



**THEOLOGY**  
ON TAP

STUDY GUIDE

A series in

# Theology

*New Year,  
New Covenant*

*1 Cor. 11:23-26*

January 1



# THEOLOGY ON TAP

## A STUDY

on Theology

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**January 1**

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Beijing, China

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Written by TJ Johnson

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# New Year, New Covenant

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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# New Year, New Covenant

On the night Jesus was arrested, He sat down with His disciples in an upper room and ate a meal together. It was a Passover meal which meant all types of delicious dishes. Roasted lamb, stewed beans, freshly plucked olives dripping in oil, bread (unleavened, of course) straight out of the oven, and large, sweet, plump, syrupy regional dates. Since Passover is a yearly event, the disciples had sat through dozens of Passovers from childhood to adulthood.

This was not like waking up on Christmas morning and wondering what presents awaited you under the tree. There was no mystery in Passover. It was as routine as brushing your teeth. You retold the same story. You ate the same foods. You sang the same songs. And prayed the same prayers. So on this night, the disciples had expected the usual. Handwashing. Breaking of Matzah. A telling of the God delivering Israel from slavery in Egypt. A meal. Wine. Bitter herbs. More wine. Prayer. Desert. More wine. Recounting the ten plagues. More wine. A song. The end.

And yet, on this night, after the meal, when Jesus took the third cup (The cup of redemption) something unexpected happened. Jesus broke with tradition. He did something NEW. Instead of saying, "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm," he says, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

New. We all like new things. New cars. New jewelry. New clothing. New phones. New is good. So, a new covenant probably sounds like a good thing to you, even if you don't quite understand what a covenant is. Oh, but to be a disciple around the table that night and to hear Jesus say these words must have been more exciting than any "new" gift you can dream up. This new covenant was something the people had been waiting on for a very long time.

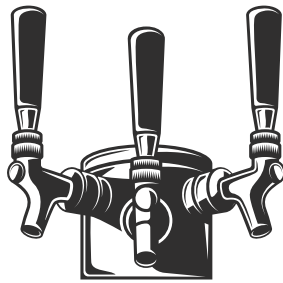
# New Year, New Covenant

Think with me. We have been waiting three LONG years for Covid restrictions to subside. Longing for the day when we could stop scanning QR codes, board a plane without a 48 hour negative Covid test, or travel back into the country without quarantine. Do you remember how you felt when you heard the news that day had finally arrived? Do you remember the joy of your long wait being over? Now imagine waiting not three years but three HUNDRED years. This is how the disciples must have felt when they heard Jesus say, "New Covenant." Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all prophesied about a time when God would do something NEW. When God would give the people a NEW covenant. And this new covenant would usher in a NEW era and make God's followers NEW creations with a NEW heart and a NEW Spirit.

That long awaited day had finally arrived. And it was all made possible because of what Jesus was ABOUT to do after the meal. Jesus was about to give His life as a ransom for sin. Jesus was about to shed his blood, for there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. This Sunday we will explore this new covenant and then remember Jesus' death as we drink from the cup and eat the bread.

Made new with you,  
Pastor TJ

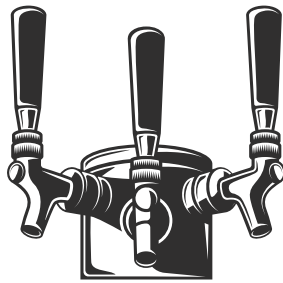
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*The new covenant*

## Discussion Questions

1. List the five Old Testament covenants mentioned in the sermon, give some modern covenants today and discuss the differences between a Biblical covenant and a contract.
2. Why do you think God chose to relate to humanity through covenant?
3. Read Hosea 6:7, Romans 5:12, Genesis 2:16–17, and Genesis 3:16-19. What was the covenant blessing and curse in the Adamic covenant and what specifically was God teaching humanity about Himself through this covenant?
4. How did Adam fail to keep this covenant, what was the result (for him, humanity, and all creation), what gracious act and promise does God give to Adam and Eve and in what way did this foreshadow Jesus (aka – how did Jesus fully uphold this covenant)?
5. Read Genesis 9:9-16. What covenant promises does God make to humanity through the Noahic covenant and what is its sign (what does this teach us about God)?
6. In what ways is Jesus foreshadowed in this covenant?
7. Read Genesis 12:1-3, 15:17-18. What are the covenant promises in the Abrahamic covenant and what does this teach us about God?
8. In what ways is Jesus foreshadowed in this covenant?

