

Christ Is Everything - Dutch

by Paul Washer

Christ is the center of God's eternal plans, and He is the only one who can save us from death and sin.

Duration: 1:10:39

Scripture: Matthew 3:17, Acts 16:31, Colossians 1:16-22

Topics: "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the devastating impact of death on human lives, sharing personal experiences of losing loved ones. He emphasizes that death is an unbeatable enemy that will eventually come for everyone. The speaker highlights the fleeting nature of life, stating that within a few years, many in the audience will be dead, and within 100 years, all will be forgotten. However, he offers hope in the Gospel, urging listeners to come to Christ and find meaning and victory over death through His grace. The sermon concludes with a reading from the Book of Colossians, emphasizing Christ's role as the creator and head of the church.

Transcript

This sermon was uploaded by Grace Community Church in San Antonio, Texas and our website is www.gccsatx.com or you can find us on Sermon Audio by going to www.sermonaudio.com/gcc. Let's open up our Bibles again to the book of Colossians. We read again from the letter of Paul to the Colossians, chapter 1 and we will read once again 16 through 21, 16 through 22. We read again Colossians 1, verse 16 through 22.

Do you want me to read it again? Yes. Colossians 1, verse 16. For through him are all things created, which are in heaven and on earth, which are visible and which are invisible.

It is thrones, it is dominions, it is governments, it is powers, all things are created through him and to him. And he is before all things, and all things exist together through him. He is the head of the body, namely of the community.

He who is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead, that he may be the first of all. For it was the Father's will that all the fullness should dwell in him, and that he may, having made peace through him by the blood of his crosses, through him, I say, all things should be reconciled to themselves. It are the things that are on earth, it are the things that are in heaven.

And he has reconciled you, who were once strangers and enemies because of your understanding of the evil works. In the body there are flesh, because of death, that he may make you holy and incorruptible and innocent. Let's pray.

The Lord forbid. Father, you know all things. You know the needs that are here.

You know the weakness of this preacher. But, Lord, it is in my heart not to look upon men or the needs of men, because they are countless, but to exalt Jesus Christ, knowing that he is able to meet every need of every person in this place, that he is a fountain without limit, that he is the vine that bringeth forth everlasting fruit, that from him flows healing and strength for the nations. I praise you, Father, that you have given him as a sacrifice and made it possible for all men everywhere to come to him, that they might be saved.

O God, work in this place. Manifest your glory. In so many places, Father, you say that you saved Israel for the sake of your servant David.

Save people tonight for the sake of one greater than David, for the sake of the Son of David, the one whom David calls Lord. Father, I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

I wanted my brother to read this passage once more, not only because it is music to the ears of the believer, but because we need to hear it, we must hear it. We must be reminded of it every day, that in the mind and plan of God, Jesus Christ has preeminence. Now, you are here tonight, and you say to yourself, Christ has not had preeminence in my life.

My life has been filled with self and unbelief. And you say to yourself, is there any hope for me? The fact that you ask that question demonstrates that there's great hope for you. When the carnal man hears that Jesus Christ is everything, when he hears that God gives preeminence to his Son, when the carnal man hears the gospel of Jesus Christ, without the Spirit's help, he hates everything he hears.

He rejects everything he hears. Tonight you may be the greatest sinner in all of Holland, but if you desire what you are hearing, if you are saying to yourself, is it for me, is it for me, then have great assurance that it is for you. Come to Him.

Call upon His name. Those who do are not disappointed. Those who come to Him, He will in no wise cast out.

In verse 17, we have learned that He is before all things. He is the eternal God, always throughout eternity having preeminence in the heart of the Father. And we have heard that all things hold together in Him.

From the entire universe, to the smallest atom, to the smallest man, all holds together in Him. And if your life is not held together, if you see it falling apart all around you, then rejoice. It is God telling you something.

You need Christ. He is working things against you, so that you will know that you need Christ. He does not strike a man, simply to strike him.

