

Most likely, you are at least familiar with Disney's *The Lion King* (I am thinking of the original one). Think of the scene when Simba has been living a worry-free life with his new pals, Timon and Pumba, and encounters the wise Rafiki. After thumping Simba on the head a few times, Rafiki reminds Simba that he is the royal son of Mufasa and even that Mufasa lives within him. Simba looks at his reflection and sees his father, and then is confronted by Mufasa in the clouds, urging him with that thundering voice, "Remember." When Simba returns to Pride Rock to restore the land, many of the lions at first think that Simba is Mufasa when they see him, emphasizing Simba's right to the throne as the son of the murdered king. (By the way, if you like musicals, checkout Broadway's production of this story—it has some of my favorite songs.)

This classic children's movie illustrates an important truth about the parent-child relationship. No matter how far he runs away, Simba always carries the characteristics of Mufasa. Likewise, every child bears the personality traits and physical appearances of his or her parents. Like Simba, when you look at your reflection, you should be able to tell the ways in which you look like your parents, though you might favor one over the other. In a sense, you always carry your family with you; you will always have them with you in the characteristics that you share: your tone of voice, personality, natural skills, facial structure and so forth.

I want you to keep these things in mind when the Bible speaks of Jesus being the Son of God. You are probably quite familiar with Jesus being called the Son of God, which is found throughout the New Testament. Take a look at one of those passages now, Mark 9:2-8. Mark tells us about the instance when Jesus took his closest disciples to mountaintop. There, his appearance was transformed so that he shined with intense brilliance and glory—something beyond natural humanity. When this occurred, Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with Jesus, which signifies Jesus' authority and consistency with the Old Testament. Then, God speaks from a cloud and he declares that Jesus is his beloved Son. There you have it; God himself calls Jesus his own dear Son, which he did at his baptism as well.

So, what does God mean when he calls Jesus his only Son? It is quite similar to what is meant when a father calls his own child his son. It means that Jesus bears the very characteristics of God like you bear the characteristics of your parents. Since Jesus is the Son of God, he has a nature that is divine. (We took a look at that last week.) Jesus' divinity is affirmed in being called the Son of God. When I am called the son of Clint and Cheryl, then it is clearly understood that I

am made up of the stuff they are: humanity. When Jesus is called the Son of God, it should be clearly understood that Jesus is also divine.

Remember from last week's lesson in Hebrews 1 that Jesus is affirmed as the one and only God. Yet, in the very same passage he is also called the Son of God. So, he is both God and the Son of God. How?

This dilemma is an encounter with the Trinitarian nature of God. In both Old and New Testaments, it is clearly declared that there is only one God and that God is one. Yet, there are also hints in the Old Testament and clear revelations in the New Testament that God is also three. God is one and yet, God is three. That is why we use the word "Trinity" to describe God's nature (*tri*- three; and *unity*- one). The doctrine of the Trinity is mysterious, but it is true nonetheless. God is one being, one essence, one substance. Yet, God's being has three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Last week we looked at the differences between *nature* and *person*). Each person of the Trinity is fully God. The Father is God. The Son is God. And the Spirit is God. They are not a third of God that put together like a pie become a whole complete God. They are each their own distinct person, but they are not three separate beings. They are harmoniously bound together as one triune God. Jesus is the Son, who is fully God himself and has eternally existed. As God, he is the second person of the Trinity.

When God promised the coming of his Son in the Old Testament, he promised that his Son would be a ruler over his people. This ruler would reveal who God was by being just like him. This ruler was God's representative or image, in a sense. We see this particularly in Psalm 2, which I encourage you to read. Therefore, Jesus reveals God's character and speaks on his behalf as his Son. It is similar as seeing someone's child and recognizing their parents based off their looks. When you have seen Jesus, you have seen the God himself.

After announcing that Jesus is his Son, God demands that we must listen to him. As the Son, Jesus is the promised ruler who reveals the character of God. We must listen to what Jesus says because of who he is. This is not like ignoring your teacher (which you shouldn't do anyway). The stakes are high and long-lasting if you ignore and disobey the Son's commands and teachings. The consequence for rejecting Jesus is eternal death and curse, like being smashed to smithereens. However, the consequence for submitting to him, trusting in him to save you from your sins, and committing your life to love and follow him is eternal life and blessing. So repent and believe. Rejoice with trembling before the Son of God.