

Christ Is All - His Supremacy (2)

by J. Glyn Owen

Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things, the Lord of the universe, and the Lord of the church, and He is the ruler, guide, director, sustainer, and master of the church.

Duration: 51:52

Scripture: Colossians 1:15

Topics: "Supremacy"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher highlights the chaos and turmoil present in the world, as depicted in newspapers with accounts of murder, bloodshed, and injustice. He compares the universe to a machine with gear teeth that don't seem to mesh, symbolizing the lack of harmony in the world. However, the preacher emphasizes that there is hope for the future, as the Bible promises a time of harmony and peace. He explains that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is holding the cosmos and history together, working towards a final state of order and beauty. The preacher encourages listeners to trust in God's sovereign hand in steering the course of history and find comfort in the divine purpose that is being woven together.

Transcript

Let us now turn prayerfully to the Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians in chapter one, and we shall read once again this morning verses 15 to 20. We have already considered the opening words of this passage, but there is much else that remains for our meditation this morning, so let us read it with earnest prayer in our heart that the Spirit of God will give us understanding, and not only understanding, but willingness to respond to the word as it demands response from us. I'm going to read then from the New International Version, verses 15 to 20.

He, that is Jesus Christ, He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created, things in heaven and things on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities, all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

And then very particularly what's going to be the focus of our gaze this morning, and He is the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood shed on a cross.

Now we indicated last Lord's Day that we see our Lord Jesus Christ here in three contexts, as it were, or in three relationships. First of all, the text speaks of His relationship to God the Father. He is the image of the invisible God, and that was where we were most of the time last Lord's Day, and we simply introduced the second, where our Lord Jesus Christ is set alongside of creation as a whole.

And Paul speaks of His relationship to the whole creation. Now it's a very, very profound statement that we have here. He's the firstborn over all creation.

We considered that. He has the rights and the authority of the firstborn Son. He's the heir apparent.

He has the right to rule and to dispose of the whole creation. But that is brought out again in these words. For notice, by Him all things were created.

He was the agent whereby creation sprang into existence. And if you want to ask the question, what things? Well Paul answers before you ask. Things in heaven and things on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities.

All things were created by Him. But now notice, he ends that sentence by adding something new. All things were created by Him and for Him.

Many of us who champion the doctrine of creation fail to champion the doctrine that all created things were made for Him, as well as by Him. Now let's put this in a nutshell this morning, because I'm simply referring to these remaining elements in our Lord's relationship to creation. Let's put this in a nutshell.

What have you? You have health. You have wealth. You have a home.

You have prospects. You have days and time given you. You have some influence.

What have you? Everything that was made, and therefore everything that you have, was made for Him. Now this is before we come to speak of Jesus Christ as Redeemer. We're only thinking of Him as Creator.

And if you acknowledge the Lord Jesus as the Creator of all things, as the New Testament insists, then even on the basis of His creative work, all things were not only made by Him but for Him, so that everything we have is for Him. There's nothing that you can call your own which is not made for Him. Further, in this context we should go on and say that whatever is maintained in existence and in being, your health for example, your financial situation, insofar as things are well and things are being maintained, they are being maintained for who? Oh for me.

Don't you believe it? For Him. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive riches and power and glory and dominion and much, much, much, much else. Everything was made for Him.

And my friend, if our lives and what we are and what we possess do not serve His purpose, there is no reason why God should maintain us in life. Now it's as challenging as that. There is no earthly reason why you and I should be sustained in life if we do not fulfill the purpose for which we were created, namely to serve the Son of God and the Father through the Son.

That's not all. There is one other thing here. He is before all things, says Paul.

Well now he said that already. And in Him all things hold together. Now this is a very remarkable statement and I have to say something about it before coming to the point of his relationship to the church.

In Him everything holds together. We hear a lot today about the pending disintegration of the universe. Morally things are disintegrating, but according to the prophets there is a further and a far greater disintegration about to take place.

Why is it that the universe is not disintegrated a long, long time ago? History, according to the scriptures, history is held together by a sovereign hand and is moving gradually but decidedly toward a given end. And the hand that steers the history of the world is the hand of the man Christ Jesus, Son of God. All things came into being in and through Him and form an order unity in Him.