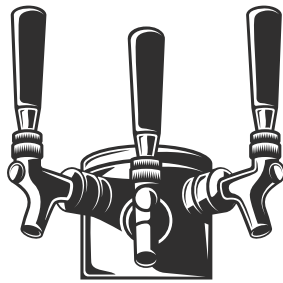


*The new covenant*

## Discussion Questions

9. Read Exodus 19:4-6. What are the covenant promises and curses in the Mosaic Covenant and what does this teach us about God?
10. How does Israel fail to keep the covenant, what is the result of their failure, and in what ways does Jesus keep the covenant?
11. In what ways is Jesus foreshadowed in this covenant?
12. Read Psalm 89:3-4, 2 Samuel 7:4-17. What are the covenant promises in the Davidic Covenant and what does this teach us about God?
13. How does David and his offspring fail to keep the covenant, what is the result of their failure, and in what ways does Jesus keep this covenant?
14. In what ways is Jesus foreshadowed in this covenant?
15. Read Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:24-28, Isaiah 42, Luke 1:72, 1 Corinthians 11:25. What are the covenant promises in the New Testament, in what ways is Jesus the mediator of this covenant, and what does it teach us about God?
16. In what way is the New Covenant similar and different from the Old Covenants?
17. How is the New Covenant applied to people today and what are some common wrong ways people try to obtain the New Covenant?

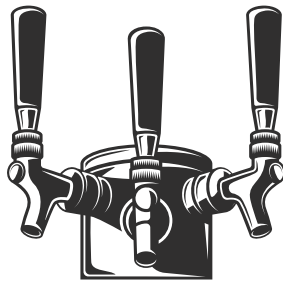




*The new covenant*

## Discussion Questions

18. What is the significance of remembering when we partake of the Lord's Supper?
19. What does it mean day to day to live under the New Covenant?
20. Compare Revelation 21:1-7 to Jeremiah 31:31-34. What aspects of the New Covenant are not yet fully realized and how can we live in anticipation of that day?



*The new covenant*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



**THEOLOGY**  
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*Theology*

*Why Worship  
Matters*

March 12

*Romans 1: 18-25*

# Why Worship Matters

Romans 1:18-25

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

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# Why Worship Matters

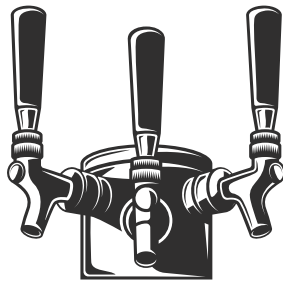
This Sunday we will pause our study of the Gospel of Luke for another Theology on Tap. This time we are looking at Why Worship Matters.

What is the biggest problem with the world? Is it poverty, famine, disease, or war? According to Romans 1 the root of every problem is wrong worship. Humanity's hearts were darkened and thoughts became futile when we chose to worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator.

In order to understand this we must first understand what worship is. Worship is not a genre of music. It is not simply a religious ritual. Worship is intrinsic to what it means to be a human being. We express it in a variety of ways, but what (or who) we choose to worship will determine the kind of life we live and the kind of people we will be.

Worshipping with you,

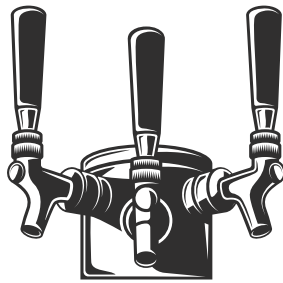
Pastor Ben



*The truth about God*

## Discussion Questions

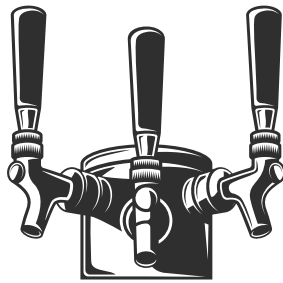
1. Summarize Romans 1:1-17 and explain how it connects to Romans 1:18-25.
2. How would you define worship and what verses have most helped form your understanding of worship? (Verses to consider: Genesis 22:5; Exodus 4:31; 34:8, 14; Deut. 12; 1 Chronicles 16; Nehemiah 9; Job 1:20; Psalm 29:2; 66:4; Isaiah 44; Matt. 15:9; John 4; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 14; Hebrews 9; 12:28; Rev. 4:10; 5:14; 7:11)
3. What are some common misconceptions Christians might have about worship today? (aka worship is only singing, worship is dependent upon the style or quality of music, low lights and ambient music enhances worship, worship is only about the intent of the worshipper, etc.)
4. Read Romans 1:1-7. What truth does this teach us about the One we are called to worship? (There is a lot you can discuss here: Trinity, role of Scripture in informing us of who God is, world-wide God vs tribal deity, God's love, God's sovereignty, God's holiness, etc.)
5. Read Romans 1:18. What is the connection with wrath and worship? What do we and the world need to know about God's wrath against unrighteousness? Why do you think some Christians today are hesitant to talk about God's wrath?



