

The Tabernacle 11 the Curtains

by J. Henry Brown

The sermon explores the significance of the tabernacle curtains, highlighting the reputation of Jesus Christ, his consecration and sanctification, and the day of atonement.

Duration: 47:40

Scripture: Exodus 26:1-28, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Tabernacle Symbolism", "Christology"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the tabernacle as a model of what was in the wilderness. He explains that the tabernacle represents Christ personally and corporately. The speaker mentions that the tabernacle was closed with five pillars and a door, but they have been taken down to allow for easier visibility inside. The speaker emphasizes that the tabernacle symbolizes Christ as God's dwelling place, where the fullness of the Godhead resides.

Transcript

Morning. We are going to turn our attention to the sanctuary itself. We're going to deal with the curtains, the coverings.

So, we'll return to the book of Exodus again to read in chapter 26, and one or two remarks as we are reading, so that it will be a help to us. Exodus chapter 26, reading from verse 1. Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle, now you notice the word tabernacle seems to have special reference to these curtains, moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twine linen, and blue and purple and scarlet, with cherubim, not cherubim, cherub is singular, cherubim plural, with cherubim of cunning work shalt thou make them. The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, now reckoning a cubit to be the length from the tip of the longest finger to the elbow, roughly about 18 inches, it would mean that these curtains were about 42 feet long.

Eight and twenty cubits in length, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits, which would mean there would be six feet. So, we have each of these ten curtains 42 feet long, six feet wide, and every one of the curtains shall have one measure. Five curtains shall be coupled together one to another, making a set of five, and the other five curtains shall be coupled one to another, making another set of five, and thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the salvage in the coupling of the first set, and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of the other curtain in the coupling of the second set.

Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, the one set of curtains, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second set. That the loops may take hold one of another, and thou shalt make fifty patches or clasps of gold, and couple the curtains together with the patches, and it shall be one tabernacle." There again the word tabernacle used with reference to these curtains. Well now, that is our reading about the tabernacle curtains.

Now, we're going to read about the tent. Verse seven, and thou shalt make curtains of goat's hair to be a covering upon the tabernacle, upon those tabernacle curtains. Eleven curtains shalt thou make.

Ten curtains in the tabernacle, eleven curtains in the tent. Verse eight, the length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits. Now in the tabernacle curtain there were 28 cubits, now there are 30 in this tent.

That is about 45 feet long, and again they were six feet wide. And the eleven curtains shall be of one, all be of one measure. And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, making a set of five, and six curtains by themselves, making a set of six, and shalt double the six curtains in the forefront of the tabernacle.

And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain, the one set of curtain that is outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second set, and thou shalt make fifty tatches of copper." Not brass, copper. In the tabernacle curtains these tatches were of gold. Here in the tent they are of copper.

"...and put the tatches into the loops, and couple the tent together that it may be one. And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the tabernacle." This has been somewhat of a problem to some people, but I think it's simple enough if we work out the measurement of the curtain. It would seem quite evident that the set of five curtains came over the holiest part of the sanctuary.

Now, that was ten cubits square, so that two and a half of these curtains would cover the top of the holiest, and the other two and a half would fall down on the backside of it. So, that is what he means when he says the half curtain, that is the half of the set of curtains. Two and a half would cover the top, two and a half to go down the back.

And then he says, verse 12, verse 13, "...and a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length," because we remember these were 30 cubits, tabernacle curtains 28, "...it shall hang over the sides of the on this side, and on that side to cover it." Well, now those are the curtains of the tent. Now we have two coverings. Verse 14, "...and thou shalt make a covering for the tent of ramskins dyed red." That covering of ramskins dyed red would go over the tent.

And then another covering above, an outer covering, of badger skins, or rather, as I believe, they were of seal skin. It has been very difficult to trace the badger in that part of the world, but they have been able to trace the seal, and the word used in the Hebrew refers to a marine animal. And therefore, we would take it that it is the seal, and they found many of these in the Red Sea, and they were called the dugongs.

