

In the (New) Beginning...
Jesus is the SON of God
John 1
EBC Advent 2024

Introduction

Good morning!

This Advent season we are focusing on how the Apostle John presents the Lord Jesus to us in the introduction of his famous gospel, John 1. Our purpose in doing so is so that we can fix our minds and hearts on Jesus the Savior this Christmas season, and understand better exactly WHO He is and WHAT He has come to do.

Attachment Theory illustration

According to psychological theorists, a deep human need is a sense of deep security and relational attachment. Often times this key bonding and attachment experience occurs at infancy. However, traumatic experiences in life can upset the bonds we make with others in such a way that we become detached and lose a sense of needed security. Now, maybe not surprising, but this same dynamic is also true for pets. In short, the need for human attachment is one of our primordial.

Now, oftentimes, the insights of psychology simply reaffirm truths about God's design for human nature. God made human beings to be attachment/bonded people, and when those attachments and bonds are fractured or damaged, things simply don't work the way they are supposed to.

This morning, we will see how our relationship with God, and our humanity, has been fractured in such a way that the attachments and security we were designed for have not been achieved. However, the good news I have to share with you today is that Jesus has come to re-attach us to Himself and our heavenly Father, that we may have security of eternal life with Him.

Review: Jesus is the WORD; Jesus is the LIFE; Jesus is the LIGHT

Pastor Michael started our series by unpacking the opening/first line of John's introduction of Jesus, whom he refers to as the "Word of God". As the "Word", Jesus comes to deliver grace to cover our failure as God's agents in the world, and His truth to enable us to reclaim God's purposes for our lives.

Last week we explored John's view of Jesus as the "light" who brings "life" to humanity. Though "life" is denied to Adam and Eve in the Garden due to their sin (physical, moral, spiritual), through Jesus, it is brought near and offered again.

This morning, we will continue our exploration of how Jesus is the Son of God who gives permission for people to become "sons of God" (being born again, from above, new creation) and re-attached in communion with God restored.

Let us pray...

Exposition of John 1:

I want to begin by going back to the book of beginnings, Genesis, and ask what happened to our humanity in the Garden?

OT background to "Image of God"

What happened to our "image" in the OT?

To answer this question, let's first go back to Genesis...

Genesis 1:26-31

Now, Pastor Michael discussed this text in some detail a few weeks ago, showing how human beings were made and designed to co-rule with God in glory. However, there is another angle I want to take is to show how we were originally attached and bonded to God, but that bond and attachment has been severed by sin.

Go to chapter 3 with me...

Notice this here in verse in Gen. 3:8 after they have sinned against God, God enters the Garden and the writer tells us that He “walked in the cool of the day”.

Gen. 3:8

On the one hand, it sounds like God shows up at dusk, after the sun goes down and things cool down. On the other hand, another way to translate this verb “cool” is the word “wind” or “Spirit”. So, it would say in the “wind” of the day, or, quite possibly as a play on words, in the “spirit”. Now, scholars debate all of these things, but what is certain is this: Adam & Eve had a form of access to God’s presence that was close and personal. However, they hide and try to clothe themselves with leaves to cover their nakedness and shame. So, what we see here is that part of being made in the image of God is the capacity for communion with God.

As we have been saying throughout this series, the curse for their disobedience was three-fold:

Physical, Moral, Spiritual

Having compared death with life, darkness with light, we are now in a place to look at the spiritual aspect of the fall, which we could refer to as spiritual isolation from God.

Through Adam, humanity is “detached” from God

However, this spiritual isolation is not the end of the story...the same verb for “walk” used here in Gen. 3:8 shows up again at key junctures throughout the Pentateuch to show how God’s covenant plan with Israel is to, in some ways, restore this capacity for communion with God. Let me show you:

Redeemed for “Attachment”: Exodus

Exodus 15:13, 17-18

Redeemed for “Attachment”: Leviticus

Leviticus 26:11-12

Redeemed for “Attachment”: Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 23:14

In other words, He claims them for His own people, His own “sons”, among whom He walks.

But there are conditions to this promise:

Be careful how you walk!

Leviticus 26:21, 27-28

We know from history this is exactly how it turned out. But if they turn:

Leviticus 26:40-42, 44-45

Ezekiel 37:24-28

When will God return to restore communion and “re-attach” His people to Himself?

“Attachment to Jesus” in John

Coming back to John, let us look at the text again with this fresh, OT perspective.

John 1:9-13

Details: Note how John describes “faith” with these action type of words. First, he says that is “receiving” something from outside ourselves. Second, that faith is “believing” for John... meaning that it is not simply information, but it is an active, day by day reality.

Now, I want to go on a few more verses here:

John 1:14-18

So, Son of God in the OT often times referred to the Davidic King. But here, it is more literal, the SON of God, not just in relationship like a human king, but in His very being and essence. He is the Davidic King, but so much more than that. What the prophets foresaw in part, in shadow, with illustrative and figurative language, is an actual reality in Jesus Christ.

For John, to have genuine faith in Jesus you are *receiving* Him (as your King and your God), and you are *trusting* in His name, that is His authority and His character, and pledging yourself in allegiance to Him. And when that occurs, a new spiritual reality happens in our lives in which we become spiritually attached to Jesus, and He is ours, and we are His.

The communion and walking in Genesis 3 that was lost, and the communion and walking that was designed in the covenant which could not be achieved and was promised by the prophets (like Ezekiel) is now available, open, to those who would receive and believe in Jesus, the Son of God.

John 20:30-31

Main Idea:

To become a child of God, one must become “attached to Jesus” by receiving and trusting in Him as the Son of God (image of the Father, eternal King, redeeming Savior)

Application: How does one become “attached” to Jesus?

So how does someone become attached to Jesus, practically speaking? How does someone receive and believe in Him?

To answer this, I want take you to another text in John...

John 6:35-40

Believing what He says (speaks on the Father's authority)

Receiving what He offers (life from the Father)

Loving who He is (the Son of the Father)