. This is not

correct, because Christ is God the Son, He is eternal and was never created. This is still more plain in

5.6 *Hebrews 1.10 Thou, Lord didst found the earth in the beginning...and the heavens are the work of thy hands...*

These words were first spoken to God in Psalm 102.25. Now the Spirit of God states that they are true of God the Son. He has been speaking of the Son:

verse 5: Thou art my Son

verse 8: Of the Son He says, thy throne, O God..

verse 10: Thou, Lord...

Here the Son *in the beginning* laid the foundations of the earth, Isaiah 51.13,16. With His *hands* the Son made the heavens, Psalm 8.3.

So we have several verses which say that God created the universe through the Son, and this verse says plainly that the Son did it all.

5.7 False teachers always take one verse or part of a verse to try to prove their lies. For example, right in these First Chapters, they say they can show that Christ is the first great creature:

John 1.14 ...the only Son...(or the only begotten Son)

John 1.18 ...the only Son...(or the only begotten Son)

Colossians 1.15 ...the First-born of all creation...

Hebrews 1.6 ...He brings the First-born into the world...

Some translations use the words "only begotten", which seem to say that Christ was born or created at some time in the past. It is better to translate them as "the One and Only", or "only". Anyway we have seen that Christ was "begotten" when He became Man. No one else was born as He was. See 3.7 and lesson 7.

5.8 The Spirit used the other word "first-born" about our Lord Jesus Christ seven times:

- a. Matthew 1.25, Jesus was the first child born to Mary;
- b. Luke 2.7, same thing;
- c. Romans 8.29, the First-born among many brothers;
- d. Colossians 1.15, the First-born of all creation;
- e. Colossians 1.18, the First-born from the dead;

- f. Hebrews 1.6, He brings the First-born into the world...
- g. Revelation 1.5, the First-born from the dead.

The words in (a) and (b) refer to the birth of the Lord as the first child of Mary. The words in (f) do not say He is the First-born among any others, and those in (e) and (g) are the same. So we have Christ the First-born among many brothers (c); the First-born from the dead (e) and (g); and the First-born of all creation (d). In every case the words mean the First or the Chief.

For example, the Lord Jesus Christ was not the first to rise from death, although He was the first to rise from death, never to die again.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Widow's son | 1 Kings 17.22 |
| 2. Shunammite's son | 2 Kings 4.35 |
| 3. Jairus' daughter | Matthew 9.25 |
| 4. Widow's only son | Luke 7.15 |
| 5. Lazarus | John 11.44 |
| 6. Many of God's people | Matthew 27.52 |
| 7. Dorcas | Acts 9.40 |

In the resurrection, Christ will be the most important Person, because He will raise all others by His power, John 5.28,29. His "brothers" are those who believe in Him and so are members of the family of God, Hebrews 2.11.

5.9 So it is in creation. God the Son became a Man among men, He entered creation, and of course, He has the chief place, He is the Creator of all else. The word "first" means first in position, not first in time.

There are many examples of this in the Bible. For example, Abraham's first son was Ishmael, but Isaac got the chief blessing, Genesis 16.15; 25.5. Esau was Isaac's first son, but the chief blessing went to Jacob, Genesis 25.23; 28.3,4. Reuben was Jacob's first son, but the chief blessing went to Joseph, 1 Chronicles 5.1,2. David had many sons, but Solomon became king after his father, 2 Samuel 5.14-16; 1 Kings 1.30.

So our Lord Jesus Christ in creation, in resurrection, in the family of God, He must have the first place, and in all things, He will be the Head or Chief, Colossians 1.18.

THE SON SUSTAINS THE WORLDS

We have seen that God the Son created everything in all the worlds. The worlds are not standing still, they are all moving. The moon moves around the earth, the earth turns around every day, and moves in a great path around the sun once a year. The stars move in their courses ... It is one thing to create the universe, another to keep it all moving in perfect order.

Question: Who keeps it all going?

6.1 Answer: the same One who created it, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1.17 ...and in Him all things hold together.

Some translate these words, "In union with Him all things have their proper place". The Creator keeps everything from flying apart. His power made everything, and it is His power that keeps them moving together.

God has control over all nature. He keeps the earth turning around so we have night and day. He has power to stop this movement for a while, to help His people. For example, Joshua prayed that the sun would not go down, and the LORD gave Israel a longer day to win a great victory, Joshua 10.12,13. God has authority over all animals, birds, fish, insects. All things hold together in union with Him.

This same truth is found in Hebrews 1.

6.2 *Hebrews 13 ...upholding the universe by His word of power.*

God the Son sustains the worlds by His powerful word. In the beginning, He spoke these words: Let there be light and there was light, Genesis 1.3.

Psalms 33.9 When He spoke, it was done...

God has the power to do many things which we men cannot do. Some people do not believe the Bible because they themselves have never seen a miracle. But God must be greater than man. He

can do miracles and gave the apostles the power sometimes to do miracles. This was to show that He really sent them and that men should listen to His words.

