

GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES SERIES

Lessons on the Promises of the Lord

2Pe 1:3-4 ESV His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, (4) by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

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Lesson 2: WHEN THE TIME HAD FULLY COME

Gal 4:4-5 ESV But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, (5) to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.



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The Old Testament ends with promises and prophecies only partly realized.

- Promises to Abraham: His numerous descendants would be a blessing to all the nations.
- Promises to David: His descendants would rule forever.
- Prophecies of Isaiah: Promises about God's Servant Messiah & Redemption

Seven hundred years from the prophecies of Isaiah to the birth of Jesus

- During that period:
- Assyria destroys Israel.
- Judea is taken into Babylonian captivity.
- Persians release a remnant population to return.
- Jerusalem and the Temple are rebuilt.
- Idolatry is never practiced again, and Temple worship with sacrifices is restored.
- Alexander the Great conquers Judea.
- This is followed by subjection to Egypt and then Syria.
- Maccabean Revolt in 164 BC.
- Judea is ruled by the Roman Empire from 63 BC-325 AD.
- Herod the Great reigns as King of the Jews: 37 BC — 4 BC
- Jesus born: 6 - 4 BC

The Mathew's record of the life of Jesus begins with the genealogy of Jesus: Matthew 1:1-18

Mat 1:1 ESV “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

Matthew divides the genealogy of Jesus into three major divisions:

1. Abraham--who received the promises of land, nation, and blessings to everyone.
2. David--who was told that his descendants would reign forever.
3. The deportation to Babylon about which Isaiah prophesied that Israel would return to be God's servant.

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God Identified the infant Jesus as the promised Messiah in many ways:

1. The Angel Gabriel's pronouncement to Mary. Luke 1:30-33 ESV And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. (31) And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. (32) He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, (33) and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

2. The angel sent in the vision given to Joseph:

Mat 1:19-23 ESV . . . an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. (21) She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (22) All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: (23) "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

3. The angel's pronouncement to the shepherds.

Luke 2:8-14 ESV And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9) And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. (10) And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. (11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (12) And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." (13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, (14) "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

4. The Holy Spirit telling Simeon and Anna of his arrival.

Luke 2:25-38 ESV Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. (26) And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. (27) And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, (28) he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, (29) "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; (30) for my eyes have seen your salvation (31) that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, (32) a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel." (33) And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. (34) And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (35) (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

(36) And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, (37) and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. (38) And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

5. The Place of his birth and the Star that guided “Wise men from the East.”

Mat 2:1-12 ESV 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.

6. The Flight to Egypt

Mat 2:13-15 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” (14) And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt (15) and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

7. Herod Kills the Children

Mat 2:16-18 ESV Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. (17) Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: (18) “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

8. The Return to Nazareth:

Mat 2:19-23 ESV But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, (20) saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." (21) And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. (22) But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. (23) And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Everything is in place:

- The time has come. The story of the Old Testament is reaching its climax in Jesus.
- The genealogy of Jesus shows that he inherits the promises given to both Abraham and David.
- The signs given by Isaiah find their great fulfillment in Jesus Christ who is Immanuel (God with us).
- The hope of Israel was at hand--Israel which was to be a blessing to the nations.
- The virginity of Mary was not the source of Jesus' divinity. He was truly God because He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. He was truly human because his mother was Mary.
- Jesus Left Heaven to come to us. He was not created by His birth.

Jesus – Eternally Pre-existent

Php 2:5-11 ESV Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, (10) so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, (11) and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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Before There Was Anything, There Was Everything

Jesus – One with God
Jesus – Before Creation

The Diety of Jesus
&
The Pre-existence &
Eternality of Jesus



Before There Was Anything, There Was Everything

The Bible teaches that Jesus is “one” with God in a unique way. The oneness of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit is the most basic of orthodox teachings.

The unity of God and Christ has been attacked from the earliest days of Christianity until now.

God in the flesh, the incarnation, means that Jesus was not created but has always been. The pre-existence of Jesus is clearly taught in the Bible. The unity of the Godhead is not metaphorical it is literal.