*The truth about God*

## Discussion Questions

6. Read Romans 1:19-20. In what ways has God revealed Himself to humanity? (See also Hebrews 1:1-3).
7. In what ways (and why) did people during Paul's day suppress the truth about God? In what ways (and why) do people suppress the truth about God today?
8. Read Romans 1:21. What does it look like to daily honor and give thanks to God? (Get personal, what has God done in your life that deserves honor and thanks and how can you give that to Him).
9. Read Romans 1:23. Does humanity still struggle with idol worship (idolatry)? Explain. (Idolatry is always about worship...what did the people hope to gain from the idol they worshipped, this is what they worshipped. What do we give our devotion to and what do we hope to gain from it).
10. Take some time to discuss the comparison Paul gives us between glory/images immortal/mortal. How do you experience God's glory and immortality today and in what ways is that superior to any other thing you might be tempted to worship?
11. Read Romans 1:24. Why do you think God "gave them up" instead of forcing them to worship Him?

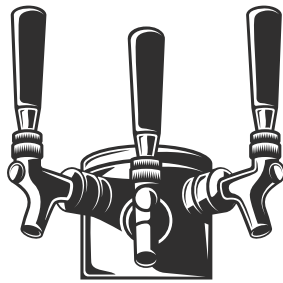


*The truth about God*

## Discussion Questions

12. What were the “lusts of the heart” and “dishonoring of the body” during Paul’s day? What are they today?
13. Read Romans 1:25. What truth(s) about God do people most readily reject today and why? What do they “exchange” it for?
14. Why do you think Paul goes to such great lengths to emphasize God as creator? What does this have to do with worship?





*The truth about God*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



**THEOLOGY**  
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*Turning Graves  
Into Gardens*

April 09

*John 19:38-20:18*

# Turning Graves Into Gardens

John 19:38-20:18

38 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. 39 Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight.

40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

3 So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. 4 Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.

# Turning Graves Into Gardens

John 19:38-20:18

6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.

8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went back to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." 14 Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

# Turning Graves Into Gardens

John 19:38-20:18

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"—and that he had said these things to her.

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# Turning Graves Into Gardens

The Bible starts with a garden. The Bible ends with a garden. And in the middle, at the death and resurrection of Jesus, we once again read about a garden.

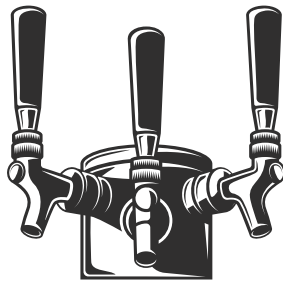
John 19:41 says "Now in the place where Jesus was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid." It is no accident that the death and resurrection of Jesus takes place in a garden. It is God's way of showing us that in Jesus, a NEW creation has begun.

The death and resurrection of Jesus changes everything! It is the beginning of the great reversal of all that is wrong with this world. But notice I say beginning, for Jesus' resurrection is a FIRSTFRUITS, a foretaste of what is to come. It points to the last garden found in Revelation. This garden is not a return to Eden, it is something better. The first Eden had potential, the last Eden has perfection.

Join us Sunday as we look at how Jesus turns graves into gardens.

Gardened by the Gardener,

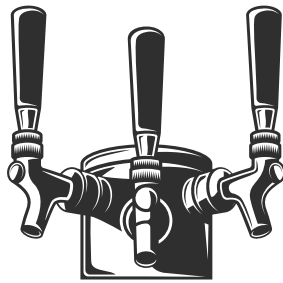
Pastor TJ



## *In the Garden*

### Discussion Questions

1. What are some tragedies and disappointments that we face in a fallen world? Get personal by sharing your own stories.
2. Read Genesis 2:8, John 15:1. What does it mean that God is a gardener?
3. What was it about the Garden of Eden that made it wonderful for humanity? Is this a place you would have liked to live, explain.
4. Read Genesis 3:1-24 and discuss the many consequences of sin that are mentioned in the text.
5. Why do you think God sends Adam and Eve out of the garden and what does that teach us about our own sin and relationship with God?
6. The sermon makes the claim that, “the first garden ends with sin, suffering, separation, shame, death.” In what ways did Jesus experience each of these on our behalf on the cross? (Use the Bible to support your answers)
7. What parallel or familiar scenes do we notice between the two gardens and how does this point to a great reversal of the effects of sin?
8. Read John 20:15. How have you experienced Jesus as gardener in your own life?

