

## THE GLORY OF JESUS CHRIST

John 1:14

Intro: Those of you who were here last Sunday morning will remember that I spoke on the words of the angels who appeared to the shepherds to announce the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is what they said--very familiar words, words which we hear over and over again at the Christmas season:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,  
good will toward men (Luke 2:14).

In the process of explaining the meaning of the word glory in that verse, I also referred to the use of the word glory in the ninth verse where Luke tells us what the shepherds experienced when the angels came to tell that shepherds that the Messiah, Who had come to be a Savior, had been born. And this is what Luke wrote:

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,  
and the glory of the Lord shone round about them:  
and they were sore afraid (Luke 2:9).

You will remember that I pointed out that "the glory of the Lord" is one way the Bible has of referring to the Lord! "The glory of the Lord" is the Lord. Our God is a glorious God, a glory which we as human beings could not behold in its fullness, and still live. It is like a brilliant light, brighter than all of the lights of the universe put together. In fact, if you have just finished reading the last book of the New Testament, the book called The Revelation of Jesus Christ, you probably remember that it is said about the New Jerusalem that it had "the glory of God" (Rev. 21:11). And then later on in the chapter, in verse 23 to be exact, we read these words:

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of  
the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God  
did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof  
(Rev. 21:23).

You can see from this that the glory of God is so great that, when God displays His glory, it makes it unnecessary to have either the sun or the moon.

When you read the account of creation in Genesis 1 you learn that there was light before there was a sun, or moon, or stars. This must mean that God Himself was the source of that light, that His glory illuminated the original creation. And perhaps, who knows, but the sun itself may shine from light received from the glory of God. This subject of the glory of God has to be one of the most interesting and most important of all of that we find in the Scriptures. Even Adam and Eve must have been clothed in some way with the

glory of God before they sinned because they were created in the image and likeness of God. And Paul described the effect of sin in Romans 3:23 as man having fallen short of the glory of God.

The glory of God, of course, means more than that God is capable of shining as a brilliant light. It means that He is glorious in all of the perfections of His being. There is no sin to be seen in God. He is absolutely holy, perfectly righteous in all of His character, ways, and works.

When Moses was interceding with God on behalf of the Israelites who had made and worshipped the golden calf, Moses was drawn in such a wonderful fellowship with God that the Scriptures say that "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Ex. 33:11). And it was at that time that Moses made this request of the Lord. He said, "I beseech thee, Show me thy glory" (Ex. 33:18). How did the Lord answer Moses? We have His words in the following verse:

And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy (Ex. 33:19).

Here we learn that a great part of God's glory is His grace, and along with it, His mercy--not just as attributes of God, but in the exercise of those attributes toward men. Because God is a God of grace, He acts graciously, and because He is a God of mercy, He acts mercifully.

In the text which I have chosen for today, we learn more about the glory of God, but it speaks of the glory of Jesus Christ, and the Apostle John said in writing, "We beheld his glory."

The margin of my Bible refers me to Luke, chapter 9, where we have the account of our Lord's transfiguration. That event in the life of our Lord has been recorded also in Matthew 17 and Mark 9. But let me read Luke's account. A little over a week before this event, the Lord had been teaching His disciples about his death, and about their need to follow Him. Then Luke wrote this:

28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, **the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.**

30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31 **Who appeared in glory**, and spake of his de-  
 cease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.  
 32 But Peter and they that were with him were  
 heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, **they**  
**saw his glory**, and the two men that stood with  
 him.  
 33 And it came to pass, as they departed from  
 him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good  
 for us to be here: and let us make three taberna-  
 cles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one  
 for Elias: not knowing what he said.  
 34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and  
 overshadowed them: and they feared as they en-  
 tered into the cloud.  
 35 And there came a voice out of the cloud,  
 saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.  
 36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found  
 alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in  
 those days any of those things which they had  
 seen (Luke 9:28-36).

It is generally agreed that when the Apostle John wrote in  
 our text, "we saw his glory," that he was referring to that  
 time when they were in the mount with our Lord and saw Him  
 transfigured before them.