These seals were about 11 feet long, and they suckled their young. They fed their young at the breast, and it was this particular seal, the dugong, that gave rise to our stories about mermaids. Now, these seals, no doubt, the skins were taken, and they were used to make the outer covering of the sanctuary, not

badger skins.

The animal they found, or got trace of, would appear to be an animal whose skin was useless for such a purpose as this. So, I think it myself that it was made of seals. Well, now then, we are going to turn our attention to the sanctuary itself.

I've tried to help you from night to night to follow how that God began with his own very throne, and came out step by step, dealing with other parts of the tabernacle, until in bringing in the priesthood, he reaches the furthest place from where he began, and that was the place of the sin offering that was burned outside the camp. So, we see God coming out step by step until he reaches the place of sin, and the place of the sin offering, and in doing this he is making provisions for Aaron and his sons to be brought into the priesthood, followed by the burnt offering, and then the offering of consecration which established them in the priesthood, and then they were able to make their way into the sanctuary, into that holy place. And then we saw the veil which said, no way in, and we had to consider that carefully, and then we realized why the veil was there, and then we had to look at our high priest, because we needed a high priest to go into the sanctuary.

In Israel's day, once every year he went in with blood, not without blood, never opened up way for anybody else to go in, but we have a great high priest who has gone right into the very presence of God, in all the value of his own precious blood. So, we looked at the very throne of God, and we saw both cherubim of one piece with it, and many precious lessons came before us concerning the art, the mercies, the cherubim. Well now, that is what we've been following night by night, but now we have to turn our attention to the sanctuary itself, and this morning in dealing with these curtains, tents, and coverings, we're keeping before us the Lord Jesus Christ personally.

Now, tonight we're going to deal with the boards, and the bars, and the foundations, and they will bring before us the Lord Jesus Christ corporately. Now, you may say, well I know, Mr. Brown, what you mean by the Lord Jesus Christ personally, but I'm not quite sure what you mean by the Lord Jesus Christ corporately. Well, you come along to the meeting tonight, and I'll do what I can to explain that to you.

So then, these two thoughts, Christ personally, Christ corporately. This morning, personally. Now, I suppose you remember that this tabernacle is a model of what we had in the wilderness, but it isn't like that.

It wasn't like that. Remember that we saw it in the first place, it was closed, and the five pillars were in position, and the door was in position, but we have taken down the pillars and the door so that you could see more easily inside, and we've opened the sides also to make it easier for you to see in, and then we had to take down the veil, the pillars of the veil, and the veil itself. We got them down there, so now we can see right away through.

But, as you saw it in the first place, that's how it would have been seen in the wilderness, and I suppose any of these people in the camp, as they looked across, could see the sanctuary above this court of fine swine linens on these pillars, each one resting in its socket of copper and having its capital overlaid with silver, they could see the sanctuary away there in the centre of the court, and what they would see for the most part would be the outer coverings. There would be the door, they would see probably the five pillars, and the door with its blue-purple scarlet, but the greater part of it was covered by this outer covering of teal skin. And, in trying to gather together thoughts that would be helpful to us, I want you to think then of the Lord Jesus Christ personally, that he was God's dwelling place.

In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He was God's cabinet. So then, as we're looking at this, in some way the outer covering will bring before us our Lord Jesus Christ personally.

Now, I know that lots of people rather like to think of the outer covering as being of badger skin, because they think that the badger skins would not have been very lovely. They would have been rather a rough kind of covering, a coarse kind of covering, and they like this thought that the outer covering was a rough kind of covering, and they like to think of the Lord Jesus Christ personally as being a man of sorrows acquainted with grief, his visage more mild than any man, no beauty in him that we should desire him. But, you know, I'm not happy about that.

I remember being at a place, and the model was in position, and they had a conference on the Saturday, and there were two speakers, and they had been given subjects to talk about. And when one of them got up and he began his message, he read his scriptures, and his subject was so-and-so, and as he began the subject he kept looking at the model, and every now and again he forgot his subject, and he was talking about the tabernacle, and he would come back to his subject, then he forgot it again, and he got on to the tabernacle. Evidently it was a subject that he loved so well, and he couldn't keep off it.

