

# The Pre-Eminence of Our Lord Jesus Christ

by Ian Paisley

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*The sermon emphasizes the pre-eminence of our Lord Jesus Christ, highlighting His person, passion, and power, and encouraging listeners to come to Him in faith and surrender to His will.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 32:10, Matthew 3:12, John 1:14, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Colossians 1:18

**Topics:** "Christ Exalted", "Divine Sovereignty"

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## Description

Ian Paisley preaches on the pre-eminence of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, emphasizing His position as the head of the church and the firstborn from the dead. He urges the congregation to focus on exalting Christ rather than themselves or any man, highlighting the humble beginnings of the church and its growth despite opposition. Paisley delves into the mystery of Christ's person, the sacrificial love displayed in His passion, and the miraculous power He holds in covenants, creation, conservation, conversion, consecration, and consummation. He concludes with a solemn reminder of Christ's consuming power and the importance of seeking Him for eternal pardon.

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## Transcript

'And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.' Colossians 1:18.

I come this day to do the most exhilarating and glorious task, to join with you and lead you to exalt and extol and to excel in honouring our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, and God the Son.

We are not here to honour ourselves in any way. 'For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.'

We are not here to give any glory to any man, for man is a total failure, fit only to fuel hell but for the saving grace of God.

Neither are we about to give a summary of the history of fifty years, glorious years though they have been.

Jacob, in his prayer to the unfailing God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, as he returned to his father's house and to his own heritage, had this to say:

'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.' Genesis 32:10.

When I think of a little tin church in Killyleagh Street, Crossgar, on 17th March fifty years ago, and the people who gathered there to see the beginning of this church, and then I think of today and the work thriving on every continent of the world, I can only, in the deepest sincerity, humility and gratitude, say the same.

This fledgling church was laughed at, mocked, scorned, ridiculed, and was the target for every poisoned religious and political pen in the country, yes, and across the world.

The Unitarian church lampooned us as 'the rise of the ranters' which would speedily die and be buried without lamentation.

The last census shows that the Unitarian church is declining rapidly, and as far as numbers are concerned, the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster is almost four times larger in our province than it is today.

The ranters are in the best of health, like the early church, 'the sect everywhere spoken against', is flourishing.

We come to render thanks unto the Lord. We come to exalt His blessed name.

the psalmist David cried to God the father, 'Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, and we shall be saved.'

'That in all things he - our Lord - might have the pre-eminence.'

Firstly, our Lord Jesus Christ - the pre-eminence of His person

His person, as the second person in the holy undivided trinity of God, must ever remain shrouded in the deepest mystery of the Godhead.

Anything which we know of God is written in His revelation to all mankind. If he had not revealed Himself in His most holy word we would not have known that the being of God is threefold in its persons.

Studying the universe could never have taught us that. it had to be revealed, and only God could do that, and blessed be His glorious name, He has done it.

When, however, in order to do His great saving work, the Son of God and God the son became manifest in flesh, then and only then could we see Him. He became, in His deep humiliation, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

In the glorious first chapter of John's Gospel, John speaks of the Godhead thus:

'In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God.

'The same was in the beginning with God.

'All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.

'In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

'And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.'

The deity of Christ as the eternal word is a mystery, but when that glorious person took into union with His eternal Godhead and became, through the virgin birth, God clothed in the nature of mankind, we were able to see and know Him. Deity robed with humanity, or as John, moved with infallible inspiration, puts it in John 1:14:

'And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father,) full of grace and truth.'

'O word of God incarnate,

O wisdom from on high,

O truth unchanged, unchanging,

O light of our dark sky,

We praise thee for the radiance

That from the hallowed page,

A lantern to our footsteps,

Shines on from age to age.'

In His incarnation, the unseen God the Son became forever seen.

He was seen of angels.

He was seen of men.

He was 'beheld' by the fallen sons of men.

He was seen, as the apostle Paul states in the opening of his epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 1:1-3:

'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

'Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds;

'Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power.'

