

## **Gospel: Who is God and What Has He Done?**

There is one God, in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

God the Father is the creator of all things<sup>2</sup> who works everything after the counsel of His will.<sup>3</sup> Out of His love He reveals himself and acts in creation through the Son and the Holy Spirit. His intention from before creation was to adopt humanity into the eternal loving fellowship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup>

Jesus Christ is God the Son,<sup>5</sup> eternally begotten from the Father.<sup>6</sup>

Humanity is separated from God through sin.<sup>7</sup> As the one and only mediator between God and humanity,<sup>8</sup> Jesus became human while remaining fully God.<sup>9</sup> Jesus fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophets<sup>10</sup> and revealed the Father to all creation.<sup>11</sup>

For humanity's salvation, Jesus was crucified,<sup>12</sup> died,<sup>13</sup> and was buried.<sup>14</sup>

On the third day God raised Jesus from the dead,<sup>15</sup> according to the Scriptures,<sup>16</sup> and appeared to his disciples.<sup>17</sup>

Jesus ascended to the right hand of God the Father.<sup>18</sup>

Jesus will return to earth<sup>19</sup> to judge the living and dead<sup>20</sup> and to consummate His kingdom on earth.<sup>21</sup> Only those who put their faith in Jesus are forgiven of sins,<sup>22</sup> justified,<sup>23</sup> adopted<sup>24</sup> into the fellowship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and will enjoy eternal life<sup>25</sup> with God in Jesus' kingdom.<sup>26</sup> Those who do not put their faith in Jesus will remain separated from God for eternity in hell.<sup>27</sup>

The Holy Spirit is God,<sup>28</sup> eternally proceeding from the Father.<sup>29</sup> The Spirit inhabits those who put their faith in Jesus<sup>30</sup> and gives them new birth<sup>31</sup> and adoption<sup>32</sup> into the loving fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the source of the believer's transformation into the image of Jesus<sup>33</sup> and the power to bear witness to Jesus in word<sup>34</sup> and action.<sup>35</sup>

The church is the fellowship of all humanity who put their faith in Jesus. By the presence of the Holy Spirit<sup>36</sup> they are the body of Christ,<sup>37</sup> of which Jesus Christ is the head.<sup>38</sup> There is only one Church.<sup>39</sup>

Upon Christ's return,<sup>40</sup> all the Church will be raised bodily from the dead<sup>41</sup> to live eternally<sup>42</sup> with God<sup>43</sup> in Christ's kingdom,<sup>44</sup> the new heavens and new earth,<sup>45</sup> the restoration of all things.<sup>46</sup>

## **Gospel: Who Are We and What Do We Do?**

All humans can and must respond affirmatively or negatively to Jesus Christ, the one and only mediator between God and man. The affirmative response to Jesus is repentance<sup>47</sup> and faith in Jesus Christ,<sup>48</sup> which is demonstrated by baptism.<sup>49</sup>

Those who respond to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith are given the Holy Spirit<sup>50</sup> and are included “in Christ,” which fundamentally transforms their identity. They are made into a new creation,<sup>51</sup> forgiven of all sins,<sup>52</sup> justified by faith apart from their works,<sup>53</sup> are declared the righteousness of God,<sup>54</sup> are reconciled to God,<sup>55</sup> are adopted as children of God,<sup>56</sup> and inherit eternal life with God.<sup>57</sup>

As a result of this transformation of identity, those who believe in Christ live a new life empowered by the inner presence of the Holy Spirit.<sup>58</sup> The Holy Spirit enables the believer to live a life of growing obedience to God, which is called discipleship.<sup>59</sup> This discipleship is the believer’s ongoing response to God’s love in Jesus,<sup>60</sup> and it involves the continuing choice to learn what pleases God,<sup>61</sup> to leave behind the old life, and to live as “in Christ.”<sup>62</sup>

