

Seeing the Father in Christ

Building a Christian Mind

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Well, for those of you that are joining us for the first time or perhaps have not been with us for a while, we're in the middle of probably a year-long study that we've titled "Building a Christian Mind," and the goal of our study is to help people understand the most fundamental principles of biblical thinking so that they would understand how to respond to God, respond to the times in their lives, and to prepare themselves for eternity. We've seen without question from Scripture the existence of God, and we looked at a number of different factors that support that. We live in a universe that God created and that God is present in. We are neither alone in the universe, which is a great comfort to know that there is a God who is directing the course of events to his own glory and for our good, and yet at the same time, we are not living in a way where there is no accountability. There is a God, and he will be a judge at the end of the age. We will all stand before him and give an account for what we have done with his word, how we have responded to Christ, and how we have lived our lives. Every moment of every day is building toward that ultimate accountability before God, and it's that and that alone which gives meaning to our lives. God will judge us. God will assess us. God will evaluate us. For those that are in Christ, God will reward us for the pattern of life faithfulness or unfaithfulness, as the case may be.

It's important for us to know these things, beloved, and to have a mind that operates with a theistic sense from the very beginning leads you in a very different trajectory of life than to ignore that or to disbelieve it and suppress it in your mind. This leads you in entirely different directions as far as the difference between West and East may be found. So while some of these things may seem to be so simple, and I sympathize with those who say, why do you spend so much time in even reviewing it so constantly, it's because it's so fundamental. If you believe that there is a God and you fear him, you will live a much different life and you will have a much different assessment of the world around you than if you're indifferent to that. If there is a holy God who reigns, if there is a holy God to whom you must one day appear and give an account, you will live differently or you will seal an even greater judgment by ignoring the things that are so ready and so evident to be applied to your soul. This is so fundamental to know these things and to think through them.

Then we had the blessed privilege for a number of weeks of looking at the authority of Scripture, knowing that the Bible is true, receiving it on the authority of Jesus Christ himself, that the Bible is true and accurate in faith, doctrine, morals, history, geography, every area to which it speaks and affirms, to know that the Bible is true in all of its fullness, and we receive that on the authority of Jesus Christ and we disregard and we reject those men and those with scholarly credentials who would undermine the Scriptures. We don't accept that. We reject that because we receive the word of God on a higher authority than that. We receive it on the highest authority in the universe, which is the Lord Jesus Christ. He affirmed the Old Testament. He said not a jot or a tittle of it will fall. He prepared the way for the New Testament as he commissioned his apostles to go out and promised them the help of the Holy Spirit to record his words and his word for future generations to rightly interpret the person and work of Christ for the benefit of the church until he returns.

Now who can stand and challenge Christ in that way? Who can stand and reject Christ and undermine his word? It's a great sin to undermine the confidence of little ones in the authority of Scripture and so we spent time there. God exists, the Bible is true, and what we've been looking at and we're about to conclude this week is the Lordship of Christ. We've looked at a number of different Scriptures considering the Lordship of Christ. It's been a blessed privilege to do these things, even though it has taken time and there's been interruptions. Beloved, those of you particularly that are at Truth Community Church on an ongoing basis, it's my prayer for you that these things would sink in very deeply to your hearts, because this is essential to thinking rightly as a Christian, as having a Christian mind, and the longer that we go in ministry, we as elders have talked about this, we realize that there is a reality that ministry takes place in and you know it theoretically, stepping into ministry, then you live in ministry and you go for a few decades and then you see it experientially. But it's so easy, and I speak this earnestly to every one of you here in the room today, it is so very easy to confess these things outwardly without them being real in your heart. It's so very easy to confess Christ in a superficial way and yet to be guided by such worldly thinking, to be sucked into a worldliness, to be sucked into a humanistic approach to living, a materialistic approach to life, a superficial approach to life that is just concerned about making money and making friends and without any real serious thought of God, of Christ, or living and being committed to him, and how to serve him and to serve his people, and over time that plays out and it becomes evident. It's sad and I don't mind telling you that over the years, you know, there's some scars. There's some scars from feeling the sorrow of people that you thought were walking with Christ and then they turn away and in the subsequent outworking of their lives, you realize there was no conversion there at all; someone you welcomed and loved as a brother or sister in Christ, and it wasn't real as shown by their worldly thinking that led to and was proven out by worldly living.

