

Reason for Hope 2

by Peter Maiden

The sermon explores the identity of Jesus Christ, emphasizing His divine claims and the evidence supporting them.

Duration: 48:40

Scripture: John 5:23, John 8:46, Colossians 1:15-20, Colossians 2:9-10

Topics: "Hope"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the impact of Jesus' life and teachings on humanity. He emphasizes that Jesus' sinlessness is a remarkable aspect of his character, as he challenges others to find any fault in him. The speaker also mentions the enduring influence of Jesus, despite his humble background and short public ministry. He shares the story of C.T. Stud, a missionary who recognized Jesus as the Son of God and was willing to make any sacrifice for him. The speaker concludes by acknowledging that while some may question the miracles attributed to Jesus, the reality of these events was widely accepted in his time.

Transcript

We'll be referring to many scriptures as we go along, but I just want to set the scene, if you like, by reading to you this tremendous statement from Paul in Colossians chapter 1, from verse 15 to verse 20, concerning the majesty of Christ's prison. Colossians 1, 15 to 20. Many scholars think that these verses were in fact a hymn, which the early church used to sing in their worship services.

And Paul borrowed the hymn and put it here in his writings. If it was a hymn, then it certainly must have been a most beautiful one. Colossians 1, 15.

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

And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

And then just verses 9 and 10 of chapter 2. For in Christ all the fullness of the deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. And may God add his blessing to those wonderful words. Just before we consider this subject together, we're going to sing one further hymn.

It's hymn number 86. Hymns of wisdom, love and power, that mortals ever knew, that angels ever bore, all are to me to speak his worth, to me to set my saviour forth. Number 86.

Josh McDowell begins his book, *More Than a Carpenter*, with the following words. Almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus entered the human race in a small Jewish community. He was a member of a poor family, a minority group, and resided in one of the smallest countries in the world.

He lived for approximately 33 years, of which only the last three comprised his public ministry. Yet people almost everywhere still remember him. The date of your morning newspaper, the copyright date of the book you might now be reading, bears witness to the fact that Jesus lived one of the greatest lives which has ever been lived.

H.G. Wells, the noted historian, was asked one day which person had left the most permanent impression upon history. And this was his reply. If anyone judges a person's greatness by historical standards, then by this test, Jesus of Nazareth must stand first.

Another famous historian, Kenneth Scott LeTourre, wrote the following. As the centuries pass, the evidence is accumulating that measured by his effect on history, Jesus is the most influential life which has ever been lived on this planet. And that influence appears to be ever mounting.

From Ernest Renan, not a Christian, we have the following observation. Jesus was the greatest religious genius who has ever lived. His beauty is eternal and his reign shall never end.

Jesus is in every respect unique and nothing can be compared with him. All of history is totally incomprehensible without Jesus Christ. Who then was this man? This man who people from all aspects of society agree has made such a remarkable impact on history.

Just who was he? It's very interesting that ever since Jesus stepped foot on this planet, that's the question people have been asking. Who is this man? When he stilled the storms on the lake of Galilee, the question rang out, who is this man? Even the wind and the sea obeys him. When he healed the paralyzed man and forgave his sins, the question rang out again, who is this man? Who even forgives sins? As he went around the shores of Galilee teaching with immense authority, the question rang out, who is this man? He's not like our scribes, he's not like our Pharisees.

He teaches as one who has authority. And it's still the question which deep down people in our generation are asking themselves. Who is this man? Jesus.

Of course, in public conversation, they often seek to evade this question. People will talk about anything except the person of Jesus. They'll talk to you about evolution and creation.

Where did Cain get his wife? They'll talk to you about any amount of things, but they evade the great issue. Who is Jesus Christ? If you turn to the 22nd chapter of Matthew's Gospel, you'll see that such people are doing nothing new. Even in the days of Jesus, in public conversation, people tried to dodge the issue.

In the 22nd chapter of Matthew's Gospel, there are certain people who are questioning the Lord Jesus Christ. You can see in verse 15, their design in doing this. The Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap Jesus in his words.

They wanted to trip him up. So what did they do? Well, first of all, verse 17, the Pharisees asked a political question. Is it right, they say, to pay taxes to Caesar or not? A very loaded political question in the days of Christ.

And then along come the Sadducees, arch enemies of the Pharisees. The Pharisees have been unable to trip up Jesus, so the Sadducees want to get one better than their enemies. And verses 23 and 24 show us how they come with a great theological question concerning the resurrection of the dead, which they didn't accept.