6.3 The Lord Jesus Christ did many miracles so men would know that He was God the Son who had come from God, John 20.30,31. Some teachers try to lower Christ's glory by saying that many men have also done great miracles, for example, feeding many people or raising those who have died or walking on the water. Let us consider these miracles.

Elijah fed one family for a long time; he told them that it was by the word of the LORD, 1 Kings 17.14-16.

Elisha fed a hundred men; he said it was by the word of the LORD, 2 Kings 4.42-44.

The Lord Jesus Christ fed 5,000 men, plus women and children; and another time, 4,000, Matthew 14.20,21; 15.37,38. He knew in advance what *He* was going to do, John 6.6.

6.4 Elijah and Elisha also brought a person back to life soon after they had died, 1 Kings 17.22; 2 Kings 4.35. The Lord Jesus Christ raised three persons, one after he was dead for four days.

6.5 Peter walked on the water for a short time, when the Lord permitted it, but his faith soon failed and he began to sink. The other disciples worshipped the Lord and called Him the Son of God, Matthew 14.25-33. They all knew that Peter had walked on the water only with the power of Christ.

Other people say that the Lord was really walking on land near the edge of the water but it was still dark so the disciples supposed that He was on the top of the water! Would they worship Him when their boat came close enough for Him to get in, and they saw that they were really at the shore? Would He let them call Him Son of God because they had made this mistake? We ask, Why do people change the plain meaning of the Bible? Is it because they wish to make Christ less than God?

6.6 It is clear that Christ did far greater miracles than prophets or apostles, and many more of them, John 15.24. God the Son is still in control of all nature, all things hold together in Him, He is still upholding the universe by the word of His power.

THE INCARNATION: GOD THE SON BECAME MAN

We have seen that God the Son is eternal, He created and upholds the universe. In this lesson we will study some verses which tell that He became Man.

7.1 John 1.14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...

The Logos or Word existed before the beginning of creation, He was and is God, yet it is said that He was with God, John 1.1.

Now we learn that He became flesh. We were all born of flesh, John 3.6, and Christ wanted to be one with us. We are persons of flesh and blood, so He also became Man like us ... yet with great differences also.

God made Adam from the dust of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life, Genesis 2.7. He was then a living man, but his body was still the same materials as the earth, Genesis 3.19; 1 Corinthians 15.47. The name Adam is almost the same as the word for earth or ground, adamah, Genesis 2.5,7,19.

7.2 Christ was God, He became Man, but He never ceased being God. God could not cease being God, He never changes:

Psalm 102.27 ...thou art the same...

Malachi 3.6 ...I am the LORD, I change not...

Even a man cannot cease being who he is. He may act like someone else, talk and dress and say he is someone else, but he really is the same person. The king or president of a country may have to step down and someone else becomes the chief leader. People would say, We have a new president. But the men are the same persons they were before, they have now different positions.

Now God is a Person; not a position. No one could possibly become God. Satan tried to become like God, Isaiah 14.14. Even if Satan did get the throne of God, he would still be Satan and God would be God.

Of course Satan could never take God's throne by force or make himself the ruler of the universe. In the beginning God created millions of angels; He can always create millions more. All His creatures together could never put some one else on the throne of heaven.

7.3 God never changes, He will always be God. At one time, God the Son became Man but He did not cease to be God, He could not. Still He is now Man and always will be. Perhaps we could use the word *God-Man* to show that He has two natures, but we must still remember He is only one *Person*.

We have learned from Colossians 1 something about the deity of Christ, but here is a little about His becoming flesh.

7.4 *Colossians 1.22 ...His body of flesh...*

In this verse we read that He has reconciled us to God in His body of flesh. This does not mean that He removed the enmity just by becoming Man, because in verse 20 we see that it was by the blood of His cross. This helps us to answer the question, Why would God the Son wish to become Man? For one thing, so He could die on the cross for our sins. We will think about His great work in lesson 10.

Another reason is, so He could reveal to us what God is like. Lesson 9 will tell more about that.

We could also add here: so He can judge the world as a Man who knows what it is to be a man and knows how we feel.

John 5.27 He has given the Son the right to judge because He is the Son of Man.

More about the Son of Man in the next lesson. For now look at Hebrews 1.

7.5 *Hebrews 1.6 ...He brings the First-born into the world... ...let all God's angels worship Him.*

We have seen that God would never give His glory to another

er, Isaiah 42.8, and He would not command His angels to worship another creature. This verse therefore proves again that Christ is God. Coming into the world, He must be the Chief, the First-born, see 5.9, page 23.

7.6 *Hebrews 1.5 ...Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee.*

The baby Jesus was begotten by the Holy Spirit, not by any human father. The virgin Mary after nine months gave birth to her Son. He had always existed as God, now He became the God-Man. The Holy Spirit repeated these words to show that Christ must rise from death, Acts 13.33; and again, to state that God's Son is High Priest forever, Hebrews 5.5.

However, many people find it hard to understand Philipians 2.7.