But I remember, I was rather horrified, when he said, now you look at that building, he said, the sanctuary, it was a narrow, a long, narrow building. He said, a long coffin-like structure, a coffin-like structure. What do you call it? A cask-like structure? And I thought, oh dear me, the sanctuary likened to a coffin or a cask.

And then he said, you know, and there was no beauty in it, you know, it was a rough, coarse kind of a covering, so reminding us of the Lord Jesus Christ, when they said, no beauty in him that we should desire him. I didn't feel happy at all. You know, I reckon that our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was down here, moving about, there were multitudes of people that were following him, and you know, they admired him, they loved him.

Many of them would fail to become his disciples, but you know, the standard of discipleship was so high. But there they were, multitudes treading one upon another. You know, they thought he was lovely.

There he was, making the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and healing all manner of diseases, his meekness, his gentleness. Oh, he was a wonderful person. And you see, never a man spake like this man, never a man lived like this man, and never a man died like this man.

You know, the Lord Jesus Christ was a wonderful person. And when I think of this sanctuary, and I think of that outer covering, don't try and tell me it wasn't beautiful. Made of those steel skins, it would be a lovely covering.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was a lovely person. He was altogether lovely. And when we look into the Word of God, it's amazing how God, in these various ways that we find, bringing in types, and figures, and shadows, and things, all that it might speak of Christ and magnify him.

And as you look through the Word of God, you can see how the earth brings together all its richest treasures, and it lays them at his feet. The gold, and the silver, and the precious stones that bring out that prismatic radiance of that one pure light. The gold, the frankincense, the myrrh, the sweet rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley.

He's the altogether lovely one. He's the fairest of ten thousand. Oh, he was a lovely character, wasn't he? Oh, you say, but it still says, his faith was more mild than any man's.

There was no beauty in him that we should, don't forget, they said, no beauty in him that we should desire him. Oh no, he was a man of sorrows, yes, and they did these things to him. His faith may be more mild than any man's.

This is all true enough. But listen, before this took place, he was here down below among men, and he was a lovely character. He could turn around to them, and he could say, which of you convinces me of sin? He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

He was a lovely character. I know in the background, there were always those who were trying to get rid of him, planning to slay him. I know all that, but the mass of the people left to themselves, it would have all been for him, because he was so lovely.

So, I'm inclined to think that outer covering would bring before us our Lord Jesus Christ, his reputation. What he was to man, to the man in a suite, to the multitudes of people. Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

Lovely character. Well, that's our first thought. Now, beneath that covering of heel skin, there was this covering of ram skin dyed red.

And if we try to keep to the tabernacle, and what was done there, then we will remember that when the high priest Aaron was being brought in, he and his sons identified themselves first with a sin offering, and then with a burnt offering, with an offering of consecration. And so now, in thinking of the ram, we have before us this thought of consecration, sanctification. Now, Aaron was to be that perfect type of Christ, and so when he pressed his hands upon the head of the sin offering, it was might that he might be seen as that type of Christ.

Christ offering himself as a sin offering. This man could not do that, but when his hands are pressed upon the head of the sin offering, there he stands as that type of Christ the sin offering. Now, when he pressed his hands on the head of the burnt offering and the offering of consecration, again it is that he might be that perfect type of Christ.

Now, you remember that burnt offering. All of it, having been prepared, cut up into its pieces, not hacked to pieces, cut up into its pieces in a very orderly way, and those pieces washed, they were put together, and it was lifted and put within the altar of burnt offering. The sin offering was burned outside the camp.

There is God dealing with sin. All that was hateful, he's dealing with it there. But here in the burnt offering, it's a different thought.

The burning is not the same. That is a burning in judgment outside the camp. This is a burning which is an incensing, and this is all going up to God as a sweet savor.

