

Jesus Christ Is Lord - Lord of the Universe

by J. Glyn Owen

Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe due to his role as creator, his historical ministry, and his exaltation to the right hand of God.

Duration: 56:14

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2

Topics: "Lord"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that the universe, including humanity, was created by the Son of God and is meant to bring glory to Him. The purpose of our existence is not solely for our own enjoyment, but to serve the Son and fulfill His purposes. The speaker highlights that sin poses a constant threat to the universe and the Son's inheritance, but the Lord Jesus Christ actively rules and overrules history to counteract this disruption. Through His redemptive present rule, Jesus guides the progress of history towards its appointed destiny, ultimately gathering those who choose to serve Him in eternity.

Transcript

Now would you kindly turn with me prayerfully to the subject before us this morning and if you have your New Testament handy you may find it beneficial to be turning to the four passages I don't know how you're going to do all this at once at any rate uh to be turning to the four brief passages that we read a little earlier on from John, Colossians, Hebrews and Matthews and Matthew, particularly the first three of these. Jesus Christ is Lord, Lord of the universe. Now we have been reaffirming a cardinal Christian tenet in these in this series namely the tenet that Jesus Christ is Lord in the fullest sense of that word.

The words Jesus is Lord, some of you at any rate will realize, comprise the first Christian creed. In the early church whenever someone was prepared to acknowledge Jesus is Lord he was accepted as a candidate for baptism and was believed to be a true disciple of the Lord Jesus as Paul puts it. No man can call Jesus Lord, no man can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

Well he can mouth the word but he cannot mean it. In order to say Jesus of Nazareth is Lord it requires the revelation that comes only from God and the illumination to recognize him as such. And then of course Paul tells us that that is adequate to make and to constitute a person a Christian.

In his dissertation to the Romans he says that if you if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and then believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved. And so we have here the

earliest Christian creed Jesus is Lord. Now we have based this affirmation concerning the lordship of Jesus Christ first of all on Lord's testimony to himself.

Secondly upon the witness of those who lived with him, lived with him and were on intimate terms with him for a period of approximately three and a half years. Having lived in closest relationship with their master for that period they conceded to him the highest and the loftiest titles and designations found in their vocabulary. They could say nothing loftier of him than they did say.

They could not think in higher terms of him than they did think. And let us remember it was not just a matter of popularizing a philosophy but when they laid their colors to the mast and acknowledged themselves to be but disciples of Jesus Christ the Lord they were literally inviting persecution and death. And they died for him as well as live for him.

Now granted that Jesus claimed to be Lord and that his first followers recognized the validity of his claims. The question faces us how did he actually acquire the title Lord which is the highest of all. John R. W. Stott speaking in the Philadelphia Conference of Reformed Theology.

Well now I could have a little advert in here but I won't take it this morning I have no time. But you know the Philadelphia Conference of Reformed Theology will be held here in the last weekend in April first in May. That's all I can say.

Well okay Dr. John R. W. Stott speaking there in 1976 was actually taking as his theme the title of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Not taking it in the way that we are taking it precisely but he was referring to Jesus Christ as Lord. And he posed and answered this question in a threefold way.

How did Jesus get his Lordship? Where did he get it from? How was it conceded to him? And he says three statements. He makes three statements I cannot add to them. First Jesus had this title because he was God.

He possessed this title from all eternity along with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. The three persons of the triune God share in an eternal Lordship. So that there never was a time when Jesus was not Lord.

Second Jesus brought the title with him when he came to earth. Now this is where many of us don't see as clearly as we ought. When Jesus became man he did not cease to be God.

When Jesus became a servant he did not cease to be Lord. Just after he had washed the disciples feet he says you call me master and lord and so I am he says. Which really really shatters us.

There he's just had the towel around his loins as he and he's been washing the disciples feet and just a moment later he says I am Lord who's done this. If I your master and your Lord have done this you shouldn't have any difficulty in serving one another. I'm the Lord.

But let me go back one step. When the angels announced to the shepherds outside Bethlehem that the Savior was born. You remember the terms.

They did not announce that the Savior was born in these terms. Unto you was born this day in the city of David a Savior who is the Lord's Christ. The Lord's Messiah.

