

# Understanding the Triune God

## Part 1:

### The Relationship of the Father and Son

#### The Background:

God Dwelled in the Tabernacle (from the time of Moses)  
and then the Temple (from the time of Solomon)



<sup>10</sup> The cloud filled the house of the LORD, <sup>11</sup> so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD. <sup>12</sup> Then Solomon said, ‘The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud... <sup>27</sup> But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built! (1 Kings 8:10 – 12, 27)

Note: God left the Temple (described in Ezekiel 10) because Israel’s sin drove Him away, and the Temple was destroyed by the Babylonian invasion in 586 BC.

**Introduction to John's Gospel:**  
**The Son Reveals the Father through His Human Nature**  
**(John 1:14, 18)**

<sup>1:1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being. (1:1 – 3)

<sup>1:14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt [*tabernacled, pitched his tent*] among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth... <sup>18</sup> No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, he has explained Him. (1:14, 18)

Discussion Questions

1. In the Jewish Temple, how could God be inside the Temple, yet also outside it?
2. Notice how the word 'dwell' appears in 1 Kings 8:27 and John 1:14. In *what* did God come to dwell? What are the similarities? Differences?

## **Jesus' Claim to Reveal the Father** **(John 1:19 – 12:50)**

<sup>11:27</sup> All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. [...] <sup>12:6</sup> But I say to you that *something greater than the temple* is here. (Matthew 11:27; 12:6, emphasis mine)

<sup>5:17</sup> But he answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I myself am working.' <sup>18</sup> For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God his own Father, *making himself equal with God*. <sup>19</sup> Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself, unless it is something he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. <sup>20</sup> For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show him greater works than these, so that you will marvel. <sup>21</sup> For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom he wishes. <sup>22</sup> For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, <sup>23</sup> so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. <sup>24</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word, and believes him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. <sup>25</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. <sup>26</sup> For just as the Father has life in himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in himself. (5:17 – 26, emphasis mine)

<sup>10:30</sup> The Father and I are one... <sup>38</sup> The Father is in me and I am in the Father. (10:30, 38)

### Discussion Questions

1. How is Jesus 'something greater than the Temple'?
2. How does the Son seem to relate to his Father?

**By the Spirit, Jesus Shares With Us His Relationship with the Father**  
**(John 13:1 – 17:26)**

<sup>14:6</sup> Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me. <sup>7</sup> If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; from now on you know him, and have seen him.’ <sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father abiding in me does his works. <sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. (14:6 – 11)

<sup>14:16</sup> I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper... <sup>17</sup> that is the Spirit of truth... <sup>20</sup> In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you... <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. (14:16, 17, 20, 23)

<sup>16:32</sup> Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. (16:32)

<sup>17:21</sup> that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent me... <sup>23</sup> I in them and You in me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent me, and loved them, even as You have loved me... <sup>26</sup> and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved me may be in them, and I in them. (17:21 – 26)

Discussion Questions

1. Jesus had to die and rise before he could share himself by his Spirit with us. He said, ‘An hour is coming,’ referring to his cross and resurrection (16:32). If Jesus’ resurrected new

humanity is the only human nature that is free from the corruption of sin, is there any other way for human evil to be defeated and undone?

2. What does Jesus mean when he says that his people would be 'in him'? Or that he would be 'in them'?
3. What is the role of the Spirit? How does this make God a Trinity?
4. In Israel, God made Himself available in the Temple, and people could come to Him there. How is Jesus still 'functioning' like that Temple? How is he better than the old Temple?
5. If only the Son reveals the Father, why do we often think of God being revealed by earthquakes and hurricanes? Since we call them 'acts of God' – would Jesus call them 'acts of God'?
6. Did Jesus ever do evil? What kind of character would God have if He did both good and evil? Is that consistent with Jesus' claim to reveal the Father?

### **The Son Reveals the Father, Like the Temple Once Revealed God**

<sup>2:9</sup> For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form (Colossians 2:9)

<sup>1:1</sup> God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. <sup>3</sup> And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. (Hebrews 1:1 – 3)