

Who is Jesus Christ? Part 1

By Dr. Steven J. Lawson

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: Colossians 1:15-20
Preached on: Sunday, June 13, 2010

OnePassion Ministries
5622 Dyer St, Suite 200
Dallas, TX 75206

Website: www.onepassionministries.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/onepassion

We come now to the time to look together into the word of God. I invite you to take your Bibles and turn with me to the book of Colossians, Colossians 1, and before we step back into our ongoing series on the Gospel of Mark, I want to follow-up last week's message in which we talked about is the Bible just another book, which was a very basic, elementary, foundational, entry level type of message. I want to follow that up and I want to bring a message to you this morning that also is very foundational, very essential for our Christian faith at the most basic point. I want to speak to you this morning on who is Jesus Christ. Colossians 1, I want to begin reading in verse 15.

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. 18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. 19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

I want to begin by asking you the two most important questions I could possibly ever ask you. Question 1 is who is Jesus Christ? And question 2 is do you know him? Upon these two questions hang your eternal destiny. You cannot be wrong about these two questions and be right with God. There is no middle ground. It is all or nothing regarding Christ. Either you know who Jesus Christ is or you do not, and either you have a personal relationship with him or you do not. Upon these two questions hangs everything, everything about salvation, everything about abundant life, everything about the forgiveness of sin, everything about where you will spend eternity. The heart of Christianity is Jesus Christ. Christianity is Christ but to know Jesus, we must understand two great things about him. Theologians refer to it as the person and work of Christ. We must understand who he is and what he has done if we are to know about him properly and to know him personally.

Now people give all kinds of answers regarding who is Jesus Christ. There is no lack of answers and some people answer that Jesus is who their sentimentalities make him out to be, the Jesus of their childhood fantasies, the Jesus of their youthful imaginations. Other people say that Jesus is who some shallow, sappy Christian song makes him out to be, the Jesus of the contemporary music industry, some pretty boy Jesus. Still others answer that Jesus is who some religious huckster makes him to be, the Jesus who wants you to have your best life now; the Jesus who wants you to be healthy and prosperous and successful in everything; the Jesus who would spare you anything that is not what the world would say is the best. Still others say that Jesus is who some new age spiritualist says he is, the Jesus of the positive force of the universe; the Jesus who is full of moral platitudes, who wants to become your life coach and give you some pep talk in life to put a plus on your A to help you get through the day, it even rhymes. Then, of course, there is the Jesus who is presented by the cults and by the religious elite of the world religions, the Jesus who is good but he is not God; the Jesus who is a role model but not a redeemer nor a reconciler. There are all kinds of opinions floating around out there but the problem is if you believe in the wrong Jesus, you don't know him and it is critically important for us that we have an accurate understanding of who Christ is.

As Paul writes these words in Colossians 1:15, they were so familiar in the early church that these very verses are referred to as the Colossian Hymn. It's the first recorded, really, hymn that we have in the early church that was more than just singing the Psalms. A hymn is a compact collection of deeply theological truths that are set in a poetic-like structure; very concentrated. It's not the repetition of one truth over and over and over but it is a rich multifaceted display of theological truth that is succinctly stated. That's what we have here, we believe, beginning in verse 15, was an early hymn that Paul takes and probably enlarges upon a little bit and sets it right here, this is the true Jesus.

Now in the church at Colossae, there was floating some wrong teaching, some bad teaching. Wherever the church gathers, it is always having to buttress her walls against the encroaching of false teaching that inevitably wants to come. Wherever there is light, there is always bugs and wherever there is the light of the truth, there will always seek to be an invasion of error. Every New Testament epistle was written to counter some false teaching that was already beginning to make inroads into the church and the church at Colossae was no exception. There was what was called the Colossian Heresy and it mixed together Jewish legalism and Greek philosophy and Eastern mysticism and asceticism with some Christian vocabulary, and in the mix of that you have the Colossian Heresy. Chapter 2 addresses all of that, but the fountain source of it all was the distortion of the Lord Jesus Christ and in this Colossian Heresy which was an early form of Gnosticism, it was believed that God is in heaven and we're here on the earth and in order to connect with God, there was a series of imminations that descended down from God like steps on a ladder and there was a created order of angelic beings that came down from God to man to connect with man and this would be our stair-step up to God. We would climb these rungs, so they said, and in the course of that, they were involved in angel worship because these stair-steps they saw as angelic beings, orders of angelic beings, and it led to a gross preoccupation with angels, and they saw Jesus as the greatest

of the angels; they saw Jesus as the greatest of the angelic created beings. He was one more step on the ladder.