Now I hope you know what's wrong with that statement. He didn't say Jesus the babe born in Bethlehem is the anointed Messiah of the Lord. He is that of You remember what the angel said.

I'm announcing he says the arrival of the Savior who is Messiah the Lord. The Lord. I don't know how the shepherds took it in.

Did they realize as they moved to Bethlehem to see those things that had come to pass that they're wrapped in swaddling clothes there in that rough humane manger was none other than the Lord. But that's what the angel said and the angel should know. So I believe anyway.

And then of course in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ that was manifestly proven by the fact that in his life the kingdom the rule of God came into this world of ours. His life his victory over Satan his victory over temptation his his his ability to deal with human needs of the body and of the mind and of the spirit manifested that he was Lord. And so we said the kingdom of God has come into your midst.

The reign of the heavens were manifestly present upon earth as Jesus walked among the needy. He was king he introduced the kingdom. Thirdly I'm sorry I'm enlarging upon John Stott now.

I shouldn't do that. There is a third way in which Jesus secured the title Lord. He was especially accorded it at his exaltation to the right hand of God at his ascension.

Jesus had often predicted his death and ignominy even death by crucifixion. Very rarely had he done so without also pointing to something beyond his death. Namely the glory that should follow.

He had always foreseen the glory that was to come. Very daringly our Lord even applied to himself the words of Psalm 110 verse 1 which goes like this. The Lord said to my Lord sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

Now at his trial if you please. Oh our Lord was courageous. Oh the courage of the Son of God.

At his very trial before the Sanhedrin Jesus said this. You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God. What's he saying? He's virtually saying that he is the fulfillment of the person spoken of in Psalm 110 verse 1. When God said to him who was already Lord sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

On the basis of that same verse Peter quotes it before he goes on to say this in Acts chapter 2 verse 36. Therefore he says let all Israel be assured of this. God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.

Stott concludes his reference to the manner in which Jesus inherits the title Lord in these following words. So Jesus is Lord three times over by right. First by right of his Godhead sharing the throne of God.

Second by right of his historical ministry ushering in the kingdom of God. And third by right of his supreme exaltation seated at the right hand of God. Jesus is three times Lord and thus deserves our full homage and our total worship.

And I hope every heart in this congregation this morning says amen to that. Now we have to broaden our approach. We have to broaden our study of this subject in order to examine the extent of that lordship.

And our subject this morning takes us right to the peak of it all. Jesus is Lord of the universe. Not Lord wearing a title that is not applied to anybody or anything in particular.

But he is Lord if you like of all. But our designation this morning is he is Lord of the universe. I want to say three things in order to manifest I trust and prove how the New Testament concede this this to him.

The first Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe due to his role as its creator. Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe due to his role as the creator of the universe. Though the details and the dating of creation as given in Genesis the Genesis record has been variously interpreted.

The New Testament writers unequivocally and concertedly announce and affirm that we live in a divinely created universe. Now this is a fact too indelibly written into the fabric of our Christian faith to be extricated without causing the whole to collapse. Those who argue for a very elaborate form of evolution generally talk about the first few chapters of Genesis which they push on one side.

If there are any such here this morning let me tell you you do not simply have to get rid of the first few chapters of Genesis in order to avoid the concept of creation. You've got to get rid of Paul you've got to get rid of John you've got to get rid of Peter you've got to get rid of Jude you've got to get rid of the bulk of the writers of the New Testament. Because concertedly in one way or another they say you and I don't live in an alien universe.

We're not living in a jungle we are living in a world a cosmos an orderly place that was brought into existence by the Godhead through the agency of the sun. And you can't get rid of the doctrine of creation by just saying Genesis belongs to an era beyond pre-scientific and we can get rid of that and get back to the New Testament. You can't do that.

You can't do that. Now whatever this issue is and wherever it takes you you simply can't do that. Now for our purposes let us refer to three passages and only three that clearly state the fact and which designate Jesus role in creation.

I'm not going to read again John 1 3 to 4 Colossians 1 16 Hebrews 1 1 & 2 but I'd like you to notice the relevant statements there. Now they're absolutely key. Please don't charge me with just bringing a phrase out from here or there.

