

# **THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST**

## **(Sermon Summary)**

**Sunday Morning, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2022**

**Preacher: Walter Johnston (Retired Pastor of Chorlton Evangelical Church, Manchester).**

**Reading: Colossians 1: 15-20; and 3:1-15.**

We may be able to list lots of great people. But the greatest of all is the Lord Jesus Christ. The greatness is in His name. 'Jesus' means 'Saviour' or 'Strong Saviour'. He is the God-man. His title, 'Christ' is not a surname but means that He is the anointed one, equipped and set apart to do be our Saviour. His name is above every name. But do we obey Him? Do we serve Him? Do we love Him?

His greatness was experienced firsthand by the disciples. It was revealed to them that He was the Son of God. They watched and observed Him. They were astonished at the miracles He did. There were thousands of them, and they were all done effortlessly and with authority. They drank the wine that had been changed from water. They helped distribute the bread to the five thousand. They saw the lepers cleansed. They had been terrified on the occasion of the stilling of the storm. All of it showed to them His greatness. His life was written down in the Bible so that we can experience these things ourselves. That is how His greatness is to be seen and experienced today.

And He loves His people, us, with a deep and unfailing love. In His love He guides us, guards and trains us. He reveals Himself to us. It is said 'Never meet your heroes' because you will always be disappointed in them. But that is not true in the case of the Lord Jesus. The closer you get to Him, the more you know Him. But the closer you get to Him, the worse you also feel about yourself.

### **His claims.**

There are lots of claims that He made about Himself.

In John 8:12 He told people He was the light of the world. He said this at the Feast of Tabernacles when the people were to remember how the Lord led them out of captivity

and also led them through the dangers of the wilderness. There were golden lampstands at the feast which were lit at the beginning and then put out at the end of the feast. While that light at the feast went out, He is the continuing light of the world. He is the light that does not go out and can lead us through the wilderness of this world.

In John 9 He makes good the claim of John 8:12 by healing the man born blind.

In John 11:25-26 He makes the claim to be the resurrection and the life. He proved this claim by raising Lazarus from the dead. The body had been in the tomb four days. There was a Jewish superstition that the spirit of the deceased remained near the person three days and then went, so that there was no chance of the person coming back to life. But by raising Lazarus after he had been dead four days, the Lord showed to the Jews, against their superstition, that He had total power and authority over death. He is able to call people to newness of life. Other religions have nothing like this to offer.

Then in Mark 2: 1-12 He heals the paralysed man but also forgives him his sin. People were amazed that the man was able to walk. They lost sight of the second healing that had happened, the forgiveness of his sin, which was the most important healing with eternal consequences. Anyone can make great claims, but the Lord was able to make them and to back them up. He is the Son of God to be loved, worshipped, adored, and obeyed. Believers are in the light, having been transferred to the kingdom of light.

So we must ask ourselves whether we are thankful? Are we rejoicing? Are we walking in the light? And is that light increasing? For some people seem to have more light than others!

### **Life.**

We are called to life in the Spirit. It is fullness of life, and it is all of grace. We must ask ourselves if we are living in the fullness? Lazarus is found in John 12 eating and enjoying his food. Christ calls us to live a healthy and fulfilling Christian life.

We are forgiven – ‘ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven’ as the hymn puts it. Do we sing His praises in our hearts? Is there a hymn of praise welling up within us? We are to praise everyday. All our sins are forgiven. We are accepted. We can go into the presence of God at any time, and we are always received. To know this gives us boldness before God and before men. We are able to reason that if we are able to stand before God, we are able to stand and speak before men.

### **Warning to non-Christians.**

There is the warning of Luke 13:1-5 that if we do not repent, we too will perish. We should turn to God and go to Christ for forgiveness. We must repent of our laziness, our selfishness, and our lies.

Then there is the gracious invitation of the Lord. It is there in John 7:37-38. This was in recognition of the miraculous provision of water in the wilderness. At the Feast of Tabernacles there were large pots of water that were overturned at the end of the feast, flooding the whole area. It was an abundance of water, and this is what the Lord promises His people. If we are thirsty in this wilderness, then He is the one who can provide for us as we journey to the Promised Land.

We will be judged if we stay as we are. Our eternal destiny is at stake. This offer of life is genuine. We should call upon Him and do it today. His greatness means that He will pardon all who come to Him. There is not a moment to lose. Then we will be walking in the light, loving Him, and believing in Him.