7.7 *Philippians 2.7 ...He emptied Himself ... or ... made Himself nothing ... or ..gave up what He had ...*

This last translation is much like 2 Corinthians 8.9: He was rich, for your sake He became poor. So the question is:

What did Christ empty Himself of? or What did He give up to become Man?

Wrong answers:

1. He was God and He gave up being God, or He emptied Himself of His nature as God.
2. He was still God, but He gave up some or all of His powers as God.

We have just proven that He could not cease being God. We cannot accept the other answer either because the Bible never says so. He did not *use* all His powers all the time, but only when He chose to. To say, *He did not use His power*, is not the same as to say, *He could not*, because *He had* emptied Himself of His powers. The main thing is, He was still God even when He became Man.

In what was God rich?

- 7.8 Romans 2.4 ...kindness, tolerance, patience...
Romans 11.33 ...wisdom and knowledge...

Ephesians 1.7 ...grace...
 Ephesians 2.4 ...mercy
 Ephesians 2.7grace...
 Ephesians 3.16 ...glory...
 Philippians 4.19 ...glory...

Which of these did Christ give up and become poor in?
 kindness, tolerance, patience? NO
 wisdom and knowledge? NO
 mercy and grace? NO
 glory? YES

He laid aside the glory which He had with the Father before the world existed, and received it again when He went back to heaven.

7.9 *John 17.5 ...glorify me...with the glory I had...before the world began.*

The angels gave Him full glory with His Father before He created the world. He came to His own, but His own people did not know Him or receive Him, John 1.10,11. In fact they rejected Him, insulted Him, gave Him to the Roman enemies, beat Him, crucified Him. He did not get much glory in this world, except from His own disciples. Now back in heaven, He is sitting at God's right hand. This is what He gave up, His glory.

Some will say that He gave up His knowledge as God. This is based on man's thoughts, not on what the Scripture says, but we will take it up in the next lesson.

So we see that God the Son made a great step downward when He became the Man but He was still God, and the Father told the whole universe that Christ was His Son.

SON OF MAN, THE PERFECT MAN

Our Lord Jesus Christ is indeed God the Son and since His incarnation may be called the God-Man. The term God-Man does not and cannot mean half and half, half God and half Man. We must think of one glorious Person, fully God and also fully Man.

8.1 It is wrong to think of God as a Spirit coming down on some created man and making him the Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ was born, apart from a human father, in the normal way. The virgin Mary, His mother, waited nine months, and brought forth a tiny baby, and wrapped Him in cloths. He grew up slowly as a normal boy and learned the skills of his mother's husband, a carpenter. He was still and always God the Son.

John 1.10 (The Logos) was in the world...

John 1.14 ...the Word...dwelt among us...

He did not look any different from the rest of the Jews. John the Baptist told the people that Christ was before him, although we know from Luke chapter 1 that John was born before the Lord Jesus. Christ was greater than John... The apostles saw His glory, John 1.14, because He was full of grace and truth. Others could not see anything that would make Him look different from all men. We cannot know what He looked like, except we can be sure that He did not have long hair like a woman, which would be a shame to Him, 1 Corinthians 11.14.

8.2 God made man in His own image, in some ways like Himself, the Three-in-One. Man is body, soul and spirit, 1 Thesalonians 5.23. Some people teach that the soul is the same as the spirit, but this is not correct, Hebrews 4.12. Others translate soul as heart, and this is good, because the heart is the center of our feelings, as the soul is. Our spirit makes it possible for us to know and worship God, John 4.24.

The Lord Jesus was a perfect Man, that is, a complete Man, body, soul and spirit:

His body: Matthew 26.12—Mary poured perfume on His body.

John 19.38,40—Joseph and Nicodemus buried His body.

His soul: Mark 14.34—His soul (heart) was full of sorrow.
John 12.27—His soul was troubled.

His spirit: Luke 10.21—He rejoiced in spirit.

Luke 23.46 - He placed His spirit in His Father's hands.

John 19.30 - He gave up His spirit.

8.3 The Scripture says He was like other men:

Hebrews 1.9 ...thy comrades...

He became like us, Hebrews 2.14. And yet so different! Men love darkness, and the praise of men, John 3.19; 12.43, but Christ loved righteousness:

8.4 ***Hebrews 1.9 Thou hast loved righteousness...***

Adam sinned and passed on his sinful nature to all men who have ever been born. Christ was born in a different way, and He never had a sinful nature. We have this sinful nature which often gives in when we are tempted, Romans 7.20; James 1.14. God is holy, Psalm 99.5; Isaiah 6.3; 1 Peter 1.16; and Christ is holy, Luke 1.35; Acts 4.30; Hebrews 7.26.

The Spirit said that there was no sin in Him, 1 John 3.5, that is, there was no sin nature to give in to temptation. The God-Man could not commit sin, He was impeccable. God cannot be tempted, James 1.13.