Everything coheres in Him. He bears things forward toward the destiny that He has appointed. Now this is a tremendous word that you and I need to know and we need to derive the comfort from it that we can only find here.

You know there is an adaptation in the universe that saves it from disintegration. And that adaptation is due entirely to the lordship of Jesus Christ over created things. For their perpetuation certain plants need certain definite insects.

As some of you know, if not all of you, these insects are always found in the right place at the right time. Or take a little thought like this. The polar bear is able to live where there is ice and snow as we know full well.

It is kept from slipping on the ice by having fur even on the soles of its feet. I don't know whether I'm terribly simple. I guess I am.

But I couldn't stop praising God when I first discovered that. But the polar bear has special fur under the soles of his feet that other bears do not have. Who thought of the polar bear? He in whom everything is held together.

And He gave the bear a special pair of slippers. The yucca plant growing in the Sahara desert and in other places can live in the hot dry desert because not only does it have roots reaching deeper down into the soil than any other roots, but because it has foliage. And that foliage is such that the evaporation is very, very slow and prolonged.

And the minutest little bit of moisture will remain for a long, long time. Who put the yucca plant in the Sahara? Our lungs are adapted to the air we breathe and our eyes to the light we see and so forth. Who's responsible for this adaptation? Who holds us together where we are and where we've been placed? We would die in another atmosphere.

It's the Lord of all creation. This too, of course, is also true of daily events of history. Here, too, things are not what they appear to be.

We are often challenged by the confusion that seems to be rampant. But a guiding hand is there though nowhere visible. Instead of seeing a guiding hand, we hear a cry, a shriek of anguish.

The newspapers are full of accounts of murder, bloodshed, rape, people crying for their rights and unaware of their responsibilities, one section battling against another, somebody parading for this or for that, and others trampled in the business. If we compare the wheel of the universe to a machine, we might well say that its gear teeth don't seem to mesh. To be sure, one day in the far-flung, distant future, and many of us refer to this, and it's about our only hope, one day in the far-flung, distant future, all will be

harmony.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and we rejoice to think of that, but wait a moment, my friend. Is it true that there is no order in the universe at the moment? Is it not right that we should think of the universe at the moment and of history at the moment more as we see? Well, let me give you an illustration.

I was visiting someone the other day and the lady of the house was making a little carpet by hand, a little rug, I should say, and she had it rolled up and she brought it out to show us, and of course the underside was facing us. Looking at it from the underside, as she was showing it to my wife first, there wasn't very much to look at. In fact, it was just a dab of color here and a dab of color here and some loose ends here and some loose ends there.

It just didn't make sense. When we saw it from the other side, it was quite a different story. True, it wasn't completed yet, but it was a thing of beauty.

It was a thing of artistry. It was, it was a beauty to behold, and I believe that that is what the Bible wants us to see. There are many not sometimes looking at things from our human vantage point, but there is a tapestry in process of being made and being woven together, and there's a divine hand and the divine purpose on yonder side that we cannot as yet see.

But if you want to change the picture, sometimes life looks to us as if everything's going to pieces. It's just like the experience of standing in an international airport, and the planes are coming in and going out, one every minute or often than that, and you wonder what's going to happen next with all the noise. But there's someone in the tower.

Even though the folk in the tower, the controls are human and frail and fallible, nevertheless things are as they are because they are there. My friend, the Apostle Paul wants us to see that he, the Son of God that made all things, is holding the whole cosmos together and history together, so that at long last, when he's put the finishing touches on things, we shall have nothing but order, and all the loose strings and the unrelated strings will be tied up or done away with and cast in the fire. Now, against that background, we come to the third main feature here, Jesus Christ in relation to the church.

Now, I want you to notice Paul passes so naturally from the one to the other, and there's something here. There's a principle here. You see, we can so easily separate this material world, this present history, from things spiritual and things eternal, and we can often drive wedges between things that are not separated in the purpose of God.

It's a wonderful picture to behold, our Lord as the Lord of everything, of every sphere, of the material order, of history here and now and there and then, of the moral and the spiritual as well as the material. He's Lord of both worlds. This is a precious gain when our hearts fail us on the borderline between the two worlds.