The believer’s life of discipleship, empowered by the Holy Spirit, yields good works<sup>63</sup> and character traits which are described as fruit.<sup>64</sup> The primary and summative fruit of discipleship is love: Love for God, self, and others.<sup>65</sup> Love is expressed through character traits such as joy,<sup>66</sup> peace,<sup>67</sup> patience,<sup>68</sup> kindness,<sup>69</sup> goodness,<sup>70</sup> faithfulness,<sup>71</sup> gentleness,<sup>72</sup> self-control,<sup>73</sup> forgiveness,<sup>74</sup> generosity,<sup>75</sup> holiness<sup>76</sup> and humility.<sup>77</sup>

The believer’s life of discipleship is characterized by the essential ongoing practices of prayer,<sup>78</sup> worship,<sup>79</sup> word,<sup>80</sup> witness,<sup>81</sup> and fellowship.

The fellowship of believers, the church, is characterized by both unity and diversity. The Holy Spirit, in cooperation with believers, maintains this unity and diversity.<sup>82</sup> The Spirit enables the believer to bear fruit,<sup>83</sup> chief of which is love,<sup>84</sup> to maintain relational unity in the church.<sup>85</sup> The Spirit maintains diversity in the church through gifts given to individual believers which are expressed through love for the edification of the church.<sup>86</sup> Unity and diversity in the church are also maintained through a relational governmental structure which envisions the church as a family of families<sup>87</sup> and also informs how the church engages with the world.<sup>88</sup>

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; 16:7, 13; Ex. 3:2-6; 23:20-22; Num. 22:35, 38; Judg. 2:1-2; 6:11, 14; Ps. 45:6-7; 110:1; Isa. 6:8; 7:14; 9:6; 48:16; 63:10; Mal. 3:1-2; Hos. 1:7; Matt. 3:16-17; 16:16-17; 21:33; 24:31; 25:31; 28:19; Luke 12:12; 22:66-71; John 1:1-18; 3:5-7; 5:19; 8:29; 10:38; 14:7, 10, 16, 26, 28; 15:26; 16:13, 15; 17:24; 20:31; Acts 5:3-4; 13:2; Rom. 3:30; 8:26-27; 9:5; 1 Cor. 8:6; 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; Col. 2:9-11; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Titus 2:3; Heb. 1:3; 7:25; 9:14; James 2:19; 1 John 2:1; 3:9; 1 Peter 1:1-2; Jude 20-21

<sup>2</sup> Acts 17:24-26, 29; 1 Cor. 8:6

<sup>3</sup> Eph. 1:11

<sup>4</sup> Eph. 1:4; John 15:9; 17:24

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 26:63-66; 28:18; Mark 14:61-64; 15:1-5; Luke 22:67-71; 24:52; John 1:1-3, 10, 15, 18; 14:1; 17:5; 19:7; 20:31; Acts 2:36; Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 8:6; Phil. 2:10-11; Eph. 1:20-23; 1 Tim. 3:16

<sup>6</sup> John 3:16; 14:10-11, 20; 16:32; 17:2, 10, 21

<sup>7</sup> Gen. 3:8-24; Deut. 31:17-18; Josh. 7:12; 2 Chron. 24:20; Ps. 78:59-61; Matt. 7:21; 25:41; Rom. 1:18-3:20, 23; 6:23; Heb. 12:14

<sup>8</sup> John 14:4-6; Acts 4:12; Rom. 1:5; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:18

<sup>9</sup> Luke 1:30-35; John 1:14; Phil. 2:6-8; 1 Tim 3:16

<sup>10</sup> foretold by the prophets: Matt. 26:54; 27:9, 46; Mark 14:49; 15:24, 28; Luke 22:37; 23:34; 24:25-27, 44-47; John 19:28, 36-37; 20:9; Acts 3:13; 4:11; 7:2-35, 37, 44-53; 10:43; 13:17-23, 27; 17:2-3; Rom. 1:2-3. Descendant of David: Acts 13:23, 26; 17:3, 7; Luke 4:18; 7:22; John 1:17; 6:69; Rom. 1:3; Acts 2:36; 2 Tim. 2:8.