If we were here for a week I would like to go through every detail of those of those passages. And I know you like to get home sometime. Would you please focus your attention very especially upon these crucial statements in John 1 3. Through him all things were made.

And then the next statement without him was not anything made that was made. Now go down to Colossians chapter 1 and verse 16. You notice there is something repeated here and evidently when we have repetitions it means that there is reason for it.

By him all things were created. Then come to the end of the verse. All things were created by him.

By him all things were created. All things were created by him. And then in Hebrews chapter 1 and verse 2. Through whom he that is God made the universe.

Now actually scripture to be to be strictly accurate. Scripture variously attributes the work of creation to all three persons of the Trinity. To the entire Godhead at various times.

Sometimes the references to the father as to the ultimate source of all things as in Genesis 1 1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. There are many other passages. At other times the references to the spirit as the creator.

The creator spirit as for example in Psalm 104 and verse 30. Where we read when you send your spirit they are created and you renew the face of the earth. And the reference there even though it's the present tense is primarily to creation.

Then again as in the text we have just quoted from John Colossians and Hebrews. Creation is attributed to the son of God. We do not therefore mean to imply that the son created the universe in isolation from the father and the spirit.

You see that's not possible. The unity the bond of union between the three persons of the Godhead is such even the one of them is the executive. That does the will of the Godhead.

He is seen to do the action but the whole Godhead is involved. But more than that scripture goes out of its way to explain the the way in which the son of God was the agent of the Godhead in the creation of the universe. Now let's look at these several statements rather briefly.

Paul's inspired affirmation in in Colossians. Colossians 1 16. Now I want you to notice there.

Paul said I said that Paul was repeating himself. And I quoted from the NIV by him all things were created at the beginning of verse. Then at the end of the verse all things were created by him and for him.

Well now actually there's a difference. He doesn't say exactly the same thing twice. The King James doesn't show the difference neither does the NIV.

The reason they don't by the way is not cussedness or desire to mislead anybody. They don't they don't distinguish between the two kinds of statement. Because they think that they're so much alike you can you can hardly distinguish between them.

But the revised standard version does distinguish. And they translate this 16th verse in this way. For in him all things were created in heaven and on earth visible and invisible whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities.

And now the end of the verse all things were created through him and for him. So the important prepositions are and prepositions are very important here. All things were created in him.

What on earth does that mean? And all things were created by him. Well that we can understand but what does the first mean? Well let me give you a comment from a contemporary commentator. He puts it like this.

All things it makes no difference whether they be material or spiritual were created in him. That is with reference to the Son the firstborn. And then he goes on to explain what it what it probably means.

As two walls and the bricks in those two walls are arranged in relation to the cornerstone from which they derive their angle of direction. So it was in relation to Christ that all things were originally created. He is their point of reference.

Now the picture is a very beautiful one. Let's say that this book is the cornerstone. It's a very simple one.

Here is the cornerstone at that corner there if you like. A big slab of a stone at the corner right at the bottom. Now all these these two walls.

One going that way and the one going this way. And the laying of the bricks or the laying of the stone in each of these two walls are going to be determined by the cornerstone. If it's going to be exactly 90 90 degrees.

Well it's going to be determined by the cornerstone. Jesus is that cornerstone. He determines how the universe is to be made.

But I think there is another statement in the New Testament which qualifies and helps us to understand that. I shall be dwelling with it in a little more detail later on. But let me refer to it now.

Because it casts so much light on this. In all probability the same notion should be elucidated in terms of the reference in Hebrews 1 to the fact that Jesus Christ is the designated heir of the universe. Before the universe was created we read that the heir had been appointed.

Isn't that precious? Nothing was only the Godhead. And before anything was in existence God had appointed his son later to come into a created world to be the mediator of last men and women. For he foresaw everything as clear as day and foreordained everything.

He appointed his son to be the heir of the entire creation. And the creation was brought into existence in order to bring pleasure to the son. In order to bring honor to the son and glory to the son.

That's why this universe was made. He was the point of reference. And all the energies and all the genius that came into the making of the universe is the is the energy of the word.

