

## THE GOD WHO IS (3)

### The God who is One Creates and Saves as Three

*"You know me better than you think you know, and you shall come to know me better yet."  
(Aslan to Frank the Cabbie in CS Lewis' The Magician's Nephew)*

#### A. Introduction

1. The God who is One is also the God who is Three.

There is one God – He is unique.

"Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me." (Isaiah 46:9)

This one God is three persons.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19)

The three persons are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and they are equally God.

But the Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.

2. God has always been the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

This is who God is, and it was who He was before He created, ruled, and saved.

God has always been a loving community of three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Father declares His love for the Son by giving the Holy Spirit.

"As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17)

The Holy Spirit makes the Father's love known to the Son causing Him to rejoice and cry out 'Abba'.

3. Through creation and salvation, God reveals Himself to us as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

#### B. The God who is One and Three Creates

1. Why did God create?

God did not create because He was lonely – He already existed in a community.

God did not create because He wanted slaves – He is loving community where for all eternity the Father has loved the Son in the Spirit.

God has eternally loved His Son and given life to His Son and this love and life overflowed to create a world where that love and life could be enjoyed by others, so the Son might become the firstborn among many sons.

"For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers." (Romans 8:29)

The Father has always enjoyed loving others and so creates a world where there are others to love.

2. How do we know this?

The Son is the image of God perfectly showing what His Father is like.

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation." (Colossians 1:15)

"The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." (Hebrews 1:3)

Jesus the Son reveals a loving Father who is outgoing – life-giving, loving, sending, giving.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son." (John 3:16)

"God is love. This is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him." (1 John 4:8-9)

If God the Father were not outgoing there would not have been a creation because the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were happy in themselves and enjoying one another. But because this God is outgoing it is no surprise that He would create.

### 3. How did God create?

Out of His love for the Son the Father creates the world.

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being." (Revelation 4:11)

"Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us?" (Malachi 2:10)

He creates through His Word (the Son) and Spirit who act to bring about the Father's will.

All things are made through the Son.

"And God said..." (Genesis 1:3)

"For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him." (Colossians 1:16)

"By his Son... through whom he made the universe." (Hebrews 1:2)

"Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." (John 1:3)

The Spirit breathes life and vitality into creation.

"Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." (Genesis 1:2)

"When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth." (Psalm 104:30)

"By his breath the skies became fair." (Job 26:13)

"The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life." (Job 33:4)

By giving life and personal being to humans, God allows them to have the freedom to turn away from Him, which is what they did in the Garden of Eden.

## C. The God who is One and Three Saves

### 1. Why did God save?

Because He loved the world.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son." (John 3:16)

But as in creation, this love is the overflow of the Father's love for His Son.

"Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them." (John 17:25-26)

In creation and salvation, the Father is sharing the love He has for His Son.

*"Do you want to know how much Jesus loves you? Ah! soul, before thou canst master that arithmetic thou must learn another mode of computation. Tell me first the love of God the Father to His Son, and I will tell thee the love of the Son to thee."* (FB Meyer on John 15:9)

## 2. How did God save?

*"God the Father sent the Son to do something for us and the Spirit to be something in us, to bring us into the family of God."* (Fred Sanders)

The Father purposed it – it was He who sent the Son and the Spirit.

"For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me." (John 6:38)

"And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world." (1 John 4:14)

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever – the Spirit of truth." (John 14:16-17)

Jesus was sent by the Father to accomplish salvation by becoming like us (incarnation) and dying for us (propitiation).

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." (John 1:14)

"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice [the propitiation] for our sins." (1 John 4:10)

Jesus accomplishes salvation in company with the Holy Spirit.

"The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

"As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove." (Mark 1:10)

"At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert." (Mark 1:12)

"But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." (Matthew 12:28)

The Holy Spirit is active in equipping the Son to do His work.

The Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ to believers.

The Holy Spirit makes the Son known by breathing out Scripture.

"All Scripture is God-breathed." (2 Timothy 3:16)

"For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:21)

"He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." (Luke 24:44)

The Holy Spirit indwells us opening our eyes to see the glory of Christ, winning our hearts so that we taste and see that the Lord is good, and giving us the mind of Christ so we become like Him.

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

### 3. What does it mean for us that God saves?

*"The Son opens up the path of human sonship, and the Spirit puts us into it."* (Fred Sanders)

Adoption – we are brought into a new relationship of having being made into His children that enables us to call God "Father".

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12)

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" (1 John 1:13)

"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:4-6)

"But you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." (Romans 8:15-16)

*"The good news of salvation is ultimately that God opens his Trinitarian life to us. Every other blessing is either a preparation for that or a result of it, but the thing itself is God graciously taking us into the fellowship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit to be our salvation."* (Fred Sanders)

## **D. Implications**

### 1. We are to be loving and obedient children.

As children of God, we look to the Son, to learn how we should respond the Father's love.

The Son loves the Father and does what the Father commands in the power of the Spirit.

"But the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me." (John 14:31)

And that is what we are called to do as well.

"Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30)

### 2. We are to be outgoing children.

We are to be outgoing because we are made in the image of the God who is outgoing, and being conformed to the true image of the God who is outgoing.

As the Father loves the Son by breathing out the Holy Spirit on Him so Jesus breathes out the Holy Spirit on His disciples. As the Father sends His Son in the power of the Spirit so Jesus sends His disciples out in the power of the Spirit.

"Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20:21-22)