But He strikes a man, that a man might wake up. And see that you cannot, apart from Christ. Now it says in verse 18, He is also head of the body, the church.

And He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead. Now notice two things here. God has made Him head of the church.

And God has made Him also the firstborn from the dead. Now what is the purpose of that? Here we can see God's great desire. If you want to know something about God's greatest passion, then you will find it in this text.

Because this is what God desires above all things. That His Son have first place in everything. That is what God is about.

That is why God is working in the world. That's the reason for every eternal decree God has ever set. He thinks about one thing.

That His Son have first place in everything. Do you share those thoughts? Answer the question in your own mind. Do you share those thoughts? You say no.

No, He is not first in my mind. And I don't care. Then know this, you are in a terrible predicament.

You are in a dangerous place. You are fighting against the very eternal plans of God. And you are hating what He desires.

But know this, hope is here. Maybe you are saying to yourself, I am convicted of my sin. Christ does not have first place in all my thoughts.

Even when I study scripture. Even when I worship Him. Even though I desire it.

Christ does not have first place in all my thoughts. If that is what is ringing in your heart. Then know that there is great hope.

This is one of the reasons Christ died. Because you and I are wayward in our deeds. And we are wayward in our thoughts.

How much we have sinned against Him. We have thought more about us than Him. But if you recognize this.

And it breaks your heart. And you see the foolishness of it. And you count it as sin.

Then know this, Jesus Christ died for such sin. Men do not go to heaven because all their thoughts are pure before God. Men go to heaven because Christ shed His blood.

And although we are imperfect. Although we are sinful. In both deed and thought.

Where sin abounds, grace abounds more. And His blood is powerful. To take away all sin.

Now let's look at verse 18. He is the head of the body, the church. First of all let me speak to the unbeliever.

Maybe you have much against what is called the church today. Maybe you look at the church and you say to yourself it is full of hypocrisy and sin. But so are you.

Maybe you say the church has failed you. But with these words you condemn yourself. Because you have failed others.

And you will be judged with the same judgment you put upon the head of others. But know this. Whatever you may have against the church.

Whatever you may have against what has been called Christianity. And whatever accusation you can prove. Know this.

You have no accusation against Christ. For He doeth all things well. God Himself has given testimony.

This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Before God He only committed perfect obedience. As a man He walked in all the ways of His God.

Yes, He was like us in every way, but without sin. None of His promises have ever failed. He has never spoken a lie.

He is true and faithful. So do not use the sin of others against the Christ. If everybody in the world has done you wrong.

If the church has failed you in every way. You still have no excuse for not coming to Christ. Because He has never done anything but do what is right to you.

He created you. Though you do not acknowledge Him as Creator. He provides you with every breath.

Though you do not wish to live in dependence upon Him. He gives you every beat of your heart. Yet you do not want to live for Him.

No, my friend, you have no accusation against Christ. But Christ has great accusation against you. But take heart, sinner! He has no accusation against you.

He did not come into this world to condemn the world. He came into this world that you might be saved. The gospel is not a message of condemnation.

Even for the greatest of sinners. It is a message of hope. A message of God extending the olive leaf to you.

And if the gospel of Jesus Christ becomes condemnation to you. It is you who have made it such a message. Now, for those of you here tonight who are Christian and have assurance of your salvation.

Notice this. That Christ is the head of the church. For those of you who are pastors and leaders, know this.

You are not the head of the church. Christ is the head of the church. It is He who is Lord of the church.

And our great task is to go into the word of God and discover His will. His living, dynamic will. And we must go to Christ for life.

I love the confessions. I love the great words of men. But only in Christ is there life.

If your church has more to do with confessions than it does Christ, you are dead. And preacher, let me ask you a question. When people come into your church.

Are you preaching the confession? Or are you preaching Christ? The living, risen Savior. You say they're one and the same. They are absolutely not.

The confession works to point to the living one. The confession may be His footstool, but it is not His throne nor His person. We must have Christ.

People need Christ. You must learn to run to Christ. To feed upon His word.