God spake and it was done. He performed the act of creation by his son the word. But now that's one of the prepositions.

Everything was made in him. In that sense he was the point of reference. But very specifically Paul goes on.

Everything was made by him. Die out now. And here is a clear reference to the fact that the son was the agent of the entire Godhead.

Effecting the act of creation. Just as he is the mediator in our redemption. So he was the agent in creation.

Everything was made by him. And says John in case you're tempted to give the honor to somebody else. Nothing was made that was made except by him.

Nothing at all. In other words creation as such was planned and purposed by the Godhead. But the plan was executed by the son.

Now the inspired language of John and the epistle to the Hebrews add to this. They or rather that they just confirmed this. John's language is identical with a second statement in Paul's affirmation.

And he uses the same preposition that is found there. All things were made through him or by means of him. That is the son.

John like Paul in Colossians makes sure that he includes everything in that creative act of the son. Everything. There was nothing brought into existence by any means whatsoever other than by the son.

The son you see brought everything into existence. One commentator very daringly uses an analogy here. A modern analogy.

Now whether he's right or whether he's wrong you must judge. But I'm going to refer to it. He refers to the Lord's place in the creation of the universe as akin to that of a contractor in modern building programs.

Now what he says is this. That the son was the contractor ordained by the Godhead. And entrusted with a whole task to bring into being a creation that would ultimately redound to his own glory as the creator and as the redeemer.

And then he ends with this very clear statement. And there was no sub-contracting. There was none other.

All things that were made were made by him. He was the sole contractor of the edifice. The writer of the Hebrews also employs the very same language.

When he says through him he God or the Godhead made the universe. And the emphasis there is not so much upon the material universe as upon the ages of the universe. The word is I own.

The word for age. In other words he made the whole thing. And insofar as there is a continuing process of creation.

He is lord of that. He's responsible for that. He set the whole thing in being at the beginning.

And if there is a continued act of creation. Then he also is responsible for that. All the ages.

All the ages come from the genius of the son. And by the power of the son. He's the architect.

He's the contractor. And there is no other to succeed him. I don't know what your view of creation is.

But I whatever if you believe you're a Christian. And if you believe in the word of God. You've got to bring it under the light of these statements.

They're not mine. Now without becoming further involved in technical biblical exegesis. Let us underscore the implication of this of this threefold testimony.

To the fact that Jesus Christ was the agent of the Godhead in the creation of the universe. That implication of course is this. He is essentially its Lord.

The creator of anything is essentially its Lord. He has a right to it that no one else has. And what is more.

It qualifies him as no one else to be its savior. If savior is needed. You and I buy some precious things from time to time.

Maybe a Cadillac. Maybe something else that's very valuable. And with the instructions they tell me.

I don't own a Cadillac by the way. Okay. But with the instructions they tell me.

You are told not to allow everybody to tamper with the thing. But if anything goes wrong. See that the makers or their agents.

And they alone tackle the business. If anything goes wrong. Don't trust anyone else.

And I believe my friends that that is written into the doctrine of the divine creation of this universe. It is only the creator who can ultimately put right what has gone wrong. Others may patch up this that and the other.

But no man can put right what has gone wrong with the creation that God made through his son. His role as creator. But now not every creator contractor is Lord.

Not every not every creator not every contractor owns what he's made. Well that's my next point. Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe also because he is its rightful and soul heir.

Now we refer to this but I must make it very specific without dwelling on it. Let me quote again from Colossians 1 16. All things were created by him and notice and for him.

Make work from Romans 11 36. From him and through him and to him are all things. And again from Hebrews 1 2. His son whom he that is God appointed heir of all things.

Why did the Godhead plan such a complex and such a glorious universe as ours? What was the divine intention? What was God after? What were the three persons of the Godhead thinking about? What was the ultimate end when they talked about bringing man and other creatures into existence and a complex universe such as ours? What was the Godhead after? Oh brothers and sisters in Christ let's get it shall we? If we never get it again let's get it this morning. The concern of the Godhead was the glory of the son who was going to become the incarnation of the Godhead and the mediator of salvation and the savior of lost men and women. That he should in all things have the preeminence and the glory.

