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Today I plan to preach what is largely a Spurgeon sermon in modern language. Please open your Bible to Colossians 3, beginning in verse one.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."

Today we are going to delve into the very sum of the gospel. That is God's communicating himself in his mercy to mankind through a mediator, his Son Jesus Christ. This is what Paul calls the great "mystery of godliness": I Tim. 3:16, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. It is the chief part of the mind and counsel of God that he wills to be known to men. It is a great message that the ministers of the gospel have to bring and it is the most absolutely necessary point in all of Christianity.

The apostle Paul was a chosen vessel, as you know, to bring the name of Christ, carry it up and down in the world. His spirit was full of Christ. He desired to know nothing but Christ and him crucified, to preach nothing but Christ to be found in no other but Christ. The very name of Christ was delightful to him. He seeks to magnify Christ in all of his epistles. And in these words I just

read to you he magnifies Christ. He not only makes him great, but he makes him all. Christ is all and in all. “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.”<sup>3</sup> That is, there is no privilege in one’s circumstances to commend him to God and there is no lack of anything in anyone to hinder himself from God. Let men be whatever they are in their outward respects, that means nothing to God. They can be dirt poor. They may be uneducated, disease ridden. It doesn’t matter. That can never hinder them from the enjoyment of God because God doesn’t look at these things, but Christ is all in all to them.

As far as God sees Christ in anyone, he accepts them. If Christ is not there, no matter what they have he does not accept them. As Calvin wrote, “There is no way of obtaining favor from God but through the intercession of Christ.”

Christ is all in all even in the esteem of the Father himself. He was the delight of the Father from all eternity; in Proverbs 8:30 Christ says: “Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.”

God the Father is infinitely satisfied with Christ. He is all in all to him. Surely if Christ is an object sufficient for the satisfaction of the Father, much more then is he an object sufficient for the satisfaction of any soul.

Christ is the only means of conveyance of the good that God the Father intends to communicate to his people in order to eternal life. He is all in all.

Again, God’s communicating himself in his mercy to mankind through a mediator is the very sum of the gospel, the great mystery of godliness. God communicates through a mediator, through his Son. That is absolutely necessary for us to know if we would have eternal life. It is possible to be ignorant of many other truths and still be saved, but there must be something of this or there can be no salvation. The mistake is the eternal undoing of untold millions of people. Many believe that they need God’s mercy. We probably talk to many people who say, “Yes, I need God in my life. I

can't be saved without the mercy of God." And even the light of nature convinces us that we need God. But they are ignorant of the truth that God communicates his mercy through a mediator. And they perish eternally while crying to God for mercy because they try to come to God without a mediator, his only mediator, his Son Jesus Christ. So, as I said, this is the sum of the gospel in the most supernatural truth revealed in the book of God. It is a truth that was hidden from nearly all the world for many ages. 1 Corinthians 2:7: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." Romans 16:25: "... the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began."

Turn in your Bibles to the book of Ephesians, Chapter one verse nine. We are talking about the mystery. In Ephesians, by the way, the word "mystery" is used over and over again. Paul talks a lot about the mystery of godliness here. Ephesians one beginning with verse nine. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." Now note that the purpose is the mystery of his will. The purpose is that: "...he might gather together in one all things in Christ." That is the purpose. That is going to be the consummation of the world, that all things will be gathered together in him. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven..." Don't spiritualize this because it says: "...both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." This isn't the sweet by and by -- He bring everything to Christ on earth as well. Every knee shall bow.

Look now at Ephesians chapter three beginning in verse nine. "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." Keep your Bible open there for now.

A couple of other references to the mystery. In Colossians 1:26: "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." And 1 Timothy

3:16: “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

There is no truth revealed in all the Scriptures whereby we can honor God as much as this. This is the great honor that God would have in the world to be honored in his Son. And then the great design he has of bringing forth glorious things by his Son, gathering together in one all things in his Son, that is his great design.

God doesn't accept praise even from a sincere heart that is not directed through his Son. He doesn't accept worship merely as the Creator from those who do not worship him through his Son. Worshipping him as God apart from Christ is abominable to him. We never know what it is to honor God correctly so as to be accepted by him until we come to honor him in his Son. The mistake people make is that they don't understand this vital message of the Bible. There is no coming to the Father but by Christ. He is the way.

Look at 1 Corinthians chapter three starting with verse 21. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." How is that again? Take note of that. "... all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." God the Father, as we know, is the principle of all good, the source, the fount of all good. All comes from him first, but it doesn't come from him immediately. He doesn't say, "All are yours if you just believe in God." No, he says: "... all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." So you see how Christ comes between you and God. There is such a distance between us and God that if Christ were not in the middle breaching this distance, we would never come to God. But Christ has come between and joined us together so that all is yours because you are Christ's and Christ is God's.

Think of God as the fountain of all good and Christ, as it were, the reservoir and from him are

pipes branching out to the church, the body of Christ. That is in fact the picture in Zech. 4. The grace of God flows into the reservoir and then through these pipes. But it comes from God through Christ. The Father fills the Son with all good and so it comes from the Father through the Son by faith into the church and into the soul of every believer.