To feed upon Him. An intimate relationship with Him. Through prayer and communion.

When He says in the book of Matthew chapter 7, Depart from Me, I never knew you. He is speaking about communion. The Hebrew idea of the word know is very important.

To know someone is an intimate, intimate term. So intimate that it can even refer to a sexual relationship between a man and a woman. On the day of judgment.

Christ will look to many people. And even many ministers of the gospel. And say to them, Depart from Me, I never knew you.

I was a concept to you. I was a creed to you. I was a doctrine to you.

But we did not fellowship together. We did not commune together. We did not walk together.

There was no personal intimate relationship. He is the head of the body. All the strength of the church flows from Him.

If the church is to have any life, it will flow from Him. If the church is to have any wisdom, it must flow from Him. It would do us well to throw ourselves down on our faces before Christ and seek Him.

When was the last time in a prayer meeting you came together just to seek Him? Most people, when they think about prayer, the only thing they know is intercession. They know nothing about communion. They bow their knee to ask and ask and ask.

But when was the last time you bowed your knee just to know Him? Just to worship Him. Just to draw strength from Him. To cry out to Him for a greater and greater filling of the Holy Spirit.

For a greater and greater manifestation of His life in you. What we see here is not an organization, but an organic living relationship. The believer with Christ.

He is the head of the body. And He is the first born from the dead. I know a great deal about death.

As a young missionary, I lived for many years in a country that was torn apart by war. In that time, 23,000 people died. Sometimes to get the message, I would have to walk over a dead body.

The beauty of man is destroyed by death. The hope of all men destroyed by death. In my family, it has been torn apart by death.

My brother was killed when he was six years old. My father died in my arms in the middle of a field. And a few years ago, I preached the funeral of my sister.

I know much about death. But death is too strong of an enemy to overcome. No matter how much you wrestle him.

No matter how much you fight against him. No matter how much you live in self-denial that he is not going to knock on your door. Know this, that he is coming for you.

And there is nothing you can do about it. As David said, there is but a few steps between me and death. Within just a few years, some of you will be dead.

Within 25 years, many more of you will be dead. Within 50 years, the great majority of us will be dead. And within 100 years, not only all of us will be dead, but we will be forgotten.

All our hopes will be crushed. Every memory of whatever we have done will be erased. And of all creatures, we are most pitiful.

Because not only is death coming for us. We know it. You know it.

And you know it. You do everything in your power to push it out of your thoughts. But he is coming for you.

Maybe even this evening. He is coming for your children. And there is nothing you can do.

But there is one who has faced death head on. There is one. A mighty warrior.

Who went into death's stronghold and defeated him in his strongest place. There is one who has overcome death. There is one who has overcome man's greatest enemy.

His name is Jesus Christ. And he bore the sins of the world. And he died upon a tree.

And he paid for the very thing that is the cause of our death. And on the third day the Father raised him from the dead. And on the third day the Holy Spirit raised him from the dead.

And on the third day he raised himself from the dead. And now the smallest, weakest believer can look death right in the face and say, O death, where is your victory? Grave, where is your sting? Sin, where is your power? You who have devoured nations you will devour no more. You see, the gospel is good news.

It's great news. And God is crying out to you about it. Did not Paul the apostle himself say, I am pleading with you, but it is though God is pleading with you through me.

Why will you live a life that has no meaning? Why will you live a life that literally is going to fall apart? Why will you allow yourself to be swallowed up by death? Why don't you come to me and say, Come to Christ. What is holding you? What is this thing that has control of your mind and your heart? Come to Christ. You say, oh, it's too good to be true.

But it is true. You say, oh, I'm too great a sinner. You are not greater than the Christ, are you? You do not have more power than his grace, do you? Come to him.

Now look in verse 19. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in him. Look what is the Father's good pleasure.

That all the fullness of God would dwell in his Son. We can see again the priority of the Father. He wants everything for his Son.

He's done everything for his Son. He's given everything to his Son. And he rejoices in it.

