Title: A Biblically Consistent Theology of Jesus, God, and Restoration

Purpose: This teaching document offers a scripturally grounded theological framework that presents Jesus not as identical with the Creator of the Universe, but as the first perfected Son of God—a model for humanity. It also examines the historical development of Trinitarian doctrine and critiques the decisions of the Council of Nicaea in light of alternative theological perspectives present at the time.

I. Foundational Assumptions Based on Scripture

1. God is One and the Creator of All

* "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." (Deuteronomy 6:4)
* "I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God." (Isaiah 45:5)

God is described consistently in the Old Testament as a singular, sovereign Creator who desires relationship with His children. He is both just and loving, referred to as a jealous God who will not share His glory with idols or lesser beings (Exodus 20:3-5).

1. God’s Essence is Love, and His Purpose is Restoration

* "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness." (Jeremiah 31:3)
* "How can I give you up, Ephraim?" (Hosea 11:8)
* "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48)

God is a Heavenly Parent whose goal is not judgment but restoration—to bring humanity back into perfect relationship with Him.

1. Jesus as the First Perfected Son of God

* "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:52)
* "I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me." (John 8:28)
* "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46)
* "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

These verses reveal Jesus as a human being who grew, learned, obeyed, and prayed. He speaks to God as another being—not as his own divine self.

1. Humanity’s Capacity for Perfection

* "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48)
* "To those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12)
* "Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ." (Romans 8:17)

Jesus is the model for what all humans are called to become. The purpose of faith is not just to worship Jesus, but to follow him in restoring our relationship with God.

II. Scriptural Challenges to Jesus Being Identical to the Creator

1. Jesus Distinguishes Himself from God

* "The Father is greater than I." (John 14:28)
* "Not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42)
* "Why do you call me good? No one is good—except God alone." (Mark 10:18)

1. Jesus Prays to God, Speaks of God as Separate

* "Father, forgive them." (Luke 23:34)
* "My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me." (John 7:16)

1. Paul’s Distinction Between God and Jesus

* "There is one God, the Father... and one Lord, Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 8:6)
* "The head of Christ is God." (1 Corinthians 11:3)

These verses suggest a relationship of oneness in purpose and love, but not in ontological identity.

III. Historical Context: Competing Theologies Before Nicaea

1. Adoptionism: Jesus was born human and was adopted by God at his baptism due to his righteousness.
2. Arianism: Jesus was the first and greatest creation of God, divine but not equal to the Father.
3. Ebionitism: Jesus was a human prophet and messiah but not divine.

These views were widespread in early Christianity and had legitimate scriptural support. There was no uniform doctrine of the Trinity until centuries after Jesus' death.

IV. The Council of Nicaea and Its Legacy

* Convened in 325 CE by Emperor Constantine, primarily for political unity.
* The Nicene Creed declared Jesus "of one substance (homoousios) with the Father."
* The term "homoousios" was not biblical, and its use was a point of major controversy.

Key Figures:

* Athanasius: Strong advocate for the Trinity; argued that salvation required Jesus to be fully God.
* Arius: Opposed this view; held that Jesus was created by God and not co-eternal.

The Council's decision was driven by imperial pressure for religious unity, not unanimous theological consensus. It suppressed legitimate interpretations by declaring them heresies.

V. A Theology of Restoration

This proposed theology restores the relational focus of the Bible:

* God is a Heavenly Parent, not an abstract essence.
* Jesus is a fully human Son, perfected in love and obedience.
* The Holy Spirit is the active presence of God guiding and empowering.
* The Trinity is best understood as oneness of heart and love, not metaphysical identity.

All people are called to become like Jesus, growing into full relationship with God.

VI. Conclusion

This interpretation returns to the core message of the Bible: that God's purpose is not to mystify Himself with metaphysical puzzles, but to restore relationship with His children. Jesus' mission was to model that perfection, not to embody divinity in a way that separates him from humanity.

In this light, Christians can reclaim a faith rooted in love, growth, relationship, and achievable spiritual maturity—not just veneration of unattainable divine mystery.