Every bit of the burnt offering went up to God, and it was a sweet savor. This was the consecration. Every bit of this man's work and person didn't go up to God, couldn't go up to God as a sweet savor, but he was brought into it as a type, our Lord Jesus Christ, in every detail of his life.

He was precious to God. Every bit of it went up to God as a sweet savor. So we have the thought now, if the outer covering brings before us Christ in his reputation as he was seen by man, the inner covering will bring before us our Lord Jesus Christ as he was seen by God, his consecration.

And so it was an inner covering, it wasn't seen by man, it was seen by God. And so the thought of his consecration. Now beneath that there is, as you can see, the tent.

Now this tent was made of goat's hair, and we have seen that there were 11 curtains made, five coupled together, then six coupled together, and then there were these clasps or taches of copper to couple the two sets of curtains together. And when that tent was thrown over the tabernacle curtain, then the taches or clasps of the tent would come over the taches or clasps of the inner curtain, and those clasps or taches would come immediately over the four pillars that were supporting the veil. So now again, keeping to the tabernacle, when we are thinking of the curtains of goat's hair, we have before us what took place on that great day of atonement.

And I think it's good if we can fill this out somewhat. A Jewish friend that seemed to have gone into these things very deeply, he helped me and brought before me what he understood would have taken place on this great day of atonement. Now remember that on that day Aaron, the high priest dressed in these garments of glory and beauty, must needs enter into the sanctuary and remove all those garments of glory and beauty, and then he would put on a plain linen garment which was called the holy garment, because this is the great day of atonement.

Our thoughts now are being drawn to God himself, to a holy God, and to a holy God dealing with sin. And in that case there can be no glory there, it is all holiness. And so we find that when Aaron the high priest, in his garments of glory and beauty, enters the sanctuary, he must remove those garments of glory and beauty.

And I tried to help you, I don't know, maybe friends here for the first time, here you can see Aaron dressed in those garments of glory and beauty, and we dressed him up in them, and tried to learn what the meaning of it all was. But now, when he goes into the sanctuary, he must remove these things, and so that golden plate with the words on it, holiness unto Jehovah, is removed from his brow, and laid at one side, and then the breastplate of judgment, with its twelve stones and the name of one tribe on each stone, that was removed and laid at one side, and then he took off this ephod itself, and that was put at one side, and then he removed the robe of the ephod, all of blue, and that was put at one side, and that left him with this fine linen tunic. Now that had to be removed as well, because that was made of fine twine linen called shech, and it had to be replaced with another linen coat or tunic which was called bad, and that was the kind of dress they wore when they were dealing with sin offerings, when they were dealing with the sin offering of the great day of atonement.

So, that there in the sanctuary, he slips off these garments of glory and beauty, and dresses himself in that rough linen gown, and with a linen mitre on his head, now he goes down the court there, and there's brought before him two goats, and these two goats have been chosen so that they are of the likeliest possible. You cannot tell one from the other. So, Aaron goes and he stands there, and the two goats are standing before him.

They bring to him a golden urn, and inside the golden urn there are two golden pieces, and now Aaron is going to cast lots upon these two goats. So, he puts his hands down inside the urn, and he takes the golden piece in each hand. He withdraws his hand, they take away the urn, and he stretches his hands out to the two goats and turns them up.

If they see in the right hand the golden piece with the words inscribed upon it, La Jehovah, then they take a scarlet piece of cloth, and they tie it to the horn of that goat which is La Jehovah for Jehovah. In the

other hand will be another golden piece, and on it the words inscribed La Azazel. That is the goat that is to be the scapegoat.

So, having cast lots now, and found out which is La Jehovah and La Azazel, this goat for Jehovah is slain, and then the blood is taken by Aaron in those plain linen garments, and he makes his way through the court, through the holy place, into the holiest of all, and there he must stand before the very throne of God, a throne of judgment, but now with the blood of the sin offering. Now, I think it might be as well for me to be a little careful here, lest you might jump to some conclusion. You may be thinking, well, now that's what took place on the great day of atonement, that Aaron just took the blood of the sin offering, and then he went into the holiest, and he sprinkled the blood.