For one thing, it sanctifies nature to us, and it makes its immeasurable heights and depths at once safe and radiant with the name of Jesus. It connects the remotest age of the past with him. It connects the remotest star in the sky with him.

It bids us, when we feel as if we are lost in the enormity of space and time, fall back upon the center with a capital C, the center of both of them, and the source of both of them, and the Lord of both of them, and rest in his arm. Cowper was right. All things are under one, one spirit.

His, who wore the plaited thorns with bleeding brow, rules universal nature. With his name the traveler can rejoice in the glories of a mountain, forest, and the flood, not worshiping nature but nature's Lord. You and I, in our service of worship as we speak of it on the Lord's day, can worship the same Redeemer, seeing him very especially in his redemptive ministrations for the lost sons and daughters of men.

And so we come to his relationship to the church. He is the head of the body of the church. The church within the general creation, the creation at large, history at large, and beyond history likewise is the church.

The church of Jesus Christ comprises men and women called out of every kindred and every age to be Messiah's people. Some were called out before he ever came into this world. He called them.

He chose them. He made them his own. Abram rejoiced to see my day.

Why? Because Abram received the call in him. He called them out during his incarnate ministry here upon earth, and he called men and women out after he'd gone back to heaven by his apostles, and he still calls men and women to himself by the word of the gospel and the spirit that he sent forth. Jesus Christ calls men and women to himself.

Now many of those that he's called to himself to be his people, his redeemed, have passed beyond the realm of space and time to go to be with their Lord. That's the church. The church can be legitimately spoken of, and I think is in Paul's mind here, envisaged as the new creation alongside of the natural creation.

And what he wants us to see is this, that Jesus Christ is Lord not only of the material order and of history generally as we speak of it, but he is Lord of destiny, and he is Lord of the spiritual realm. He is Lord of the church as well as Lord of the world. This is marvelous you see.

When you have spiritual problems, you don't need to ask your God to go to another God who is Lord over the universe and try to come to terms with him that things should be better for you. He can communicate with you because he's Lord of nature, and he's Lord of life. It's the same Lord over both spheres.

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord. She is his new creation by water and the word. Paul thought of the church as humanity made anew through Jesus Christ.

As the New English Bible rendering of 2 Corinthians 5:17 makes very clear, it goes, when anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world. The old order has gone, a new order has already begun. Any man in Christ, any woman in Christ, there's a new world.

Don't we know what that is? Brothers and sisters, rejoice in your hearts even if you don't want to shout about it. If you know what it is to be brought from death to life, rejoice and give thanks to God in your hearts at this moment. A new creation and Christ is the Lord of it.

He brought men and into it. He keeps men and women in it, and he will bring men and women to the ultimate end and goal of the church as he will bring the material order to its appointed destiny. He's Lord of

both.

But now notice, the church is related to Jesus Christ in a special way, and it's put here in language that we so easily gloss over, and it's too familiar for us, it blinds us. He says that the church is related to Jesus Christ as the human body that also is related to the physical head. Now I want to do something very prosaic this morning before we come to that, and I hope you'll forgive me for doing it, but I just want to read from the pen of someone who should know, what is this relationship between the head, the physical, and the human also, the human body? Listen to these words.

Now they're not mine. In a human individual, it is to the head that the body in large measure owes its vigorous life and growth. From the pituitary gland, housed in a small cavity located in the base of the skull, comes the growth hormone and several other hormones.

This hormone is known to be closely related to the health and growth of connective tissue, cartilage and bone. Consider also the other functions of the head, those related in large measure to guidance. It is in the head that the organs of special sense are mainly located.

The brain receives impulses from the outside world and from inside the body. It, that is the brain, organizes and intercepts these impulses. It thinks, it reacts, and this both voluntarily and involuntarily.

Thus, it guides and directs the actions of an individual. In the cerebrum are located, among other things, the areas that control the various parts of the body. The cerebellum has been called the, quote, coordinator and harmonizer of muscular action, unquote.

The medulla controls such action as winking, sneezing, coughing, chewing, sucking, swallowing, etc., etc. Here also the cardiac center regulates the rate of the heartbeat, whilst the respiratory center is in charge of the activity of the respiratory organs. And all this in the head.