Before There Was Anything, There Was Everything

The Pre-existence of Jesus

Theology of the Pre-existence of Jesus Christ In The Old Testament

- Genesis 1:26 ESV Then God (*Elohim*) 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.”
- Genesis 3:22a ESV Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. . .”
- The name *Elohim* is unique to Hebraic thinking. It does not occur in other ancient Semitic Language. The masculine plural ending, *im*, does not mean “gods”, since the name is mainly used with singular verb forms and with adjectives and pronouns in the singular. However, the form indeed allows for the plurality within the Godhead, especially in these verses that use plural pronouns and verbs.

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Before There Was Anything, There Was Everything

The Pre-existence of Jesus

1. Some people have used these verses to hypothesize that there is more than one God. However, we can rule out polytheism (belief in multiple gods), because that would contradict countless other Scriptures that tell us that God is one and that there is only one God. Three times in Isaiah 45 alone, God states, “I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me” (vv. 5, 6, 18).
2. A second possible explanation for God’s referring to Himself in the plural is that God was including the angels in His statement. In saying “us” and “our,” God was speaking of all the heavenly host, Himself included. However, the Bible nowhere states that angels have the same “image” or “likeness” as God (see Genesis 1:26). That description is given to humanity alone.
3. Since the Bible, and the New Testament especially, presents God as a Trinity (three Persons but only one God), Genesis 1:26 and 3:22 can only represent a conversation within the Trinity. God the Father is having a “conversation” with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament hints at the plurality of God, and the New Testament clarifies this plurality with the doctrine of the Trinity. Obviously, there is no way we can fully understand how this works, but God has given us enough information to know that He does exist in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

How Can Three Things Be “One”?

The Triune God Is Not Limited To Our Four Dimensions. The 4 dimensions are the 3 spatial and the fourth one is time. God is not constrained by time or space like we are.

In A Spatial World With Only One-Dimension

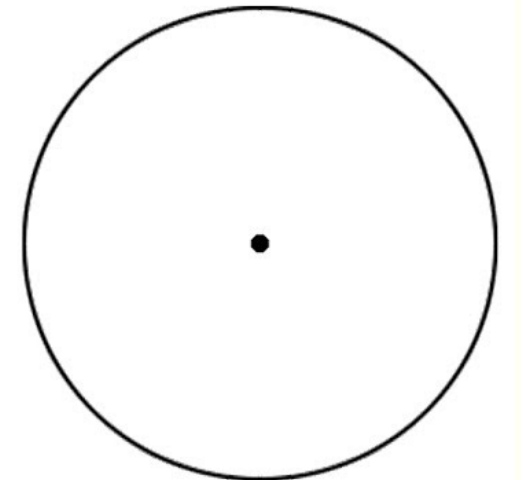
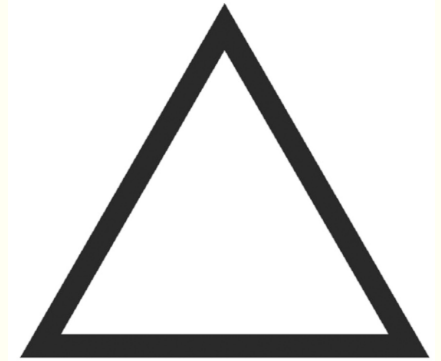
There would be “points” in space, but they would not have height, depth, and width.

Theoretically they would exist in time. Even the “dot” below is an inaccurate depiction of a point in space. Put your finger in the air and there is a point in space at its tip.

