

SERMON SERIES: *The True Light Has Come*

SERMON TITLE: *Jesus: The Light of Creation*

SCRIPTURE: John 1:1-4, John 17:5, 24-26, Genesis 1:1-2

#1 “In the beginning was the Word”

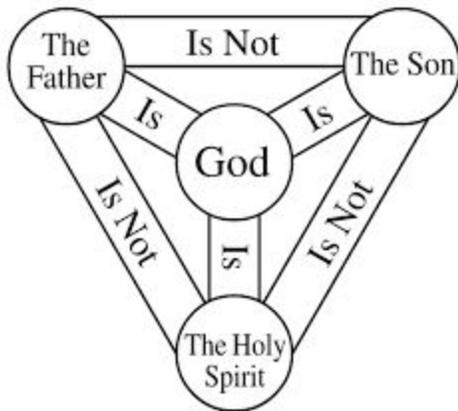
- Jesus existed before the creation of the world. He existed as the world progressed from a state of “nothingness” to a state of “formlessness” and “voidness” to a state of order and fullness.

#2 “The Word was with God”

- The literal translation of this phrase is that the Word “was towards God.” In other words, Jesus wasn’t loosely associated with God in the beginning but rather his whole existence was oriented towards God. He was in the presence of God. In communion with him.
- In declaring that “the Word was with God”, John is asserting that the Word is his own distinct person. For if the terms “Word” and “God” were referring to the same person, the statement “the Word was with God” wouldn’t make sense. You would never say that a person was with another person if you were only talking about one person.

#3 “And the Word was God”

- This phrase means that although the Word is a distinct person, the Word shares the same nature and being of God. All the attributes that apply to God apply to the Word, to Christ.
- This stretches our brain because we have never met a person that shares their being with another person. When we encounter two separate people we are always encountering two separate beings and two separate natures.
- The doctrine of the Trinity is the belief that God is one being with one nature but that nature is shared equally by three distinct persons...God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. The Father has 100% of the nature of God, the Son, or the Word, has 100% the nature of God, and the Holy Spirit has 100% the nature of God and yet each of them have a distinct center of consciousness which makes them distinct persons.
- God is one but he is also three. This is not a contradiction because the way in which God is one (being, nature, essence) differs in how he is three (persons).
- Here is a helpful graphic that represents what John 1 teaches.



#4 "All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made."

- Jesus was the agent by which God the Father made the world. Creation was a creative partnership between the two of them.
- This verse also speaks to the eternal existence of the Word for if everything that was made was made through him, then he wasn't made and therefore has no beginning.

#5 "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

- The greek Word used for life in this phrase and used 34 other times in John's Gospel is "zoa". Zoa doesn't just refer to existence but to a certain quality of existence. It means a life that is full, vigorous, abundant, and thriving. John was saying that in Jesus, was zoa life...that is life full of blessing, joy, peace, growth and productivity.
- Zoa life was what the Father and the Son created human beings to experience.

#6 Christ's life before he became a human being was characterized by love, creativity, unity, and joy!

1. LOVE

- a. John says a little bit later in John 1 that the Son is in the bosom of the Father. We are talking about the highest form of closeness and intimacy.
 - i. John 17:24-26, John 17:5

2. CREATIVITY

- a. God the Father and God the Son designed and built the world together.

3. UNITY

- a. When you stop to ponder that God the Son is identical in nature and character as God the Father and that they share the same being we can only imagine what their unity must be like.

4. JOY

- a. A community full of love, creativity, and unity must be filled with joy.

#7 How does knowing the truths that are contained in John 1:1-4 enable us to celebrate more fully at Christmas so that our joy is maximized and God is glorified?

- A. We have reason to celebrate that the baby in the manger created us to experience the zoa life that he has always enjoyed with the Father.
- B. We have reason to celebrate that Jesus willingly made himself so poor so that we could become so rich.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does knowing what Jesus's life was like before he became human help us to celebrate more fully at Christmas?
2. What evidence was there in Jesus's earthly life that he was truly oriented towards God the Father? What evidence is there in your life that you are oriented towards God the Father?
3. The doctrine of the Trinity is the belief that God is one being but three distinct persons. Why is this so difficult for us to understand?
4. Christianity is the only religion that asserts that God is a community of love, creativity, unity, and joy. Why is this significant?

5. What does Jesus's cry from the cross tell us about the quality of his relationship to the God the Father?
6. The Bible describes Hell as a place of utter, eternal torment. What makes being completely cut off from God so horrendous?
7. What's one thing you can do this Christmas that will enable you to celebrate Jesus more fully? What might distract you from worshiping him in the coming weeks?