

The Only Child is a huge concern in our society. There are books, studies, and web-sites devoted to the Only Child. Here are some books: *“Do You Have an Only Child?”* *“Are You an Only Child?”* *“Do You Know an Only Child?”*

There are stereotypes about the only child: 1. They are brats 2. They are lonely 3. They are unsociable.

All the major studies, however, have proven these stereotypes to be myths. There are just as many siblings who are spoiled brats, social misfits, and loners as only children.

Some famous only children are Franklin Roosevelt, Cary Grant, Condoleezza Rice, Lance Armstrong, and Elvis Presley.

John makes much of the most important only child: Jesus is God’s “only” child in John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18 and 1<sup>st</sup> John 4:9.

**1. God’s only child proves God’s Love in 1<sup>st</sup> John 4:9:** “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”

**2. God’s only child provides the only way of salvation in 3:16.**

**3. God’s only child reveals His Father in 1:14, 18.** Like Father like Son is certainly true with this only child. This passage begins and ends with a reference to Christ, God’s only child. I would like to focus on this passage and answer this question:

### **How Does God’s Only Child Reveal His Father?**

#### **1. As the God/Man (John 1:14)**

A. Jesus is God (1:1). This is the reason John wrote his Gospel (20:31).

B. Jesus is Man (1:14). Jesus became Man to die on the cross for our sins. That is why as Hebrews 2 tells us that Jesus did not become an angel. Angels do not have physical bodies. Jesus was born in Bethlehem so He could die on Calvary.

Jesus reveals He is the Only Child of the Father as the God/man so He could die on the Cross for our sins.

Jesus also reveals He is the Father's Only Child as the eternal Son of God.

#### **2. As the Eternal Son of God (John 1:15)**

A. John the Baptist was always pointing his cultic followers away from himself to Jesus.

The apostle John says in 1:6-8, John the Baptist “was not that Light.” Now John gives the reason in 1:15 “He was before me.” Even though the Baptist was six months older than Jesus, Jesus existed before John. In John 8:58, Jesus said, “Before Abraham was, I am.” Jesus not only existed six months before John the Baptist but He existed before Abraham who live two thousand years before Christ. Jesus not only existed before Abraham, who live two thousand years earlier, but Paul said Christ existed before creation when he said that “by Him were all things created.” Micah the prophet declared that Jesus who would be born in Bethlehem “has been from everlasting.”

B. In order to give the believing sinner eternal life, Jesus must be eternal.

He can not give what He is nor nor what does not possess. In John 10:28, Jesus said, “I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish.” Again, this is the reason John wrote his Gospel (John 20:31).

Not only does Jesus reveal He is the Only Child of the Father as the God/man but as the Eternal Son of God so He can give us eternal life. Christ also reveals He is God's Only Child as the source of all blessings.

### **3. As the Source of All Blessings (John 1:16)**

Out of the fullness of Christ's deity, He blesses all people. So there are plenty of blessings to go around. John in 1:14, referred to that fullness: the incarnate Word is “full of grace and truth.” Paul taught the same truth in Colossians 2:9: “For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

A. Jesus is the Source of All Blessings for the Unsaved.

John said, "all of us have received." Theologians call this "Common Grace" because some of His blessings are common to all people. In a sermon where Jesus is teaching us to love our enemies and do good to them that hate us, He said God is our example because He “makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:44-45).

James Montgomery Boice in a sermon said, “While the sinner is running from God, God pays the bills.” While the sinner is rejecting God and running from Him who is pursuing him/her for salvation, God is supplying him with breathe, health to work, aptitudes and skills, etc.

B. Jesus is the Source of one unending succession of gracious gifts for believers or as John wrote: "and grace for grace."

It is like an ocean of grace where one wave of grace crashes on another wave of grace on the beach of our lives. James put it this way, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is coming down from above.” Stop a minute, child of God, and "count your many blessings and name them one by one and it will surprise what the Lord has done."

C. The reason Jesus is the source is found in 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

There was grace in the Old Testament when God gave the Law to Moses. When Moses said to God, "Show me your glory" God said, "The Lord God is merciful and gracious." God always has to be gracious or we could not exist. "The soul that sins shall die" says God's Word in the Old Testament. But God is gracious not to kill us for our first known sin nor the many that follow.

So, yes there was grace in the Old Testament with Moses, But grace is super abounding with Christ.

Paul said, "Where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound." Moses gave the Law that condemns. Jesus brought grace that justifies. Moses' Law said, "Obey me and I will bless you." Grace says, "Because I have already blessed you obey me."

In John 8, the Pharisees demanded the woman caught in adultery be stoned as the Law commanded. Jesus' response was, "He that is without sin among you, cast the first stone." But to the guilty woman Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you (because grace forgives) go and sin no more." Obey me because I have blessed you.

Jesus reveals He is God's Only Child as the God/man, the Eternal Son of God, the Source of all Blessings and also as God's Revelation.

#### **4. As God's Revelation (John 1:18)**

A. No man can see God in His pure essence and live.

This is what God said to Moses when Moses asked, "Show me your glory." In Exodus 33:20, God responded, "You can not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." Moses saw the brilliant, shining evidence of God's presence or the manifestation of God's presence. Others saw God in visions and some in dreams.

B. But in Christ's incarnation, we not only see God but we understand who God is.

Jesus has "declared" or explained God because of His intimate relationship with Him. Jesus "is in the bosom of the Father." John will use this expression in 13:23 to describe his closeness to Jesus at the last supper. The close fellowship John enjoyed for a moment, Jesus has experienced for eternity. Because Jesus has been "with God" for eternity as His Son, His only Son, He can teach us who God is.

Sometimes a child will ask, "What does God look like?" The answer is "Jesus." Jesus told His disciples, "He that has seen me has seen the Father."

If you want to see God's unconditional love, look at Jesus on the cross praying for his enemies, "Father, forgive them." Forgive the ones who rejected me as their King and nailed me to this cross on which I am now hanging and dying for their sins.

If you want to see God's power, look in the empty tomb of Christ from which Jesus arose. Christ was not just buried in the tomb of Joseph, Jesus charged into the grave and attacked and conquered the grave and the sin of man that put Him there.

God doesn't want us simply to see His unconditional love in Jesus, He wants us to experience that forgiving love that Jesus has explained to us in His own life. He wants us to be always praying "Father forgive them."

God doesn't want us only to see His great resurrection power in Jesus, He wants us experience that power in conquering sin in our lives as Jesus explained it to us in His own life.

When an only child has a brother or sister that only child becomes a firstborn. Paul said Christ is the Firstborn from the dead in Colossians 1:18. Because of Jesus death, burial, and resurrection, we who have believed have become "sons of God" (John 1:12) and Jesus has become the Firstborn from the dead. Because He lives we also will live.