It's heartbreaking for a pastor. It's heartbreaking for elders to watch that take place. It's heartbreaking. Trust me. Trust me, it's heartbreaking to hold people in your arms in the waters of baptism after they've confessed Christ and you lay them in the water and you bring them out, people applaud so encouraged by the testimony, and then maybe a short time, maybe a few years later, to see them walk away, to see them godless, to see them

openly proclaiming their homosexual lifestyles or their hatred for the things of God. There's no measuring the earthly sorrow of that. You know, I keep records, keep a lot of ministry records that will be quickly deleted when I'm gone, but they matter to me, and I have a record of everyone that I've ever baptized. Do you know what the truth of the matter is, and this goes back to California, not just here at Truth Community Church, the truth of the matter is, is I've watched those people over the years and some in decades to follow, easily, 50% of them today show no evidence of being Christians. All you can do as a pastor, as elders, as church leadership is take people at face value and to baptize them on the testimony that they give and you receive that in good faith because we can't look into the heart to see whether it's real or not. We look for a confession of the gospel, some evidence of repentance and faith, something in the life that shows that it's real, but Scripture warns us and I say this not to recall and to rehearse disappointments in ministry, but for the benefit of your souls, beloved, and to warn you and to caution you to examine yourself to see whether you be in the faith because Scripture tells us in the parable of the sower that there will be seed that falls on different kinds of ground and sometimes it falls on shallow ground and it sprouts up and it looks so promising but the cares of the world come and choke it out and it shrivels up and it shows that it was never, nothing ever took root. Other times people receive it with joy, but Satan comes and snatches it out before it has any fruit.

And so the reality of spiritual life for every one of us in the room today and those of you listening on the live stream and listening on the video later on, the reality that every one of us has to face is that there is really such a thing as a false conversion, of outwardly confessing Christ in a superficial way without having really experienced the new birth, the regeneration that comes only from the Holy Spirit. Maybe it's children that grew up in a Christian home and just assumed these things without having ever really felt the weight of their sin. Maybe it's those superficially attracted to something of the power and authority of biblical preaching and see that and like that, and yet never take it to heart and apply it to themselves. It's so common, particularly in the kind of age that we live in in our American society, so common for people of a politically conservative bent to come and hear things of righteousness that seem to align with their politics and to love preaching for that reason and to think that they're Christians because they have political views that align with ethical teaching of Scripture, having missed the most fundamental point, which is the Lordship of Christ and being personally submitted to him, repentant before him, and embracing him by faith and having a new life and a new love coming out of their heart because of the work of the Holy Spirit within them.

Well, beloved, I'm giving you yet another defense of this long series that we're doing, building a Christian mind; it's only when fundamental principles are deeply embedded, deeply ingrained in your mind and governing the motions and affections of your heart that you can ever begin to assess these things and interpret them and discern them for how they apply to yourself. You know, I said this before, sometimes things come to me as I'm preaching that I say and then I say, I want to say that again, I hadn't planned that, but I like that. I want to say it again. In Matthew 7:21 through 27, Jesus says that, "There will be many who come to me on the day of judgment saying, 'Lord, Lord, did we not?' And I'll say, 'Depart from me, I never knew you.'" Now look, as one who's been given a