Point --> ●

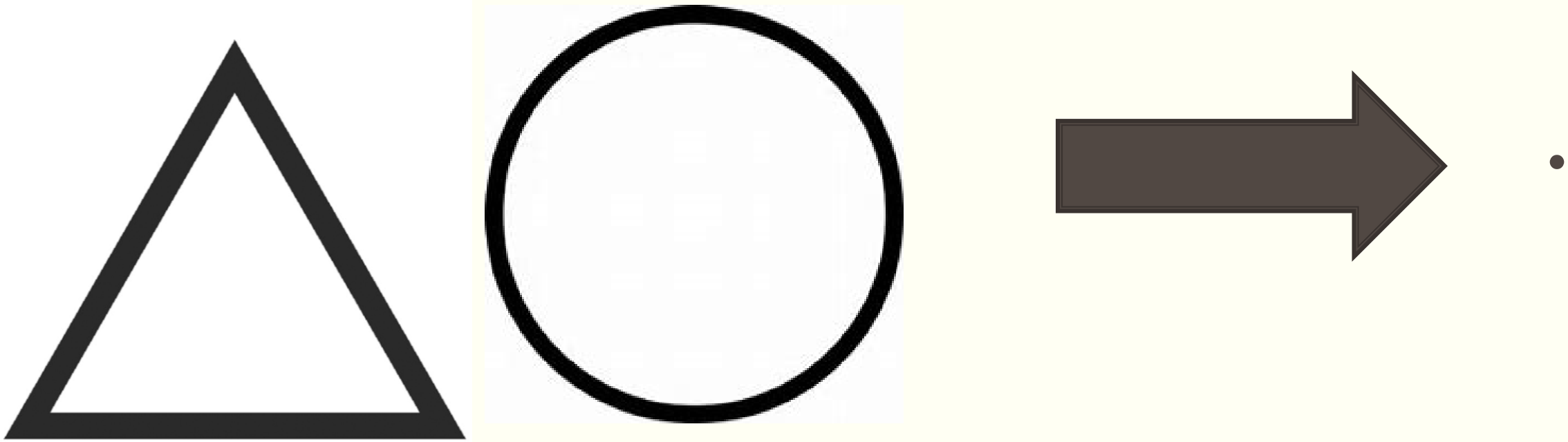
In A Two-Dimensional World

There would be any combination of two of the three dimensions called width, depth, or height. Or in the case of a circle, circumference, radius, and diameter. All of these have the single dimension “point”. For the circle it is the “center”, for the triangle it is where the sides intersect.



How Can Three Things Be “One”?

The Triune God Is Not Limited To Our Four Dimensions



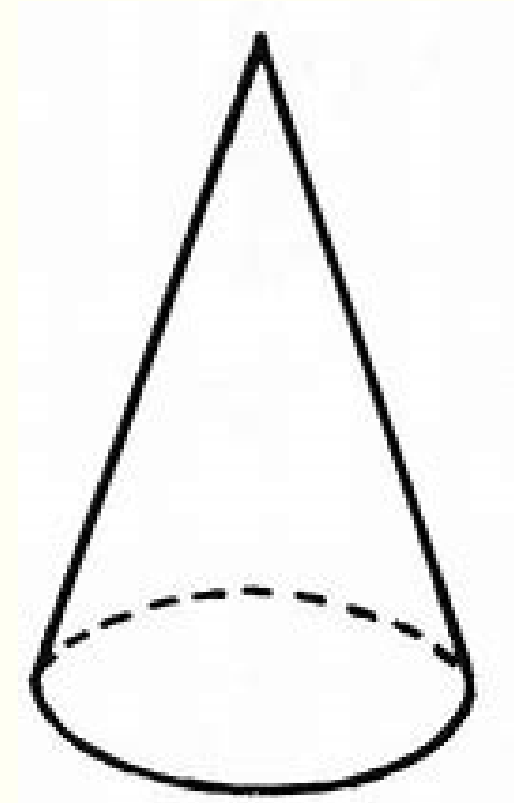
What do the triangle, circle, and point have in common?
Can you say they are “one”? Can all three be “one”?

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Before There Was Anything, There Was Everything The Pre-existence of Jesus

The Triune God Is Not Limited To Our Four Dimensions

Can the three be “one”?
YES! By adding the third dimension a circle, triangle, and point become a singular whole made up of three.



JESUS ONE WITH GOD IN PROPHECY

- Matthew 1:22-23 NASB Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: (23) "behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which translated means, "GOD WITH US." (From Isaiah 7:14)
- "IMMANUEL – How do we interpret GOD IS WITH US?"
 - God is helping us?
 - God is on our side?
 - God is present but not in physical form.
 - God has arrived. He is one of us and among us.

Only Jesus

Col 1:15-20 ESV He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (17) And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (18) And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (19) For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, (20) and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

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At the end of today's lesson, consider:

- What were the circumstances at the time of Jesus' birth? What political powers were in control? What was his family life like?
- God is a God of surprises. The disciples once asked, "What kind of man is this?" The better question is "What kind of God is this?"
- How does Jesus' influence on history compare with that of other famous people?
- We must conclude that there never has been or ever will be another like Jesus. He is fully God and fully man. Col 1:15-20