

The Divine Son of God

“Do you believe in the Son of God?” (John 9:35) This was Jesus’ question to the man born blind. It is also a question for each one of us. Who is the Son of God, that we may believe in Him? Is our answer based on what the word of God says, or the tradition of men? This study will explore what the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy say about this important topic. Please pray as you study.

1. Who did the disciples and John the Baptist testify that Christ is? **Matt. 14:33, 16:13-17; John 1:34, 6:69**
2. Who did God the Father say that Jesus is? **Matt. 3:17, 17:5; 2 Peter 1:17**
3. Who did Jesus declare Himself to be? **John 10:36, Matt. 26:63-64, Mark 14:61-62**
4. Was Christ the Son of God prior to the incarnation? **Dan. 3:25, Prov. 30:4**
5. Why is Christ equal with God? **John 5:18, Phil. 2:5-9**
6. What does *begotten* mean? **1 John 5:1, John 8:42, Luke 9:38**
(a) Note: in Luke 9:38 the phrase “only child” is translated from the same Greek word as “only begotten” in **John 3:16**.
7. **Heb. 11:17-18** – Why is Isaac called the “only” begotten son of Abraham? **Rom. 9:7-8, Gal. 4:22-23**
8. **John 8:56, Gal. 3:8** – How was the gospel preached in God’s test of Abraham?
Gen. 22:2, 1 John 4:9

“It was to impress Abraham's mind with **the reality of the gospel**, as well as to test his faith, that God commanded him to slay his son. The agony which he endured during the dark days of that fearful trial was permitted that he might understand from his own experience something of the greatness of the sacrifice made by the infinite God for man's redemption. No other test could have caused Abraham such torture of soul as did the offering of his son. **God gave His Son** to a death of agony and shame. The angels who witnessed the humiliation and soul anguish of the Son of God were not permitted to interpose, as in the case of Isaac. There was no voice to cry, ‘It is enough.’ To save the fallen race, the King of glory yielded up His life. What stronger proof can be given of the infinite compassion and love of God? ‘He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?’ Romans 8:32.”
Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 154.2

9. What did Christ say about His pre-existence? **Prov. 8:22-25** (compare **1 Cor. 1:24, 30**)
(a) Note: the Hebrew word for “brought forth” in Prov. 8:24-25 refers to childbirth (compare **Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 26:17-18, 45:10**).

10. How does the Bible speak of the time before creation? **Psalm 90:2**; compare **Prov. 8:23** and **Micah 5:2**
 - (a) Note: the Hebrew word for “goings forth” in Micah 5:2 means a family descent.
11. Does Jesus being begotten mean He was created? **John 1:1-3, 14, 18; Col. 1:12-16**
12. How can Christ both be *with* God and *be* God at the same time? **Gen. 1:27, 5:1-2**
 - (a) Note: Eve was with the man (Adam), and she was man (Adam or mankind). While Eve was a distinct being from Adam, she was brought forth from him and was equally man (human nature). Likewise Christ is a distinct being from God, but as the only begotten Son of God He is equally God (divine nature).

“The Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father, is truly **God in infinity**, but **not in personality**.” E. G. White, Ms 116, Dec. 19, 1905, par. 19
13. Is Christ's sonship a figure of speech, metaphor, or non-literal illustration/parable?
John 16:27-30, 17:8
14. In what way are Christ and the Father one? **John 17:11, 21-23**
15. Who is the God of Christ? **John 20:17; Eph. 1:3, 17; Heb. 1:8-9**
16. Is there a sense in which God the Father is greater than Christ? **John 10:29, 14:28**
 - (a) Note: the Greek word for *greater* in these verses is translated as *elder* in **Rom. 9:12**.
17. For what purpose was the Gospel of John written? **John 20:30-31**
18. What did Satan call into question? **Luke 4:3, 9**
19. What do those in whom God abides confess? **1 John 4:15**
20. What is the Godhead? **Acts 17:29, Rom. 1:19-20**
21. How much of the Godhead dwells in Christ? **Col. 2:8-9**
22. Why does all the fullness dwell in Christ? **Col. 1:19**
23. Why does Christ have all power/authority in heaven and earth? **Matt. 28:18**
24. Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life (**John 11:25**). Why is Christ self-existent? Why is this original, unborrowed, underived life in Christ? **John 5:26**
25. Who is the head of Christ? **1 Cor. 11:3**
26. Who does Christ belong to? **1 Cor. 3:23, Rev. 12:10**
27. Will Christ always be subject to God the Father? **1 Cor. 15:22-28**
28. When we worship Christ, who are we ultimately glorifying? **Phil. 2:10-11**

In what sense is Christ the Son of God? Is there a distinction between *begotten* and *created*?

A complete offering has been made; for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,”—**not a son by creation**, as were the angels, **nor a son by adoption**, as is the forgiven sinner, **but a Son begotten** in the express image of the Father's person, **and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory**, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

E. G. White, ST May 30, 1895, par. 3

What does the Spirit of Prophecy say about Christ's existence before creation?

“Before Abraham was, I am.” Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent **Son of God**. The message He gave to Moses to give to the children of Israel was, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” The prophet Micah writes of Him, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, tho thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of Thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; **whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.**”

Through Solomon **Christ declared:** “**The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old.** I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, **I was brought forth;** when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, **before the hills was I brought forth....** When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by Him, **as one brought up with Him;** and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.”

In speaking of His pre-existence, **Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages.** He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship **with the eternal God.** He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him. ST August 29, 1900, par. 13-15

How did the Great Controversy start?

Satan was once an honored angel in heaven, next to Christ. His countenance, like those of the other angels, was mild and expressive of happiness. His forehead was high and broad, showing great intelligence. His form was perfect; his bearing noble and majestic. But **when God said to His Son**, “Let us make man in our image,” Satan was jealous of Jesus. He wished to be consulted concerning the formation of man, and because he was not, he was filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred. He desired to receive the highest honors in heaven next to God. *Early Writings*, p. 145

What fact would the fallen angels obscure?

Angels were expelled from heaven because they would not work in harmony with God. They fell from their high estate because they wanted to be exalted. They had come to exalt themselves, and they forgot that their beauty of person and of character came from the Lord Jesus. This fact the fallen angels would obscure, that **Christ was the only begotten Son of God**, and they came to consider that they were not to consult Christ.

TDG 128.2 (Letter 42, April 29, 1910)

What is the relation between God and Christ?

God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son. *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8, p. 268*

Why was Christ equal with God prior to creation?

Lucifer in heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to **God's dear Son**. His countenance, like those of the other angels, was mild and expressive of happiness. His forehead was high and broad, showing a powerful intellect. His form was perfect; his bearing noble and majestic. A special light beamed in his countenance and shone around him brighter and more beautiful than around the other angels; **yet Christ, God's dear Son**, had the pre-eminence over all the angelic host. **He was one with the Father before the angels were created.** Lucifer was envious of Christ, and gradually assumed command which devolved on Christ alone.

The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that He might in the presence of all the angels **confer special honor upon His Son**. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that **it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself**; so that wherever was the presence of His Son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. **His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host.** Especially was His Son to work in union with Himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. **His Son would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone.** The Father's will would be fulfilled in Him.

The Story of Redemption, p. 13-14