stewardship of a ministry of the word of God and stewardship along with other elders of concern for your soul and what happens to you eternally, even if you don't care, we do. I do. I care what happens to you eternally even if you're indifferent and cold to it. But speaking to those who profess the name of Christ and superficially call Jesus Lord, I want to remind you that Jesus said there will be many on that day that he will say, "Depart from me, I never knew you." Now look, what I said in the past is that if Jesus had said there will be some, I wouldn't be so exercised about it. If he said there will be a few, so be a little bit careful about it, I wouldn't trouble you with these impassioned pleas for you to examine your heart and to go earnestly before God and say, "God, where am I in Christ? Is my salvation real or not?" If he had said a few, if he had said some, occasionally this will happen, I wouldn't waste your time. But beloved, he said many. He said many. He looks out on the scope of the future of the church age, he looks out over the course of thousands of years of preaching and he says the conclusion of all of it will be there will be many who will be shocked on the day of judgment to be sent away. It's one thing to live as a pagan and to have no care for the things of God. It's one thing to live in rebellion and to have your face set in stone against Christ. It's one thing to do that and then to go to hell. You don't really have any surprises there. But beloved, to approach the judgment seat of Christ, to think that glory awaits you just on the other side, and to see his hand set before you, "Stop. You shall go no further. Turn around and depart from me. I never knew you." That's unthinkable. And he says it's going to be many. I don't know how many people are in the room here, 250-260, what does many look like in those numbers? Which of your precious faces do I look on from a pulpit and yet I will not see in heaven?

It's unthinkable and so what we have to realize is that today is the day of salvation, that today is the day that God has given us to contemplate the eternal destiny of our souls, and the only way that we can find a sure guide in these things is through the revealed word of God in the pages of the Holy Scripture. And there are certain themes that rise up as you study the totality of Scripture, not simply isolated passages and focusing simply on little matters of lexical or grammatical things and missing the whole big picture of it all, there are certain themes that we must have swept up in our thinking that dominate the way that we view life and view our souls. There is a God who is to be feared, who is present everywhere in the universe. This God has revealed himself in his word and has declared a gospel which alone can save you from your sins. At the center of that gospel is the Lord Jesus Christ.

So as we've considered his Lordship in the past couple of studies, we've gone to the gospel of John. We've seen from the gospel of John that the Bible calls Jesus God, that Jesus does the works of God, that Jesus has the name of God, that Jesus shares the essence of God with him, and so we look at these things and we realize as the Scriptures present Christ to us, Scripture is presenting to us the supreme Ruler of the universe. It presents Christ to us and sets him apart and until you've come to grips with the Lordship of Christ, you're wasting your life. You're on a road that leads to destruction. Perhaps you superficially name him as Lord, but you have no real heart desire for his word, no real heart desire to worship him, to live in submission to him, to obey him, to live as you see so often in ministry, but you don't see it at the time, subsequent events reveal it, people

living double lives, showing up on Sunday, getting drunk on Saturday, being with the people of God one day, being in bed fornicating with someone on Wednesday. Do I speak too directly for the comfort of some of you? This is the way it is and those double lives are the kinds of people that are going to be sent away. And if you know that you're harboring sin, you know that you're hiding sin in your life, beloved, you are in the greatest danger of them all. Having heard the gospel and living like that as a practical atheist, as though there were no God, my heart, my mind is overwhelmed with fear and concern for you. And I know there's got to be people like that in the room right now.

But what can a man do to convince people of these things, to warn them in a way that they take to heart? It's beyond human power to do that. I could speak until the cows come home and not make a difference to a hardened heart. It takes the work of the Spirit. It takes the work of God to overcome the bias and the prejudice and the hatred of the things that I'm saying. It takes a work of God to overcome those things and to lead a person to the truth. How does God do that? How do we help men who hate the very things that are being said? How do we help them? We preach the word of God and we ask the Spirit of God to use that for faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ. That's the only hope. We stake everything on this word. We stake everything on the Spirit and his promises to work through the word to accomplish his will. And I say this not to be dramatic, not to be uncaring, but as Paul said, you know, there comes a point where your blood's on your own head. If you don't hear the things of the gospel and respond to them, your blood is on your own head. And to whatever extent, you know, that we're called as church leaders to testify at the end, "Did you preach the word of God to this person?" Yes, I did. And then you're left without excuse. It's as if Christ would say, "So you heard the word and rejected it. You heard about your sin and you loved it more than the truth. You heard about my shed blood and you despised it as something that was not for you, that you did not want." How is the Lord of the universe going to respond to that kind of rebellion against him, I ask you? What will happen to some of you when he sends you away unless you repent today?