You will remember how Philip asked the question 'Shew us the father, and it sufficeth us', to which our Lord long sufferingly replied, 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the father; and how sayest thou then, shew us the father?'

The Lord Jesus Christ - the pre-eminence of His person.

Oh, the glorious person of our beloved! We can say with the Godly Robert Murray McCheyne : 'There was a time when friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the tree, the blessed Lord Jesus meant nothing to me.'

But that is not so now. I have heard His inviting voice. Have you?

'It drew me, and I followed on, charmed to confess the voice divine.' Have you?

His grace and glory have been revealed. I have received it. Have you?

In the misery and acknowledgement of my rebellion and sin I knelt at the cross and I received Him. Have you?

'Behold', He said, 'I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me.'

I opened the door, and He came in, and we have been in sweet communion ever since. Have you?

Oh, it's real because He is real! real!! real!!! 'That in all things He, our Lord Jesus Christ, might have the pre-eminence.'

If you have never met Him, meet Him now!

If you have not received Him, receive Him now!

If you have not confessed Him, confess Him now!

Are you asking 'what must I do to be saved?' believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.'

I wish I could express what the Lord Jesus is and what He means to me. words fail me. I can but declare my worship of His glorious person in the words of this hymn:

Blessed lily of the valley, o how fair is He!

He is mine, I am His;

Sweeter than the angels' music is His voice to me,

He is mine, I am His!

Where the lilies fair are blooming by the waters calm,

There He leads me and upholds me by His strong right arm;

All the air is love around me, I can feel no harm.

He is mine, I am His.

oOo

Let me sing of all His mercies, of His kindness true,

He is mine, I am His;

Fresh at morn, and in the evening, comes a blessing new,

He is mine, I am His!

With the deepening shadows comes a whisper, 'safely rest!

Sleep in peace, for I am near thee, naught shall thee molest;

I will linger till the morning, keeper, friend and guest,'

He is mine, I am His.

o0o

Though He lead me through the valley of the shade of death,

He is mine, I am His;

Should I fear when, o so tenderly, He whispereth,

He is mine, I am His;

For the sunshine of His presence dot illumine the night,

And He leads me through the valley to the mountain height;

Out of bondage into freedom, into cloudless light,

He is mine, I am His.

o0o

Lily of the valley, He is mine!

Lily of the valley, I am His!

Sweeter than the angels' music is His voice to me,

He is mine, I am His!

My Saviour is the lily, not of a single valley, but of all the valleys, whether sin, temptation, darkness, dismay, disappointment, depression, disillusionment, darkness or death itself.

Secondly: Our Lord Jesus Christ - The pre-eminence of His passion

Here is a subject which defies human explanation or illustration. The passion, the sacrificial love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ's passion is pre-eminent in its age. It is eternally unaging love. It never grows old. It never wearies. It never dims. It never wanes. It cannot grow old. It is the very oldest in the world, but still the very newest.

Let me trumpet it forth!

Time ploughs no wrinkles on the brow of the eternal Christ. He is the one who infallibly proclaims 'I am alive for evermore.' So His heart of love - loving poor lost sinners, is loving for evermore. no scars of age

will ever mark the face of the divine passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The little tots, the lambs of the flock in Sabbath school are right when they sing with gusto-

'Jesus loves me, this I know,

For the Bible tells me so;

Little ones to Him belong,

They are weak, but He is strong.

o0o

Jesus loves me, He who died

Heaven's gate to open wide;

He will wash away my sin,

Let His little child come in.

o0o

Jesus loves me, loves me still,

When I'm very weak and ill;

From His shining throne on high,

Watches with me where I lie.'

o0o

Jesus loves me, He will stay

Close beside me all the way;

If I love Him, when I die,

He will take me home on high.

o0o

Yes, Jesus loves me,

Yes, Jesus loves me,

Yes, Jesus loves me,

The Bible tells me so.

About fifty years ago I ran 'rescue meetings' on Saturday nights in our old church. In those days the pubs closed at 10 pm, and we had our meeting at 10.30. About three-hundred men attended those meetings.