Well, it's not quite like that. You see, there's more detail to it. So, we find that in the first place, Aaron had to go into the sanctuary with a censer.

He came down to the altar burnt offering, removed some of the burning coals, and then he made his way through the door into the holy place, through the veil, into the holiest of all, and there, in the very presence of God, he brought out a cloud of sweet perfume. He caused that cloud of sweet perfume to cover the mercy seat. Then he came out, and then the bullock was taken, which was for himself, and he went in with that blood, and it was sprinkled once on the mercy seat, and it was sprinkled seven times before the mercy seat.

And then he came out, and he took the blood of the sin offering on behalf of the children of Israel, and he went in, and again he sprinkled the blood once upon the mercy seat, seven times before. And you know, when the high priest was standing there in those holy garments, in the presence of a holy God, and they too are dealing with sin, there is the blood. He dips his finger in that blood and sprinkled it once on the mercy seat, only once, and the cherubim of one piece with it, their faces toward one another, they're looking down, and they're watching for that blood to be sprinkled there.

Otherwise, that is a throne of judgment, for the moment the blood is sprinkled there, it's a throne of mercy, it's a mercy seat. And then he dips his finger, and he sprinkles the blood before the mercy seat. Now he counts, and he counts very carefully.

When he sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat, he said once, and only once on the mercy seat. Now he dips his finger in the blood again, and he sprinkled it before the mercy seat, and he counted once, once. Once on the mercy seat, and once before it.

Now he sprinkles the blood a second time, and he says once twice. He sprinkles the blood a third time before the mercy seat, and he counts once three times, and so on until he has counted once seven times. No mistake made.

Now having accomplished that work of atonement, of sprinkling the blood on the mercy seat, and before it, Aaron the high priest came out in these garments, these linen, plain linen garments. He came out, and he made his way down in the court, and there was the other goat standing. Now you'll notice that when the first goat was slain, he didn't put his hands on his head.

There was no identification with it. There was no thought of these people outside. This is altogether the question of a holy God, and it's sin that is being dealt with.

So he doesn't even put his hands upon his head. This is altogether God's work. But now when he comes out and puts his hands on the head of the other goat, there is your identification with it.

Meanwhile the children of Israel are all gathered outside there. They're all prostrate before God on account of their sins and iniquities, and they know Aaron the high priest is going in on their account, on their behalf. And the question is, will he be redeemed? Will he be accepted? Will they be forgiven? Will their sins be covered? And so they prostrate before God while Aaron, with his hands pressed on the head of that goat, he is confessing over it all the sins and iniquities of the children of Israel.

And then having done that, the goat is led away by the hand of a fit person through the gate, through the camp, and away out into the wilderness where it is let go. Now what does it all mean? Well, this is the great day of atonement, and the first goat, La Jehovah, is showing us how this atonement is made. The blood is taken into the very presence of God and sprinkled there upon the throne of God.

That blood makes the atonement. Now we come to the other goat, and his hands upon its head, confessing over it the sins and the iniquities of the children of Israel, we see the effect of atonement. That is, that their sins and iniquities are being borne away.

So, whilst there are two goats, it's only one offering. Remember that? Two goats, but only one offering. The one goat makes the atonement, and the other goat shows the effect of the atonement, the bearing away of sins.

Now, you need to be careful, because there are some friends, we call them friends, some of them very, very nice people, and some of them very devout people, and no doubt many of them true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. But you know, they tell us something rather strange. They say, well now, when Aaron the High Priest cast lots upon the two goats, he was casting lots in order to find out which goat was for Jehovah, and which goat was for the devil.

Now, this is rather a terrible thought to me, the idea that there in the court, within the court of the tabernacle, that Aaron was casting lots to find out which goat was for Jehovah, and which goat was for the devil. And then they tell us that the first goat, when it was slain, the blood certainly was to make atonement, and that the High Priest went into the sanctuary. And so they say the Lord Jesus Christ, having shed his blood, went up into the very presence of God.