So when Paul caught word of this, Paul is in Rome at this time, he is in his Roman imprisonment, and when he receives word about this, he sits down and he dictates this letter and front-loaded before he even gets into sifting out all of these other corruptions of what the Christian life is about with its mysticism and asceticism and legalism and philosophy and all of that stuff, he drops anchor right here in verse 15 as if to say, "We've got to get one thing straight. We must understand who Jesus Christ is because everything hinges with knowing who Christ is and being a follower of him." Isn't that truly the way it is with every cult and with every false religion? They miss it with the person and work of Christ. So what we're going to look at right here is absolutely essential because this is what separates us from every cult, every world religion, every religious movement that has gone astray. You miss it at this point, your ship is astray in the vast ocean of religiosity far away from the port of grace, but to be anchored in at this point, is to be anchored in at the cornerstone, at the very most important place.

Now this is not the only place in the Bible, obviously, that the person and work of Christ is laid out for us but this is perhaps when you consider layer upon layer upon layer of phrases upon phrases upon phrases, this may be the most tightly worded, condensed statement that answers the question who is Jesus Christ. Now to answer that, we just want to dig into what Paul has written here and I want to give you five words, five words that will succinctly summarize the theological depths and profundity of what these verses are saying who is Jesus Christ? Every one of them is essential in our understanding of who the real Jesus is.

1. God. Did you get that? Jesus Christ is God. The Apostle Paul begins in verse 15 at the most high level. He first declares the absolute deity of Jesus Christ. So he begins in verse 15, "He is the image of the invisible God." Now there's no question as to what "He" refers to. The antecedent is in verse 13, "His beloved Son," and verse 14, "in whom." That is the "He." It is God's beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and Paul states it in unmistakable terms that Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God.

Now this word "image" is the Greek word "ikon." It's carried over into the English language and pronounced the same although spelled differently. An icon means "likeness or copy," sometimes it meant an imprint on a coin or a reflection in a mirror, and this is saying that Jesus is the perfect image and the exact likeness of God.

Now God is invisible, right? No one has ever seen God. John 1:18, "no one has seen God at any time." John 6:46, "not that anyone has seen the Father." 1 John 4:12, "no one has seen God at any time." So the question is what does God look like? What does God sound like? And little children are always asking, "Mom, dad, what does God look like?" And there is a very simple answer: we point them to the Lord Jesus Christ who has come to be the revelation and the representation of God to us because he is God in human flesh. Did you get that? He is God in human flesh. He is fully God and fully man. He is the God-man. John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld

His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." And in no way did he diminish any in his deity. He did not give up any of his deity, he assumed humanity such that Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

Now a couple of other verses tighten this and make this abundantly clear. Hebrews 1:3 says Jesus is "the radiance" of God's glory and "the exact representation of His nature." Did you get that? The exact, the precise, the accurate representation of his nature. Now we are made in the image of God, are we not? Genesis 1:26-28. But we are a train-wreck of the image of God. Sin has defiled and corrupted the image of God in us and Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and lived a sinless and perfect life, he was without a sin nature, and he became the exact likeness and the perfect representation of the image of God. Even before Adam fell, it was but a partial representation of God, but Jesus Christ is the exact representation of his nature.

You remember in John 14:8, Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us." So which direction do you think Jesus pointed when he said, "Yeah, I'll show you the Father." And there's only one person who could ever make this response, Jesus said, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father." C. S. Lewis is famous for saying there is only one of three possibilities: either Jesus Christ is a liar or a lunatic or Lord, there are no other categories. And we believe because of the evidence that has been presented to us in the Scripture by the power of the Spirit that Jesus is exactly who he claimed to be, God in human flesh.