Turn in your Bibles to John 14. Turn in your Bibles to John 14. I'm going to read the first nine verses of this chapter and that'll serve as our fifth point in this series on the Lordship of Christ. In John 14, beginning in verse 1, our blessed Lord says this, and actually, let's step back to three verses earlier because it fits with everything that I said just now. John 13:36. "Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, where are you going?' Because Christ had said, 'You'll seek me and not be able to find me.'"

36 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." 37 Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." 38 Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times."

Peter's sin, Peter's failure in that moment was spiritual overconfidence. He thought he was something that he wasn't and Jesus rebukes him and subsequent events exposed him

as not being the spiritual giant that Peter thought he was. This is the common condition of man, to think more highly of himself than he ought, to take spiritual matters for granted without an earnest seeking of Christ, an earnest brokenness before him.

Jesus speaks in verse 1 of chapter 14 now. He says,

1 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going." 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." 8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Now the point here for our extended series and the first point for today, the fifth point in this overall series on the deity of Christ, is that Jesus Christ perfectly reveals God the Father. He perfectly reveals God the Father. The only way he could do that would be if he was God himself.

And so in John 14, in the first three verses, Jesus has told his uncertain disciples that he'll be leaving soon, but he says, "Don't let it trouble you. There's a sovereign plan that I'm working out and I will come again and take you to myself that where I am, there you may be also," in verse 3. And Thomas speaks and says, "Lord, I don't get it. I don't understand a thing you're saying. You talk about us knowing the way where you're going," verse 4, and Thomas says to him in verse 5, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" He is desperately in the shadows of spiritual understanding. He's in the presence of Christ and yet he doesn't understand. Just like so many of you today, you're in the presence of an open Bible and the open teaching of the word of God and yet you are in darkness and you have no idea what would happen to you tonight if you fell over dead. Thomas says, "Lord, you talk about going away and we know the way. I have no idea. I have no clue." And it's in that context that Jesus responds to him and notice how he points him to himself. He doesn't tell Thomas that, "Thomas, all you need to do is to live a little bit better life. Thomas, you just need to be in the synagogue, be in the church on a weekly basis and, you know, things will be okay. Thomas, it's not really so serious. It's all going to work out fine in the end. Everyone's going to be in a bright green place in the end and God will just magically forgive everyone's sin and we'll all be in heaven together." He doesn't say anything like that. Beloved, the justice of God is real. The wrath of God is real and his judgment on sin will be executed. It's a lethal spiritual mistake to just presume upon some kind of general mercy of God without looking to Christ for personal forgiveness of your sins.

So Jesus says to him in verse 6, he says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Notice the assumption is no one comes to the Father. That's the blanket statement and then there's one solitary hopeful exception. It's those that would come not in their own goodness, but come in the name of Christ, who would come through Christ, having received him, having rested in him, having put their faith in him, only those will be saved. Everyone else will be lost.

Philip is still confused as you read on in verse 8, "Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father and it's enough for us.'" Just give us a glimpse of God and we'll be satisfied. Now Thomas and Philip, both, neither one of them had come to know Christ at this point. Thomas says, "We don't know the way." That's not the mark of someone who's been born again, who has the Spirit of God in them, the Spirit hadn't come yet. Philip didn't understand who Christ was. He says, "I just want to see God and I'll be satisfied." And Jesus responds to him in verse 9. There's almost, if it weren't so weighty, it would almost be humorous to realize that Philip says, in essence, "I want to see God." Do you know who he's telling that to? God in human flesh right in front of him. It'd be like you saying to me, "I just wish I could meet Don Green." Now no one wants to do that. I get that and that's okay. I'm all right with that. I'd say, "Well, I'm right here. I'm in your presence." Well, in an exponentially, geometrically greater way, Christ says to Philip, "Don't you understand who I am?" Verse 9, "Have I been with you so long and you still don't know me? If you've seen me, you have seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father? That's the most ridiculous thing I've heard all day. How could you say that to me?"