But then at a certain time, about 1844, the Lord Jesus Christ came. This is the way they interpret the coming. He came, he didn't come down here, he didn't come to the air, but he came out of the very presence of God, and he entered the sanctuary.

We say, well where is this sanctuary? It was in heaven, but he came out of the heaven of heavens, the very presence of God, and he went into heaven, into this sanctuary. And from then onwards, he has been working in the sanctuary, cleansing it of all sin and all iniquity. I don't know how the sin and iniquity got up there, but they tell us that that is the work he's been occupied with.

Now eventually, when he has finished cleansing the sanctuary of all sin and iniquity, then he is going to put it upon the head of the devil, the goat which was for the devil. And the devil is going to bear away all our sins and our iniquity. You get it? You didn't know the devil was going to be your savior, did you? No.

Now this is rather a terrible thought, but they have reason for it, and I think it'd be well for us to remember this. The reason is this, that the one lot said La Jehovah, and the other lot said La Azazel. Therefore if La

Jehovah means a person, then La Azazel means a person.

Now this is Jehovah, and this person must be the devil himself. So they take it that the word Azazel is a name for Satan. And you know, you might find that difficult, because it would seem to be that which is personal.

Now I've looked at this word Azazel, and it's very helpful to note that the word Azazel is two words put together. The first word is Az, and it means a goat, and the second word is Azel, which means to let go. And that's exactly what that goat was.

It was the goat to be let go, bearing upon it the sins and iniquities of the children of Israel. So rather than believe what they say, we're going to hold on to this, that there were two goats, and that the one goat in the shedding of its blood, and that blood sprinkled before and on the throne, brings before us a tomb, and he brings before us the work of Christ on that cross. He going into the very presence of God in all the value of that shed blood.

How great I preach! The other goat shows the effect of him doing that, and that is the bearing away of sin into a place where they will never be remembered again. So then, as we are thinking of these coverings, that outer covering, what Christ was, the man, his reputation, and then the inner covering of ramskins, dyed red, what Christ was to God, his sanctification or consecration. Then we look at the tent, and there we have before us the great day of atonement, and now the thought is what Christ was both to God and to man, his expiation.

He meets the demands of a holy God on account of sin, and he meets our deep and dire need of sinners. He opens up a way for us to enter into the very presence of God. So our thought concerning this tent made of goat hair.

Now this may give you an idea of the tent. Here we have the five curtains, one, two, three, four, five. Five curtains coupled together.

One, two, three, four, five, six curtains coupled together, and there are your patches or clasps of copper joining the two sets of curtains together with their loops of blue. Now there's your tent. So remember that when this was thrown over the tabernacle, then you have these five curtains.

Two and a half would cover the top of the holiest, and the other two and a half fall down the back side of the tabernacle, and so you are covering that section of the tabernacle church. Now the set of six curtains, five of the curtains suffice to cover the top of the sanctuary, twenty-two minutes, leaving one curtain, and that was folded over at the front of the tabernacle. Probably folded over, as you see I did it, to preserve or protect those inner curtains which are called the sanctuary itself.

Now you can see that we have these inner curtains, the tabernacle, and they were made of that fine twine linen. They were embroidered with the blue and the purple and the scarlet, and there were cherubim embroidered upon. Now they again are bringing before us very clearly our Lord Jesus Christ as being God's dwelling place.

This is the tavern, the tabernacle curtain. Christ personally was God's tabernacle. God's tabernacle in flesh, in Christ, and so we have here, first of all, our thought about that fine twine linen, our Lord Jesus Christ in his perfect righteousness, in that spotless purity.

And he belonged up there, in your heavenly colour, the blue. He belonged up there, but he came down here, and he came down here that he might suffer and die, shed his blood to redeem, and so you have the scarlet. And then it was embroidered with purple, and so when we read Paul's words in the epistle to the Philippians, we can see him bringing before us Christ who thought it not something to be grasped, to be equal with God up there.