Someone once remarked, that's why they were sad, you see. But I'll let you work that one out. Well, they bring that theological question concerning the resurrection of the dead.

And Jesus calmly answers their question. So back come the Pharisees, and in verse 36, they bring a moral question, which is the greatest commandment in the law. And if you read through the whole passage, you'll see how with remarkable patience and wonderful wisdom, Jesus calmly answers each question.

And then the opportunity arises for Jesus to ask his question, having answered all of theirs. What question does Jesus ask? Well, of course, it's that famous question of verse 42. What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he? If I can say it reverently, Jesus was not the kind of man to beat around the bush.

He always went to the heart of every matter. When you are considering Christianity, this is the heart of the matter. Our faith does not stand or fall on vague issues of theology, politics, or even morality.

Our faith stands and falls on the person of Jesus Christ. If Jesus is not who he said he was, if he did not do that which he said he came to this world to do, then the whole superstructure of Christianity crumbles in ruins to the ground. Well then, who was Jesus? Let's look first of all at what he said about himself.

What claims did Christ make for himself? When you consider the claims which he made, a very popular notion that Jesus was just a good man must be immediately discounted. C.S. Lewis, a Cambridge professor and one time agnostic, put it like this, I am trying to prevent anyone from saying the really foolish thing that people so often say about Jesus. That is, I'm ready to accept him as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God.

That is, says Lewis, one thing you must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic on a level with a man who says he's a poached egg, or else he would be the devil of hell.

You must make your choice. Either this man was and is the son of God, or else he's a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool.

You can spit at him, kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let's not come up with any patronizing nonsense about him being a great human teacher. He has not left that option open to us, and he never intended to do so.

Very, very important words from Professor Lewis. Well, what did Jesus say about himself? First of all, of course, he directly claimed to be God. We know the famous statement of John 10, verses 30 to 33, where Jesus says, I and my Father are one.

Opponents of this doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ immediately respond by saying, ah, yes, Jesus said that, I know. But he meant one in purpose. I and my Father are one in purpose.

Well, did Jesus mean that? Those who know the Greek language, and I'm not at all familiar with it, tell me that in fact the New Testament Greek will not allow for that interpretation. Jesus did not mean we are one in purpose. He meant we are one in essence.

And in fact, you can see from the context that that's what Jesus meant. Because when Jesus said, I and my Father are one, what did the Jews do? They took up stones, Matthew tells us, or John tells us, to kill the Lord Jesus. Now, why should they do that? If a man is merely saying, I and the Father are one in purpose, why should they seek to kill him? Stoning, as we well know, was the prescribed Jewish punishment for blasphemy.

These Jews knew what Christ meant. He was saying, I and my Father are one in essence. If you turn to John's Gospel, chapter 5, you will find a very important statement from Jesus Christ in this context.

John, chapter 5, and verses 23 and 24. We'll pick up the thread in verse 22. Moreover the Father, this is Jesus speaking, judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father.

He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. What immensely important words they are from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ. You'll find them particularly important if you're dealing with any of the sects of our generation who do not believe in the deity of Jesus Christ.

I always use these verses when I'm talking to a Jehovah's Witness. They will of course say that Jesus Christ is very important. He's the firstborn son of the Father.

But they would never agree that the Lord Jesus Christ should be given the same honor as Jehovah is given. You turn them to this verse in your Bible. Even surprisingly, in their own translation, I think they must have overlooked something.

But Jesus clearly says all should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. Now if you just turn over quickly to John, chapter 20, you'll see another example of what I'm saying about Jesus claiming deity. Here in John, chapter 20, we meet the risen Christ.

Of course when Jesus appeared for the first time after his resurrection to his disciples, Thomas wasn't there. Verse 24, Thomas called Didymus, one of the twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. When the other disciples told him that they'd seen the Lord, he declared, unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were and my hand into his side, I will not believe.

A week later, Jesus appears again. This time Thomas is present. Verse 27, he says to Thomas, put your finger here, see my hands, reach out your hand and put it into my side, stop doubting and believe.

And look at Thomas' response. Verse 28, my Lord and my God. Here is Thomas worshipping Jesus as God.

Now, what does Jesus do? Does he remonstrate with Thomas for worshipping him as God? Not at all. He indeed does remonstrate with Thomas, but because of his unbelief, he calmly accepts the worship which Thomas gives to him. The worship which can only be given to God.