And the universe was made for him. For him to him heir of all things. Now the implication of these three biblical references to which we've referred is most serious and far-reaching.

You see the cosmos wasn't made for you and for me. You get cross when things are not what you want them to be. So do I sometimes.

I'm sorry to say. And if it's a very cold winter I grumble too. But listen here.

This cosmos, this universe was not made for you. It was not made for me. More than that it wasn't made for man.

It wasn't made for man nor men. We are all its favored inhabitants. And God doesn't charge any rent of us.

But it doesn't belong to us. It belongs to the son who created it. And we are part of the creation that were meant to bring glory to the creator's son and the Godhead who commissioned him.

The whole universe including ourselves was made with a view to serving the purposes and ministering to the pleasure of the son of God. The son of God's love. Now this is the reason for your existence.

Listen friends. You were not brought into life just to enjoy yourself. I'm sorry to have to say that to some of you.

Because you see we think that don't we? Why am I doing here? Well I'm here to have a jolly good time. Let's eat and drink and be merry. This is what I'm here for.

Life will soon be over. Let's make the most of it. God have mercy on us.

You and I were not put here for that. We were given life in order that what we are and what we have should minister to the glory of our creator. He's the Lord.

We are the servants. We, you and I, own nothing that was brought into being. Everything that was brought into existence was brought into existence that it should minister to the son.

You got a home, it was brought into existence to minister to the son. You got a car, an automobile, it was given you to minister to the glory of the son. Have you got good health? It was given you to minister to the glory of the son.

Have you any prospects? Then in so far as you have them, they are yours that they should minister to the glory of the creator Lord of the universe. Not yourself. Now brothers and sisters I cannot conceive of a more far-reaching and important statement than that Jesus Christ is the appointed heir of the cosmos in its entirety.

If this is true it requires us to become wholly Christ centered in our living and it demands the full employment of our whole beings and of our entire possessions to fulfill his pleasure. He is the exclusive Lord of the universe. He has no rightful rival and no possible successor.

As I understand the implications of that fact I have to say that I know of no valid reason why one any of us should have been given life. Two, why any one of us should be allowed to live beyond this very moment unless our life ministers to the glory of the son. Men and women if you and I are living for ourselves this morning I tell you we are living out of sheer grace for we are cutting right across the purpose of the universe and we are dishonoring the heir and we are going against the grain of God's will.

There is no reason why God should give you health or wealth or anything else nor me unless in an in so doing it we minister to the glory of our Lord. He's the Lord and it is not enough to sing Jesus shall reign wherever some does his successive journeys run in some distant millennium or whatever you have around the corner there when most of us are dead. No no no it must apply now your life will soon be over and mine.

Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe because of his role as its creator because he is its rightful heir. But now not every creator heir can have his house or mansion or save it from ruin before it is taken over by him. Some people have had a mansion built to their taste according to their specifications but before they got into possession of it certain things had happened to it.

I could quote you illustration. Now listen my third point and last one. Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe because of the redemptive present rule whereby he guides the progress of history towards its appointed destiny.

Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe not only because he set the whole thing in motion and brought into existence what was brought into existence. Not simply because he is the heir of all things at last but because he is the Lord of history between the beginning and the end and he guides the affairs of the universe so that at last he will gather out of the nations those things that he chooses to serve him in the eternity beyond the end. And what is more he sovereignly makes sure that nothing can happen in this present world that he cannot rectify and redeem if that is his will so that it serves his eternal purpose.

The entire created order which owes its origin to the son of God as the divine agent responsible for its existence and which was made to serve his purpose and pleasure as the designated heir of all things is now being sustained. Now notice I'm quoting being held together held together held together by him and guided by him towards its destined goal the goal of his own glory. One day he will publicly return and claim his inheritance before a watching world and in the meantime he is supervising and sovereignly ruling in the affairs of the world so that his pleasure will be eventually fulfilled and he will have total pleasure at last.

Now when I'm saying that I'm quite sure some of you are thinking about what is going on in the world which is contrary to his will and evidently contrary to his purpose. What about the sin? What about the things that are happening which are so contrary to his will and purpose? What this statement from Colossians and from Hebrews tells us is this. He's supervising the whole thing and he allows nothing to happen that he cannot redeem in due course and make to serve his purpose and sooner or later he will right every wrong and sooner or later he will show us what he's been doing in the meantime and we are to trust him that throughout all the ages of time he is doing exactly this.