8.5 The Bible says that Christ did not sin, 1 Peter 2.22, and most teachers agree. Some people say that He did not sin but He *could have* sinned. They say He was a man just like us, and was tempted just as we are, Hebrews 4.15. But He was not just like us, He had no sinful nature. He was perfectly holy and hated sin, as God does. People often ask, What was the meaning of the temptation, if He could not sin anyway?

The Spirit led Christ into the desert to be tempted by Satan, Matthew 4.1. Satan demanded that God should put Job to the test, Job 1.11; 2.5; and Peter, Luke 22.31. God never tempts any man, James 1.13, but He allowed this test, to show to all that Christ could stand up against man's greatest enemy. Satan used all his power when he cleverly tried to trap the Lord Jesus into saying just one wrong word. He failed. Christ won the victory. How? By the Word of God, Matthew 4.4,7,10.

8.6 Satan in the beginning sinned against God, and God judged him at once, Isaiah 14.14,15; Ezekiel 28.13-16. God created man, but Satan soon led Adam and Eve to follow him. Of course God had His great plan to bring men back to himself. A Savior would come and defeat Satan, Genesis 3.15. Everything depended on this Savior. Would God send some one who might have sinned? His whole plan could fail in one minute.

About 4,000 years later Christ came. We cannot believe that it was possible for Him to sin. Just before the temptation, God announced to all that He was well pleased with His beloved Son, Matthew 3.17. God knew that the Perfect Man could not sin. He was impeccable.

If He could have failed then, how could we be sure that He will not fail again? The whole Bible tells us that God's plan will be fulfilled and Christ will come to rule as King. Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever, Hebrews 13.8. If He cannot fail now, He could not fail then when here on earth.

8.7 Some people have other problems about the God-Man. They say if He could not sin, He is not a perfect Example to us. Or, if He had all power, He could not be the perfect Example.

There are many good "examples" in the Bible, men like us who did great things for God, Philippians 3.17; 1 Thessalonians 1.7; 2 Thessalonians 3.9; 1 Timothy 4.12; Titus 2.7; Hebrews 11; James 5.10,17; 1 Peter 5.3. Only two verses speak of Christ as our Example:

John 13.15, Christ is our Example in being humble;

1 Peter 2.21, Christ is our Example in being willing to suffer.

We could not follow Christ fully in either of these things. The

Lord humbled Himself and came down from heaven to earth; we could never do that. He suffered on the cross as no man could ever suffer. We could not follow His example fully in suffering. To be our Example in every way, the Lord would have to have a fallen, sinful nature like ours. Nothing could be further from the truth.

8.8 Still others say that Christ gave up His ability to know everything as God does. Here they use two verses:

Luke 2.52 Jesus grew in body and wisdom, and in favor with God and man.

Mark 13.32 No one knows that day or hour, not the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.

Did the Son give up His knowledge as God when He became Man? We notice that the verse in Luke does not say He grew in knowledge, but in wisdom. Christ learned by experience what it means to be a man, Hebrews 5.8. Knowledge is not the same as wisdom, Romans 11.33; Colossians 2.3. He grew in the wisdom of experience, so He can understand what it is like to be a child, a young person, an adult.

Adam and Eve knew the difference between good and evil when God told them they should not eat the fruit of one tree in the garden. They knew by experience what evil is when they sinned... There are many scientists and college teachers who have great knowledge about certain subjects, but they are not wise. Some use alcohol or drugs, some fight against the government, some say there is no God. They are fools, Psalm 14.1.

God always loved His Son, but Luke 2.52 says He grew in favor with God and man. This is what the people in Nazareth noticed. They saw He was growing taller and acting properly. To them He was getting wiser also. They did not know that He was God the Son, knew all things, and was perfectly loved by His Father.

8.9 Still He said that there was one thing He did not know.

People say, Therefore He did not know everything and He was not God. But He could know men's thoughts as God can, Psalm 94.11; 139.2; Luke 5.22; 9.47. God knows the future, Isaiah 46.10; 48.5. So did Christ, Matthew 20.18,19; 26.31; Luke 21.24,27;

John 6.61,64; 13.1,3,11; 18.4. His disciples heard His words in Mark 13.32, yet they believed that He knew all things, John 16.30; 21.17.

We cannot deny that Christ was God the Son. We can say that He was omniscient and knew all things. He had infinite knowledge and perfect ability to know any man's thoughts and to know the future. He could choose not to know one thing, the day of His return.

Paul, a man, decided not to know or remember one thing, 1 Corinthians 2.2. Christ also can choose what He wants to know. For example, He will say to some people that He never knew them, Matthew 7.23.

Truly it is a marvelous thing: God the Son became the God-Man, the Son of Man, the Perfect Man. We cannot understand everything about this great truth. Let us take the Bible as it is, study it and ask the Lord to help us understand the hard verses. Some day we will, but for now we can know enough to make us want to worship and praise Him every day.

THE SON REVEALS GOD TO MAN

The God-Man is fully God and fully Man, He is the Perfect Man. He always was God the Son and He became Man when He was born into this world. Why would God want to do this? What was His purpose in the Incarnation?

