



Only Begotten Son of God

A SUMMER SERMON SERIES ON THE NICENE CREED

Psalm 2 Rev 5:1-14 John 3:16-21

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The normal way to think about children is that our sons and daughters come *after* us. Perhaps you get married in your 20's, and start having kids soon after. Usually, your children are at least 20 or 30 years younger than you are. There is a “**age gap**” between you and your kids. *There was a time when they were not.*

NOW, HERE'S THE THING: *you cannot think like that when you think about the relationship between God the Father and God the Son!* There is no “**age gap**” between the Father and the Son; there was **never** a time when the Son did not exist; there was **never** a time when God the Father was all alone. Both the Father and the Son are **eternal**; they are outside of our understanding of “time”; they have no beginning and no ending. The way the Bible teaches us to talk about Jesus is that He is the **only begotten Son of God**.

The title “**only begotten Son of God**” is meant to teach us the divinity of Jesus, that He is the eternal God; that He is God of God, Light of light, very God of very God. The title “**only begotten Son of God**” highlights the divine, eternal nature of Jesus.

In the 4th century AD, a false teacher named Arius had caused quite a stir in the Roman Empire and in the Holy Christian Church. He was teaching that Jesus, as the **Son of God**, came **after** God the Father in time. He was teaching that God the Son was not eternal, but that He was like our sons and daughters, who come *after* us in time. He was teaching that there was an “**age gap**” between the Father and the Son. He taught that the **Son of God** was made and created like our sons and daughters are made and created. One of his sayings about Jesus was, “*there was a time when he was not.*”

The Holy Christian Church responded with the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, and they condemned Arius and his teaching, and confessed the truth of Holy Scripture in what we know today as the Nicene Creed. When it comes to the **Son of God**, the truth of Scripture is properly spoken of like this:

JESUS CHRIST,
[is] the **only-begotten Son of God**
begotten of His Father *before all worlds*,
God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God,
begotten, *not made*

The word **begotten** is the word the Bible teaches us to describe the relationship between the Father and the Son; however it is not defined for us¹. The Apostle John is the one who reveals this term to us:

No one has ever seen God, but the only begotten Son , who is Himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made Him known. John 1:18

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son , that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. 1 John 4:9
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Jesus is the **only begotten Son** of **God the Father**. That's their relationship with each other. It reveals to us that Jesus is fully God, equal to the Father, with full divine power and glory, all divine attributes and works². There are many implications for us because Jesus is the **only begotten Son of God**.

¹ In theology, this is called an opera ad intra, the “internal workings” of the Holy Trinity. All that is revealed to us is that the Son is **begotten** of the Father; and the Holy Spirit **proceeds** from the Father and the Son. Neither the word “begotten” nor “proceeds” is defined nor explained to us. So all we can do is confess these truths as is; and let them remain a mystery.

² From the *Athanasian Creed*: “The Father is made of none: neither created nor begotten. **The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but begotten.** The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is before or after other; none is greater or less than another; But the whole three Persons are coeternal together, and coequal: so that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped.”

In the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, it's like God the Father was circling Jesus with a **big red marker**; pointing to His Risen Son as True God, and identifying Him as the Savior of the world.

And was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, Romans 1:4

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is proof that He is the **only begotten Son of God**.

Because Jesus, **only begotten Son of God**, has risen from the dead, He is able to give you eternal life and raise your body from the dead on the Last Day.

Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.
1 John 5:12

Truly, truly, I tell you, the hour is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so also He has granted the Son to have life in Himself. John 5:25-26

The eternal Son of God, gives you the gift of eternal life. At the moment of death your soul will immediately be with Christ in heaven. And on the Last Day, **only begotten Son of God** will call your name, and your body will rise from the dead, be glorified, be reunited with your soul, and live forever in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Because Jesus is the **only begotten Son of God**, He has conquered the devil and his depraved demons for us, and gives us the victory over them.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8

When the **only begotten Son of God** died on the cross, Satan's head was crushed, his power restricted, and death destroyed. That victory is given to you as a gift, and Satan and his depraved demons have no power over you; nor do you have to fear death and die.

Because Jesus is the **only begotten Son of God**, we listen to His word.

There He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ... a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!" Matthew 17:2,5

Of all the things that God the Father could have said, He chose to direct us to the Words of His Eternal Son. That's because the power of salvation is in the Word of God. The Son of God speaks to us through this Spirit inspired Word of God³. That's why the Bible is so important to us. The **only begotten Son of God** speaks the truth to us, He reveals God to us, He gives us true wisdom and understanding that leads to eternal life. The Word of God, that is, Holy Scripture, is living, active, and powerful: it forgives sins, gives the Holy Spirit, and empowers holy living. There are many voices in this world that clamor for your attention; but there is *only one voice needful*; the one the Father directed us to: that is the voice of His **only begotten Son Jesus Christ**.

Jesus is the **only begotten Son of God**, it is one of the loftiest titles given to Him. It teaches us that Jesus is the eternal God; equal to the Father and equal to the Son. Jesus, the **only begotten Son of God**, is Who you put your faith in; He is the one that you trust above all things.

We believe in

JESUS CHRIST,
the **only-begotten Son of God**
begotten of His Father *before all worlds*,
God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God,
begotten, *not made*

Amen!

³ Don't be misled by "Red Letter Bibles." A "red letter Bible" highlight Jesus' words in red, that is, the things that He says in the Gospels. It leads many people astray and to think that only what is highlighted in red letters is important. That is not true! Whatever the Prophets and the Apostles say are just as important as what Jesus says in the Gospels. Remember, ALL OF SCRIPTURE is God's Holy and inspired Word – in other words, ALL OF SCRIPTURE are Jesus' words!

Son of God, we thank you for the faith to know and recognize who you truly are, and the work that you have done for us and in our place. Give us courage to boldly confess your deity to the world, and to proclaim you're saving work throughout our lives. We pray this in the power of the Spirit and to the glory of the Father, amen!

Psalm 2

1 Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and
against his Anointed, saying,

3 “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.

5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying,

6 “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

7 I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”

10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Revelation 5:1-14

¹Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. ²And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" ³But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. ⁵Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." ⁶Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits^[a] of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." ¹¹Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹²In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" ¹³Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" ¹⁴The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

John 3:16-21

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”