Let me just drive this home just a little bit more. Look at verse 19 in Colossians 1. I just want you to see that this is not something we're forcing on the text, that this just leaps out of pages of Scripture. "For it was the Father's good pleasure," that means this was God's design, this was God's purpose, and it brought great pleasure to the heart of God. Now note this, "for all the fullness to dwell in Him." That word "fullness, pleroo," was a word that the Gnostics batted around in their teaching that spoke of deity and they said that deity was spread out among the various angelic orders and the various angelic beings, and the different angels had a little bit of deity and man has a little spark of divinity in him, and all of this is in this stair-step effect of degrees of deity in angels and in man and Paul says, "Rubbish." Paul says, "Anathema." He says in verse 19, "all," a-l-l, "all the fullness to dwell in Him," meaning all the fullness of deity; all the holiness of the Father is in the Son; all the sovereignty of the Father is in the Son; all of the truth, all of the power, all of the immutability, all of the grace, all of the mercy that is in the Father is in the Son. Jesus as the image of the invisible God, he is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father.

Now look at chapter 2, verse 9. This states it yet even tighter. There is no wiggle room in this statement. In Colossians 2:9, "For in Him," we know who the "Him" is, the antecedent is the last word of verse 8, "Christ." "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." We sing a hymn that he lay aside the robes of his deity to become man, or he lay aside it all except for love, something sappy like that. He lay aside nothing. He came to this earth fully God and took upon himself the limitations of

humanity by becoming a member of this race yet without sin. All of the fullness of deity in bodily form.

Now what do you think the implications of this are? Well, number 1, whatever he did at the cross has extraordinary value, something that only God could do at the cross; something way beyond a mere prophet or an apostle or the best of men. That was God upon the cross dying in our place, suffering, bearing our sins, making an atonement that only God can make upon Calvary's cross. And this speaks volumes, does it not, of what should be our response to him, that when he speaks, he speaks with the authority of God to us and when he provides for us, he provides out of the abundance of what belongs to God.

This is where this begins. Jesus Christ is God. Look at the end of verse 15, "the firstborn of all creation." Now that does not mean that Jesus is the first created being. That's where the cults take a wrong turn and they see this and they go, "Wow, Jesus was created." No. Verse 16 says Jesus has created everything, that it is all by him, from him, through him, and to him. He did not create himself. Now what this is saying, "the firstborn of all creation," is he has all of the rights and all of the prerogatives that belong to a firstborn child. It speaks not of being chronologically born first. For example, Israel is called the firstborn nation but it was not the first nation to be created on the earth. There were other nations long before God sired Israel. No, it meant that his covenants would come through Israel; the Messiah would come through Israel; the truths of Scripture would come through Israel. Firstborn of all creation means Psalm 89:27, "I shall make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth." Jesus Christ, in other words, has all authority in heaven and earth as a firstborn child would receive and inherit from his father. God has given to God. God the Father has given to the Son all authority in heaven and earth.

That's where this begins. 1. God. And if we miss it here, every other step goes astray. If we miss it here, anything else that we have to say about Jesus Christ is corrupted and defiled but if we're right here, we're now ready to add the other key words and the second key word is "Creator." 1. God. 2. Creator. And in verse 16 Paul sets forth the creative power of the Lord Jesus Christ and he says that all that there is in the universe is by him and through him and for him. It sounds very much like Romans 11:36, "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things." There is nothing outside of verse 16. The entire universe is self-contained within verse 16. There is not one molecule of the created order that is outside of verse 16.

Now when he says by him, verse 16, "For by Him all things were created," literally the word "by" is "in." For in him, meaning the sphere in which the work of creation takes place. In other words, he didn't sub it out to another firm to do the work of creation. It was all done within his hands and within his spoken power. The preposition "in" is really, I think, more forceful and descriptive than even the preposition "by." It's an interpreters or translators decision. So creation was not out-sourced, it was all done within the confines of Christ's creative word. He was the one in Genesis 1 who said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

"For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth." Now when he says "the heavens," he's referring to the vastness of outer space, the planets, the suns, the stars, the galaxies, as well as the angelic realm, both elect and fallen angelic beings. Then when he says "on earth," he's referring to this planet of the oceans, the continents, the seas, the mountains, the trees, all plant life, animal life, human life, and the human race. Everything has been made by Christ. Sometimes when we buy a product it will say, "Made in China. Made in Taiwan. Made in Texas." All the foreign countries. But ultimately there has only been one who has made everything out of nothing and that is Jesus Christ.