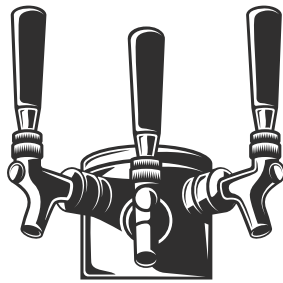


## *In the Garden*

### Discussion Questions

9. Read John 20:17. Why does Jesus tell Mary not to cling to Him?
10. Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-23. If resurrection is the reversal of the effects of sin, why do we currently live with the effects of sin? In what ways is it the same, in what ways is it different?
11. What parallel garden imagery do you see in this passage between the Garden of Eden and New Jerusalem?
12. How does one gain entrance into this last garden and what happens to those who cannot enter? (See John 20:30-31; Rev. 20:11-15, 21:5-8)
13. Read 1 Corinthians 15:17-26. Discuss the present and future power of the resurrection. In what ways might a person wrongly overemphasize one and deemphasize the other?
14. What are the sorrows, sins, struggles, disappointments, and failures that you can bring to the grave, bury it with Jesus and experience a garden resurrection? (Is there really POWER in the resurrection to bring new life to these things? Explain)





*In the Garden*

**Prayer & Praise**

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

**Prayer Requests**

**Praise Reports**



**THEOLOGY**  
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# Theology

Why Gender  
Matters

June 04

Genesis 1:27

# Why Gender Matters

## Genesis 1-3

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." 7 And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. 8 And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. 9 And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. 12 The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. 14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so.

# Why Gender Matters

## Genesis 1-3

16 And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. 17 And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20 And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” 21 So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23 And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24 And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. 25 And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

# Why Gender Matters

## Genesis 1-3

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

29 And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. 31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. 5 When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, 6 and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— 7 then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

# Why Gender Matters

## Genesis 1-3

8 And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

18 Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." 19 Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. 21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.

# Why Gender Matters

## Genesis 1-3

22 And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

# Why Gender Matters

## Genesis 1-3

11 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

16 To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you." 17 And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." 20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. 22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.



# Why Gender Matters

Genesis 1-3

24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

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# Why Gender Matters

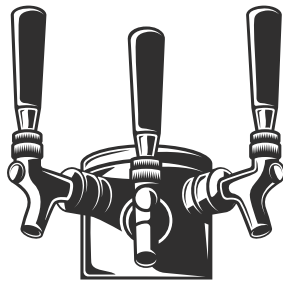
In a world where gender can be misunderstood and distorted, it's essential for us, as followers of Christ, to ground ourselves in God's unchanging truth. This Sunday we will explore God's purposeful and intentional creation of male and female.

Beginning with the Genesis account, we will see how our gender is a reflection of God's image and an integral part of His plan for us. As we acknowledge the impact of sin on all of our being, including our understanding of gender, we find hope and redemption in Jesus Christ. He offers something better than transition; He offers transformation and restoration to all who trust in Him.

Join us as we navigate the challenges of our culture with grace and unwavering commitment to biblical truth. May God's church, male and female, fully embrace our differences and walk in the fullness of our masculinity or femininity.

Male and Female He created them,

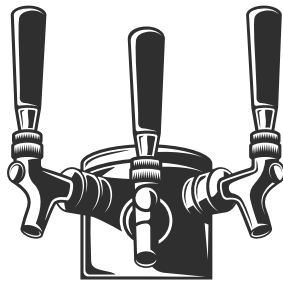
Pastor TJ



*Male and Female He Created Them*

## Discussion Questions

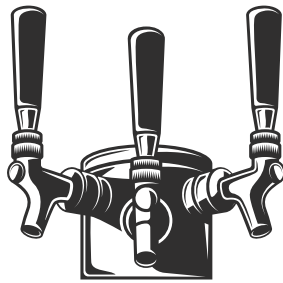
1. What are some healthy and unhealthy ways to engage our current culture on Gender?
2. In what ways is the world/culture indoctrinating our present generation on gender and how can the church lovingly address these systematic methodologies to teach a lie?
3. How have you or someone you known been impacted by the current gender ideology?
4. In what ways are men and women different biologically, how do those differences reflect God's image and contribute to human flourishing?
5. Explore the roles (gender) assigned to men and women in the creation account in Genesis 2. Why do you think God created male and female with distinct roles and how can we live that out faithfully today in community, church, and family?
6. How do the specific instructions given to men and women in the New Testament reflect God-given gender roles and the unique struggles each gender faces?
7. How have cultural stereotypes and expectations lead to confusion and a distorted understanding of masculinity and femininity?