One day, Christ will come. And all glory will be given to him. All the wealth of the nations will be given to him.

Angels and men alike will cry out all glory to him. And the true believer will rejoice in it. The true believer rejoices in it now.

Not unto us, oh Lord, not unto us be the glory. But unto Christ and Christ alone be the glory. But notice this, that the fullness of deity dwells in him.

You should not trust in a lesser being. You should not place your faith in a creature. If Christ is not God in the flesh, he cannot save you.

Your sin is so horrible. Your rebellion is so great. That no man can make payment for your sin.

No angel in heaven is strong enough to pay for your transgressions. But Christ is the fullness of God. And being the fullness of God, he is of infinite worth.

And he is able to make the payment that must be made. I love telling this story. I was speaking to a man in the church.

I was speaking in a university one evening. And a young man who didn't like what I was saying, stood up in the middle of the audience. And he said, I have a question for you, preacher.

There's something about the gospel that I just don't think is right. He said, how can just one man, suffer for a short time on a cross, and pay for the sins of a multitude of men, and save them from an eternity in hell? How can he do that? And I said, oh young man, thank you for that question. That one man, Jesus, could suffer a few short hours on that tree.

And save a multitude of men from an eternity in hell. Because he is worth more than all of them put together. Imagine that you have a huge scale here in front of you.

And you put everything that has ever been on this side of the scale. Every planet that's ever been made. Every star.

Every grain of sand. Every creature. Angelic and human and animal.

Take everything that's ever been made and put it on this side of the scale. And put Jesus on the other side. And he outweighs them all.

You see, when the theologian says that Christ offered a perfect sacrifice, he doesn't just mean that it was a sacrifice without blemish or without sin. He also means it was a sacrifice of infinite worth. You say, can he save me? Yes, he can.

Will he save me? What did he say? But others have told me. I don't care what others have told you. What did he say? Come unto me.

And I will in no wise cast out. You say, but my repentance is so small. It's not the greatness of your repentance that saves.

You say, my faith is so little. It's not the greatness of your faith that redeems you. It is the power of Christ.

Do you have strength enough to save me? Do you simply give up? Do you have strength enough to simply fall on Christ? Then cease your striving. And fall on Christ. He is mighty to save.

Oh, you're an American preacher and you're preaching superficial Christianity. Not at all. For I'll tell you this.

The evidence that you have fallen on him and that he has saved you is that he will become a greater and greater reality in your life. And that he will begin to work in you. And you say, oh, you must not be talking about me.

Because I have professed faith in Christ and yet I so struggle with sin. Oh, it is the struggle with sin that is evidence that he has done something. That he is working with you.

For the Christian life is sometimes three steps forward and two steps back. But he who called you is faithful. And he who began a good work in you will finish it.

He is a mighty Savior. Now look in verse 20. Oh, what a mighty Savior we have.

And through him to reconcile all things to himself. Verse 20. Having made peace through the blood of his cross.

Through him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. By his death on that tree. He not only paid for the sins of sinners.

But his death even goes farther. There is a real sense that with the fall of Satan and the fall of Adam. That the entire universe was thrown into chaos.

The entire universe was undone through this deed. But Christ and his death on the cross has brought reconciliation for all things. You ask, is the cross of Jesus Christ strong enough to reconcile me to God? Is it strong enough to end the chaos in my life? It is strong enough to end the chaos throughout the entire universe.

Not only the things on earth, but also the things in heaven. Why do you doubt? Why do you think he's not able? Who told you he's not willing? He says in verse 21. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile against God.

Be well in mind, engaged in evil deeds. This is ugly, isn't it? And it is especially ugly because it is talking about you. Do not sit there all day and say, I deserve to go to hell, I deserve to go to hell, I deserve to go to hell.

All of heaven and earth is in agreement with you. You do deserve to go to hell. And so do I. It's true.

But that is not the gospel. It is the beginning of the gospel. God speaking hard words to you.