We know that Peter was there, and so was James, the brother  
 of John. Peter probably was referring to that even when in  
 2 Pet. 1:16 he wrote these words:

For we have not followed cunningly devised fa-  
 bles, when we made known unto you the power and  
 coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, **but were eyewit-  
 nesses of his majesty.**

That was just another way of saying that they saw His glory.  
 They saw our Lord transfigured before them, as Mark described  
 it,

And His garments became radiant and exceedingly  
 white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them  
 (Mark 9:3, NASB).

This was something like Isaiah saw when he, according to John  
 12, saw the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. If there had  
 been any doubt in the minds of the three apostles as to who  
 Jesus of Nazareth was, that doubt was dispelled when they saw  
 our Lord in His glory on that day.

But now let us look at our text. We have in the first words  
 of our text, a statement of:

I. OUR LORD'S INCARNATION: "And the Word was made flesh."

If incarnation is a new word to you, it simply means what

John said when he wrote, "And the Word was made flesh."  
Incarnation means that the eternal Son of God became a man.

But let us look at those words in the light of what John had written before in this chapter.

The Apostle John was referring to the Lord Jesus Christ when he called him, the Word. And he is the only NT writer who used this as a name for our Lord. What did he mean by it?

Perhaps we can be helped by recognizing that John began his Gospel just like Moses began the book of Genesis: "In the beginning." And then nine times in Genesis 1 we have the statement, "And God said." Now a word is something you speak; it is a message. And in the case when God speaks, it is a powerful message. The Lord Jesus is called the Word because in Him God was speaking, and continues to speak, through His Son.

We learn this also from Hebrews 1:

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners  
**spoke** in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 **Hath** in these last days spoken unto us by his Son... (Heb. 1:1-2a).

That is why He is called the Word. God has given us His written Word (which we hold in our hands); the Lord Jesus Christ is the living Word. We have the truth in the Scriptures. At the same time we know that Jesus Christ is the Truth.

But now I want to relate what the Apostle John wrote in verse 18 to what he wrote in verses 1 and 2 about the Word. (Read and explain.)

Since John used the same name for our Lord in verse 18 that he did in verse 1, this means that we are to recognize that he was speaking of identically the same Person in verse 18 that he had spoken of in verse 1. When "the Word" became a man, that is, when the Son of God became a man, He did not cease to be God. He did not cease to be equal with God. Becoming a man did not in any sense change His Deity. He became a man by birth, a real man, a true human being, but He continued to be God. His humanity did not change His Deity. He was God Who became Man--the God-Man. He not only did not sin, but He could not sin because He was God. And yet, as the writer of the book of Hebrews said, He was tested in all points like we are, but He never sinned. That, too, was proof of His Deity. That, too, was a part of His glory, a major part.

And you will notice that John described the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ as "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." "Only begotten" means that Jesus Christ is the only Son God has. This does not mean that Jesus Christ had a beginning at some point in eternity past. He, like God the Father, has always existed. Theologians speak of the eternal generation of the Son, for want of a better explanation. There is a mystery here which God has not fully revealed to us, and we might not be able to understand it if He did. But we can understand that Jesus Christ is God, has always been the Son of God, and that when He became a Man, His Deity remained unchanged. In His Deity He was what He always had been.

But let me make another point from our text.

## II. ONE OF THE MAJOR PURPOSES FOR HIS COMING INTO THE WORLD.

The Lord Jesus had several reasons for coming into the world, but here we have one of the biggest reasons.

Since He continued to be God even after He was born as a human baby, we can also see that the Lord Jesus Christ came to earth as a Man to reveal God to us. And this is confirmed by John 1:18.

All through OT times God had been revealing Himself at different times and in different ways through the writing and through the preaching of the prophets. But His final and complete and most glorious revelation of Himself came when Jesus Christ was born into this world. In Himself Jesus Christ shows us what God is like.

The glory of Jesus Christ is just like the glory of the Father. And we can go on to say that the glory of the Holy Spirit is just like the glory of the Father and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. All Three Persons of the Godhead are equal in glory, equal in Deity.