I came across a little passage in McLaren puts it in rather a poetic way but I think it's very clear and very beautiful. All things came into being and form an ordered unity in him. He links all creatures and forces into a cooperant whole, reconciling their antagonisms, drawing all their currents into one great wave, melting all their notes into music which God can even now hear however discordant it may sound to us.

He is the bond of perfectness. He is the keystone of the arch. He is the center of the wheel.

But we must face the facts. The truth is that sin constantly threatens the total disruption and disintegration of the universe and it would actually rob the son of its inheritance if it could, if it were allowed to go unchecked. Now that tendency is counteracted by the activity of our blessed Lord whereby he rules and overrules the warring elements of history just as he hushed the sea to silence when he went with his disciples into a storm on the little sea of Galilee.

He will eventually get glory and the whole cosmos will eventually serve his purpose. His hand so holds the controls and guides the movement of history that the cosmos does not now degenerate into chaos and so that all things should work together for the good that he has appointed in due course. Just as the unseen force we call the law of gravity keeps things fixed in their proper places and guides moving things in their proper orbit, so also does the word of the Lord control all creatures great and small within the limits he has done.

Now I'm drawing to a close. Now such a task however is not negative but positive. It's not simply a matter of prohibiting alien forces from causing disruption beyond that which the Lord allows.

It includes that but it goes beyond that and that positive feature comes out very clearly in Hebrews 1:3 where it says he upholds all things by the word of his power. I've no time to enlarge upon this but the picture is not so much of an omnipotent Lord holding the universe up on his shoulders like a mighty Hercules but he is omnipotently sustaining the universe nevertheless. But the main picture is this he's not simply holding the universe up in the hollow of his hands but he's carrying it forward.

He's moving ahead. He's taking it forward to his goal toward the appointed end by God and he will see to that and on the way toward that goal there is one thing that happens. It happens now in part ultimately it'll happen in a most significant and cosmic way and that is judgment.

It has often been asked by one or another where is history going. Well the New Testament answers that question I believe. History is moving irrevocably toward the day of God and the day of his son and the glory of the appointed heir of the universe.

And during the times of its onward march the sovereign Lord from time to time comes in to expurgate, to judge, to exercise his judgment upon an individual or a company or a nation or a civilization which has gone so far out of his will that the only thing he can do with it is to get rid of it. Whereas beyond this time process at the very end of it there will be a final judgment a universal judgment when every conceivable thing that he has allowed to go unchecked and unrewarded will be extricated from the pattern and cast aside into the furnace. And that's the picture of Jesus.

That's the picture he gives. Here is this let me quote to you from John Calvin. I think it's necessary to give this marvelous quote.

In the final chapter of his institute John Calvin writes these words. Here is displayed he says God's wonderful goodness and power and providence. But sometimes he raises up some of his servants as public avengers.

Now our our contemporary climate doesn't like this notion at all. But never mind forget about them for a moment. God raises up his public avengers, his servants.

Sometimes he even calls them anointed ones like Cyrus of old. And he arms them with commission to punish unrighteous domination. And to deliver from their distressing calamities a people who have been unjustly oppressed.

Sometimes he accomplishes this by the fury of men who meditate and attempt something altogether different. He liberated the people of Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh by Moses. He subdued the pride of Tyre by the Egyptians.

The insolence of the Egyptians by the Assyrians. The haughtiness of the Assyrians by the Chaldeans. The confidence of Babylon by the Medes and the Persians.

And after Cyrus had subjugated the Medes. The ingratitude of the kings of Israel and of Judah and their impious rebellion notwithstanding all his numerous favors. He repressed and punished sometimes by the Assyrians sometimes by the Babylonians.

Whatever opinion is formed of the acts of men yet the Lord equally executed his work by them when he broke the sanguine receptors of insolent king. You and I could also refer to the fall of Rome or you could refer to the fall of the demonic Third Reich in Germany. And it may be that this process is already going on at this present moment.

