

The Person of the Son

Part 2

Speaker	Ernest Brown
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[00:00:01] Hymn 132 The person of the Christ, enfolding every grace, once slain, but now alive again in heaven, demands our praise. 132 The person of the Christ, enfolding every grace, once slain, but now alive again in heaven, demands our praise. [00:01:05] 133 The name of every sin, take we with them again, our God this day, with Christ alone in Christ our God in heaven. 14. More and more and more [00:02:01] and more and more gives us the Christ alone.

Our reading tonight is from Paul's letter to the Colossians chapter 1.

[00:03:01] Beginning at verse 12 Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son in whom we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins Who is the image of the invisible God the firstborn of every creature for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth visible and invisible [00:04:02] whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers all things were created by him and for him and he is before all things and by him all things consist and he is the head of the body the church who is the beginning the firstborn from the dead that in all things he might have the preeminence for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell and having made peace through the blood of his cross by him to reconcile all things unto himself by him I say whether they be things in earth or things in heaven [00:05:01] that's all for the moment There are three major sublime dissertations on the personal glory of our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God in the order in which they come John 1 Colossians 1 and Hebrews 1 We began our meditations on this line by looking at the book of Revelation to terms that are used of the Lord Jesus by himself Alpha and Omega beginning and end [00:06:02] first and last Taking that order we considered last night some of the detail involved in the Lord Jesus being in person the Alpha and Omega the sum and substance of all that God has to say and because we were thinking of the speaking of God in the person of the Son we looked at Hebrews chapter 1 we move now to a development of the terms beginning and end and so we move to the epistle to the Colossians necessarily we begin and spend most of the time I suppose on chapter 1 but we will need to see [00:07:02] how chapter 1 fits into the structure of the epistle as a whole you will be acquainted with the fact that of the seven major epistles that bear the name of Paul addressed to Christian assemblies two of them were almost entirely instructional instructive Romans laying the basis and foundation and Ephesians the top stone of Christian truth in between we have five cities in what then was called Asia which were the recipients of letters [00:08:02] in each case dealing with a problem that was there one of them being Colossi and the problem of Colossi was bad doctrine they had been affected their minds had been poisoned and disturbed by

things that sounded well but they were not the truth of God and in particular they were getting misguided teaching about the person of Christ and so in a major way the epistle to the Colossians is doctrine concerning the person of Christ and the particular aspect is that which we have thought of as the beginning and the end the one in whom [00:09:02] by whom and through whom God has done is doing and will do whatever he has purposed to achieve in looking at Hebrews last night we saw a list of many things that the Lord Jesus did but the emphasis was that in the doing of them he was in an active way expressing God speaking for God in what he did it was his personal glory that was being displayed in everything that he said and everything that he communicated and we have something very similar in Colossians chapter 1 indeed if you compare [00:10:02] the works of the Lord Jesus directly or indirectly referred to in Colossians 1 generally speaking they are the same things as are referred to in Hebrews 1 there may be time to make a little parallel later on but in particular the epistle was written to correct the errors that had been brought in now it was on this in this kind of way there were those who were saying there are many beings in the universe there is what men would call a hierarchy steps and stairs all different levels [00:11:02] from the very bottom right to the very top man is towards the bottom of the scale God in person is right at the very top and they said Jesus Christ is towards the top not quite at the very top on a level with God but certainly greater than the animal kingdom and man and the whole bent of the apostles teaching in Colossae was to counter man that and to say in several ways it's all wrong to say that the Lord Jesus as high and lofty [00:12:02] but not quite at the top you cannot get higher than the station that is proper to the person of the Christ of whom we've been singing and so the whole teaching is geared to set forth the paramount glory of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and we'll come back to the presentation in a minute These teachers of error were saying to the simple Colossian believers what you've learned is alright you've come to Christ for salvation, the forgiveness of sins and that's right [00:13:02] and proper oh but there are mysteries you know nothing about there are tremendous philosophical truths you have no idea about Christ's alright for a start but really if you want to get into the depths and the heights and in particular they said if you want to get into the fullness of the knowledge that's available and what they called the Greek mysteries or they said you'll have to allow us to teach you Paul says knowledge fullness completeness if you have Christ you have all you have everything [00:14:02] in having him you are complete now if you turn over to chapter 2 briefly verse 9 says in him in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily what does that mean? in person he is God he came into manhood he was here in the world bodily he took to himself a body he became man and in person he is no less in personal [00:15:02] glory in a body on earth than he ever was subsisting in heavenly glory in pre-incarnate glory before he came into the world Hebrews won Colossians won John won are all clear as to this the Lord Jesus has lost nothing in personal glory in becoming man he goes on to say and ye are complete in him in having him you have everything you have all again and again and again we get the word all and everything coming into the Colossians epistles and again and again this is the [00:16:02] emphasis pay no attention to these purveyors of poison if you have Christ in all simplicity you could have no more you have the one in whom and who is the fullness of the Godhead no less when he came into the world than when he subsisted in pre-incarnate glory and so the writer Paul says and ye are complete in him well we leave that for the moment and we'll come back to chapter 2 later on we'll go back to chapter 1 and look at verse 13 notice the thought begins in verse 12 the father [00:17:02] if we just take the major statement the principle clause we can say pick up the words the father substitute those words for the who in verse 13 and read this the father hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son take whatever literal accurate translation or text is available to you and you will find that the last phrase could and should be rendered the father hath delivered us translated us into the kingdom of the son of his love now mention [00:18:02] was made last night that the term only begotten well beloved one unique object of affection is a term almost unique to John and the term means unique that if someone is your only