This was one of the major purposes for the preaching of the apostles, and for our preaching today as well. Paul stated this very clearly in 2 Cor. 4:5, 6:

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, **to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Therefore, if I want to know God, I need to know Christ. And

Christ is not just one way of many that we can know God; He is the only way! But let us all understand that never in this life will we be able to learn all that God has revealed of Himself in Christ. And so we need to keep learning, and learning, and learning. That is why we need to read and re-read our Bibles. There is always more to learn, and even the things that we know about God, we need to learn in deeper and better ways.

But now, thinking about all that it is possible for us to know about Christ, and about God, what did John emphasize here that we should know to begin with, about the glory of Jesus Christ? The answer is very clear.

### III. THE STARTING POINT IN LEARNING ABOUT THE GLORY OF GOD.

When we see in Scripture how awesome God is, even how terrible He can be in His wrath, it might make us be afraid to set out to know Christ if He is just like God. But look at how the Apostle John described God's glory here. Jesus Christ is "full of grace and truth."

There are many ways to describe the glory of Jesus Christ, but it seems that the Apostle John here, probably getting close to his centennial year, said that the glory of Jesus Christ can be summed up in two words: "grace and truth." With these glorious attributes is "full"--as though, when you have said this, you have said all that can be said. This does not mean that it is a simple thing to know God, but it means that those two words, "grace and truth," contain far more when related to God and to Jesus Christ, than we have ever imagined that they could mean.

#### A. "Grace."

If it had not been that God is a God of grace, and that grace characterizes our Lord Jesus in the same way, there never would have been an incarnation of God's Son. The birth of Jesus Christ has grace written all over it.

Why did the Lord Jesus come to earth? It was to reveal God to us--which is far more in itself than we could ever deserve. But He came also to save sinners. And that called for grace!

Think about that for just a moment. Nobody asked for Him to come to save us. Nobody really wanted Him to come. People never have been interested in knowing the true God. They have always preferred the false to the true even after they have been exposed to the true God. Think of how quickly the Jews who came out of Egypt were worshipping a golden calf.

But, in spite of man's rebellion against God, God sent His Son, and the Lord Jesus Christ willingly came, because it is only as we begin to learn about God through Christ that we can see how holy and good He is, and how sinful and bad we are. That information would terrify the human family if we did not also learn that our God and our Lord are "full of grace."

If you let your eye run down to verses 16 and 17 you will see more about "grace and truth."

16 And of his fullness have all we received, and  
grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and  
truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:16-17).

F. B. Meyer said that "grace for grace" meant "wave upon wave" (The Life and Light of Men, p. 32). There is an endless supply. We need it before we are saved, we need it in order to be saved, and we need it all through life after we are saved. "Grace for grace." This is a major part of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was sufficient to save the chief of sinners, and to keep him saved, guaranteeing that one day he would be presented faultless "before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). It is grace which finally will enable us to stand before the full display of the glory of God.

But there is another word which completes the glory of Jesus Christ:

#### B. "Truth."

This word is like a cut diamond which can be looked at in several different ways revealing the glory of Jesus Christ and of our God.

It is a word which can mean truth as opposed to error. The Lord Jesus is the embodiment of the truth. We will never go wrong, never be misdirected, if we listen to Him. There are many ways that seem right to men, but the end is always death--eternal death. But with Christ we have the truth which leads to life because it leads us to God.

This is also a word which can stand for righteousness and holiness. God did not set aside the truth in order to save us. He did not by-pass His character, nor the character of His Son to save us. He found a way to uphold His truth, His righteousness, by placing our sins upon His sinless Son, and by that death the charges that were against us have been fully met, and God has been satisfied. God and Christ are "full of...truth." However great our sins might be, the

"grace and truth" of God and of Christ are far greater.

Third, and finally, truth can stand for the faithfulness of God. That is often the case in OT passages where the truth of God is mentioned. God is "full of" faithfulness. He not only saves us, but He keeps us. He is never sorry that He has saved us even though we may fail Him miserably. And when we finally stand before Him transformed into the likeness of His beloved Son, the glory will not be ours, but His! We may sing now, "Great is Thy faithfulness," but we will sing it as a new song when we finally get to heaven.