<sup>11</sup> John 1:1, 14, 17, 18; 14:7-9; John 16:25; 17:6

<sup>12</sup> Matt. 27:35-49; Mark 15:20-36; Luke 23:33-45; John 19:16-2; Acts 2:13-15, 23; 4:10; 10:39; 13:27-28

<sup>13</sup> Matt. 27:50-54; Mark 15:37-39; Luke 23:46-49; John 19:30-37; Acts 7:52; 26:23; Phil. 2:8; 1 Pet. 3:18

<sup>14</sup> Matt. 27:57-66; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42; Acts 13:29; 1 Cor. 15:4

<sup>15</sup> Acts 2:24; 3:15, 26; 10:40; 13:30; 17:31; 26:8, 23; Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:4; Eph. 1:19-20; 2 Tim. 2:8; 1 Pet. 3:18

<sup>16</sup> Acts 2:25-32, 34-35; 13:32-37; 17:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:4

<sup>17</sup> Matt. 28:1-17; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:1-29; Acts 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:6-8

<sup>18</sup> Matt. 28:1-17; Mark 16:1-14, 19; Luke 16:19; 24:1-53; John 14:2-4, 12, 28; 16:5, 7, 10; 16:16-19, 28; 17:11; 20:1-29; Acts 1:2-3, 9; 2:33, 36; 3:21; 5:31; 7:55-56; 10:39, 40-41; 13:31; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:6-8; Eph. 1:20; 2:6; Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:12; 12:2; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:22

- <sup>19</sup> John 14:3, 18, 28; 16:22; Luke 23:42; Acts 1:11; 3:21-26; 1 Pet. 1:5
- <sup>20</sup> Matt. 28:18; John 17:31; Acts 10:42
- <sup>21</sup> Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:16-18; 23:42; John 18:36
- <sup>22</sup> Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20, 28-30; Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:7; 4:32; 1 Pet. 3:18; Eph. 1:7; Gal. 1:4
- <sup>23</sup> 2 Cor. 3:14; Gal. 2:4, 16-17; 5:6; Phil. 3:3, 9; Col. 1:4; 2:5; 1Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:10; 3:13, 15; Philemon 8; 1 John 4:15
- <sup>24</sup> Gal. 3:26; Eph. 1:5; 5:1-2
- <sup>25</sup> John 3:15-18, 36; 14:19; 17:2-3
- <sup>26</sup> Unbelief in Jesus results in God's wrath: Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43, 45-50; 22:1-14; Mark 16:16; John 3:18, 36; 15:1-2, 6, 22, 24; 16:9-11; Acts 3:23; 13:40-41.
- <sup>27</sup> Matt. 7:13, 19; 8:11-12; 10:28; 13:30, 38, 40, 42, 46, 40-50; 18:8-9, 34-35; 22:13, 33; 25:41, 46; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:50-51; 16:23-28; John 15:5; 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 6:2; 10:27; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 14:10-11; 20:10, 13-15; 21:8; 22:15
- <sup>28</sup> Ps. 139:7; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; 3:16; 6:19; Heb. 9:14
- <sup>29</sup> John 14:16, 26; 15:26; Sent by Jesus; in Jesus' name: John 3:34; 14:26; 15:26
- <sup>30</sup> Acts 10:44-46; John 14:17; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 1:13; 1 John 2:27-28; 4:13
- <sup>31</sup> John 3:3, 5-8, 15-18, 36; 1 Pet. 1:3
- <sup>32</sup> Mark 10:28-31; John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:26; 4:6-7; Eph. 1:5
- <sup>33</sup> 2 Cor. 3:17-18; 1 Pet. 1:2
- <sup>34</sup> John 15:27; Luke 24:49; John 20:22; Acts 1:8; Col. 3:30; Eph. 6:19-20
- <sup>35</sup> By example: Matt. 5:14-16; Titus 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:12. With healing, signs & wonders: Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 11:5; Mark 16:17-18, 20; Luke 9:1-6; Acts 8:13; Rom. 15:18-19
- <sup>36</sup> 1 Cor. 12:3-4, 13; Eph. 2:18, 22; 4:3-4
- <sup>37</sup> Eph. 1:23
- <sup>38</sup> Eph. 1:22
- <sup>39</sup> Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12-13, 20; Eph. 4:4; Col. 3:15
- <sup>40</sup> 1 Cor. 15:23-28, 51-57
- <sup>41</sup> 1 Cor. 15:22, 35-49, 57
- <sup>42</sup> John 3:15-18, 36; 14:19; 17:2-3
- <sup>43</sup> John 14:2-3; 17:24; Rev. 22:3