He says "visible and invisible." Visible refers to the physical world, invisible refers to the spiritual world. Then when he says, "whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities," these are subcategories of the angelic order and these are levels in the hierarchy of angelic beings. Ephesians 1:21, Ephesians 3:10, and Ephesians 6:12, all three of those Ephesian passages kind of give different nuances to these strata of angelic beings.

Now this is why Paul is belaboring this point and why we need to hear this. The Colossians were being drawn into idolatry in this sense, they were beginning to become preoccupied with angels and were even dabbling in angel worship, and what Paul is doing here is he is reasoning with him, one, stating the truth of who Jesus is, but secondly, reasoning with him, "Why would you worship a created being when you ought to be worshiping the Creator? Why would you worship what he has made when you should be worshiping him who spoke everything into being out of nothing?" That's the point here.

Then he says, "all things have been created through Him." That is to say he is the agency, he is the mediator by which this creation has taken place and it has all come through him. Then notice, "and for Him." That means everything that has been made has been made for his own glory, for his own pleasure, for his own purposes. It's all about him, we would say in the vernacular. The one who makes it has designed it for his own purposes and that speaks volumes to our own lives, does it not? We didn't make ourselves. We're not the product of society or the culture. We here in the South region haven't arisen out of the sands of the South. We have been made by Jesus Christ in the womb at the moment of conception and we are fearfully and we are wonderfully made, and all abortion is rising up and attacking the very masterpiece of the design of the Lord Jesus Christ.

J. Vernon McGee has a very pointed note, he says, "Friends, this is God's universe and so you're going to have to do things God's way. You may think you have a better way but you don't have your own universe in which to do it." McGee goes on to say, "Then just go and create your own universe and come up with your own rules and run it the way that you want to, but until then you're in God's universe; you're on God's planet; you're breathing God's air; you're drinking God's water." And we all have to function according to what the Creator has designed. Is that not basic?

Jesus Christ is God. He is the God-man. Jesus Christ is Creator. Notice verse 17, in verse 17 he is sustainer. All that he creates, he sustains and maintains. In other words, he didn't just create it and then walk away from it. All that he has created has never left his hand and he upholds it by the power of his word. Look at verse 17, "He is before all things." Now what that says is that he has existed before the creation of all things. He is pre-existent. He is the eternal God, the eternal Creator who is before all things. Isaiah 9:6 calls him the eternal Father, meaning the Father of eternities. Micah 5:2 says his goings forth are from long ago from the days of eternity. In other words, he stepped out of eternity into time when he was born in Bethlehem. John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word," which means before time began Christ was already in existence. John 17:5, "Father, glorify Me together with Yourself with the glory which I had with You before the world was." So this is an important statement. Paul is driving home yet again that Jesus is not a created being, he is the Creator, because he has existed before all things. He can't be created if you exist before all things or you would just be one more of the things that have been created.

Then he says at the end of verse 17, "and in Him all things hold together." Do you know what's keeping the universe from exploding? Do you know what's keeping the earth in its rotation? Do you know what's keeping the earth on its axle? Do you know what's keeping the laws of gravity and the laws of first and second thermodynamics, the laws of inertia? Do you know what's keeping all of these physical laws going? It's the Creator God who is sustaining all things, the Lord Jesus Christ. He has the whole world in his hands. That's a mind-boggling statement.

He's also sustaining and maintaining your life. Now do you think he's qualified to keep up with your life? Do you think he might know what's best? Do you think he knows tomorrow? Do you think he can make the right calls? He's got the whole universe in his hands. He is upholding, sustaining, maintaining everything. The nations are but a drop in the bucket. What must we be? There is no prayer that we can ever bring before his throne of grace but that he is so abundantly able to do exceedingly beyond all that we would ask or think. With us things are impossible, with him nothing is impossible. With him all things are possible. He is the sustainer of all.