begotten he or she is absolutely unique absolutely special there's none to compare and we saw that Isaac the well beloved of his father Abraham had other sons he only had one Isaac his Isaac was his only begotten now what John conveys by the term only begotten Paul conveys by this term the son of the [00:19:02] father's love check the text it's not the same word as is used for only begotten but if there is a word in Paul's vocabulary which is equivalent to John's word only begotten it's this phrase the son of the father's love now just in passing let us notice who is it who in pre-incarnate glory was right at the pinnacle of glory honor and subsisting honor who was it that from those lofty heights became man who was it [00:20:02] that took upon himself a body who was it who subsisting in the form of God as we read in Philippians came down and took and entered into the condition of manhood that he might become obedient unto death and that the death of the cross this epistle says totally in agreement with Hebrews one and John one that the one who came from glory into manhood then into death was no lesser person than the son of the father's love like the other scriptures I need no other scripture than this if it were the only one to tell me [00:21:02] it was the son of the father's love who came it was the son of the father's love who took that lawless death in obedience to the will of him that sent him it was the son of the father's love that went into death more will come as we move on but that's all of that for the moment we then get a series of vital works that are referred to remember if in Hebrews it's the speaking of God in Colossians it's the doing of God acting on behalf of God we can go simply down the verses verse 14 he is the redeemer verse 15 [00:22:02] he is the image of the invisible God he is the first born of every creature verse 16 he is the creator of the universe verse 17 he is the sustainer of the universe by him all things hold together verse 18 he is the head of the body the church he is the beginning he is the first born from the dead in verse 20 he is the reconciler notice the emphasis is not on what was done although what was done was exceedingly important the emphasis is upon this that here in each case was a work to be done, an office to be filled [00:23:02] which was so important to God that no less a person than the son of the father's love was competent to do it for God he is the beginning and the end it is a tribute by God to the eternal deity eternal being and eternal power of the son of the father's love that these tasks were given to him to do the father the source the origin in complete control the son the instrumental agent on his behalf and it is he because of his personal glory who was deemed only competent to do these mighty tasks on behalf [00:24:02] of the mighty God and so we have here again and again notice in whom verse 14, verse 15 who is and verse 16 by him notice the emphasis on the personal pronoun who is in whom, by whom by him in him and so on he is the head of the body, he is the beginning he is the firstborn from among the dead these mighty offices these mighty titles sufficient to merit a detailed study when time permits, we'll have to leave that to our private meditation to do some of the terms that are used highlight indeed the fact that he is the beginning [00:25:02] and the end the fact that he is referred to as the image of the invisible God he is the one whom in virtue of his personal glory is alone competent and sufficient to represent God because he is God he's the only one competent to act for God and do things for God because he is God now we take that from chapter one and those verses twelve to twenty why did Paul consider it to be so important, we'll pause there John Newton the converted slave trader [00:26:02] put pen to paper and he wrote those graphic words what think ye of Christ is the test to try both your state and your scheme you cannot be right in the rest unless you think rightly of him the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews knew it that led to Hebrews one being written in the power of the spirit Paul knew it and under the guidance and power and control of the Holy Spirit he wrote this dissertation on the personal glory of Christ, he said to the Colossians these teachers are taking you along the wrong path [00:27:02] if you follow them you'll be wrong concerning the person of the Christ there is no one greater there is no greater person there is no need for anyone else when we read the detail Paul says, Colossians you have him what want you more ye are complete in him now we have to keep moving on look again at chapter 1 verse 19 end of verse 18 summing up these personal glories of the Lord Jesus [00:28:02] Paul says that in all things he might