Now if you turn over to Acts chapter 14, you will see a remarkable contrast. Acts chapter 14. Here we meet Paul and Barnabas in verses 11 to 18.

They are in Lystra and Derby and they are worshipped in verse 11 after healing a man. When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lyconian language, the gods have come down to us in human form. And they attribute Barnabas to Zeus and Paul to Hermes because he was an eloquent speaker.

The priest brings out objects of worship from the temple. Now what do Paul and Barnabas do? Verse 14. When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes, rushed into the crowd shouting, men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you.

A remarkable contrast. Totally unwilling to accept worship which should only be given to deity. However, Jesus calmly accepted such worship.

There then are his direct claims to deity. He made many other startling claims when he was upon this earth. For example, he was constantly commanding people to follow him.

He said they must be willing to deny themselves. He said they must be willing even to lay down their lives for him. And of course he made that remarkable promise that one day he would return at the end of the age to judge the world.

Now once a man has made remarks such as this, there are only three logical alternatives. The first alternative is that these words are true. That Jesus is the son of God.

That he is the light of the world and everything else which he claimed to be. The second alternative is that these words are not true but Jesus didn't realize that. He was a deluded man.

The third alternative is that they weren't true and Jesus knew they weren't true and he was therefore speaking lies. Those are the only three logical alternatives which you have. Once a man has made remarks such as this.

So next time someone says to you I like Jesus. He was a great man but he's not the son of God. You tell them they're being totally illogical.

Jesus does not leave us that option as C.S. Lewis said to believe that he's a good man but he's not the God man. Well of course many people have made amazing claims like Jesus makes. Not so long ago a couple of years ago now I had a very sad experience.

I visited a home on the day of a gentleman's 33rd birthday. When I went into his house I found that he was crying uncontrollably. So I said to his wife what's wrong with your husband? And he said my husband or she said my husband is mentally deranged.

He believes he's Jesus Christ and he can't understand how he has reached the age of 34. I'm sorry it was his 34th birthday. He can't understand how he's reached the age of 34.

He was convinced that he would die when he was 33. One of a surprising number of people who believe they are divine and who will tell people that they are divine. Now why does no one listen to them? And why have so many millions of people the world over listened to the remarkable claims of Jesus? Of course the simple and obvious answer is that the character of Jesus supports the claims which he made.

This is what sets him apart from every other person who has made similar claims. His life backs up his limb, his lip. What he is and what he did backs up what he said.

William Leckie, one of Britain's most noted historians and a very dedicated opponent of Christianity wrote the following. It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which through all the changes of 18 centuries has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love. Has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions as being not only the highest pattern of virtue but the strongest incentive to its practice.

This non-Christian then finished his statement with the following sentence. This simple record of those three short years of active life I must say has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists. I wonder what is our explanation for the character of this man? First of all, of course, we consider his sinlessness.

In John chapter 8 and verse 46 he throws out the challenge. Which of you will convince me of sin? This is a very remarkable thing. Normally people who walk closely with God have a very sensitive appreciation of their sinfulness.

The closer you walk with God the more you recognize how utterly sinful you are. It was very well put by the poet. They who fame would serve thee best are conscious most of wrong within.

Now here's a remarkable thing about Jesus. He was a man who obviously walked closely with God. He was very, very sensitive about sin within other people.

But he never, on one occasion recognized sin within himself. What is even more remarkable is that the people who knew him best who lived most closely to him failed to recognize sin also. Even more remarkable is the fact that they were brought up to believe that every man ever born was born in sin and practiced sin.

They were good Jews. They were brought up with this Jewish theology and biblical theology firmly in their minds. But when John gets to write about Jesus a man who possibly lived more closely to Jesus than anyone else in his first epistle after stating that if anyone says he has not sinned, he's a liar.

He goes on in chapter 3 to show how Jesus was different and he alone was perfect and pure. Peter's the same. He speaks of Jesus as being without blemish, without guile sin never being in his lips or on his lips.

All of these people who lived most closely to Jesus were astonished by his sinlessness. Another astonishing aspect of his character is his humility. You know, Jesus was a man who was always talking about himself.

Don't know whether you've ever recognized that. Now there are people like that in the world today, aren't there? And they tend to be very boring people. But there was nothing boring about Jesus even though he was always talking about himself.

I am the truth. I am the way. I am the life.

No religious teacher on earth has ever spoken like that. You read the writings of Muhammad or Buddha or Confucius, choose whom you may. And they will say this is truth as I understand it.

