

## BEHOLDING THE WONDER OF THE TRINITY

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### Session Three: Relationships and Roles of the Incarnate Son and the Spirit

#### I. Introduction

Review: There is one and only one God, eternally existing and expressed in three divine Persons. Each Person is equally God, and each is fully God—not three gods but three Persons, equal in essence but different in personal expressions of the one undivided and eternal divine nature. Each Person, then, is fully God—not one-third God, but fully God. Yet, it is not the Father, or Son, or Spirit alone who is fully God, but each exists along with the others, each of whom possesses fully and eternally the identically same divine nature.

So, what distinguishes the Father, the Son, and the Spirit from each other is not and cannot be the one and undivided divine nature. This (divine nature) is possessed equally and fully by the Father and by the Son and by the Holy Spirit. What distinguish the three Persons, then, are the *relationships* that each has with the others and the particular *roles* that each carries out in relation to each of the other Persons. What, then, characterizes the distinct relationships and roles of the incarnate Son, now, in relation to the power and presence of the Spirit?

#### II. Jesus' Submission to the Spirit – to fulfill his role as the Spirit-anointed Messiah

Amazingly, on the subject of Jesus and the Spirit, there are clearly two themes in the New Testament. On the one hand, Jesus submits to the Spirit and relies on the Spirit in doing his work, in performing his miracles, and in living his life. But on the other hand, Jesus also claims authority over the Spirit and proclaims unequivocally that the Spirit will glorify him. Can it possibly be that both are true? If so, just how can this be?

- Why would Jesus, the God-man, need to have the Spirit of God upon him? What can the Spirit of God add to the deity of Jesus?
- How can Jesus in his sinless obedience and sacrificial service rightly be upheld as a model for how we should live (e.g., Phil 2:5; 1 Pet 2:21-22) since he was the God-man and we are not?

Isaiah 11:1-5 – <sup>1</sup> Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. <sup>2</sup> The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. <sup>3</sup> And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; <sup>4</sup> But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist.

Isaiah 61:1-3 – <sup>1</sup> The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; <sup>2</sup> To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, <sup>3</sup> To grant those who mourn *in* Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise

instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Luke 1:32-35 – “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.”

Luke 2:40, 52 – <sup>40</sup> The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. . . . <sup>52</sup> And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Luke 3:21-22 – <sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.

Luke 4:1-2a – <sup>1</sup> Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness <sup>2</sup> for forty days, being tempted by the devil. (Note: Even stronger is Mark’s account – Mark 1:12 reads: Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness.)

Luke 4:14 – And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.

Luke 4:16-21 – <sup>16</sup> And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. <sup>17</sup> And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, <sup>18</sup> “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, <sup>19</sup> TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.” <sup>20</sup> And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. <sup>21</sup> And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Matthew 12:28 – But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Acts 2:22 – Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know

Acts 10:38 – You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

### III. Jesus’ Resisting Temptation and Growth in Character as a Spirit-empowered Man

A. Hebrews 4:15 – For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

How was Jesus truly tempted when he was fully and truly God? And how can he be an example to us when we are tempted when he was the God-man and we are not?

Consider these factors:

1. Jesus was sinless: 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:21-23
2. Jesus was genuinely tempted: Luke 4:1-13; Heb 4:15
3. Jesus was impeccable: Luke 1:35; Heb 1:10-12; 13:8
4. Explaining the reality of Jesus' temptations in light of his impeccability. Three considerations:
  - a. He was really tempted "in all things as we are" (Heb 4:15). This cannot be jeopardized.
  - b. Because he never succumbed to temptation, he experienced the full force of each and every temptation.
  - c. Because of what was at stake in whether Jesus obeyed perfectly or not, Satan would have been relentless, more so than with any other person, in his attempt to bring Jesus down.
  - c. Distinction: Why Christ *could not* sin, and why Christ *did not* sin.  
Illustration: swimmer

- B. Hebrews 5:8-9 – <sup>8</sup> Although He was a Son, He *learned obedience* from the things which He suffered. <sup>9</sup> And having been *made perfect*, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation [italics added].

What does it mean that Jesus "learned obedience from the things which He suffered"? And how was he, the God-man "made perfect"? What does our understanding of Jesus living his life as a man in the power of the Spirit help with these questions?

### III. Application

- A. Marvel at the eternal submission of the Son to the Father, a submission that occurs in eternity past (eternal Son), in his earthly mission (incarnate Son) and in eternity future (raised, exalted, reigning Son).
- B. Embrace the truth that we really and truly should endeavor to pattern our lives after how Christ lived his life. Yes, he was God! But he also was a man, and he lived his life as a man with the resources we've also been given.
- C. Consider what it means that Jesus never sinned! Bow in worship and adoration as this Savior who resisted the full weight of every temptation, fighting for faith and obedience each step of the way, and only because he never once sinned, he alone qualifies to be our Savior.