In Eph. 2 verse 12 Paul has told the Ephesian believers that they had been without hope and without God in the world. But he says in verse 13: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." So it is by the blood of Christ that you have anything to do with God. But especially in Ephesians 3:12: "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." In whom? In Christ we come to have boldness and access, that is, access to God. Spurgeon said of this verse, "We are led by the hand of Christ to the Father. There is no coming to the Father except by Christ and Christ takes a believer by the hand and leads him to the Father and so he comes to have boldness. We have boldness because we have access to God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ, for he now and forever shall be at the right hand of God the Father in glory making intercession for his people. That is, he is continually presenting before the Father the work that his mediation, his merits, which... what he has done and suffered and, as it were, pleading with the Father for the conveyance of all mercy and good unto the souls and bodies of his people whom he has redeemed. It is as if he should every moment say to the Father, "Father, behold, here is my blood. Here are my merits. Here is my death, all my sufferings, the work of my humiliation. It is for my people, my body. And, yes, for this particular soul and for this particular soul.

Christ doesn't think only of the lump of believers in general, but he also loves you as a believer and is continually presenting his mercies before the Father to plead with him to supply all of grace and mercy to you. Thus, he becomes an infinite way of conveying all good to the souls of his people to be, as our verse says, all and in all to them, both here and eternally.

Our confidence must always be in Christ and his perfect righteousness. God only accepts the good you do if you are doing it in the name and power of his Son. He scorns the so-called good works of those who reject his Son. They are filthy rags in his sight. Isaiah 64:6: "But we are all as an

unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” But Romans 3:24: “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” And why shouldn’t he reject them? They rejected his only Son, refused to believe him when he has told them who he is; called him a liar, a fraud.

Of course God scorns their little acts of kindnesses and such which, in fact, are at bottom selfish acts. When an unbeliever does what appears to be a good work, they essentially do it to make them feel good about themselves, to look good to other people and salve their consciences, not to serve the Lord. That is not their motivation. Of course God calls these little charades stinking, filthy rags. Even if they are convinced their motive is to help their neighbor, if their works are not sanctified by Christ they remain soaked with sin and an abomination to God.

Unbelievers may say they do what they can for others, they have good intentions. In fact, if all the righteousness of all the righteous men, whoever lived, were put into one man that would still be not sufficient for his justification. Sin would still pollute it. And God will not tolerate one spot of sin in his presence. You cannot work your way to heaven even if you tried to do good works 24/7. And don’t make the mistake thinking, well, it is the good works that God enables us to do that qualifies us for heaven, the basis of our justification. There is nothing you can do of yourself or be enabled to do that is accepted by God to earn eternal life. It is Christ’s righteousness that gives us the gift of eternal life. He earned it and gives it to those who believe in Him. Though God may give you honor in the world, give you riches, health, a long life, if you don’t have Christ you don’t have anything. You will die in your sins, without hope. So don’t be satisfied with anything that does not start with glorifying the Lord through Jesus Christ. Pray, “Lord, what is all of this to me if I go Christless and do not have him that is the conveyance of grace to my soul, him that is all in all? Lord, you have taught me this day, that such is the distance and breach between you and me that unless it is made up through a mediator, I must eternally perish. Therefore, give me Christ whatever else you deny me.”

If God should lay you upon your sick bed or your death bed and you cry to God for mercy, be sure to go to him through faith in Christ. Look upon God through Christ as he looks to you through

Christ or else all of your cries will be of no avail. You can't go to God and find mercy without going to him through his Son. Trying to do so is a false doctrine that has called millions to perish. Our cry must always be, "None but Christ."

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The martyrs down through the centuries have died by the thousands because they wouldn't accept false doctrines or false teachers. They wouldn't bow to popes and they wouldn't bow to torture. Hear this from Foxe's Book of Martyrs about John Lambert. He was a [Protestant martyr](#) burnt to death on November 22, 1538 at [Smithfield, London](#). He was considered a heretic by the [Roman Catholic Church](#) and [Henry VIII's Church of England](#).

"No man ever suffered more diabolical cruelty at the stake than this evangelical martyr, he was rather roasted than burnt to death; if the fire became stronger, or if the flame reached higher than they chose, it was removed or damped. When his legs were burnt off, and his thighs were reduced to mere stumps in the fire, they pitched his broiling body on pikes, and lacerated his flesh with their halberds. But God was with him in the midst of the flame, and supported his spirit under the anguish of expiring nature. Almost exhausted, he lifted up his hands, such as the fire had left him, and with his last breath, cried out to the people, none but Christ, none but Christ! "

Is Christ all in all to you? Can you be a living John Lambert? Do you think John Lambert's money or possessions meant anything to him as he saw his flesh burning away? What meant everything to him was Jesus Christ. He knew what Scripture means by Christ is all in all. Do you? May the Lord give us all the faith of the martyr Lambert.

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"Lord, what is all of the world to us if we go Christless and do not have him that is the conveyance of grace to our souls, him that is all in all? Lord, thou hast taught us this day, that such is the distance and breach between thou and us that unless it is made up through a mediator, we must eternally perish. Therefore, give us Christ whatever else you deny us."