*Male and Female He Created Them*

## Discussion Questions

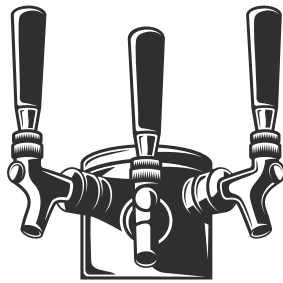
8. What does it mean to be a man or woman (gender) according to the Bible?
9. How does God' biological design for each sex contribute to our gendered design in order to bring about human flourishing?
10. Reflect on the idea that embracing a gender identity that differs from one's biological sex is seen as going against God's design. How do you reconcile this perspective with the experiences and challenges faced by individuals who identify as transgender or gender nonconforming?
11. In what ways has your biological design contributed to you fulfilling your God-given role as male or female?
12. What are some reasons why a female (or male) might not be comfortable with her (or his) body and desire/envy a male (or female) body?
13. Was there ever a time when you were embarrassed or unhappy with your gender? How did you deal with your feelings?
14. Discuss the significance of God's declaration that His creation of male and female is "very good." What implications does this have for our understanding of our own biological sex and the importance of embracing and celebrating it?
15. What are some unhealthy stereotypes/biases about men and women?



*Male and Female He Created Them*

## Discussion Questions

16. How does the Bible (not just Genesis 1-3) display the full worth and dignity of each sex and how can we better reflect that in the world today?
17. Discuss the concept of listening to one's inner self and trusting personal feelings as a potential source of error.
18. Why is the statement, "I was born that way," not a good excuse for living out a particular lifestyle?
19. What would you say to a friend if they asked you why they should choose transformation over transition?
20. What does transformation through Jesus look like for a person experiencing gender dysphonia?
21. What would you say to a person who used Matthew 19:12 or Galatians 3:28 as an excuse for transition?
22. How can the church be both truth and grace to our friends and neighbors struggling with gender identity?



*Male and Female He Created Them*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



**THEOLOGY**  
ON TAP

STUDY GUIDE

A series in

# Theology

*Why the Trinity  
Matters*

August 23

*Genesis 1:26*

# Why the Trinity Matters

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.



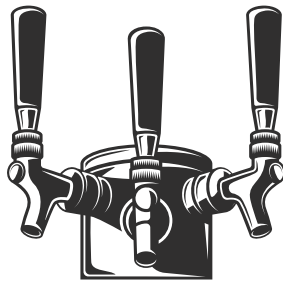
# Why the Trinity Matters

If you were to visit the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, Russia, you might happen upon a very old Russian painting by Andrei Rublev. It pictures three persons sitting at a table, enjoying a meal together. But it is much more than an image of three PEOPLE, it is in fact the artist's attempt to capture the inner workings of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit.

Like this iconic painting, the mystery of the Trinity invites us to peer into the inner life of God (one being, three persons, eternally existing in perfect love and unity). As we explore the depths of this divine mystery, we discover that the Triune God invites US to participate in the same love and unity that exist within the Trinity itself. What a wonderful truth!

Join us Sunday as we learn about the Trinity and what importance the Trinity has on our lives today.

In HIm,  
Ps TJ Johnson



*Let Us*

## Discussion Questions

**1. What are some key passages that tell us there is only one God? What are some passages that teach us that the Father, Son, and Spirit are God?**

### **NOTE FOR LEADERS:**

#### **a) There is just one God**

Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:6, 1 Corinthians 8:6 (relevant for following point also).

#### **b) The Father is described as God**

Malachi 2:10, John 5:18, John 6:27, 1 Corinthians 1:3, 2 Corinthians 1:2-3, 1 John 3:1.

#### **c) The Son is described as God**

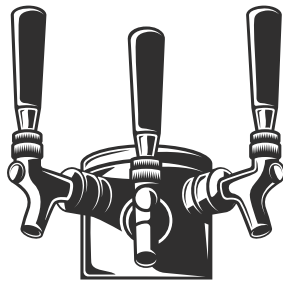
Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, Titus 2:11-14, 2 Peter 1:1, John 20:28, Revelation 1:8, John 8:58.

#### **d) The Holy Spirit is described as God**

Acts 5:1-4 (where lying to the Holy Spirit is equated with lying to God), Psalm 139:7-8; John 14:23, 1 Corinthians 2:11, 1 John 4:13, 1 Peter 4:14.

**For fun take this quiz  
on the Trinity:**





*Let Us*

## Discussion Questions

**2. How would you describe the Trinity in a way that is understandable and Biblical? Do you think analogies are helpful or hurtful?**

### **NOTE TO LEADERS:**

The biblical teaching on the Trinity embodies four essential affirmations (see the [ESV Study Bible](#) for more detail):

- There is one and only one true and living God.
- This one God eternally exists in three persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
- These three persons are completely equal in attributes, each with the same divine nature.
- While each person is fully and completely God, the persons are not identical. The differences among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are found in the way they relate to one another and the role each plays in accomplishing their unified purpose.