Though we see things through a through a glass darkly. God the Lord is on the helm and his son who is to be the heir of all things is upholding all things. And when he sees jarring agencies coming in to disintegrate the universe to rob him of his inheritance he steps forth in judgment.

But over and above all these kinds of judgments and interventions in the course of history there is the final cosmic irreversible judgment of the sun at the end of the universe. A climax in which the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll we are told. And in which the evils of human egotism throughout history will finally be put right.

On that day we are told there will be nothing covered that shall not be revealed. Nothing hid that shall not be made known and whatsoever you have spoken in darkness will be heard in the light. And that which you have spoken in the year in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house tops.

This promise of final perfectly just judgment of all men and women and nations at the end of time gives the Christian conception of history a direction and its ultimate meaning. Every moment of the Christian's life must be lived then existentially in the light of John Donne's famous question what if this present were the world's last night. The time of the end cannot be calculated but the fact of the end is certain.

And the end will involve the final and irrevocable judgment over which let me remind you dear people this morning over which none other will preside. And there will be no one standing in the sides to take his place if he faints for he won't faint. None other than the appointed heir of the universe himself.

And every detail in your life and mind that has offended him and been dishonoring to him will have to be extricated and forgiven before we come there. If we are to know the joy and the glory of the eternity beyond. Now I am ending.

But I want to end with my Lord's own words. Jesus put it all in terms that spoke of the seriousness of the issue in his explanation of the parable of the weeds. I want to read from J.B. Phillips.

Just as the weeds are gathered up and burned in the fire so will it happen at the end of the world. The Son of Man will send out his angels and they will uproot from the kingdom everything that is spoiling it. And all those who live in defiance of its laws and will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be tears and bitter regret.

Then after that final purgation then says the Lord the good will shine out like the sun in their father's kingdom. The man who has years should use them says J.B. Phillips. Jesus is Lord of the universe.

Jesus is Lord of the universe. Men and women old and young committed Christians and some of you who may not be so committed. There may be some unbelievers here this morning.

I want not to frighten you but I want with all the sincerity of my soul to tell you that whatever avenue you take between now and your death and your demise at the end of that avenue stands the Lord of history and he wants an answer from you. What have you done with the life I give you? And the space between now and the moment of your death is a space of grace given you to change your mind and turn around and make your peace and receive forgiveness and be prepared and see that there is nothing left in your life that offends the judge the holy just and gracious judge of the universe. He bids you come now to the fountain where your every sin can be washed away.

If you've not come before I ask you come today. What a blessed opportunity for some of you this morning here in this congregation. No one will think you're queer or odd if you even stand up and say I want to come to the Savior.

Do it today if you're outside in the cold. I heard someone pray a few times recently for members of this congregation who are not saved. Now I don't know any and I've made it my business to ask members of this congregation when I've spoken to them the first time.

Do they know the Lord Jesus in a personal way? Is there a member of Knox here this morning who is unsaved? I beg of you as your pastor get right with God. Don't be satisfied with the fact that your name is

just on the on the register. Make sure of it.

The times are serious. You will be judged according to your privileges. Jesus is Lord of the universe and as sure as he is one day he will inherit his possessions and his people.

Having finally rid the entire cosmos of every marring feature and having perfected his purpose in the entire redeemed community that he calls his bride, his beloved, his own. Let us pray. Oh Lord, oh Lord our God.

Your truth is always a truth that is sobering for us mortals to face, to face up to. And especially this truth that we have been feebly trying to expound from your word today. But some of us need a thunder clap in our ears to be wakened from our lethargy.

We like the Christian game. We can opt out every now and again and just come in and play when we think the going is reasonable. But we don't like the cross that crucifies the old man.

And we don't like the discipline that reminds us of the judgment to come. Forgive us our Lord. Oh merciful Father, humble us all and start with me.

And make us so terribly real in our relationship with yourself that we shall be prepared to walk in the light as you are in the light, for you are light as well as love. And we shall know thereby the cleansing of the blood that enables us to live in the eternal light of the city. Four square.

These things we ask and these sins of ours we humbly confess. In the name of your Son, our Lord and our Savior. Amen.

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