And if you follow that truth you will find life. Jesus never ever spoke like that. He said I am the truth.

Follow me. Always talking about himself. Always referring people to himself.

And yet the remarkable thing is that you never sense pride in this man. His humility is recognized by all. His selflessness.

His tireless service. His poise and his dignity in the most difficult circumstances. Think of Christ upon the cross.

Here is a moment of awesome agony for the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet he's in perfect control of himself and of the situation. His poise and his dignity is quite extraordinary.

Pilate in the judgment hall asks him various questions. There's no response. Pilate says don't you understand? I have the authority to crucify you or to release you.

Jesus calmly reacts. You would have no authority whatsoever unless it was given to you by God the Father. There on the cross he looks down and he sees a weeping mother and a weeping beloved disciple.

He's in total control of himself. He's not thinking of himself. Woman, behold from now on your son.

Son, from now on behold your mother. The poise and dignity of Christ in the most extraneous situations is really quite outstanding. Another thing which so many people recognized about the life of Christ was his authority.

I've already mentioned the authority of his words. People were astounded by his teaching. Never man spake like this man, they said.

If you will just turn to Mark chapter 1 for a moment you will see this authority in many areas. Mark chapter 1. Look first at verse 22. The people were amazed at his teaching because he taught them as one who had authority not as the teachers of the law.

Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God. Be quiet, said Jesus sternly. Come out of him.

The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. Just in two or three verses you have the authority of his teaching. You have his authority over the demons.

And then later on down the chapter verses 30 to 32 you have his authority over disease. Various sick people are brought to him and he heals them all. Into chapter 2 if you had time you would find his authority over sin as he forgives the sin of the paralytic man in the first paragraph of that second chapter.

The authority of his life. Quite remarkable. All of this caused Lord Tennyson to write the following.

His character, the character of the Christ is by far the most remarkable of his miracles. Of all his miracles his character, his life stands as the greatest. So you've got the claims of Christ backed up by the character of Christ.

But thirdly, what about these miracles? Now I realize that miracles in themselves do not prove Jesus to be the Son of God. People before Christ and after Christ have performed miracles. And it's not always godly men who perform miracles.

But if you take the miracles of Christ and you add them to his claims and his character you have a very powerful picture being built up. I'm sure you've noticed that many of these miracles are closely connected to his claims. For example, the statement, I am the bread of life was made soon after Jesus had fed 5000 people with five loaves and two fishes.

His statement, I am the resurrection and the life was immediately followed by raising Lazarus from the dead, the man who'd been dead for four days. Jesus confirming what he says by his deeds. The statement, I am the light of the world was immediately followed by Jesus giving sight to the man who had been born blind.

Of course, we could just say that these stories are fables. They're mere fabrications. But it's very interesting that the people of his day, even the non-Christians of his day, did not question the reality of the miracles.

No historian that I have ever come across ever questioned that the miracles actually happened. All that they seek to do is to find another explanation for them than the fact that Jesus is the son of God. The most obvious example would be Celsus, the principal philosopher and critic of the first century.

And after a long discourse on the miracles of Christ in his writings, he finally comes up with the sad and sorry explanation that Jesus was demon-possessed. But he doesn't question the reality of the miracles. And of course, on top of all of that, you have the greatest miracle of all, and the miracle for which we have the most documentation.

That miracle we'll be looking at in detail tomorrow night, the miracle of his resurrection. Let me just give one verse to whet your appetite for tomorrow evening. Acts 26 and verse 8. Paul is defending himself before King Agrippa, and he asks the king the great question, why should any of you consider it incredible that God should raise the dead? Do we consider that incredible beyond belief? Well, I tell you, the documented evidence for the resurrection of Christ, which we'll be looking at in detail tomorrow night, is quite enormous.

And if you add to his claims, his character, his miracles, the resurrection, you have a most powerful picture being constructed. Now there's just two other areas which we should look at before we apply this great truth. The next area is the area of the virgin birth.

One thing, of course, is certain. If God did become man, then we would expect him to have an unusual entrance into this life. That's exactly what the Bible claims for Jesus.

700 years before his birth, Isaiah declared, the virgin will conceive and will bear a son. Matthew, in chapter 1 and verse 23 of his gospel, takes up the prophecy of Isaiah and claims that it was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Well, of course, the evidence for the virgin birth is much more difficult to amount than for other events in his life.