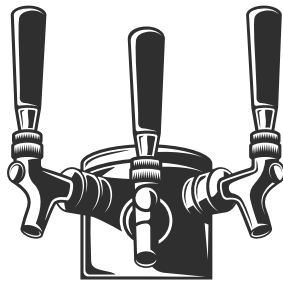
**3. What are the most common misunderstanding about the Trinity and why does it matter?**

**4. What are the three distinct roles of each person of the Trinity?**

**5. In what ways do we relate to each person of the Trinity today?**

**6. How does the Trinitarian relationship help us better understand submission and authority?**

**7. What does the Trinity teach us about love and relationships?**



*Let Us*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



**THEOLOGY**  
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STUDY GUIDE

A series in

**Theology**

*Nailed it*

*2 Timothy 3:12-17*

October 29

# Nailed it

2 Timothy 3:12-17

12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work

# Nailed it

The Bible stands as the best-selling book of all time, with approximately 100 million copies printed annually. Its popularity has carried over even into the digital world. Take, for instance, the YouVersion Bible app, boasting over 545 million unique installs globally.

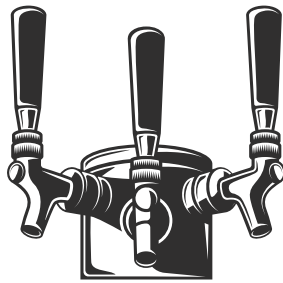
This is promising news, for it signifies a widespread recognition of the value inherent in God's Word. Yet, amid the plethora of physical Bibles and digital apps, a crucial question arises: is owning a Bible enough? Do these numbers necessarily indicate changed lives? For example, possessing an abundance of healthy food, stored away in cabinets, provides no nourishment. To benefit, we must cook and consume it. Similarly, having workout clothes and exercise equipment gathering dust in a corner brings no fitness. To attain health, we must don those clothes and USE that equipment.

So, while it's promising to think of all the Bibles in our homes and pockets, I can't help but wonder...is it in our HEART? Are we actually READING it? One of my favorite church fathers, Augustine, understood the power of reading word of God. While sitting under a tree, searching for meaning in his life, he heard the words of some nearby children, "Tolle Lege, Tolle Lege" (take and read). There happened to be a Bible sitting next to Augustine...so he took up the Bible and READ it. This was THE moment that Augustine points to as his spiritual awakening. His life was forever changed by taking it up and reading Romans 13:13-14.

It is clear, as a culture we have Tolle (taken) the Word. But, have we Lege (read) the word? This week we will explore 2 Timothy 3:16 and hear the challenge to TAKE UP, READ, MEDITATE, MEMORIZE, and LIVE the Word.

Tolle Lege with you,

Pastor TJ



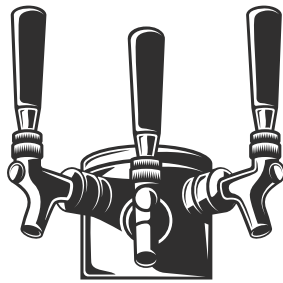
*Sacred Writings*

## Discussion Questions

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17 out loud. If possible, use two different translations, one more word for word and another more thought for thought.

1. What's the context of 2 Timothy? How does chapter three fit into the overall book?
2. Why do you think Paul places such an emphasis on the Word of God in this book?
3. Who is Paul referencing in v. 14 (from whom you learned it)? From whom did YOU learn the Bible?
4. What are the sacred writing referenced in v. 15? Defend your answer.
5. What does it mean that these writings are "sacred" or "holy" and how should this impact our interaction with them?
6. What does it mean the Bible is inspired (verbal plenary inspiration)? What did that process look like? (see Heb. 1:1, 2 Peter 1:21, Jer 1:9, John 16:13, 1 Cor. 2:13, Gal. 1:11-12, Rev. 1:10-11, etc).
7. What does it mean the Bible is inerrant and why is it important? What are the most common passages people point to as evidence of "errors" and how would you respond to them?

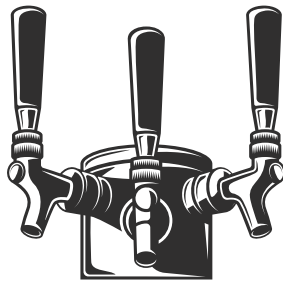




*Sacred Writings*

## Discussion Questions

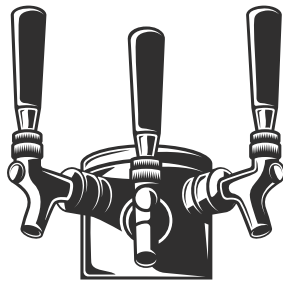
8. What is the purpose of the Bible and how might people today seek to use the Bible in ways it was not intended?
9. What is the role of scripture in evangelism?
10. Share with the group how all of Scripture is about Jesus. How should this inform HOW we study the Bible (see Luke 24, John 5)?
11. How do we know that the 66 books we have in our Bible today are meant to be in the canon OR that there are not other books that should be included in the canon?
12. In every era, the church has faced attacks to the canon, what are the greatest attacks to the canon today?
13. How should we view translations of the Bible? Which ones would you recommend? Which ones would you encourage people to avoid? What role does it play in a meaningful Bible Study?
14. Part of the theology of Scripture is the unity of the Bible (ALL parts are EQUALLY inspired), in what ways is this doctrine attacked today?
15. What parts of Scripture most often get neglected and why? Which parts do you avoid (intentionally or unintentionally)? How will you seek to correct this?