What's this man saying? What he's saying is this, that the physical body is largely governed and ruled and guided and directed by the head. And Paul takes hold of this image and he says, Jesus Christ is the body of which you are the head. Did he say that? No, he did not.

He said, you are the body. The church is the body of which he is the head. He's the ruler.

He's the Lord. He's the guide. He's the director.

He's the sustainer. He's the master. That's how it was meant to be.

The inspiring, ruling, guiding, combining, sustaining power, the mainspring of its activity, the center of its unity, and the seat of its life is in the head, says Bishop Lightfoot, to add another testimony. And all these things reside alone in the Christ whom God has appointed to be the head of the church. Now that meant, of course, in this particular context, that since Christ is the organic and the ruling head of the church, then it doesn't, the church is not dependent on any creature, angelic or otherwise.

You remember that in Colossae, they were trying to introduce the worship of angels, or semi-worship, if there is such a thing. They were bringing angels in and wanting to give them some honor and some prestige, not given in the New Testament. Some kind of angels are known, save in this kind of setting.

You don't need them. You don't need them, says Paul, because everything was made by our Lord Jesus Christ, and he is the head of the body, the ruler, the governing factor. Wesley was right, you see, when he

sang, Vow, O Christ art, all I want, more than all in thee I find.

You don't need to go outside of him and get some other little angel from here, or somebody else from there, and bring them together to help the Lord Jesus to do his work. He's enough. He's adequate.

He's Lord. Now that Jesus Christ is head, and thus Lord of the churches, stressed by the additional statement, he is the beginning and the firstborn of the dead. Now let me hurry here.

He's the beginning and the firstborn of the dead. He's the beginning. Again, we have a technical word here, and I'm sorry, but there are a number of technical terms in this passage, and you would do well, most certainly, to consult a good commentary before you dare to say that you know what Paul is getting at here.

This is a very, very deep passage. Now this word, beginning, is a special word. It's a technical term used in a special way.

Now it could be used in this sense. Just as A is the beginning of the alphabet, so Jesus is the beginning of the church. Could be used in that sense, but that's not the sense in which it is used here.

It seems to be used here in a more definite, in a more dynamic sense altogether. It's more in line with Paul's purpose here, to understand it as having reference to our Lord as the origin of the church. He is the beginning of the church in the sense that he is the first call, the prime mover, the one who sets the whole thing going by his incarnation, and life, and death, and resurrection, and the sending forth of the Holy Spirit, so that men may herald the gospel in the power of the Spirit, and the Spirit bring the same and divine into the hearts of men, so that they're born again.

Our Lord is the sole life giver and life producer. He is the source of the mysterious life which flows from himself into all the members, and is sight in the eye, strength in the arm, swiftness in the foot, color in the cheek, being richly various in its manifestations, but one in its nature, and all his life, the same mysterious derivation of life from him is taught in his own metaphor of the vine and the branches, in which every branch, however far away from the root, lives by the common life circulating through all, through all which clings in the tendrils and reddens and the clusters, and is not theirs, though it is in them. The life did not originate in them.

It doesn't belong to them ultimately. It is not their life. It is the life of the vine.

It is in them, but they didn't put it there. Jesus Christ has given us life, and he keeps his life in us, and we say it is ours, and it is right that we should say that it is ours, but it is only right that we should say that it is ours, because we are in Christ, in Christ. It is life in Christ.

Considered as the beginning then, Jesus Christ is not to be thought of as simply the first flower that blossomed in the garden of the church, but rather, he is rather the root whence every other sprig and flower emerged. He's the root of all things. He's the beginning in that sense.

Now, Jesus Christ is also here designated to be the first from the dead, and if time permitted, I would have wanted to say a number of things about that, but I must just summarize what I wanted to say. What does this mean? What is really stressed here? Well, it's not quite accurate to put it like this. There are many things stressed there, but I think the main thing that Paul wants to refer to is this.

Jesus Christ is the firstborn from among the dead in this sense. He's the firstborn to leave the territory of the dead, never more to go back. Oh, there were people who were raised from the dead before Jesus was conceived in the virgin's womb.

A child of the Shunammite woman and two kings, you remember? And there are others, maybe in the Old Testament, that were brought to life before Jesus was born, but they died again. The dear Shunammite had to see her. She lived long enough.