You see, the point for today, beloved, for our takeaway on this is that to know Jesus Christ is to know the Father. To see Jesus Christ is to see what the Father is like. To read his words is to hear the revelation of the Father. To read his works is to see God manifesting himself. There is no distinction in their essence. In their person, yes. In their essence, in their attributes, no. Perfect identity. That can only be true if Jesus is God, eternal God in human flesh. If he was a created being, as the Jehovah's Witnesses blasphemously teach, he would not be uncreated God. If he was manifested in the Catholic Mass, he would not be the Christ of Scripture. If he was only a prophet, if he was only a really good man, he would not be God himself. So if you were only looking at a human prophet, if you are only looking at some kind of angelic being that had been created, even as the first of the creation of God, if that's what you were looking at, someone who was created, someone who was naturally born, someone who was made and fashioned distinct from the essence of God, beloved, this is a really important, profound theological point: no matter how elevated those views might be compared to other men, if they were true, and they're not, but if they were true, you could not say, "When I look at Christ, I'm seeing God himself." You're looking at an angel, not someone of a different order of magnitude of existence. If you're looking at a human prophet, you're not looking at God. If you're looking at a good moral teacher, and that's all that he is, you're not looking at God. The only way that it could be true for Jesus to say, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father," in that unqualified sense, is if he's God himself.

Beloved, here's the thing: this God who exists, that we've seen, declared, who's made himself known in creation, in the Canon of Scripture, in the conscience of humanity, in the person of Christ, and in the conversion of men throughout the ages, who makes himself known in that way, who sheds abroad the knowledge of God in the hearts of sinners that they might come to Christ, the only way that that God is known in Christ, the only way that you can say looking at Christ is to see that God is if Jesus Christ is fully equal with him. The words of Jesus Christ perfectly express the character of God. The works of Jesus Christ perfectly express the character and power of God. There is this sharing of a divine essence without separation, without diminishment, that means that the fullness of God is present in the person of Christ. Colossians 2:9 says all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form in Christ.

Now Jesus goes on in verse 10 and 11 and says, "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves." He says, "Take my word for it when I tell you that you see God when you see me. Take my word for it," he says, "and if you won't take my word for it, look at all of the works that I've done, turning water into wine, raising the dead to life, stilling the seas, look at the works that I do, the works that only God could do as testified by the Old Testament, look at the works that I do and believe on account of the works, and then you'll come to believe my words as well." Oh, beloved, and as you read the gospels, as you read the gospels, there's so many testimonies to the reality of Christ and who he is. You have the words of Christ, you have the works of Christ. Scripture talks about how God the Father spoke from heaven, looked down on Jesus, for example, at his baptism and at his transfiguration and says, "This is my beloved Son. In him I am well pleased." You know, look, Scripture says that on the testimony of two or three persons a fact is established. We have God the Father having spoken, the works of Christ speaking to us. John the Baptist spoke, the apostles spoke. 500 witnesses saw him resurrected from the dead. There's no lack of evidence. There's no lack of persuasion. If this was a courtroom, the judge, a righteous judge would give summary judgment in favor of those proclaiming the deity of Christ. There's no opposition to it here. The testimony is of the highest order. It's established.

You say, "Well, then why doesn't everybody believe?" Well, think about it this way, to kind of reverse the analogy a little bit. The hearts of those that refuse to believe, that refuse to bow to the lordship of Christ, they're like a judge that's taken a bribe. They've been paid off by sin and their love for sin and so they refuse the things of Christ because they love sin. They love themselves. If Christ is Lord, then they are not. If Christ is the authority, then they are not. Then you're not free to live however you want if there's a final accounting. Easier to push Christ out and deny him and to reject him in the falsehood of your own mind than to simply acknowledge the truth that's established in all these ways. It's so, so sad. It's so, so sad.