*Sacred Writings*

## Discussion Questions

16. According to v. 16, what are the four things Scripture is profitable for? What does each one mean and how have you experienced the Word doing EACH of these in your own private Bible Study?
17. What have you found most helpful in keeping a consistent Bible Study?
18. What methods of Bible Study have you found to be most helpful to accurately know and apply the Word? Are there any methods that more easily lead to inaccurate interpretation and application?
19. Who has influenced you most in your Bible Reading habits? (maybe a friend, mentor, person from history like Tyndale, Wycliff, etc).
20. Have you read through all of the Bible? If so, what strategies helped and in what ways did reading through the whole Bible impact your understanding of and relationship with God?
21. What questions do you have concerning the doctrine of Scripture?



## *Sacred Writings*

### **Prayer & Praise**

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

#### **Prayer Requests**

#### **Praise Reports**



**THEOLOGY**  
ON TAP

STUDY GUIDE

A series in  
*Theology*  
*Come and Worship*

December 24

*Matthew 2:1-12*

# Come and Worship

Mathew 2:1-12

## The Visit of the Wise Men

1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

6 "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

7 Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." 9 After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

# Come and Worship

Christmas. Christ...Mass. In its original meaning, Christmas was a celebration of Christ through Holy Eucharist. It's a bit strange when you think about it. Eucharist is an act of remembering DEATH!

Bread...the body of Christ...BROKEN for us.

Wine...the blood of Christ...POURED OUT for us.

So strange, that the season of Jesus' BIRTH would be a season of remembering His DEATH. And yet...so obvious.

As 1 Timothy 1:15 says, "Jesus came into the world to save sinners." God became MAN to SAVE sinners. There is but one way to deal with sin...death. So it is true to say that Jesus was BORN that He might DIE! In fact, it is for this very reason He took on flesh...for God can not die! So God became man to do the impossible...die.

There, at the birth, are so many foreshadows of a death. Herod's killing spree in Bethlehem. The words of Simeon in the temple, "a sword will pierce through your own soul." Myrrh, a burial perfume given by the Magi, which will reappear as Jesus' body is laid in the tomb.

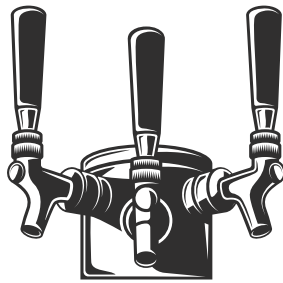
God took on flesh, that flesh might be ripped. He took on blood, that blood might be spilt. He was born to live the life we cannot live and die the death we should have died.

So, yes...it makes perfect sense that ChristMASS is a celebration of Jesus' birth by remembering His death.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Remembering his BIRTH and DEATH with you,

Pastor TJ

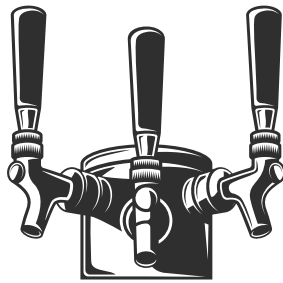


*Come to Worship*

## Discussion Questions

**Read Matthew 2:1-12**

- 1. What are the main truths that Matthew wants his readers to know from this passage?**
- 2. In what ways was Jesus' birth different from every other birth in human history?**
- 3. How does Matthew reveal to us that Jesus is both fully man and God? What other passages help teach this truth? Why does it matter?**
- 4. Who are the people mentioned in Matthew 2:1-12, how does each respond to the birth of Jesus, and how do people respond in similar ways today?**
- 5. What does it mean for us practically that God became flesh and dwelt among us?**
- 6. How would you define "worship"?**
- 7. What are some things people worship today?**
- 8. What does it look like practically to live a lifestyle of worship?**
- 9. Considering the entire Gospel of Matthew, how and why does Matthew emphasize the Kingship of Jesus?**



*Come to Worship*

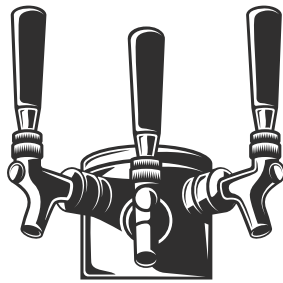
## Discussion Questions

10. What does it mean that Jesus is King? What does His Kingship demand from us?
11. What are your thoughts regarding the three gifts given to Jesus?
12. What gifts are we to give to Jesus today?
13. Why is it important that these Magi come from the East?
14. What other passages teach that Jesus is the Messiah to the nations?
15. In what ways can you be involved in the worldwide worship of Jesus?