There is a fourth key word that I want you to see and this really continues to strike at the heart of who Christ is. If I were to tell you who Christ is and I left this one out, this would be an incomplete study. 4. He is Lord. He is Lord. Now in verse 18 and it's hard to know where to stop it, I think it goes all the way through verse 20, he is setting forth the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ. Now you will not find the word "Lord" per se, "kyrios," in this passage but the truth of Lordship is in every line and in every phrase. This is the Lordship of Christ and he has already spoken that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Notice he says, verse 18, "He is the head of the body, the church." Now it's all good for us to know our place, is it not? And we are the body of Christ and some of us have been placed sovereignly by Christ into his body as an elbow, some a hand, some a foot, some a hip. We all have different places that we are assigned by the Lord and given different gifts and we are placed into different opportunities and it is all by God's design and none

of us are a self-contained package and we all need one another. The hand needs the foot and the foot needs the elbow etc., but there's only one head and head here communicates the brains, and it communicates the direction and the decisions, and it conveys coming from the head and all that medically is implied in that. The entirety of life is coming from the head, the headship of Christ. This is to say he is the Lord of the church. He is the Lord of our lives. He controls every part of the church and every part of our individuals lives. There is no part of our lives that are not under the Lordship of Christ: our personal life, our church life, our family life, our work life, our recreational life. Hear me say it again: every component part of our lives is under his Lordship. And as our head, he gives grace, he gives direction, he gives power, he gives wisdom, all that we need is flowing from the headship of Christ.

It says, "He is the beginning," the beginning of what? Well, he is the beginning of the body, he is the beginning of the church, and this really goes back to eternity past and it speaks of the fact that we are chosen in Christ; we are predestined in Christ; that our names were written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. He is the beginning of it all and this word "beginning" also speaks of primacy, "arche," that he has the highest rank and the chief position. How do you explain the unity in our church? Marvelous unity the Lord has given his church. We are a people at peace with one another and we are a people at peace with God. How do you explain that? Is it the color of the carpet? Is it the palm trees? It is that we all find ourselves under the headship of Christ and we all submit and yield to him, and if there would ever be any dissension or any division in our church, it would be because someone or some group is no longer under the headship of Christ. And he mediates his Lordship through his word, by his Spirit, through his elders who are supported by deacons and it flows from top to bottom down to the congregation. Jesus is Lord.

He goes on to say in verse 18 he is "he firstborn from the dead." The same word, "firstborn," that was used in verse 15 and again it carries the same meaning, and this makes the point even more clear. This is not saying, can't be saying that Jesus is the firstborn ever raised from the dead. There were people raised from the dead in the Old Testament, I would remind us all. This has nothing to do with chronological sequence. It has everything to do with prominence and preeminence and this is saying that of all of those who have ever been raised from the dead, Jesus Christ is the preeminent one.

He says at the end of verse 18, "so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything." Did you get that, in everything? He must have first place in our families, first place in our marriages, first place in our professions, first place in matters of intellect, first place in time, first place in love, first place in conversation, first place in pleasures, first place in eating, first place in play, first place in athletics, first place in what we watch, first place in music, first place in worship, first place in art, first place in missions, first place in ministry. He must have first place in everything.

Verse 19, again, just supports this and he uses the word I used earlier to buttress this point, "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him." Therefore who else could possibly be the head of the church but the one who possesses

all the fullness of deity in himself? So do you know what? Here today at Christ Fellowship, we're not free to do church however we want to. We're not free to reinvent church. We're not free to invent a new way of doing church for this generation. That's not our prerogative. The head of the church, who died for the church, who is God, has told us in his word how his body is to function.

Now verse 20, I believe he's still elaborating on the Lordship of Christ and you'll note that the sentence even continues in verse 20 in the New American Standard, there's not supplied period at the end of verse 19 and now the start of a new sentence, the word "and" indicates, I think it's the same flow of thought that really began in verse 18, we're still talking about the Lordship of Christ. "And through Him," we know who the "Him" is, that's the one who's the head of the church, Christ, now watch this, "to reconcile all things to Himself." Now the word "reconcile" means "to change the status of something; to bring about a dramatic change of condition," and for the most part it has meant two parties that are at enmity with one another and they are reconciled together, but at this point I think it's still general, it will become specific in verse 21 and 22, but in verse 10, it is to reconcile all things to himself.