Is not just so he might make you feel even worse and then condemn you. God speaks the truth to you. So that you might see the truth about you.

And turn from your sin. And throw yourself upon his mercy. Throw yourself upon him.

You say, oh, I have not the strength to even throw myself. Then do you have the strength to fall? And to fall upon Christ? And look what he says in verse 22. What is he able to do to the greatest of sinners? He is able to reconcile the greatest of sinners to a holy God.

And how does he do that? Through his death. Through his death. What a price was paid.

What is this thing that has been done for you? That God would become a man. And according to an eternal plan that he would go to a cross. And that he would carry your guilt upon himself.

That the son of God would be abandoned, forsaken of the father. That he would be crushed under the father's wrath. The very wrath that should crush you throughout all eternity.

And that he should die under a curse. And in dying that he should pay for the penalty of your sin. For those of you who know that you are not in Christ.

Look what has been done. Look at the provision that has been made. Come to him.

And for those of you who are Christian. Let me ask you a question. What is your motivation for the Christian life? What is your motivation for obedience? Why do you go to church? Why do you read your Bible? Why do you seek to obey God? I'll tell you what should be your motivation.

Jesus Christ shed his blood for my soul. If you do it for any other reason it is idolatry. You hear preachers saying, come to Jesus because he can fix your life.

Well he can fix your life. And you may come to him at first for that reason. But if you are truly converted.

Eventually you will see a greater reason for coming to Christ. He died for me. Why do we seek to obey the law of God? Is it because we desire to be moral? Is it because we want to be good people? Is it because it will go well with us? No.

We obey God for this reason. He shed his own blood for our soul. Everything for him.

Absolutely everything for him. You must have a rational reason or purpose for what you do. Everything you do you are to do for him.

I desire to love my wife. And she is a motive for that. But she is not the greatest motive.

I desire to love my wife for him. I desire to raise my children in godliness for him. I do not want to lie because of him.

He is the reason for everything we should do. For he is certainly the reason for everything the father does. Christianity is not the same as morality.

Now Christianity does have commands. And we are to be a biblically moral people. But obedience and morality are not an end in themselves.

We do these things for him. For his good pleasure. Some of you have children who could care less about the things of God.

And although their sin is their own. And they cannot blame you for their own rebellion. Were they raised thinking.

I have a question for you. Were they raised thinking that you ought to go to church because it is the right thing to do. Did they see parents who were only doing the right thing.

Morality in Christianity because it was the right thing to do. Or did they see parents going to church because they were passionate about Jesus Christ. Morality without Christ.

Is nothing more than the work of a Pharisee. And doing anything for morality's sake. Or for the sake of tradition.

Is idolatry. Everything we are to do. We are to do for him.

I use an illustration sometimes. And maybe it is a bit common. But I think it will work here.

When I get home on Saturday. And I walk up to my front door. And my wife comes out that door.

The first thing I am going to do is kiss my wife. Now if she were to ask me. Honey.

What is the reason for what you have done. And I reach in my back pocket. And I pull out the good husband manual.

And I say honey. I have kissed you. Because on page 32.

It says that when I come home. I am supposed to kiss you. My wife is Latin.

She is going to take that good husband manual. And she is going to feed it to me. I do not want you kissing me.

Because it is the right thing to do. I want you kissing me. Because you are passionate about me.

Because you love me. Because you are driven to do it. By everything in you.

That is the goal of the Christian life. We have a saying in the United States. You can cross every T. You can dot every I. Of the law of God.

But if your heart is not right. The law. You can cross every T. You can dot every I. Of the law of God.

You can obey it all. But if your heart is not filled with passion for Christ. You have accomplished nothing.

Now look at verse 22, the end. That he reconciled us in order to present us before him. Holy and blameless and beyond reproach.

Christian. Those of you who trust in Christ. Have assurance of what he has done for you.

Do you have any idea who you are in Jesus Christ? Do you have any idea what you are in Jesus Christ? Let me just share one verse with you. God made him who knew no sin. To become sin.