## Going Deeper

16. What is the significance of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem?
17. What is the significance of the star guiding the Magi (see Numbers 24:17, Isaiah 60:3, 6)?
18. Why was Herod (and all of Jerusalem) troubled at the news of Jesus' birth?
19. What other truths about Jesus are found in the passage Matthew quotes in v. 6 (Micah 5:1-4)?





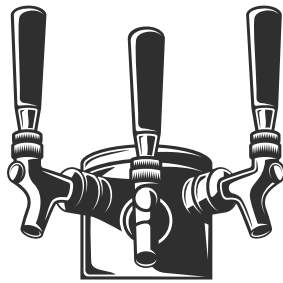
*Come to Worship*

## Going Deeper

**20. Read Matthew 2:10. What role does joy play in worship?**

**21. Read v. 11. Discuss the oddness of this passage and what it teaches us about Jesus. (Worship of a human, worship of a child, worship by non-Jews, absence of the religious leaders, etc)**

**22. In what ways do you see the sovereignty of God at work in this passage and how does that give us comfort today?**



*Come to Worship*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



**THEOLOGY**  
ON TAP

STUDY GUIDE

A series in

*Theology*

*The Offices of Christ*

December 31

*Hebrews 1:1-3*

# The Offices of Christ

Hebrews 1:1-3

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

# The Offices of Christ

If asked, how would you respond to Question 31 of the Heidelberg Catechism:

"Why is Jesus called Christ?"

And no, it's not because Christ is his family name!

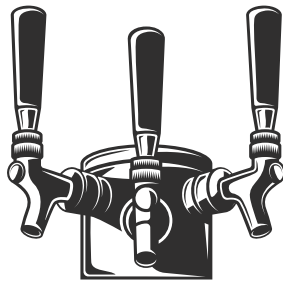
Perhaps you might say something about Jesus being the Messiah. Maybe you will make the connection that Christ means Anointed One and that Jesus is our Anointed One. But REALLY, what does that mean? Why does it matter? Why is CHRIST such a precious name for the Christian to hear?

This is what we hope to answer this Sunday as we return to finish out our series, Theology on Tap. The answer lies in the OFFICES of Christ...The TRUE prophet, the TRUE priest, and the TRUE King.

Join us Sunday as we further unpack the Heidelberg Catechism's response:

Because he is ordained of God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Ghost, to be our chief Prophet and Teacher, who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption; and to be our only High Priest, who by the one sacrifice of his body has redeemed us, and makes continual intercession with the Father for us; and also to be our eternal King, who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us."

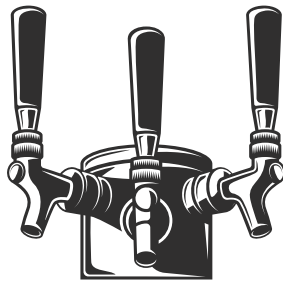
In Him,  
Ps TJ Johnson



*He Has Spoken by His Son*

## Discussion Questions

- 1. What was the ministry of an Old Testament Prophet and in what ways did they foreshadow or point to the prophetic role of Jesus?**
- 2. How does Jesus' prophetic ministry continue today through the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures?**
- 3. How can we, as believers, participate in the prophetic work of Christ in our daily lives and interactions?**
- 4. What was the ministry of an Old Testament Priest and in what ways did they foreshadow or point to the priestly role of Jesus?**
- 5. How does the truth that Jesus is our High Priest bring assurance and comfort to believers?**
- 6. How can we, as believers, participate in the priestly work of Christ in our daily lives and interactions?**
- 7. What was the ministry of an Old Testament King and in what ways did they foreshadow or point to the Kingly role of Jesus?**
- 8. What demands does Jesus' Kingship require of us?**

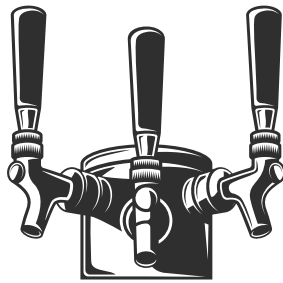


*He Has Spoken by His Son*

## Discussion Questions

**9. What comforts does Jesus' Kingship bring us?**

**10. How can we, as believers, participate in the Kingly work of Christ in our daily lives and interactions?**



*He Has Spoken by His Son*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports