

Son

John 1:1-18

Last week we studied the beauty and wonder of the Trinity as expounded in the gospel of John. Today we continue that study, shifting our focus from God the Father to God the Son. Of course, the nature of the Trinity is such that it's hard to talk about one person of the Trinity without reference to the others. To review:

The LORD is:

- One God
- in Three Persons, eternally exchanging
 - Glory - Pure Delight
 - Love - Perfect Communion
 - Life - The Power of Existence

How did the church arrive at this understanding of the nature of God? Quite simply - it was how Jesus talked and was explicitly what He taught. It's not a doctrine anyone would have chosen or invented. But Jesus taught that He was one with the Father and equal with the Father. Jesus' claim to be the Son of God was a claim of full divinity - of sharing the fully divine nature of God Himself.

The Son of God proved the fullness of His devotion to the Father by giving up His life on the cross. ***In the cross*** of Jesus we see the Trinitarian exchange played out in the climactic moment of history.

1. ***Jesus was glorified*** - literally lifted up for the world to see - so He could reflect that glory back to the Father who sent Him.
2. ***Jesus' perfect communion with the Father was fractured*** so that you and I could be brought into relationship with God.
3. And Jesus - ***the Creator of All Things - died*** so He could give life to all who believe in Him.

Glory, love and life. And that's just one infinitesimal glimpse into the overflowing, neverending movement that is the Trinity.

Today we focus on God the Son. Next week we study the Holy Spirit. This morning we will see ***three perfections of Jesus***. Check out the church blog for some of my source material and inspiration.

Here is a wonderful ***THREE STEP method of Bible study and Gospel application***. First, study any perfection of Jesus. As you do, you will quickly realize how far you fall short of that glory. But then look for how the Gospel addresses the gap between your sin and Jesus' perfection! That is ***where to find hope and power to change***, growing more and more into the image of Christ.

1. Jesus is the Light	We walk in darkness	Jesus shows us the truth
"In the beginning was the Word..." 1:1	"The light shines in the darkness" 1:5	"We have seen his glory" 1:14

Later in John Jesus says, "**I am the light of the world.**" The Word of God is the light for God's people - a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. ***Jesus is the full and final WORD OF GOD.*** He came as the complete and final revelation of the nature and will of God. Before Jesus God sent one prophet after another - which is why we have the Old Testament. After Jesus the apostles explained the meaning of his life and teachings - but that was it. No more prophets. God's work of revelation was finished in the coming of Christ.

Jesus is the Light. He is - in Himself - ***the fullness of truth.*** In Him there is no darkness, no confusion, no deception. Jesus IS truth. It is as impossible for God to lie as for a square to be a circle. God's very nature is truth: unchanging, unbending reality.

We live in a world of shadows and darkness. Worse than that, **apart from Jesus we were BLIND.** We were not only confused in a world of half truths and full deceptions, but we were totally unable to see the truth. Before you trusted in Christ, you were spiritually blind. The things of God can only be understood through the Spirit of God and the natural person - outside of Christ - CANNOT understand them. (1 Cor. 2:14)

That is what it means to be blind. Just as a physically blind person cannot see the physical world, so a spiritually blind person cannot perceive the truth about God. Cannot. It's not just that they don't want to - though that is true too. They cannot. They are blind.

This is why it is always **a miracle when someone comes to faith in Christ.** It is truly a work of God's supernatural power by which blind eyes are opened and suddenly the person can see and understand the nature of God, the truth of the Gospel, the presence of the Holy Spirit and 1,000 other things.

Isn't it a wonderful truth of the Gospel that the light of God's truth shined into the darkness of this world in the person of Jesus Christ? John 1:14 -

1. Jesus is the Light	We walk in darkness	Jesus shows us the truth
"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth." 1:14		

The fact that **John, the son of Zebedee,** could write "We have seen his glory," in reference to himself and the other disciples, was a miracle of God's grace. John was one of the first four fishermen Jesus called to follow him. He was not educated. He did not know much of the Old Testament. He knew way more about fishing than he did about the Bible.

And yet Jesus came to John. Jesus called them, saying, “Come, follow me.” Jesus patiently taught them the truth and showed them His power and grace. Jesus washed his feet. And of the 12 apostles John was the only one near the cross when Jesus died. So John could truly say, “We have seen his glory.” And all the disciples who read that must have nodded in amazement at the grace and wonder of it.

Do you feel that same amazement? Can you say with the hymn-writer, “I once was lost but now I’m found, was blind but now I see”?

The Gospel truth is that **Jesus CAME. He is the light of the world.** He came to make the truth visible and accessible in a dark world filled with blind people. Our application is to walk in the light of Jesus!

This is what we’ve been doing this whole year in the **Open the Bible series.** Jesus is the KEY that unlocks the truth and meaning of the whole Bible. He is the light that illumines every tricky verse and passage.

Walk in the light of Jesus. ***Let His light shine into the dark corners of your heart and life.***

- Stop living in denial. Stop resisting the truth and shutting out the light of God’s truth.
- God cannot clean up what you don’t open up to Him. So open the doors. Throw open those secret closets.
- Invite the light of Christ to shine into your most broken, messy places.

Bring God your confusion. Bring Him your fear. Bring Him your anger and sadness. Don’t curl up alone in the darkness of isolation. Jesus stands at the door of your heart and knocks, waiting for you to let Him in. When He comes, He brings LIGHT - TRUTH. Honesty. Stop making excuses. Stop putting this off.

1. Jesus is the Light	We walk in darkness	Jesus shows us the truth
<p>“We have seen his glory.” John 1:14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>“Step out of the darkness of denial into the light of God’s grace.” Celebrate Recovery</i> 		

A small group has just started **Celebrate Recovery** on Monday nights. The first book in CR says, ***“Step out of the darkness of denial into the light of God’s grace.”*** Some of you need to go visit CR tomorrow night. 7 pm in the TreeHouse building.

In a few minutes we will gather around **the Lord’s table.** That is the table of LIGHT - the table of TRUTH. That will be an opportunity to confess our sin - to bring it out of the darkness and into the light. Jesus is the light. We walk in darkness but Jesus shows us the truth. He brings light into our darkness if we let Him. Second:

2. Jesus is Glorious	We are sinful	Jesus died to set us free
"The Word was God." 1:1	"His own people did not receive him." 1:11	"I am the Good Shepherd." John 10:11

Jesus is the fullness of God. John 1:1 is one of the most important verses in the Bible. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Deliberately patterned after Genesis 1:1 what we see in **John 1 is a New Creation**. In verse 13 and again in chapter 3 John will talk about being BORN AGAIN. In a very real way history experienced a new birth in the coming of Christ. There is a reason we measure time from the birth of Jesus.

The phrase "**in the beginning**" is meant to remind us of Genesis 1:1 - not to teach that Jesus had a beginning. John 1:1 actually refutes that teaching - "In the beginning WAS the Word." **The Word ALREADY WAS** when the world was created. In fact, "all things were made THROUGH HIM." The eternal WORD OF GOD was the person through which all things were created. Jesus was the **Agent** of Creation.

Verse 4 - "In him was LIFE, and the life was the light of men." This is one expression of the infinite GLORY of Jesus. **He is the Holy One and the Almighty Creator of all things**. John is explicit - "without him was not any thing made that was made." He is the One who is full of Grace and Truth. He is the one of whom John said, "We have seen His Glory - Glory as of the only Son of the Father."

Verse 18 - "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known." This is the glory of Jesus Christ. "He is the image of the invisible God" "He is the radiance of the glory of God, the exact imprint of His being" (Heb. 1:3)

Jesus is the All Glorious Son of God. We, by stark contrast, are wretched, miserable, rebellious, idolatrous, iniquitous, perverted, stiff-necked, adulterous, promiscuous SINNERS. **Every one of us is a sinner by nature and by choice**. We were born in sin we inherited and we have - each of us - repeatedly chosen to sin.

John 1:10-11 says the world not only did not KNOW Jesus, but **His own people did not RECEIVE Jesus**. That specifically refers to the Jewish people. But by extension it refers to every person on earth. None of us knew Jesus. None of us received Him. "He came to his own, but his own did not receive him."

Thanks be to God John didn't stop writing in verse 11. He goes on to the Gospel in verse 12:

2. Jesus is Glorious	We are sinful	Jesus died to set us free
"But to all who did receive him, who believed on his name, he gave the right to become children of God... born... of God." John 1:12-13		

Do you see the lesson of how to apply the Gospel? See the perfection of Jesus. In the light of His glory perceive the reality of your sin. Then you will be prepared to appreciate the infinite grace of God to you in Jesus.