Now what are the "all things"? Well, I think the "all things" in context, look at verse 16, "by Him all things were created both in the heavens and on earth." Verse 16, "all things have been created through Him." Verse 17, "He is before all things, and in Him all things." That's four times "all things" has been mentioned in verse 16 and 17, and then verse 18, the alternate statement, "everything." So he has just said, "All things, all things, all things, all things, everything." He comes to verse 20 and says, "to reconcile all things to Himself." I think the "all things" are all things. Now this is not teaching Universalism, that everybody in the world ends up saved and some people, theologians, even little sects have said even the devil is saved at the end.

Now what is he saying in verse 20? This is a critical point that through his humble obedience unto death, God has therefore highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess whether in heaven or on earth – get this – or under the earth, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. What this is saying, don't miss this, this may be bigger than what you realized, that through the obedience of Christ unto death at Calvary's cross whereby he purchased the salvation of all of his people, it is by that final act of obedience unto death that God has exalted him to the heights of heaven and given him the name above every name and that at the end, all things will be reconciled to him in the sense that everything will be brought into submission to Christ and everyone and everything will rise up and say Jesus Christ is Lord. Not unto salvation, for many unto damnation, but every knee will bow. There will be no atheists in that day. There will be no agnostics in that day. There will be no liberals in that day. There will be no ecumenical people out there in that day. There will only be orthodox statements in that day.

Jesus Christ is Lord. Every one of us here today will bow the knee to Christ. Has that thought ever registered in your head? It's just a matter of when. Either in this life you will

bow the knee to Christ confessing your sins and surrendering your life to his Lordship and receiving his saving grace, or on that final day you will bow your knee to Christ and you will declare his Lordship and he will damn you and he will consign you to the pit of hell forever and you will descend into the abyss, into the bowels of hell saying, "Jesus Christ is Lord. Jesus Christ is Lord."

Verse 20 is one of the most extraordinary statements of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, that he will "reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven." Verse 20 puts its arms around the entire universe, not just around the elect, not just around those who are the redeemed salvifically, that's verse 22, but verse 20 is an enormous statement of the unrestrained parameters, the unlimited, infinite borders of the sovereign Lordship of Jesus Christ that the entire universe has been reconciled – listen – into a position of accountability to Christ; has been reconciled into a place of submission to Christ. This is Philippians 2:9-11 that I just quoted, that Jesus Christ will preside and is presiding and will forever preside over the entire created order. All that he created in verse 16 will be reconciled to him in verse 20 and it will be under his feet in a position of subjugation to Christ.

Next Lord's Day, we will look at verses 21 to 23 and I will give you the final word and we will step into the ocean of saving grace and the mercy and forgiveness that has flowed to us through this one who is God, Creator, Sustainer and Lord. Only now are we ready to talk about Jesus as Savior.

As we bring this service, this message to a close, I want to say to you that there is salvation in no other name; that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. There is nothing in your head that can match what you just heard. There is no thought in your mind that can rise above what I just told you. There is nothing that you have that can displace what has just been presented to you. This is the Alpha, the Omega. This is the sum and the substance. This is the beginning and the end. This is the height and depth and breadth and length of truth and reality and there is not one drop of saving grace outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. I call you to confess your sin today. I call you to humble yourself beneath his mighty right hand. I call you to call upon the name of the Lord and if you have never done so, this very moment, this very second, throw yourselves upon his loving arms and he will receive you. He's come to seek and to save that which is lost. He has come not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. Come and give yourself to Christ and be one of those many for whom the Savior will receive with arms of forgiveness and grace.

How could you live for anything else? How could you live for anyone else? How could you live contrary to the very purpose and reason for which you were made? It is incongruent, illogical and irrational to live for anyone else other than Jesus Christ. It is moral insanity, it's intellectual suicide for you to live for anyone else or anything else than the preeminence of Christ, that he would have first place in your life and in every area of your life. "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world yet lose his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his own soul? For me to live is Christ and

to dies I gain." Live for Christ. Believe upon Christ. Give your life to Christ. Adore him. Serve him. Worship him. Obey him. May your whole life be like an arrow that is pointed at the target of Christ. May you hit that target. May God by his grace direct your life to him.

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, thank you for Christ. We can't see you, you're the invisible God. We praise you that you have made yourself visible to us in the image of your Son Jesus Christ. Father, I pray that you would just enlarge our hearts for Christ that we would pursue Christ all the more, more than we ever have. Father, we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.