Makes himself of no reputation, epitomizes himself, and he comes out found in fashion as a man, found among men as a man, and he humbles himself unto death. That's your scarlet. Even the death of the cross, wherefore God has highly exalted him, given him a name above every name, and that's your purple.

But then you've got it embroidered with cherubim too, and those cherubim always have to do with the administration of justice in regard to judicial authority. They're God's executives, and so we find that here we have these cherubim on these embroidered curtains, bringing before us our Lord Jesus Christ. God has committed all judgment into the hands of the Son.

He has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from among the dead. All judgment committed into the hands of the Son. You know, we have a Christ who is not a small Christ.

I'm inclined to think very often we're thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ, born of a virgin. We see him as a baby in the manger. We see him as a boy of 12 in the temple.

We see him as a man of 30. We see him on the cross, suffering, dying, buried, raised again, received up, and that's it. Is it? Oh no, this is not a time Christ that we have to do with.

He's an eternal Christ. He spans eternity. He spans time.

He's the eternal Christ. He was away there in the beginning, and it's going to please God in a day yet to come, to gather all things together in Christ. He is going to be the center.

God has purposed all this from way back in eternity. His beloved Son is going to be the center. You remember the apostle writing his letter to the Romans, says, the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now.

The whole creation. God has subjected it to vanity. What does he mean? Well, he means that whatever purpose God had in mind when he brought in the creation has not yet been seen.

Because of sin, God has subjected it to vanity. We shall never see what was in the mind of God with regard to creation until it pleads God to show it. When will he show it? At the revelation of the sons of God.

When will that take place? When the Lord Jesus Christ takes his place right there at the very center. You know, at one time the scientist said, you know, the sun's going around the earth. Then after a while he said, sorry, mistaken.

No, it's the earth that's revolving. And then they said, oh sorry, yes, it's something else. Not only is the earth revolving, but it's moving in an orbit.

Oh yes. And yes, and we find that everything seems to be moving around something which is central. And what is that? It's the sun.

Everything is revolving around. And they said, oh no, sorry, the sun's not central. But what is central? We don't know.

Can I tell you? The Lord Jesus Christ is right there at the very center of the universe. By him all things were made. By him all things consist.

They all hang together. What a Christ is this? Not just the Christ that came born of a virgin, lived and died and went back to glory. An eternal Christ.

And eventually God is going to head up all things in Christ. And it's wonderful that you and I are going to be with him. For the grace of God in seeking us out, in convicting us of sin, in bringing us to repentance and to faith in his touch, that we might be with him.

That we might reign with him. That we might share that glory with him. He's at the very center.

To him every knee shall bow, every tongue confess. Things in heaven, things on earth, things under the earth. Thank God we've already bowed the knee.

He's our Lord, our Savior. And we look forward to his coming again. And so now this is what Christ is going to be to the whole universe.

King of kings, Lord of lords. Oh what a Savior. Well I trust the Lord will make these thoughts a real blessing to us all, as we think of Christ, his dwelling place, and all that's involved in him being the very dwelling place of God.

All the fullness of the Godhead Father. Shall we pray? O God our Father, again we give our thanks to thee for bringing before us thy beloved Son. O we realize, our God, that we cannot express ourselves.

We cannot speak of him as we ought to do. We fail, but thou knowest, our God, that we do glory in thy beloved Son, because we owe everything to him. It pleased thee to spare him.

It pleased him to suffer and to die. And he did this that we might be with him. And we thank thee, our God, that thou hast assured us of that in a day yet to come we shall see him as he is.

We shall be like him. We shall share in that glory which is his, and only because he was willing to suffer and to die that it might be so. So we bless and we praise thee for such a wonderful Savior, and thank thee, our God, that we can look forward to the day when thou wilt head up all things in Christ, when he shall be at the very center of the universe, all honor and glory being his.

We thank thee, and we bless and praise thee for it all in his worthy and precious name, the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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