We made them tea and gave them something to eat, and got them sobered up as best we could. That hymn, Jesus loves me, was our signature tune! It was well known to them because in their childhood years they had attended Sabbath school, and that hymn awakened thoughts of gospel truths in their besotted minds. A great number of those men got saved at those meetings. What a difference meeting Christ and receiving His love and pardon made in their lives, and in the lives of their wives and children. Some of them didn't live too long because they had abused their bodies through drink and hard living, but they proved at death that Christ's love for them had never waned. I shall meet them in the better land, safe and saved by grace alone.

Yes, Jesus is the lover of souls.

What a difference He has made in my life. has He made a difference in yours? What about taking Him home with you today from this service?

Christ's passion for your soul beats with eternity. it never began and it shall never end.

'I have loved you with an everlasting love' is his very own declaration.

I have a message from God for you today.

'God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.'

Christ's passion for your soul beats with immutability.

It never changes. He loves you as He always did. He is without shadow of turning. Oh, Christ's love knows no barriers, brooks no opposition, and never bows in defeat. it is glorious in its exploits and outstanding in its conquests.

Christ's passion for your soul beats with infinity.

There is no shortage of supply. its depth, with all its immense outlays, has remained at the same unalterable level. its sufficiency knows neither measure nor end. 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.'

Christ loved, to the giving up of heaven and the sacrificing of the eternal throne of the most high God.

He loved to the eternal uniting of Himself to mankind by a body and reasonable soul.

Christ loved to the humiliation of a human birth.

Christ loved to poverty in all things.

'For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.' II Corinthians 8:9.

Christ loved to the bitterness of rejection by His own.

Christ loved to the slandering of His character.

Christ loved to the vilest suggestions ever made against a fellow man.

Christ loved to the misunderstanding by all His disciples.

Christ loved to rejection by the whole world.

Christ loved to the tortures of Pilate's judgment hall.

Christ loved to the sweat of blood in Gethsemane.

Christ loved to the death of the cross.

'Having loved His own, He loved them to the end', which became for them a glorious new beginning.

Oh! what love is this!

Oh! what passion is this!

It is incomprehensible!

It is inconceivable!

It is incredible!

Oh the deep deep love of Jesus!

Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free!

Rolling as a mighty ocean

In its fulness over me.

Underneath me, all around me,

Is the current of thy love;

Leading onward, leading homeward,

To my glorious rest above.

o0o

Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus!

Spread His praise from shore to shore,

How he loveth, ever loveth,

Changeth never, nevermore;

How He watcheth o'er His loved ones,

Died to call them all His own;

How for them He intercedeth,

Watcheth o'er them from the throne.

o0o

Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus!

Love of every love the best;

'Tis an ocean vast of blessing,

'Tis a haven sweet of rest.

Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus!

'Tis a heaven of heavens to me;

And it lifts me up to glory,

For it lifts me up to thee.

Our Lord Jesus Christ - the pre-eminence of His passion.

Thirdly, our Lord Jesus Christ - the pre-eminence of His power.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is not only mysterious in His person, majestic in His passion, but miraculous in His power.

i. My Lord Jesus is preeminent in His covenanting power.

The Bible contains two covenants - the old covenant and the new covenant. Christ is the covenant Christ!

Before anything that was made was made, Christ was preeminent in His covenanting.

He is before all things. it could not be anything else, for if all things were made by Him He must of necessity be before them all.

There in a calendar unimaginable, there in a council indefinable, there in circumstance inexplicable Christ, covenanting with the father to carry out the redemptive programme so that man, not yet created and not yet condemned by sin, would be reconciled to God, would be rescued from the horrible pit, would be redeemed by His precious blood, would be reconciled to God.

It was a covenanting ordered in all things and sure.

Christ is preeminent in His covenanting power.

ii. My Lord Jesus is preeminent in His creating power.

Christ is the creating Christ 'all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.' John 1:3.

He is the almighty maker of all things.

He simply spoke, and it was done. what power! He commanded, and it stood fast. what power! everything was made by Him, and came forth running out of the womb of nothingness at His command!

iii. My Lord Jesus is preeminent in His conserving power.