Concl: In the light of what we have in this passage, I am prepared to say that when John said, "We beheld his glory," that he was not just talking about what he and James and Peter saw on the Mount of Transfiguration. There is no doubt but that he saw the glory of the Lord there. But John saw the glory of the Lord every day that he was with the Lord here on earth, and through all of the years that had passed since the Lord went back to heaven, John had continued to see the glory of the Lord as he poured over the Scriptures, OT and NT, and feasted His soul on the glory of his Lord and his Savior, Jesus Christ.

And then in his later years he saw the Lord again as the Lord appeared to Him on the Isle of Patmos.

I hope that you are determined by the grace of God to read your Bible every day in 1995. I don't care how many times we have read it before, we need to read it again. But as we read it this time let us pray that the Holy Spirit will enable us to look upon the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ day after day. Our Savior said when He was preparing to leave this earth that the Holy Spirit would "receive of mine, and show it unto you" (John 16:14). That means He is going to show us the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. If that is what we want from our Bible reading, 1995 can be the best year ever for all of us. May God grant that it will be so.



## THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN ETERNITY PAST

John 17:5

Intro: It seems especially significant that our Lord's first request in John 17 had to do with glory, and the last request had to do with glory--His own glory. (Read verses 5 and 24.)

Verse 24 should remind us of John 1:14 which we considered together last week where we read that the Apostle John said, "And we beheld his glory," speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, I am sure that we realize that, as wonderful as it was to see the Lord transfigured, and also to have seen Him here on earth, to see the glory of the Lord in heaven will surpass anything that anyone has ever experienced here on earth. What will it be like to "see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2)? But that is another subject different from the one I have suggested as my subject for today: THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN ETERNITY PAST. This takes us to verse 5.

The only other time the word "glory" appears in John 17 is in verse 22, but we have the words "glorify" or "glorified" in verses 1, 4, 5, 10. So this could well be called the glory chapter of the Bible.

If we are to give as full a consideration of our Lord's glory as it is possible for us to do, we have to recognize that we must think of Him:

- 1) Before creation.
- 2) After creation, but before His birth.
- 3) His lifetime here on earth.
- 4) His present condition in heaven.

Our text links the first of these, and the last. Our Lord knew that the time for His return to heaven was near. Before He came to earth, He was not a man. But He came to earth as a Man, and He would return to heaven as He left here. And, by the words of the angel we know that when He returns to the earth it will be as the same Jesus He was when He left--with this exception: He Himself said that His return to the earth would be "with power **and great glory**"!

So, in whatever part of our Lord's life we are considering Him, glory is always a part of it.

Let me remind you again, as I have the past two Sundays, that glory has to do with what God is, and what the Lord Jesus Christ is. And we can include the Holy Spirit in this too, because His Deity is equal with the Deity of the Father and of the Son. Beholding His glory not only means seeing the Lord as He appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, but it means understanding Who He is, and knowing Him as a Person,

as our Savior and as our Lord.

Back in the late 1800's an Englishman by the name of Marcus Rainsford wrote and published a book on John 17 which he called, Our Lord Prays For His Own. In his comments on verse 5 he said

that before all worlds our glorious Saviour was associated with the Eternal God in His essential glory! In the opening of the Gospel of John, and in the opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews, this great truth is stated very simply.

And then he went on to say this which I feel is extremely important for us to remember when considering the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ:

It is well, in such days as those we live in, to have our minds fully established as to who He was who bowed the heavens and came down to save us. The higher and more worthy our views of Him, the greater will be our appreciation of His salvation; and the more we understand Him who loved us, the greater will be our confidence and the repose of our souls in Him (pp. 90, 91).