- <sup>44</sup> Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:16-18; 23:42; John 18:36
- <sup>45</sup> Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:10, 13; Rev. 20:11; 21:1
- <sup>46</sup> Acts 3:21-26
- <sup>47</sup> Acts 2:37-38; 3:19, 26; 17:30
- <sup>48</sup> Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12
- <sup>49</sup> Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37-38; 8:12; 10:47-48
- <sup>50</sup> 1 Cor. 12:12; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 1:13; 1 John 2:27-28; 4:13
- <sup>51</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 2:10
- <sup>52</sup> 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:7; 4:32
- <sup>53</sup> 2 Cor. 3:14; Gal. 2:4, 16-17; 5:6; Phil. 3:3, 9; Col. 1:4; 2:5; 1Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:10; 3:13, 15; Philemon 8; 1 John 4:15
- <sup>54</sup> 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 6:11; 8:12; Col. 2:11-15; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 John 5:20
- <sup>55</sup> Rom. 8:39; 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 2:6; 3:12
- <sup>56</sup> Gal. 3:26; Eph. 1:5; 5:1-2
- <sup>57</sup> Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:18-19, 22, 31; Eph. 1:10-11; 2:7; 1 Thess. 4:14, 16; 2 Tim. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:10
- <sup>58</sup> Rom. 8:13; 2 Cor. 3:17-18
- <sup>59</sup> Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48; John 20:21, 23; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:1; 5:10, 18; Col. 1:9-10
- <sup>60</sup> Matt. 7:15-27; John 14:15, 21, 23-24, 31; 15:10, 14; Rom. 1:6-7; 1 Pet. 1:2
- <sup>61</sup> Matt. 5:48; 6:33; 7:7-11; Col. 3:1; Eph. 5:10
- <sup>62</sup> Eph. 4:20-24; 5:8-10; Col. 3:5, 7, 10-11, 12a. See also Matt. 7:13; 13:44-46; Mark 8:35; 10:28-31
- <sup>63</sup> Eph. 2:10; Rom. 16:3, 7, 9, 10; 1 Cor. 4:14, 17; 2 Cor. 2:14, 17; 12:19; 13:4; Phil. 3:14; 4:7, 19; Col. 1:28; 2:6-7; 1 Thess. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Peter 3:16; 1 John 2:4-6; 3:6, 9, 24; 4:16; Rev. 1:9
- <sup>64</sup> John 15:1-8, 16; 16:23-24, 26-27; Gal. 5:22-25; Col. 1:9-10
- <sup>65</sup> Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28; John 15:12-13, 17; Rom. 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 13:1-13; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:1-2; 2 Pet. 1:7
- <sup>66</sup> John 15:11; 16:20-22, 24; 17:13; Act 13:52; Rom. 12:12-13, 15; 14:17; 15:13; 1 Cor. 13:6; 2 Cor. 8:2; Gal. 5:22; 1 Pet. 1:8; 1 Thess. 1:6
- <sup>67</sup> Matt. 5:9, 21-26; Rom. 12:18; 13:13; 14:19; 1 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:3-6, 26-27, 31-32; 6:15; Col. 3:15
- <sup>68</sup> 1 Cor. 13:4, 7; Rom. 14:1, 10; 15:7; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12-13