But there are some questions which every unbeliever must face. Question one, how did this concept, this idea of the virgin birth arise so soon after the birth of Christ if it wasn't based on fact? Immediately, there were thousands of people, immediately, who accepted it as fact. And I'll show you that in a few moments.

Secondly, once again, at the time of Christ, this is always interesting, what did the people of the time think? Well, at the time of Christ, there was little doubt about the virgin birth. So little doubt that J. Gresham Meakin, one of the great theologians of recent days, recently wrote this, even if there wasn't a word about this subject in the New Testament, the second century testimony would show that the belief in the virgin birth must have arisen, to say the least, well before the first century was even over. Another theologian, James Orr, adds the following, apart from the Ebonites and a few Gnostic saints, no body of people in early times is known to have existed who did not accept as part of their faith the birth of Jesus from the Virgin Mary.

While we have the amplest evidence that this belief was part of the general faith of the church. And it's certainly true that the early church fathers accepted this doctrine. Ignatius wrote the following, For our God, Jesus Christ, was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Ghost.

Justin Matter wrote, Our teacher, Jesus Christ, who is the first begotten of God the Father, was not born as a result of sexual relations. The power of God descended upon the virgin, overshadowed her, and caused her while still a virgin, to conceive. Certainly very interesting writing, extraordinary in fact, that even if you look into the Koran, the religious textbook of the Mohammedans, you will find this claim being made for the virgin birth of Jesus.

Let me just quote from the Koranic writings for you. This is what the Koran says, When it was announced to Mary that she would bear a son, she replied, How can this be? For I am a virgin, no mortal has ever touched me. Later on, the Koran goes on to say, It is easy for me, that is the Lord.

He then breathed on her his spirit. Of course, evidence for the virgin birth, by its very nature, is difficult to amass. But there's certainly no evidence against it.

And I suggest, there's no other explanation for the unique life of Jesus. W. H. Griffith Thomas summed it up like this, The chief support for this doctrine of the virgin birth is the utter necessity of accounting for the uniqueness of his life. Well that leaves us with one matter, and it's possibly the most difficult matter of all.

So I ask you to rub your brains slightly so that you can just concentrate on this final issue. As evangelical Bible-believing Christians, we have to be careful not to put our head into the sand. And we have to admit that there are difficult verses in the New Testament when it comes to this matter of the deity of Christ.

For example, the terms such as only begotten, or firstborn, are used by many as arguments against Christ's deity. We read from Colossians 1.15. If you've ever had Jehovah's Witnesses at your door, you'll probably realize that they love to talk to evangelicals, once they know you're an evangelical, about the Trinity. They've been taught that this is our weakest point.

So they'll often take your Bible from you, you should have your Bible near the front door of course, they'll always take your Bible from you, and they'll say, look, how can you possibly believe in the Trinity when your own Bible says that Jesus was born? And this is the phrase they are taught to turn to, Colossians 1.15, where Jesus is spoken of as the firstborn over all creation. The basic argument is quite simple. Why should we call Jesus Son, Son of God, if he is eternal? The theologians have come up with a very

different, or very difficult doctrine in response.

It's known as the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son from the Father. It's difficult, but it's very important, because it can really help you to understand some of the most difficult portions of the New Testament. These terms, Son, only begotten, firstborn, imply that the relationship between the Father and the Son, whilst it's an utterly unique relationship, must be represented approximately as one of generation and birth.

So the theologians conclude that we must believe the Father is eternally generating his Son. He is eternally giving life to his Son. One theologian sums it up with the following sentence, which you might like to write down and meditate upon, because I'm sure you won't grasp it first time off.

I certainly didn't. He defines it as follows. It is a timeless act of the eternal present, an act which is always continuing, and yet it's forever completed.

Now there's a play on words, if you like. But Jesus is being eternally begotten, eternally generated by the Father, an action which is always continuing, and yet in a way which the human mind cannot grasp, it is forever complete. Now what's the result of it? Well the result, quite simply, is that while there's a quality of nature within the Trinity, while the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are equal in nature, there is a priority of order.

The Son is eternally generated by the Father, so he's second to the Father in the order of the Trinity. And the Holy Spirit is submitted to the Son in the order of the Trinity. Now this can help us to understand such verses as John 5, 19.

The great problem to me is a teenager. When Jesus said the Son can do nothing by himself. He can only do what he sees his Father doing.

Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. I had great difficulties with that verse as an inquiring teenager. If Jesus is totally equal with the Father, then why can he do nothing of himself? Why can he do nothing apart from that which the Father does? And this, I think, is the biblical answer.