One great reason: so we men could learn and know what God is like. The Son reveals the Father, the God-Man reveals God to us. John tells us a good deal about this, and Colossians and Hebrews add some more. (There are other reasons why God became Man, we will consider some of them in connection with His work in the rest of this book.)

No man can see God in all His glory; Moses could look only at His back, Exodus 33.20,23. But now in Christ we can learn all that God is. "He that has seen me has seen the Father," John 14.9.

9.1 *John 1.1 ...the Word...the Word...the Word...*

John 1.14 ...the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...

We can know what some one else is thinking if he speaks a word. The word reveals what is in the mind. So the Logos reveals what God thinks, what God is like.

John 1.18 ...the only Son...has made (the Father) known.

The Spirit calls Christ the Logos six times: four times here in John 1, also:

in 1 John 1.1, the apostles had seen the Word of life;

in Revelation 19.13, the Logos comes in victory, still the same Jesus.

9.2 Light is the opposite to darkness, and light is what makes us able to see everything, Ephesians 5.13. It is part of God's nature to reveal Himself, so it is written, God IS Light, 1 John 1.5. He has revealed Himself completely in God the Son.

John 1.4 ...the life (of Jesus Christ) was the light of men.

John 1.5 ...the light shines in darkness (of this world)...

John 1.7 ...(John) came for a testimony, to bear witness to the light...

John 1.8 ...(John) came to bear witness to the light.

John 1.9 The true light that enlightens every man was coming...

From these verses we learn that:

1. The life of Christ reveals to men what God is like. He showed the same mercy, grace and love as the Father shows. He also was perfectly holy and righteous, just like the Father.

2. Men greatly needed this light because the world was in great darkness, 1 John 5.19. Satan tried hard to gain the victory over our Lord Jesus Christ, but he failed, Matthew 4.1-11.

3. John the Baptist was a burning and shining lamp, John 5.35, but he was not the Christ. He knew that Christ was greater than he because He existed before John was born, John 1.30. His desire was that the Lord Jesus should increase while he himself became less important, John 3.30.

4. God the Son created all things, Lesson 5, and the world of nature reveals the power and wisdom of God, Psalm 136.5; Proverbs 3.19; Romans 1.20. Every person in the world could learn a little about God from nature. But God's will is that all men should know about His Son and accept Him as Savior, Mark 16.15.

9.3 *John 1.14 ...we have beheld His glory...*

The glory of God is the revelation of His character and nature, of all that He is and does. In the Old Testament God showed forth His glory in the form of a cloud of light, Exodus 16.10; in the Tabernacle and the Temple, Exodus 40.34; 1 Kings 8.11. In the New Testament, the shepherds saw the glory of God, Luke 2.9; also three of the Lord's disciples, Luke 9.32; 2 Peter 1.17. The Lord Jesus Christ showed forth His glory and His Father's glory in the many miracles which He did, John 2.11; 11.40. The disciples knew

that the glory they saw was the glory of the only Son from the Father.

9.4 *John 1.14...the Word...full of grace and truth;*

These two words describe the character of God. God is love and He shows His love when He acts in grace toward men. He is the only true God and He cannot lie, John 17.3; Hebrews 6.18. The Lord Jesus Christ called Himself the Truth, John 14.6. The word truth means what cannot be hidden, and Christ is the Light of the world. He came to reveal all that God is, and in this verse, He was seen as being full of grace and truth.

9.5 *John 1.17 ...grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

God gave His law to His people Israel through His servant Moses. The law was truth, but it was not grace. People had to do the works of the law, but works are the opposite to grace, Romans 11.6. God must always act according to the truth, and the truth is that we are sinners. Now through Christ He can fully show all His grace, yet in perfect righteousness. The Son showed that God is the God of grace as well as the God of truth.

9.6 *John 1.18 ...the only Son...has made (the Father) known.*

This is the last verse in the first section of John's gospel and it tells in short form what we have been learning. The Son is:

the Word;
 the true Light;
 the Light of men;
 the glory of God;
 full of grace and truth;
 the One who brought grace and truth;
 the Son who makes the Father known.

9.7 *Colossians 1.15 He is the image of the invisible God...*

God is invisible but Christ could be seen. He shows perfectly what God is like; He is God. He is the exact likeness of God, 2 Corinthians 4.4. Today as in old times, some governments issue coins with the image of the king or president on them; in Matthew 22.20 the coin had the image of Caesar on it. the head of the Roman Empire. So this verse in Colossians also shows that the

Lord Jesus Christ is the perfect revelation of all that God is.

9.8 *Hebrews 1.3 He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature...*

This verse states still more strongly that the Son is the exact revelation of God. He not only reveals the glory of God, John 1.14, in His own Self He is the outshining of that glory, the brightness of that glory, like the brightness of the sun shining. This is more than just a reflection as in a glass or mirror. He is the very image of God and all God's nature may be seen in His Son. God the Son shows forth the inner being of the Eternal in all His perfections. Look at Christ, you will see all that God is.