- <sup>69</sup> Matt. 5:4, 7, 21-22, 38-42; Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 13:4; Gal. 5:22; Col. 3:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:7
- <sup>70</sup> Rom. 12:17, 21; Gal. 5:22; 1 Cor. 13:6
- <sup>71</sup> Matt. 5:10-12; John 15:18-25; 16:2-4; 17:14; Rom. 12:11, 12; 15:5; 1 Cor. 13:7; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 6:10-17; 2 Pet. 1:6
- <sup>72</sup> Matt. 5:5; Rom. 14:1-23; 15:1-2; 1 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 5:23; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12-13
- <sup>73</sup> 1 Cor. 13:5, 7; Gal. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:6
- <sup>74</sup> Matt. 5:43-48; 18:21-35; Rom. 12:9, 10; 1 Cor. 13:5; Col. 3:12-13
- <sup>75</sup> Matt. 5:3; 25:32-46; Rom. 12:12-13; 1 Cor. 13:4-5; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:3-16; 6:18-20; Titus 3:14
- <sup>76</sup> Matt. 5:6, 8, 27-30; Rom. 12:9; 1 Cor. 13:5-6; Eph. 4:17-19; 5:3, 5-8, 11-13; 6:10-17; Col. 3:5-7; Titus 2:12; 3:14; 1 Pet. 2:11; 2 Pet. 1:5-6. See also John 17:14-16; Rom. 12:2, 9; 1 Pet. 2:11; Titus 2:12.
- <sup>77</sup> Matt. 6:1-3, 5-13; 7:1-5; Rom. 12:3-7, 10, 16; 1 Cor. 13:4-5; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12-13
- <sup>78</sup> Matt. 6:5-13; 7:7-11; Rom. 12:12; 15:30-32; Eph. 3:19-20; 6:18-20; Col. 3:30; 4:2; 1 Tim. 2:1-3, 8
- <sup>79</sup> John 6:51-59; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 5:19-20; Col. 3:15; Col. 4:2
- <sup>80</sup> Matt. 7:24-27; Eph. 5:10, 18; 6:17; Col. 3:16; 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 4:1-7; 6:3-10, 20-21
- <sup>81</sup> Matt. 24:14; 28:19; Mark 13:10; 16:15; Luke 9:1-6; 24:47-48; John 17:18; 20:21, 23; Rom. 1:5; 15:18-19; 1 Tim. 3:16. By the power of the Spirit: John 15:27; Luke 24:49; John 20:22; Acts 1:8; Col. 3:30; Eph. 6:19-20. By example: Matt. 5:14-16; Titus 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:12. With healing, signs & wonders: Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 11:5; Mark 16:17-18, 20; Luke 9:1-6; Acts 8:13; Rom. 15:18-19.
- <sup>82</sup> 1 Cor. 12:3-4, 13; Eph. 2:18, 22; 4:3-4
- <sup>83</sup> See above.
- <sup>84</sup> See fruit of love. Also see Col. 3:14-15.
- <sup>85</sup> Rom. 12:5,16; 15:5-6; Gal. 1:22; 3:28; Eph. 4:2-8, 27, 29-30; 5:4, 12, 19-21; Col. 3:14-15; 1 Tim. 2:8
- <sup>86</sup> Eph. 4:11-16; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31
- <sup>87</sup> Leaders: Acts 6:1-7; Eph. 4:7-8, 11-16; 1 Tim. 3:2-13; 4:7-8, 11-13, 16; 5:1-2, 17-22; Titus 1:5-9. Men: Titus 2:2, 6-8. Women: 1 Tim. 2:9-15; 5:3-16; Titus 2:3-5. Family: Eph. 5:21. Husbands & wives: Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:1-7. Children: Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20. Fathers: Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21
- <sup>88</sup> Work: Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25; 4:1; 1 Pet. 2:18-25; 1 Tim. 6:1-2; Titus 2:9-10. Government: Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:1-3; Titus 3:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:13-17.