Thomas Goodwin who lived back in the 1600's, in his work, Christ Set Forth, lamented that we are too much occupied in our thinking of what Christ has done for us, and not about Christ Himself! When we think about Christ, and seek to know Him in His glory, as He is, then, as Marcus Rainsford said, it will give us a greater understanding of His work for us in salvation because we will be marvelling that such a Person as He is would ever condescend to do for us what He has done in saving us, keeping us, sanctifying us, and preparing us to share the glory which is His.

So I am going to ask you to accompany me for several weeks as we seek to become better acquainted with our Lord. I trust that, as we focus our attention upon our Lord, we, too, might be able to say in some limited way that we have seen His glory, "the glory of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Who could ever expect to do justice in expounding words like we find throughout John 17, and especially a verse like verse 5? He was asking the Father to glorify Him "with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." I am going to save until a later time what the Lord was asking the Father to do when He said, "Glorify thou me with thine own self." For now let us think about "the glory" which the Lord Jesus had with the Father **"before the world was."**

As Mr. Rainsford said, two passages which help us in this are John 1 and Hebrews 1. Let us go first to John 1. Please turn to that chapter with me, if you will.

# I. JOHN 1:1-3.

Octavius Winslow, who lived in the last century, was born in New York, but lived most of his life, and died, in England, wrote a book called, The Glory of the Redeemer. In it he mentioned that the term, the Word, or the Word of the Lord, was considered by Judean Jews, and even by some Gentiles, as a Messianic title. And they thought of the Word, not in an impersonal way such as words in a book, but in a personal way, of a Person Whose coming into the world was for the purpose of revealing the mind of Jehovah to men (see p. 7). We could also add that "the Word" of God was sent to reveal God Himself. This is a major theme of the Gospel of John. And John, himself the recipient of the revelation of the Holy Spirit, takes us back in these very first words into an era from which man by his own wisdom is unable to go. Only by the revealed Word of God do we know anything about what existed before the world began. Man is obviously so often wrong about what happened when the world came into being, how we expect him to give us the truth concerning that period before there was a heaven and an earth, and before there were any inhabitants in the heavens, or upon the earth. But the Holy Spirit knows because He was there, and He tells us here through John that "in the beginning was the Word."

John 1:14 makes it very clear that the Word about Whom the Apostle John was writing was our Lord Jesus Christ. He "was made flesh." He dwelt among us. John saw His glory. But verse 1 pulls aside the curtain between eternity past and the beginning of time (so to speak), and tells us that "in the beginning," before there was any creation, before there was a man, "in the beginning was the Word." This is a statement declaring the eternal nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. It tells us that He had no beginning. He was not a creature, but, as verse 3 indicates, He was the Creator.

The theory of evolution however it may be explained (and remember that it is only a theory, a false theory), seeks to explain with world without Him Whom the Scriptures call "the Word." But the Gospel of John introduces the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ by telling us that when we step into eternity past, there we find the eternally existent Son of God! We don't find that He had a beginning; we find that He was in the beginning.

Therefore, when we consider the One Who became flesh, the One Who was born of the virgin Mary, we are considering One Who

did not begin to exist when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. His birth was simply the means by which He came to earth as a Man.

— But let us look at the second statement: "And the Word was with God."

Here John was drawing a distinction between God and the Word. He was saying that the Word and God, by which he was referring to the Father (see vv. 14 and 18), are not the same Person. John the Apostle was telling us that God and the Word are two Persons.

But John was saying more than that. In saying that "the Word was with God" he was saying that, as Bishop Ryle explained, "there was a most intimate and ineffable union between the first and second Persons of the blessed Trinity (Expository Thoughts on the Gospel, I, p. 8). "Ineffable" means that we cannot explain in words what this actually means. To say that "the Word was with God" means that there always had been a perfect relationship, perfect fellowship, between the Word and God--never any discord, never any differences, total harmony. This, of course, would mean continual and perfect oneness.

— But this is still not all. John finally states what we might have expected from the first two statements of this verse: "And the Word was God." He has already told us that they are two Persons, but here he was saying that they are identical in their natures. God the Father is no more Deity than is the Word. The attributes that the One has, the Other has. Again quoting Bishop Ryle, "To maintain in the face of such a text, as some co-called Christians do, that our Lord Jesus Christ was only a man, is a mournful proof of the perversity of the human heart" (Op. cit, p. 9).