Philip had been with Christ for three years and he didn't get it at that point prior to the resurrection. Christ says, "It's all right there for you to see. If you don't see it, if you're

hardened against it, it's not because it's not plain." If you don't hear the Spirit of God speaking through the Scriptures, it's not the Spirit's fault that you have your fingers in your spiritual ears saying, "No, no, no, I'm not going to listen." It's not the Spirit's fault that you hardened your heart against these things. That's your fault. That's your responsibility and God will hold you accountable for it. So much better, so much better to soften your heart and say, "God, work in my heart and help me to come to the truth of these things. Be merciful to me, the sinner." Appeal to the mercy and compassion of God, the mercy and compassion of Christ that he has on the lost. He's a friend of sinners. He's your best friend and you harden your heart against him. This is incomprehensible.

So Jesus has made the person of God known to us. I simply ask you this morning, is the knowledge of God in the person of Christ a living reality to you or not? Are you growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Then praise the Lord. Blessed are you that God the Father has drawn you to his Son. And your heart should be filled with joy over the things that we're saying here today, as mine is, though I was once yet dead in sin like everyone else. But if these things aren't alive to you, if these things aren't the controlling way that you perceive all of life and for which you live, beloved, do not presume that you're a Christian just because you've been hanging around the rest of us for a long, long time. "Many will say to me on that day." Turn to Christ. Enough of the games. Enough of the hardness of heart. Enough of the manufactured objections. Jesus Christ is God. Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners and you're a sinner and you need him desperately on his terms, not on your own, or you'll be forever lost. Why would you take one more step in that direction, I ask you? Why would you take one more hardened step away from Christ when he is so evidently pleading to you through his word here this morning, "Look to me and be saved"?

Father, we come to you and we confess before you how greatly we need the help of your Holy Spirit here today. Father, these are weighty matters, I know. These are things that unsaved people resist and do not want to hear. They stiffen their neck. They arch their back against them. And yet, Father, as you know so well, I was once like that. You showed mercy to me. You ultimately showed mercy to Thomas, to Peter, to Philip, to the other disciples. You brought them in. For thousands of years, you've been drawing people to Christ, and the church ever expanding is evidence of that. The many genuine brothers and sisters in Christ that are here in the room with me, Father, testify to the same thing, the greatness of your kindness, the greatness of your mercy, the greatness of your power to save, the greatness of your power to overcome the most hardened sinner, and your willingness to save the most unrepentant one, if only they will turn to you. Father, by the gentleness of your Holy Spirit, I pray that you would help people see the consequences of the truth that they've heard today, by the power of your Spirit that you would impress upon them, that you are willing to forgive all of their sins and grant them eternal life and complete forgiveness as you invite them to come to Christ.

God, I pray one final time here this morning, I suppose, I pray again, I ask again for that kind of work of your Spirit in the hearts of those who have been hardened a long time, to those that have been struggling, for those that are under the weight of sin. Father, may the grace and the mercy and the goodness of God, the righteousness and shed blood of

Jesus Christ, the danger of eternal judgment, the wickedness of sin, being so tired of the evil of life that we've lived. Father, may all of that be, and that which your Spirit uses to create faith by the word that has been preached here this morning. Show mercy to each one. Father, not creating unnecessary doubts in those that are truly redeemed, may those that are redeemed find the anchor of their soul reestablished and the wonder of Christ made fresh again in their heart, and oh, that the redeemed would speak out with joy, "Hallelujah, I have been saved!" God, make that true in believing hearts. Father, we're either in light or we're in darkness, and for those that are in darkness and can't rejoice in the glory of Christ presented through your word today, O Father, I just ask you once again to show mercy to them. Father, if they would jump to hell, Father, it's only going to be despite the fact that the preaching of the gospel and people who love their souls are hanging on to their ankles saying, "Don't do this. Don't turn away." Father, may the urgency of these things be impressed by the Spirit, that each one outside of Christ would know for certain as they walk out today that they have heard the true condition of their soul and that your Spirit would convince them that unless they turn to Christ today they are in danger of eternal judgment. May no less an urgency be pressed upon those who are not in Christ today than that. May you cause us to flee to Christ, to flee to the only refuge, to strip away all self-deception that we might belong to Christ safely in this life and gloriously forevermore. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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