9.9 *Colossians 1.19 For in Him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell...*

God the Son did not give up part of His deity or His powers as God when He became a Man. It was God's pleasure and God's will that God the Son should become the God-Man, still as ever God, but now also Man, in one Person. The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and also fully Man. True, He has a human body, but all the fulness of God remains His, Colossians 2.9.

Being God is not something which God possesses, it is what He is. God cannot stop being God and He cannot make someone else God.

God the Son received a human body when He was born. In this body He has always had the fulness of God. How can we understand these things? We cannot fully understand at present but we can take what the Bible says and worship the Lord for what He is. No man can know the Son except the Father, Matthew 11.27. We should not try to examine what God has for good reasons hid from us.

– 10 –

**THE WORK OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:
PAST**

We have studied what the three great First Chapters of John, Colossians and Hebrews say about the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The last three lessons of this book will take up His work, past, present and future. We have already learned that His work in the past was the creation of the world, 5.1, and at present He is holding up the entire universe, 6.1. In this world also He revealed all that God is, Lesson 9. Lesson 10 therefore will deal with His death and resurrection.

1. THE DEATH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

People might well ask, Why would Christ have to die if He was such a perfect Man? For one thing, He had enemies, who hated Him because He was so perfect, and because He revealed God to them.

10.1 *John 1.5 ...the darkness has not overcome (the light).*

Darkness is the opposite to light and there is a struggle between light and darkness. We have seen that God is light, 9.2, and Satan is the ruler of darkness, Ephesians 6.12. Christ came as the light of the world, and from the very beginning Satan and his servants opposed Him, but they could not win.

John 1.11 ...His own people received Him not.

It seems strange: He made the world, v.3; He came into the world, v.9, His own world, yet the men of the world did not know Him or want Him, v.10. He came to His own people, the Jewish nation, but even they would not receive Him! The four gospels

show how the Lord did good to all men, explained the love of God, told them why He had come, but they opposed Him and in the end killed Him.

However, no one could kill the God-Man, no one could take His life from Him, John 10.18. The Lord Himself said why He would die, John 10.11; Mark 10.45, and the letters of the apostles explain the reasons still more fully, Romans 4.25; 1 Corinthians 15.3; Galatians 3.13; Hebrews 9.14.

10.2 *John 1.12 But to all who received...who believed...He gave power to become the sons of God.*

Most people refused to accept the Lord, but some believed what John said, vs. 7,15, they beheld His glory, v.14, they received grace from His fulness, v.16. He gave them life, eternal life, and they became sons of God. This was not because their parents were believers and they had the same blood in them; nor because more animals shed their blood as Jewish sacrifices; nor because some priest made them into children of God; nor because they just decided for themselves to become God's children. It was entirely an act of God the Son, the Life-Giver, who gave His life so that He could give life to us.

10.3 *Colossians 1.14 ...in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

We were slaves of Satan, Christ had to set us free. He paid the price of redemption even though all men really belong to their Creator. Therefore, the righteous God can remain righteous, yet forgive our sins. Why? Because Christ bore the penalty of our sins when He died on the cross. We have seen in 8.5 that He had no sins of His own. Redemption and forgiveness are only in Christ.

10.4 *Colossians 1.20 ...making peace by the blood of His cross.*

God was never the enemy of men, He has always loved us. Adam and Eve fell into sin and at once they were afraid of God and ran away from Him. All men have the sinful nature of Adam and Eve, and we were no different from those who did not receive Him when He was in the world which He had made. God was angry with the sins of men, but now Christ has made peace, by shedding His blood and dying for us.

10.5 *Colossians 1.21,22 And you..He has now reconciled... by His death..*

Here again we see that we were the enemies, not God. But Christ by dying has taken away our fear and hatred, and has made us friends of God. We have this teaching in 2 Corinthians 5.19: God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

10.6 *Hebrews 1.3 ...When He had made purification for sins, He sat down..*

Sin makes a person guilty before God and we need a Substitute. Sin also makes the sinner unclean so he could not stand before a holy God. For example, every leper was "unclean" and had to live outside of the camp until his disease was gone, then he could come back in, Leviticus 13.46; 14.8; 15.14. God is still perfectly holy and no sinner could stand before Him. But the Lord Jesus Christ has made a purification for us by dying on the cross. His blood purifies us from all sin and God makes our hearts clean by faith, Acts 15.9; 1 John 1.7. Now we can enter the presence of God without fear, Hebrews 10.19-22.

2. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST ROSE FROM DEATH

10.7 *Colossians 1.18 ...He is...the Firstborn from the dead..*

We were thinking about the meaning of the name **Firstborn** in 5.8 and 5.9, so here we will note that Christ died and was buried, then on the third day He rose again. Other men have risen from death, and everyone will rise when the time comes, but Christ is the Chief of them all.

It was impossible that Christ should remain in the grave or the place of dead persons, Acts 2.24. Death has a just claim on sinners. It had no claim on the sinless Son of God. Therefore He paid death's just demand for our sin which He bore. He arose from the grave.