Christ is the conserving Christ!

He is not only the creator, but He holds all created things together. By Him and by Him alone they continue. He is the consistency which holds them together.

iv. My Lord Jesus is preeminent in His converting power.

He is the converting Christ.

He is the great finder. He comes to seek and to save that which is lost. He is the great converter. He came into the world to save sinners, yes, to save me the sinner, and you the sinner.

I am saved. are you? If not why not? O come to Him now. Pray this prayer right now:

Nothing in my hand I bring,

Simply to thy cross I cling;

Naked, come to thee for dress;

Helpless, look to thee for grace;

Foul, I to the fountain fly;

Wash me, Saviour, or I die!

v. My Lord Jesus is preeminent in His consecrating power.

He is the consecrating Christ!

His name is Jesus. The angel defined the meaning of that name - 'thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.'

Jesus Christ really saves. He breaks all sinful habits, pardons, purifies and preserves. He is the great emancipator. when you meet Him you lose all your sins' Chains. He sets sinners free.

I have witnessed it in my own life. I have witnessed it in the vast number of men, women, boys and girls I have seen eternally changed as I have introduced them to my Saviour and Lord.

I'm going home to glory soon,

To see the city bright,

To walk the golden streets of heaven,

And bask in God's own light.

But some of you are out of Christ,

And caught by many a snare;

I cannot see you lost and lone,

I want you over there!

vi. My Lord Jesus is preeminent in His consumating power.

Christ is the consumating Christ!

What He begins He brings to a glorious end. what He commences He majestically concludes. What He sets out to accomplish He accomplishes fully and finally. He tells His people, 'I am the first and the last, the beginning and the end.'

The work which His goodness began

The arm of His strength will complete.

He is the Lord God omnipotent, and He shall reign for ever and ever. His dominion will last for ever. it shall never end.

Every promise He will seal to His people's everlasting good, and earth shall shout with deafening eternal thunder the loud amen.

But I dare not close the book at this juncture, or I would be unfaithful to my master and to your immortal soul.

vii. Christ is preeminent in His consuming power.

He is the consuming Christ!

John the Baptist, Christ's forerunner, had this to say of the Christ whom he was sent beforehand to announce.

'Whose fan is in His hand, and he will throughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' - Matt.3:12.

Oh, this is a great threshing-floor today. There will be gathered wheat, but there will be chaff left behind. What will it be for you?

There comes to my mind today on the wings of memory, the words of a gospel song I heard in my earliest days:

I dreamed that the great judgment morning

had dawned, and the trumpet had blown;

I dreamed that the nations had gathered

to judgment before the white throne.

from the throne came a bright shining angel,

who stood on the land and the sea,

and swore with his hand raised to heaven  
that time was no longer to be.  
The rich man was there, but his money  
had melted and vanished away.  
the pauper, he stood in the judgment,  
his debts were too heavy to pay.  
the great man was there, but his greatness,  
when death came, was left far behind,  
the angel that opened the records,  
not a trace of his greatness could find.  
The widow was there with the orphans.  
God heard and remembered their cries.  
no sorrow in heaven for ever,  
God wiped all the tears from their eyes.  
The gambler was there, and the drunkard,  
and the man who had sold him the drink,  
with the people who gave them the licence,  
together in hell they did sink.  
The moral man came to the judgment,  
but his self-righteous rags would not do.  
the men who had crucified Jesus  
had passed off as moral men too.  
the soul that had put off salvation,  
'not today, I'll get saved by-and-by,  
no time now to think of religion.'  
at last he had found time to die.  
And oh, what a weeping and wailing,

as the lost were told of their fate!

they cried for the rocks and the mountains,

they prayed, but their prayer was too late!

May your lot not be eternal punishment but eternal pardon.

Seek the Lord - the Lord preeminent in His person, preeminent in His passion, preeminent in His power.

Seek Him. He can find you today, and you can find Him today.

May you do so, for Christ's sake.

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