BEHOLDING THE WONDER OF THE TRINITY

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Session Two: BEHOLDING THE WONDER OF THE FATHER

I. Introduction

Review: There is one and only one God, eternally existing and expressed in three divine Persons. Each 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.

The Father, then, is fully God—not one-third God, but fully God. Yet, it is not the Father alone who is fully God, but he exists along with the Son and the Spirit, each of whom possesses fully also the identically same divine nature.

So, what distinguishes the Father from Son and Spirit is not the divine nature of the Father. This (divine nature) is also possessed equally and fully by the Son and Spirit. Rather, what distinguish the Father are the *relationships* that he has with the Son and Spirit and his particular *roles* in relation to each of them. What, then, characterizes the distinct relationships and roles of the Father in relation to the Son and Spirit?

II. The Father's Unique Role Within the Trinity

A. The Father as Supreme in Role and Authority among the Persons of the Godhead

Consider these passages:

- Psalm 2:7-9 ⁷ I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. ⁸ Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware."
- Matthew 6:9-10 ⁹ Pray, then, in this way: "Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven."
- 1 Corinthians 15:28 When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.
- Ephesians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him . . .
- Philippians 2:9-11 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

B. The Father as the Grand Architect, the Wise Designer of Creation, Redemption, and Consummation

One of the clearest passages that indicates that the Father in fact has designed and regulates all of creation and its history is Ephesians 1:9-12:

⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

And similarly, notice how in Col 1:12 Paul says he's "giving thanks to the Father" for all that we have and hope for, and then it is clear that the Father is said to have worked through the Son in creation, redemption, and ultimate reconciliation of all things to himself.

C. The Father is the Giver of Every Good and Perfect Gift

Three passages especially come to mind here:

- Ephesians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him . . .
- James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.
- Romans $8:31-32 ^{31}$ What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?
- D. Yet, the Father often Provides and Works Through the Son and Spirit

All of Ephesians 1:3-14 makes this clear. The Father is to be praised, but his gifts to us come – every one of them – through the Son and Spirit.

- III. Applications from the Role of the Father in Re: to his Son and Spirit
 - 1. Marvel at the wisdom, the goodness, the care, and the thoroughness with which the Father exercises his authority using His absolute authority always to bring about what is best!
 - 2. Marvel at the way in which the Father delegates to others work that he is responsible to do. Both Son and Spirit carry out aspects of the work of the Father, to his glory, yet he does not hold onto this work stingily but shares it gladly and freely. And, the Son extends this to us! We share in the work of the Son (our Lord) as the Son shares in the work of his Father.
 - 3. Marvel at the Father's willingness to have his Son share in his glory. Hebrews 1:6 tells us that when He brings his firstborn into the world, he commands the angels of God to worship him! He makes much of his Son, as the Son makes much of his Father.