For emphasis, John then restated in verse 2 the second statement of verse 1. There never has been any discord between the Father and the Son, and there never will be. How important this is to remember when we consider the doctrine of salvation.

So far the emphasis has been on the Person of the Word, or, as we can also say, the Person of our Lord. In verse 3 John gives us a statement about one thing the Word did. (Read.)

— The Word is not only Deity, but He is the Creator. Everything was created, and our Lord was involved in it all.

Now when we look at our Lord "before the Word was," we see that He is eternal, that He was with God (with all that that

means), and that He was God---eternal in His existence, unchanging and unchangeable in His character. In every respect the Word is like God. And we see that He was the Creator. We are thinking about the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. What did it take to create the world?

If you stop to think about that for a while, you will realize that it took at least two attributes on part of the Creator: infinite wisdom, and divine omnipotence. Man is disqualified on both counts. He does not have the wisdom to create a universe like we live in, and, if he had the wisdom, he would not be able to create it. It is interesting in this connection to see in 1 Corinthians 1:24 that the Apostle Paul, also speaking by the Holy Spirit, called Christ "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Our Lord had the wisdom to make us, to make the world and all that is in it, the heavens with all of the heavenly bodies, and also the angelic beings.

We cannot call our Lord's wisdom and His power anything but omniscience and omnipotence. Here are two features of His glory. He is so knowledgeable and so wise that He knows all things, and can never be confused about anything. And He is so powerful that there is nothing which He cannot do. By creation our Lord displayed what He had always been, and when He came to earth neither His wisdom nor His power underwent any change at all.

Expositors of the Scriptures have long recognized that the wisdom which is described in Proverbs chapter 8 cannot be understood properly except as a revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wisdom is portrayed as a Person, and that Person is Christ. Listen to these words of our Lord in Prov. 8:22-30:

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.

What an indescribably glorious Person our Lord has always been! Perhaps we can only detract from what could be said about His glory when we try to describe it. There is nothing more profound in all of theology than what we find here, and one writer says very truthfully that we really don't have the mental capacity to explain it, and we can add, not to fully understand it. See Ryle on John, p. 9. But we can believe what the Apostle John has said, and fall at the feet of our Lord to worship Him Who is, and always has been, God.

But, before we leave this subject, let us spend a few moments looking at Hebrews 1. Please turn to the opening verses of that epistle.

## II. HEBREWS 1:3.

The words I would call your attention to are these, speaking of our Lord: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." The "who" refers to Christ; the "his" before "glory" and before "person" refers to God.

The writer of Hebrews is really enlarging upon the tremendous words of the Apostle John which we have just considered.

"The brightness of his glory" -- Two ideas seem to be present in the two expression, "the brightness of his (God's) glory, and the express image of his person." In this first one we see Christ as the Light of the world, revealing the full glory of God the Father.

The writer of Hebrews, presumably the Apostle Paul, said in the preceding verses that God had revealed Himself little by little "unto the fathers by the prophets." Any person reading the OT, if assisted by the Holy Spirit, would gather here and there, first from one person and then from another, glimpses into the glorious character of God. Abraham helps us this. So does Moses. And so does David. The same can be said about all of the writers of the OT books. But the One Who, not just in what He said, but in Who He is, came as the effulgence, a radiant and glorious light, where all of the glory of God was to be seen--by those who had eyes to see. And our Lord could not have done this if He had not been equal with God in His Person from all eternity. And even in the times in the OT when God appeared in any way, it always had to be a pre-incarnate appearance of our Lord.

"The express image of his person" gives us another idea which

complements the first. This means that you can look at the minute details of our Lord's Person, and there see all of the glorious attributes of God. Not one is missing. Nothing is there that you would not expect to see in God Himself--His goodness, His mercy, His grace, His longsuffering and compassion, His righteousness and holiness, His wrath (on occasion), and so on.