That we might become the righteousness of God in Christ. It seems almost too good to be true. The moment that a man places saving faith in Jesus Christ.

He is justified. That means more than forgiven. It means more than just neutral.

All our sins have been forgiven by virtue of the cross of Christ. But know this. Christ lived a perfect life on this earth.

He always heard from the father. You are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. The moment you trusted in Christ.

You were forgiven of your sin. But you were also clothed in that righteous life that Christ lived. On the cross.

Your sin was imputed to Christ. And he died in your place. But the moment you believed in Christ.

His righteous life was imputed to you. And that is the only reason there can be reconciliation. Because in Christ God sees you as the righteousness of God.

Let me just end with an example. Do you remember Jacob gave Joseph a coat of many colors? But Joseph would not share it with his brothers. And they hated him for it.

He was the favorite of the father. But we have a savior who is greater than Joseph. Who bears a coat of righteousness.

And he has shared that coat of righteousness with every one of his brothers. If you have trusted in Christ. He has clothed you with himself.

So that now the apostle Paul can say you are the righteousness of God in Christ. You are a child of God. You are called a saint.

You are a new creature. You have been recreated in the image of God in true righteousness and true holiness. One of the greatest needs you have.

Is to discover who you are. In Jesus Christ. And the hardest thing you are ever going to have to do as a believer.

The most difficult task the believer has on this earth. Is to believe that God loves them as much as he says he does. Now that is a pretty good thing.

Think about it. In Christ you are loved. It is an immutable love.

An eternal love. An unconditional love. You are loved when you are praying and fasting.

And you are loved even when you sin. Now someone will say this. Do not tell believers such things.

Because if they believe that the love of God is so great. Then they will give themselves to worldliness and sin. And they will not walk in the fear of the Lord.

Isn't that the same accusation made against the Apostle Paul in chapter 5 of Romans? Listen to this. When a carnal, lost church person hears about the unconditional love of God. He will say, then let us sin.

That grace may abound. But when the true Christian. Hears about the unconditional love of God.

Their heart is filled with joy. And they say to themselves. Let us love him.

Let us serve him. If his love is this great. Then let us live for him.

I am going to give you a parable of two women. Both of them serve their husbands day and night. They work 24 hours a day for their husbands.

Cooking and cleaning and doing everything their husband desires. But one of the women is tired, wore out, frail and frightened and worried. But the other woman is full of joy unspeakable.

What is the difference between the two women? The woman that is burdened and wore out. The woman who has no joy. Is the woman who works so that her husband will love her.

But the woman with joy. Whose life is filled with joy. She serves her husband.

Because he does love her. No matter what. One is a slave to conditional love.

And the other has been set free in unconditional love. That is the Christian life. And that is why it is joy unspeakable.

To know that you are loved. To look at the word of God. To see your failures.

To hear your own heart condemn you sometimes. And yet know that you are loved. And that love is based upon the perfect virtue and merit of Jesus Christ.

Walk in the freedom that Christ has won for you. Rejoice! Those of you who are not Christian. Why do you wait? Who told you to fold your hands and wait? Come unto Jesus.

All you who are weary and heavy laden. And he will give you rest. You say, oh, I long to have peace.

I long to have assurance. Assurance is the key. Assurance is the birthright of the child of God.

You say, what must I do? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Here is what we will do today. If you have any questions about salvation.

If your heart is troubled. If you need to talk to somebody tonight. If you want to seek this glorious salvation of which I am speaking.

Then we will do here tonight what we have done every night these last ten days. We will stay here with you all night. We will greet the sun together tomorrow morning.

Don't leave here without Christ. Don't leave here without assurance. There will be several men and women here tonight.

We are here to minister. The ministry does not end with this sermon. In the true pastor, ministry never ends with the sermon.

It begins when the sermon ends. Let's pray. Father, I pray that you would do what no man can do.

In the simplicity of the gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit. Do what no man can do. In Jesus name.

Amen.

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