She had to go to the funeral of her son. He was brought back to life, but he went back again to death. So did Lazarus in the days of our Lord.

He was brought back to life, and you say, that's wonderful. I'd like a Lazarus experience. Well, all right, but I'm not so excited about a Lazarus experience, because Lazarus had to die again.

But our Lord Jesus went into the darkness of the grave and was buried, and the royal seal of Rome was on the stone. He was buried and done with and to be forgotten by all and sundry. But up from the grave he arose with a mighty triumph for his foes.

He arose a victor from the dark domain, and he lives forever with his saints to reign. Hallelujah. Christ arose.

And so the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews is able to say, because he ever liveth, he is able to make intercession for us. And that's why he says he's able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him. You see, he lives evermore in the power of an endless life.

Death has no claim upon him. He's not going back into the grave again. My Lord will not go under six feet of sod again.

He'll not be buried again. He's come out never more to go back. He stands, according to the language of Saint John in his apocalypse, with the keys of hell and of death dangling to his loins.

Did you ever see another with those keys? Never. Men and women, young men and young maidens, there is none other like your Lord Jesus Christ. Get to know him.

He will travel the world over, and you will not see anyone worthy to be a shadow of him. Thus our Lord occupies a place of unique headship and lordship in relation to the church. He's the beginning and the end, the creator and the perfecter, the donor of eternal life to begin with, and the pattern of the perfect redemption with which our eternal life will conclude in due course.

And lastly, the fact of our Lord's supreme and sovereign relation to the universe and to the church has a purposeful end in view. So what, you say? You've talked about all this. Well, now one could apply it in a myriad ways, but there is one way in which it is applied here.

So that in everything he should have the preeminent. In everything? What do you mean? We'll start with the individual. In the way we think of him, in the way we talk about him, in the way we pray to the Father through him, in the way we worship him, in the way we represent him to other people.

That in all things as individuals and as groups of people, he should have the preeminence. He's the icon of God, the image of God in his essential nature. He's the Lord of the universe.

It began in him and it will end with him, and he keeps it moving until it comes to its destiny. And he's the Lord of the church, the head of the body. Now Paul does something here.

I don't know whether this fascinates me more than it would anybody else, but, you know, I like to see Paul unable to stop. He's quite unable to stop here. The language, the grammar makes it absolutely clear.

Paul's thoughts seem to be able, seem quite unable to stop, because logically his argument reached its climax with those closing words in verse 18. That in all things he might have the preeminence. Now logically and grammatically everything was leading up to this climax.

What for? For this. That in everything he should have the preeminence. Well now you've stopped.

You've come to the end of your subject. Start with a new one. You know, Paul couldn't.

I like that. I like that. You see, he was no cold calculated armchair philosopher or theologian, but he was a worshiper.

The late Bishop Handley Moon was quite right when he said of the Apostle Paul, he is more an adoring theologian than anything else. And perhaps this is something that theologians need to learn how to adore. Unfortunately, when some of them have gone through their disciplines, there's very little left to adore.

But the Apostle Paul adored, and in his adoration the subject he's already finished comes back again, and he adds this. I want you to see it even though he can't stay with it. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on a cross.

Now really that's an afterthought that he puts in after putting the period in its place. It's a recapitulation. Now let me just say two or three things about it as we have this morning.

All the fullness of God was pleased to dwell in him. And I just make these statements with a minimum of comment. God dwelt in Jesus Christ, dwelt in him.

The fullness of God dwelt in Jesus Christ. Not a bit of him, not a shadow of him, but the pleroma. And that's a special word.

The whole fullness of God. All the fullness of God dwelt in him. Now when you've used the word pleroma, there's no need to add any adjective, but all is tautology, the word all, because pleroma means everything, nothing left out.

But you see, Paul knew our temptation, we wouldn't see it. And so he brings in this tautology and he repeats and he says, all the fullness, you people, open your eyes, not just, I want you to get it, you see. All the fullness of the God had dwelt in him.

Wait a moment, there's one other thing I haven't said. God was pleased that all his fullness should dwell in him. God was pleased.

Jesus did not rob anything of the fullness of God to have it in himself and squeeze it into himself as it were and get some sort of an outpost of rebellion against the Father. That was not him. He didn't cry for his rights, let me have this, or use intrigue, let me have that.