Men insulted, rejected and crucified the Son of God. God reversed everything: He gave Him life again, He honored His Son, and received Him, not to heaven only, but to His own right hand on the throne. God promised that Christ would be the

Savior of men and the King of the whole world. He must be alive to do these things. He is alive.

We see then these great results from the death of our Lord Jesus Christ:

redemption
 forgiveness
 peace with God
 reconciliation with God
 cleansing from the sin which defiled us.

All this is possible because Christ is not only Man, He is the God-Man.

10.8 Let us ask this question: Man must die for his sins, but God loves us. How can a righteous God forgive man's sins?

You can easily see that an animal would not do, because man is greater than any animal. Angels are greater than men, but they are spirits and cannot die. Man is equal to man, but all are sinners and so must die for their own sins. But perhaps somewhere, some time, God could find a perfect man, who did not have to die for his own sins. Would this person be able to die as a substitute for sinners? NO, because he has only one life, equal to the life of only one sinner.

The perfect Substitute would have to have a life great enough to be equal to the lives of millions of people. Only the God-Man had such a life. He is the Sacrifice for our sins, and for those of the whole world, 1 John 2.2. You see how important it is to understand this great truth, that Jesus Christ is God the Son. If not, there is no other Savior who could die for our sins. God could never forgive us, we are still in our sins, we could never be saved.

Praise the Lord, the exact opposite is true:

Christ is the God-Man, God the Son.

He lived a perfect life, and laid it down for us.

God raised Him and saves us righteously.

Let us praise and worship God for His great love and wonderful work. Then let us go out and tell all others about the Lord.

- 11 -

**THE WORK OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:
AT PRESENT IN GLORY**

We have learned about the work of our Lord Jesus Christ in earlier lessons:

Creation of the world	Lesson 5
Revelation of God	Lesson 9
Redemption of Man	Lesson 10

Now we will look at these same First Chapters to see

1. His present glory
2. His present work

1. HIS PRESENT GLORY

The Lord said that He came from the Father and was about to go back to the Father, John 16.28. He asked His Father to give Him again the glory which He had before the world began, John 17.5. So we read:

11.1 *John 1.18 ...the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father...*

This tells us that the Son is very close to the Father, in the place of love and honor, in eternal fellowship.

11.2 *Colossians 1.17 He is before all things...*

Christ existed before anything else, because He created everything, v.16. He is before everything in that He is superior to all else.

Colossians 1.18 ...that in everything He might be pre-eminent.

This is God's will, that all men will honor the Son as they honor the Father, John 5.23.

11.3 *Hebrews 1.3 ...He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

Hebrews 1.13 ...Sit at my right hand...

A man sits down when his work is done. God rested on the seventh day after creating the world, Genesis 2.2. There were no chairs in the Tabernacle or the Temple, because the work of the priests was never done. Here Christ finished His work of making purification for our sins. Then God invited Him to sit in the place of greatest honor, at His own right hand. God never gave this honor to any angel or any creature.

The Lord Jesus Christ finished His work on the cross, John 19.30, and this is sufficient to save us from judgment. But the Savior will not be satisfied until all believers are with Him where He is, in heaven. He is still working for us and in us.

2. HIS PRESENT WORK

The Son created the universe and now He keeps it going, Lesson 6. This will continue until the end. So we may think of this as part of His present work. However, there is much more.

11.4 *Colossians 1.13 He has delivered us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son...*

Now Christ is our Lord, King and Master. He is responsible to tell us what to do, and He has done this in His Word. By His Spirit also He can guide us in the way we live in this world. We are responsible to obey. Before we were under the power of Satan, who is the prince of the wicked spirits of darkness, Ephesians 2.2; 6.12. We have been delivered, but we need the Lord's help every hour, every day. He prays for us, Hebrews 7.25 and He alone is able to keep us from falling, Jude verse 24. He is able

to help us when we are tempted, Hebrews 2.18;

to feel sympathy when we are weak, Hebrews 5.2;

to save us completely from the power of sin, Hebrews 7.25.

He wants to make us perfect, like Himself, and He wants His church to be perfect.

11.5 *Colossians 1.18 He is the Head of the body, the church.*

The head is able to control all that the body does. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church in all things, Ephesians 1.22,23. He has total authority and we need to obey Him and His word in everything.

The Church is also the Bride of Christ and He is preparing us for the great Wedding day. He desires to present us to Himself as a perfect Bride, without any spot or wrinkle. Therefore He has set His Church apart for Himself, and is cleansing her to take away everything bad or ugly. He uses the Word of God to remove from us anything which would spoil us in His sight, Ephesians 5.26,27.

This is the great work of Christ today. The true Church includes all who believe in Him. Some are rich, some poor, there are men and women and boys and girls. They live in many different parts of the world, speak many languages. God the Son is working in us all to make us ready for the Wedding day, when He will take us as His Bride.