The Lord of Glory - the definition of perfection - ***the unblemished Holy One*** - died on the cross to set us free from the penalty and power of sin. The eternal Son of God was cut off from His Father so we could be united with His Father. Jesus endured hell so you and I would not have to. He was cast out of heaven so we could come home to heaven.

Jesus - **who had NO SIN - became sin for us** - so that we could become the righteousness of God in Him. The moment when this happens is what John's gospel calls being "born again." That is when you were transformed from being a child of wrath to being a child of God. Instead of being destined for God's wrath and judgment you came under His protection and blessing. Instead of being an enemy of God at war with Him you became a son or daughter of God at peace with Him and united with Him in His love.

Jesus is the ultimate Good Shepherd. He not only came in search of us - lost sheep that we were - He laid down His life for us! And so He became the doorway for the sheep into His eternal pasture.

That is a beautiful picture because in the old days sheep pens were often made of stone - since there is a lot of stone in Israel. And they usually did not have a gate. So the shepherd himself would lie down in the entrance to the sheep pen and his body literally served as the gate. No predator could get into the pen and no sheep could get out of the pen. ***The shepherd's body served as the separation*** from those outside and those inside.

By laying down his life - **Jesus became the doorway** - the GATE for the sheep. Through Jesus - and through Him alone - you can enter the fold of God. Apart from Him no one can come to the Father. No predator or enemy of God can get it. And none who belong to Jesus can get out. No one can snatch them out of His hand.

So the invitation of this verse is to ***BELIEVE on His name***. If you've never called on Jesus to save you, forgiving your sins and bringing you into His forever family, today is the day! Now is the time! Jesus died for you to pay for all of your sins - to wash you clean, to set you free!

Jesus is the Judge of all people. He is glorious in every perfection. He is holy - utterly set apart from all sin. He is the LIGHT - so He sees everything. The light of His glory exposes everything - even the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

You have two options.

Jesus will either be:	"He has fixed a day on which <i>he will judge the world</i> in
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<p>1. Your Judge or 2. Your Savior</p>	<p>righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Acts 17:31</p>
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Come into the light of Jesus’ glory NOW so He can forgive you. Or let Him expose your sin later when He will condemn you. Right now Jesus offers to be your Savior - your defense attorney. But the time is coming when that offer will be off the table and He will only by your Judge. Don’t delay. This is one plea bargain you don’t want to refuse.

And if you have already trusted in Jesus - if you already belong to Him by faith - then **REST in this wonderful truth.** You ARE a child of God!

<p><u>Jesus will either be:</u> 1. Your Judge or 2. Your Savior</p>	<p>“There is therefore now <i>no condemnation</i> for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:1-2</p>
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You are in the forever family of Jesus. You are no longer defined by your sin. In Christ “there is now no condemnation. You are no longer controlled by your sin. “The law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the Law of sin and death.” That’s Romans 8:1-2.

Through His death and resurrection Jesus set us free from both the penalty AND power of sin. Believe this gospel truth. Rest in it. Walk in it. The more you learn the truth of your new identity in Christ the more you will grow to be more holy like Him.

He is infinitely holy. We are filled with sin. ***But Jesus transforms us completely!*** We were blind but when Jesus touches us we can see the truth. He IS the LIGHT OF THE WORLD! We were slaves to sin but when Jesus takes over he breaks our chains and sets us free from the penalty and power of sin. He IS the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep. Third, we were dead in our sins, but Jesus raises us up to new life in Him. He IS the Resurrection and the Life!

3. Jesus is Life	We were dead	Jesus raises us up
“In him was life.” 1:4	“Born, not of blood or the will of the flesh.” 1:13	“I am the resurrection and the life.” 11:25

Everything that exists was created at the Word of Jesus. In him was life - and from His overflowing life, creativity and power the universe came into being. ***He is the source of all power and life.*** He is the sovereign Lord over everything. He rules over creation and upholds all things with the Word of His power. Jesus is the Almighty One.