No, that was not him at all. But the Father was pleased that all his fullness should dwell in him. And there's one other thing to say, I nearly forgot.

That word to dwell means taking up permanent residence. We have people come here and they change their addresses so often. Dear people, we love to have you, however often you change your addresses, but it's difficult to keep up with some people's addresses.

But I want to tell you that my Lord Jesus Christ is the repository of all the pleroma of God, and that pleroma will never change its address. It will only be in him for all eternity. Last of all, there is reference here to all the vastness of the reconciliation that was accomplished.

Now I can't start with this. Through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things in earth or things in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. Can I just say one thing, one only, and it's perhaps not the most important, but it gives you a picture.

Our Lord Jesus Christ brought angels and men together, things in heaven and things on earth. This is not everything. There are many other things, perhaps more important, left out.

Jesus Christ took upon him the nature of men, but he originally enjoyed what we may perhaps speak of as the condition and state of angels. Is that not what Paul had in mind when he said, The first man was of the earth, earthy. The second man was the Lord from heaven.

The Savior was a native of the world where the angels have their home. Thus, though men may claim that the reconciler of sinners took upon himself their nature, the angels might claim with equal propriety that he hailed from their country. But in him, angels and men have their meeting point.

More specifically, angels and men are reconciled by his blood and appear in the same kingdom, in the same spirit. And this is the picture I leave with you. You can read it when you go home in Revelation chapter 5 verses 8 to 10.

And you come into the very sanctuary of heaven, and in the center is the throne of God and of the Lamb. And around the throne of God and of the Lamb, you see redeemed men and women of every nation, clime, people, tongue, etc. And there they are, blessing God and praising and worshiping.

Ah, but didn't you see? I hope you've seen it before. If you haven't seen it before, see it today. Around the circle of the redeemed is the circle of angels and archangels, and they're in the same place.

They have the same center of gravity. Their hearts and their eyes are moving in the same direction. What's more, they sing the same song, though the saints sing something they do not.

But what I want you to see is this, that angels and men have been reconciled and are united in the same place, singing together the glories of the Lamb. Their song is one. Here it is, thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, and thou hast made us kings and priests to God, say the saints.

But there then is something, there is something in the song of the saints which is not in the song of the angels. Worthy art thou, cry the angels, worthy art thou to take the book and to open the seals thereof, the seven seals thereof, for thou wast slain. The angels lead in the chorus, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, etc.

Their song is one. Their song is one. They dwell together around the same object, but the saints have this one note to their praise that angels have not.

What is it? This, thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, and hast made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, reconciled and prepared to take their places. That's heaven. They're all there, they're all rejoicing, and they're rejoicing to take their stations according to God's appointment and not argue with a divine appointment that angels should serve men as they serve God in the glory.

You know, this makes me feel so ashamed of myself and so ashamed of many of my fellow Christians that we cannot take the humble position that God has anointed and appointed for us. Oftentimes, we can't be the messengers, the angels. We've got to be next to the throne or nothing.

May God have mercy on us. But here he has reconciled all things to himself, and here in the glory they're all prepared. And this is heaven, and that heaven came into being only by the redeeming work of the one who was the image of the Father, the Lord of creation, the head of the church.

So that in all things he might have the preeminent, that we should trust, that we should worship him, that we should represent him, and count it a privilege so to do, even to suffer for his name's sake. Oh, may the Lord in this confusing age to his glory. Almighty God our Father, your word finds its way into our deepest souls, and its principles have a way of barbing our consciences that have sometimes got very dull.

In particular, oh Lord, do we feel this need to have such an understanding of the person, and the greatness, and the glory of our Savior, that we can trust, and realize that when the purveyors of other alleged deities or messiahs come and knock at our doors, we have him who is the first, and the knowledge of him. We have a salvation that is both past, present, and future, covers everything, and we are filled to the core. Oh Lord, enable us as a people, and as individuals, enable us, we pray, to begin to seek so that our Lord may fill the horizons of our lives, satisfy the deepest yearnings of our grace, as you have promised.

We may come to know the reality, and often lead us on our way. For Jesus' sake we pray. Amen.

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