– 12 –

**THE WORK OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:
FUTURE**

The Lord Jesus Christ said, “My Father is working still and I work”, John 5.17. God finished His work of creation, and rested. The Lord Jesus finished His work of redemption, and sat down at His Father's right hand. Still He keeps on working for His people, as we saw in Lesson 11. What about the future?

This little book is a study of three chapters, the first chapters of John, Colossians and Hebrews. The Bible tells us a great deal about what the Lord is going to do in the future, especially in the book of Revelation. [You could get help in understanding Revelation from my book: **REVELATION, THE COMING KING.**] At this time we will look at a few verses in two of our chapters, these will tell us something about the glory of Jesus Christ, God the Son, in the future.

12.1 *Hebrews 1.2 ...whom He appointed heir of all things...*

In the past eternity, God made the Son Heir of all things. In families the oldest son was called the first-born, and he would usually get a double share of the father's money, Deuteronomy 21.17, or most of it, Genesis 25.5,6. We also are sons of God and heirs of God, Romans 8.17, but only because we are in Christ, 1 Corinthians 3.21-23. God the Son became Man, the God-Man, so God makes it plain that He is Heir of all things as well as the Creator of all things, Lesson 5.

At present He does not seem to own the world. Satan claims it as his, Luke 4.5,6, and men seem to think that they own it to do as they please. When the Lord comes He will set up His kingdom,

then it will be plain to all who are still alive that He is Heir and King.

From other verses we know that the Lord will come back first for His Church, 1 Corinthians 15.15-54; 1 Thessalonians 4.13-17. This is called the Rapture of the Church.

12.2 *Colossians 1.13 ...The kingdom of His dear Son...*

Even now we know Him as our Lord and King, we obey His commands and try to do anything which would bring Him pleasure. For us the Lord Jesus is already ruling as King. But He will come back to earth with power and great glory, with clouds and the angels of heaven, Daniel 7.13,14; Matthew 24.30; 2 Thessalonians 1.7; Revelation 19.11-16.

12.3 *Hebrews 1.8 But of the Son He says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of thy kingdom."*

God was speaking through the Scripture to His Son:

The Son is God.

He has a throne and a kingdom.

His rule will last for ever, for all eternity.

The sceptre is the rod which shows He has authority, Esther 5.2.

He will rule with great power, His sceptre will be like iron, Revelation 19.15, but He will always rule in righteousness. At present many rulers are cruel and unrighteous, they cheat and rob the people, and kill any who refuse to obey them. When Christ comes, everything will be very different, Isaiah 32.1; Acts 17.31; Revelation 12.5.

12.4 *Hebrews 1.13 ...till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet.*

God said these words to His Son, not to any angel or man. Christ is today at God's right hand on the throne but this is not forever. The Lord Jesus has many enemies today, both men and demons. They seem to succeed in their attacks on God and His people, but their time is short. The chief soldiers put their feet on the necks of the enemies to show that they had gained complete victory, Joshua 10.24. No man nor all men together will be able to

resist or defeat the King of kings when He comes back in power.

12.5 God will judge these men for their sins and throw them into the lake of fire, Revelation 20.15. All living persons will be glad to accept the Lord Jesus as King, and animals and all nature will be set free, Romans 8.19-22. At present the Son holds all things together, but still there is a great struggle in the world of animals. So the Scripture says:

12.6 *Colossians 1.20 ...and through Him to reconcile all things, whether on earth or in heaven...*

We are reconciled to God by the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 5.18. When the Lord comes, only real believers will enter the kingdom with Him, John 3.3,5. Angels in heaven have always obeyed God, and the fallen angels and wicked demons will be thrown into the lake of fire, Matthew 25.41. So all beings in heaven and earth will be friends of God.

12.7 Every creature must bow the knee before the Lord Jesus Christ, Philippians 2.10, including those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. Persons under the earth will be those in hell; they too must admit that Jesus Christ is Lord, but they will not be His friends. People outside of heaven will weep and gnash their teeth, Matthew 13.42. Weeping means sorrow, and they will forever be sorry for their sins and foolishness. But grinding one's teeth means anger, as in Acts 7.54. So these rebels will be sorry for themselves and angry with God.

So there is a difference between Philippians 2 and Colossians 1.

Colossians 1: all in heaven and earth will be reconciled to God.

Philippians 2: all in heaven and earth and under the earth will bow their knees and agree that Christ is Lord.

Christ will rule over this world for a thousand years, Revelation 20.4. Then what?

12.8 *Hebrews 1.10 ...the earth...and the heavens...will perish... will all grow old...will be changed...*

The Creator will destroy His work, which has been defiled by the sin of men and Satan. Then He will create new heavens and a new earth, Isaiah 65.17; 2 Peter 3.12,13; Revelation 21.1. Then God

will be all in all. God's children will be with Him forever. All will be peace and joy. He will be our God and we will be His people. We will rejoice in Him and He will rejoice in us.

Here and now let us love, worship and obey God the Son, our wonderful Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ!

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