have the preeminence preeminent in the father's love the special object of the father's love, the son of the father's love and it's God's intention it's the father's intention it is the mind of the spirit that is preeminent in our estimation also verse 19 for it pleased the father that it was for the pleasure of the united Godhead that in him should all fullness dwell now that is speaking of him when he was living on earth in spotless [00:29:02] pure manhood the one who was sublime perfect in glory in pre-incarnate deity now entering into the world and being found here in a body bodily still the pleasure of the Godhead was centred in him now that was on earth in manhood and in chapter one because of that we get our position our spiritual status in association with him and he came into the world to perform the mighty work of the cross in order that having died [00:30:02] and being raised again and having gone back to where he was before we might here on earth be united associated with him in glory but we move on to chapter two now in him dwelleth notice the present tense in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily well there we have it again if chapter one nineteen said his personal glory living on earth in the form of man was no less than it had ever been in pre-incarnate deity chapter two says having moved from earth back to heaven again [00:31:02] in a condition in which he had never subsisted in heaven before he has taken his manhood to heaven with him subsisting in exalted manhood no less in personal glory than he was in pre-incarnate glory or when in incarnation he lived here in the days of his flesh his personal glory no less in each of the conditions in which he subsisted at the time now having said that um that in chapter one the matter under consideration is the personal glory and our position in association with him when we get to chapter two [00:32:02] the emphasis is he's no less in person than he ever was before your association is with him but think of the steps that were necessary in order that your present position might be conferred upon you now in order to develop that we move on to the main body of teaching in chapter two as we would say in a bible reading it's the section that's governed by the four prepositions words that explain our spiritual status and condition in association with the Lord Jesus Christ now we look at them briefly first of all chapter two verse eleven in whom also ye are circumcised now this is it [00:33:02] we are circumcised in him verse thirteen being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh hath he quickened together with him we are not only circumcised in him we are quickened together with him and that's different when we get to verse seventeen the shadow of things to come but the body is of Christ circumcised in him buried with him sorry I missed verse twelve buried with him in baptism verse seventeen we derive everything of him and verse nineteen [00:34:02] not holding the head from which all the body having nourishment ministered increase of with the increase of God quickening is important but the four major matters here are that we are circumcised in him buried with him in baptism which leads to the quickening we derive everything we are derived of him and we receive everything from him now quickly scripture tells us about the circumcision of Christ in fact the end of verse eleven circumcision is a complete cutting off a complete severance and we get an Old Testament prophecy [00:35:02] Daniel 9 26 is it that foretells the day when the long promised Messiah would be cut off in the midst of his days now this term very graphically says the death of Christ at Calvary was a complete clean cutting off a complete severance and the teaching of the epistle and the teaching of the chapter is that in the death of Christ we have been cut off completely from the old life that we lived before we trusted Christ as Saviour it's no good the false teachers at Colossae say now you've got to educate your mind you've got to [00:36:02] purify yourselves you've got to train yourselves you've got to refine yourselves it's a matter of education and culture God through Paul says to the Colossians it's a complete cutting off if you educate the flesh it's nearly educated flesh it's still flesh if you cultivate the flesh it's cultivated flesh even cultured flesh but it's still the flesh the old life has to be judged before God counted as completely gone cut off in the cutting off of the Christ the circumcision of the Christ is the death of Christ in the sense of cutting us off completely from what we were before buried with him in baptism baptism [00:37:02] recognises the truth of circumcision baptism recognises that in the cutting off of the Christ a complete break has been made with the world that

crucified Christ when he was here and so the teaching of baptism very very close it's an association with Christ this time not in him as to status but with him in association baptism associates us baptism identifies us with the death of Christ and opens up the way to a new life to be done in association with Christ in resurrection and this is why baptism leads on to quickening in the verse [00:38:04] the body is of Christ this is not Christ's personal body for the major teaching on shadow and substance we must go to the epistle to the Hebrews a major matter there but it comes here whether it's Jewish ordinances or Grecian philosophy these are mere shadows Christ is the substance Christ is the truth Christ is the reality of what God has to say and to do and in demonstration of that these things these mighty works referred to in chapter 1 were not achieved in answer to keeping the law keeping Jewish ordinances or paying heed to Grecian philosophies [00:39:02] they were done by the one who was the beginning and the end the substance, the reality is of Christ and then he says there is a need in practical terms to hold, hang on, keep the channel of communication going to the head the Lord Jesus is the head a major subject, the headship of Christ is spoken of in seven different ways in scripture, we cannot go into that but in every case it is a matter that there is a head who directs for God there is a head who nourishes on behalf of God and there is a head who controls everything on behalf of God, again associated with the one [00:40:02] who was the beginning and the end briefly then in chapter 3 we get the practical answer to this display of glory in Christ as the beginning and the end, in the major epistles generally speaking the doctrine comes in the first half of the epistle, the practical answer to it in the second half, and so in these opening three verses, the challenge is laid, if he then be risen with Christ if this association with Christ in this fourfold way is true of you, circumcised in him, baptised with him, deriving everything of him and receiving everything from him, it's due to him in virtue of who he is in [00:41:02] personal glory, you owe it to him to give due answer and to live in the light of what you know to be true, looking on to the time when Christ will appear in glory. Now, how can that be done? I move you on to verses 17 to 24 very practical exhortations.