But whilst they are totally equal, because of the eternal generation from the Father, he takes the position of Son, just as within a marriage, which is often the human illustration of the Trinity. There's total equality between male and female. Yet in the family order, the female is to be submitted to the male.

It's exactly the same within the Trinity. However, the Christian claim is plain. Whilst Jesus is lower than the Father in the priority of order of the Trinity, he is totally equal in his position of quality.

The hymn writer put it like this. Charles Wesley. Great words, which I always love Christmas to come round for because I delight in singing them.

I think they're the greatest words in hymnody. Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see. Hail the incarnate deity.

Pleased with men as men to dwell. Pleased with men as men to dwell. Jesus our Emmanuel.

That's who Jesus is. The Bible reveals it to us. That's why we believe it.

But the evidence to our minds is also, I suggest, conclusive. His claims, his character, his miracles, particularly his resurrection, his virgin birth, they all add up to the clear truth that Jesus is the Son of God.

Well, what should this mean for us tonight? Very briefly, two things, because I'm going to try and keep my promise not to speak as long as I did last night.

C.T. Studd was one of the greatest missionaries the world has ever known. He was born into very fortunate circumstances and he was a very successful young man. He became an opening batsman for the English cricket team and he received a fortune in his day of £25,000 and a mansion house.

One day he was contemplating the person of Christ and he came to the conclusion that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. And he wrote the following words in his diary, and in my diary as well. If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice that I make can be too great for me to make for him.

Can I just repeat those words? If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice that I make can be too great for me to make for him. That's sheer logic isn't it? Sheer logic. If Jesus Christ is God and God in Christ died for me, then there's no sacrifice that I can make which will be too great in response.

People who really believe that Jesus is the Christ, really believe he's the anointed Son of the Father will live lives of total commitment to him. Final practical application is found there in Colossians chapter 2. This time it's the logic of the Apostle Paul. Colossians 2 verses 9 and 10.

Paul says, in Christ all the fullness of the deity lives in bodily form. That's what we've looked at tonight. Jesus wasn't just a superstar, wasn't just the greatest man who ever lived.

We can't possibly say that. He was the one in whom all the fullness of God lived. Now what does Paul conclude? Verse 10.

And you have been given fullness in Christ. What's his argument? If all of God is in Christ and Christ is in you, then you have all that a man or woman could ever need. Have you reached that conclusion in your life as a Christian? Have you grasped that simple life revolutionizing fact that the one in whom all of God dwells dwells within you? That's why the theme of Colossians is you are complete in Christ.

If you have Christ tonight you have everything. Nothing can be added to your experience if you have Christ. Now you might not have grasped all that is yours in Christ.

There might be new areas which you have to grasp but it's all there for you. In Christ, all the fullness of God dwells. We've seen that tonight.

And Christ dwells within you. Let's go from this meeting determined to live in the light of that fact and to live in the light of the fact that Jesus, who is God, died for us. Our closing hymn is number 905.

905. Once we've realized who Christ is we won't want to be ashamed of him. 905.

Jesus, and shall it ever be a mortal man ashamed of thee, ashamed of thee whom angels praise, whose glories shine through endless days. That's 905. Tomorrow night we'll be looking at one of the most exciting subjects it's possible to preach on.

It's the subject the early church were constantly proclaiming. The subject of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I said earlier that I don't think there's any fact of the life of Christ which has more evidence for its reality than the resurrection.

And I'll be bringing along tomorrow some of the human evidence for the resurrection of Christ and we'll be applying that truth again to our lives. Let's pray together. Thou art the everlasting word, the Father's only Son, God manifestly seen and heard and Heaven's beloved one.

Worthy O Lamb of God art thou that every knee to thee should bow. Father, tonight we would unitedly bow the knee before the Lord Jesus Christ. He is your well beloved Son.

He is the one who is the apple of your eye, the fairest among ten thousand to your soul, the altogether lovely one. We bow before him tonight. We offer to him our allegiance.

We rededicate our lives to him. And Lord it just is quite astounding to us that he should give his life at Calvary on our behalf. And that today he, your well beloved Son is not ashamed to call us brethren.

Lord we do worship you and praise you for your mercy. We ask you by your mercy to help us to be more like you on this earth. Help us Lord, you know how weak we are to walk more closely to you that our lives and our lips might testify of his majesty.

Part us now with your blessing we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21538.mp3>

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