By contrast, “we were dead in our transgressions and sins” (Eph. 2:1). Your condition outside of Christ was not just lost and blind - you were DEAD. So on our own **we are POWERLESS**. It’s not just that people are misguided and need a little direction, a little instruction. We are helpless - utterly unable to find our way. To be born of blood or the will of the flesh may sound like a casual reference to physical birth - it is actually a reference to our condition IN THE FLESH.

This is why everyone needs to be BORN AGAIN - because ***being in the flesh means they are dead in sin***, enslaved to sin and blind to that reality. Truly it is a desperately hopeless situation!

But thanks be to God, Jesus is “the resurrection and the life!” He came not only to die but to rise from the dead. He walked into death in order to dismantle the kingdom of darkness and set us free from its powerful hold over us.

The Biblical picture from Ephesians 2 is ***not of people are struggling to swim*** in the turbulent waters of this world, needing the Coast Guard to come by and throw them a life ring. Ephesians 2:1 says “You were DEAD in your transgressions and sins.” So the Biblical picture is of **a lifeless corpse** floating face down in the water. You don’t just need the Coast Guard to fish out your body you need divine intervention to literally bring you back to life.

Thanks be to God this is precisely what Jesus did.

Jesus raised us up!

“You were dead in the trespasses and sins... But God, being rich in mercy... made us alive together with Christ... and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 2:1,4-5

We could never have saved ourselves and no one else could have saved us. Only the Giver of Life could bring us back to life! Only the Source of life itself could breathe the breath of life back into our lifeless hearts. Jesus is the Source of all life and power. He surrendered His life and power on the cross, but God raised HIM back to life on the third day and when you put your faith in Him you experience that same resurrection that Jesus did. ***God raised YOU to life with Christ*** at the moment you put your faith in Jesus.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

- If you belong to Jesus by faith you have access to His power

If you belong to Jesus by faith **you have become ONE with Him**. Your powerless state plus His infinite power equals YOUR infinite power. To shift the metaphor to John 15, Jesus is the VINE.

If you are a GRAPE then you need your vine. Any grape or any branch of grapes that falls off the vine will quickly wither and die. But a grape that is attached to the vine can draw life-giving sap from the vine in order to keep growing until harvest time.

Jesus is the true vine. He is the true and ultimate source of all power and life. If you are bound to Him by faith, then you have been connected to that source of true spiritual everlasting power. If you have not connected to Jesus then you are on your own and you are in the process of withering up and dying.

Jesus clearly says, ***“Apart from me you can do NOTHING.”*** We are powerless. Even as believers we have no power in ourselves. Any powerful thing that God does in our lives is a tribute to HIS POWER - which we access by acknowledging OUR WEAKNESS. God’s power “is made perfect in our weakness.”

Prayer, therefore, is not about us demonstrating our power - look what I can do when I pray! No! Prayer is us kneeling before God ***to profess the fact that we are powerless.*** Prayer is how we call upon God - the Almighty One - to work IN SPITE of our weaknesses and failings. And when we humble ourselves and get out of the way, His limitless power is able to flow through us.

There is NO POWER IN US - **we are just conduits of God’s power.** Pride turns us sideways to God’s power, blocking the flow entirely. Sin clogs us up and prevents God’s power from flowing easily through us. So we must humble ourselves, calling on Jesus to forgive and cleanse us - and ask Him to do His work through us.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

- ***If you belong to Jesus by faith you have access to His power***
- ***But you must walk with Jesus by faith to access His power***

Do you feel the truth and power of the Gospel?

- **Jesus is the light** - the complete revelation of all truth. We walk in darkness, blind to the truth. But that is why Jesus came as the light of the world - to show us who God is and who we are in the light of His glory.
- **Jesus is the All Glorious One.** He is perfectly holy, righteous and good. We are covered in sin. In fact, we were dead in our sin. But at the moment we put our faith in Jesus God united us with Him - raised us up to life with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places! Jesus is the resurrection and the life!
- Yes, **Jesus is the source of all LIFE.** Though we are powerless, Jesus is the All powerful One. When you received Him by faith you became a child of God with full access to the limitless power of God. You were connected with Jesus - the true vine! Now our job is to abide in him - to remain in Him - walking with Him day by day in faith. Humbly calling on Him to work through us - weak and sinful conduits though we are.

Let's prepare to come to the Lord's table now - humbling ourselves before our All glorious Savior and inviting His light to shine in our hearts to show us what is blocking the movement of His power and grace today.