Notice this is a section which seven times over speaks of the son of the father's love as the lord, the lord the lord practical answer to what we are in association with the son of the [00:42:02] father's love is dependent upon our yielding to his authority as lord. It's the practical truth of lordship.

Now, just to go down then verse 17 do all in the name of the lord, Jesus end of verse 18, as it is fit in the lord, end of verse 20, well pleasing unto the lord. Verse 23, as to the lord and not unto men twice in 24 that of the lord he shall receive the reward, ye serve the lord Christ.

Now, that's six of them. Now, very happily when we look at the end of verse 16 admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs singing with grace in your [00:43:02] hearts, if you look at your accurate texts, you'll find that it's singing with grace in your hearts to god which is appropriate. So that's one less. But when you come to the end of verse 22 in singleness of heart, hearing the lord. So in fact there is a complete testimony to the need to yield to the authority of your lord if you are to live in a way that is well pleasing to the father of the son of the father's love. How fitting that the term that is referred to in chapter 1 is put into happy perspective by things that are said in the later chapters. Now, the end of the epistle, verse 18.

Chapter 4, verse 18. [00:44:02] The last part. The salutation by the hand of me, Paul, remember my bonds.

Grace be with you. Amen. Amen. If you are devoted to the son of the father's love, if you live in the light of the truth of being circumcised in him, buried with him in baptism, deriving of him and receiving everything as from him, and you desire to live in the light of heaven while here upon earth, setting

your mind [00:45:02] on things above, as chapter 3 says, it won't be an easy life. It won't be a bed of roses. Paul found that himself and when he says, remember my bonds, he is reminding the Colossians that living in the light of this, these truths got him into prison.

Got him into bonds. And he says, it won't be easy but there'll be spiritual blessing in doing what you know to be right. And he says, you'll need grace to live like this. Grace be with you. Amen. Elijah thought he was alone.

Cried to God, [00:46:04] I'm the only one left. He was wrong.

There were 7,000 others that hadn't vowed to be.

But if he were the only one, he was prepared to go alone in faithfulness to the revelation that God had given him. Paul tells the Colossians the testimony is in reproach. But he says, be prepared to go alone and you'll always find that there are others who are prepared to go alone in weakness with you. And so chapter 4 details these other servants of God, who were prepared to identify themselves with a testimony that was in rejection.

[00:47:02] Inesimus, Aristarchus, Marcus, Barnabas, Epaphras, Luke, Demas, the others.

There will be those that you can have fellowship with. Oh, if the testimony was in reproach in the days of Paul and the Colossians, how can we avoid the conclusion that nowadays the testimony is hastening on towards total ruin? The teaching is the same.

The person of the son is the same.

There will still be the need to be prepared to go on alone if necessary. But we have the assurance of the whole testimony of scriptures that if we are prepared to go along with what [00:48:02] is right, even in smallness and weakness, we are assured that there will be those provided of the Lord that we can have fellowship with along the way. When we turn to the Gospel by John, if the Lord will tomorrow, we shall hope to see other but similar aspects of the truth.

Our closing hymn is number 54.

When we are enraptured by the thoughts of his personal glory, let us never forget his touching sensitive love for every one of us which causes this kind of response how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's [00:49:02] ear. It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear. Even in such a little hymn of Christian experience as this, 54, we get these words. Our life, our Lord, our life, our way, our end.

He set out in the epistle to the Colossians as the object of all the one who is ever in mind in all the activities of God. And he who is the beginning and the end in eternal terms is also our object while we live here. Our Lord, our life, our way, our end. Accept the praise we bring. How [00:50:02] sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear. It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole.

It hands the troubled breast.

It palates with the hungry soul. And with the weary breast.

[00:51:02] More still the hope of which we live until the mighty waves are never freely yet filled with the soul of bliss.

Jesus, our Savior, champion of broken peace and fear.

Our Lord, our life, our way, our end.

[00:52:02] Accept the praise we bring.

We hitch the anchor of the night and pull the waters o'er. What can we see here as the world in faith here as we know?

Till then we would wine of proclaim with every beating [00:53:02] breath and triumph in thy blessed name. Jesus the Lord.