So, whether you take the Lord in the fullness of His Person, or look at the details of His Person, you always see God. There is no other way to explain Who He was. And it all goes back into eternity past.

Concl: Now returning to our text, John 17:5, and the words, "the glory which I had with thee before the world was." I hope that you and I understand more about what that glory was even though it was a glory which no one on earth can actually describe. But may we know that our Lord is eternal, that He is equal with God and has always been in perfect fellowship with Him, and that He is God, the God Who by His great wisdom and power has made the heavens and the earth and all that is in them.

What should our response be? Even with the little that we understand, we should see that we need to worship Him. And we need to trust Him. And we need to live so that by God's grace others may see something of the glory of God in us. It is amazing that such a Person would ever even think of us. But to humble Himself, to take on our flesh so that He might die for our sins and provide us with an eternal salvation, this is grace more than we can understand. But it is true. Let us believe it, and thank God that He opened our eyes to begin to see His glory in what we have learned about our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

For any who do not know God, I hope you see that in the light of what Christ is, you can see what God is. And when you begin to understand God, you will see how great your need is for Him. But you and I can only come to God through Christ, by believing in Him, and trusting Him for the salvation He came to provide for all who would come to Him. Come to Christ today, repenting of your sins, and trusting Him to bring you to God.

## ISAIAH'S VISION OF CHRIST'S GLORY

Isaiah 6; John 12:37-41

Intro: (Read John 12:37-41 which indicates, since verse 40 is a quotation from Isaiah 6:10 that the One Isaiah saw was our Lord Jesus Christ.)

We have the added evidence given in John 1:18 that all appearances of God in the OT were Christ:

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him (John 1:18).

"At any time" means ever, or ever yet. And so we can say that whenever it is said in the OT that God appeared to anyone, it was always Christ. He revealed God in the OT, and He completed the revelation of God when He came to earth as the God-man. Our Lord was confirming this when Philip said to Him, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us" (John 14:8). Our Lord's response was:

Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father... (John 14:9).

Whenever the Lord appeared to anyone in OT times it always made a profound effect upon that person, as we might imagine. And Isaiah was no exception. What I want to do today is to take Isaiah 6 and show from that chapter some of the evidences of the glory of Christ. But first of all let us look at:

# I. THE SETTING OF ISAIAH'S VISION OF THE LORD (Isa. 6:1a).

It was "in the year that king Uzziah died." There is a great deal of meaning in that statement. That year was some time in the middle of the eighth century before our Lord was born.

The accounts of the life and reign of Uzziah are given to us in 2 Kings 15 and 2 Chronicles 26. He was only sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he was the King of Judah for fifty-two years. And he was a good king. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. "He sought God" (2 Chron. 26:5). He sought to please God. And God gave him great victories over the Philistines, as well as over other enemies of Judah. He built great defenses on the walls of Jerusalem to protect them from their enemies. He kept the people well supplied with water from wells which were dug under his direction. He had cattle and vines in abundance. He had a very powerful army, and some of his men invented a method of shooting both arrows and great stones from the wall of the city. He became very famous and was greatly feared by the nations around Judah. All in all it had to be one of the greatest times of blessing that Judah had ever seen.



But, as is often the case, his heart became proud under the blessing of the Lord. This was not the Lord's fault, but Uzziah apparently began to take credit for the great blessings the Lord had given him. With a proud heart he did something which was going to bring his reign to a close in great shame. The reason for his downfall is stated in 2 Chronicles 26:15b, 16:

15b And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

16 But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

Uzziah was the king, not a priest. And it was not permitted for even kings to do the work which God had delegated to the priests. But Uzziah did it anyway. He went into the temple of the Lord and offered incense upon the altar of the incense. Immediately Azariah the high priest came in, and with him eighty more priests, and they told King Uzziah that it was for priests to offer incense, not kings, and they told him to go out of the sanctuary.

Uzziah's in his pride resented being told what to do, and so he became very angry with the priests. And while he was in a fit of anger, leprosy appeared on his forehead, and he was a leper to the day of his death. Not only was he kept out of the house of the Lord, but he was kept away from the people, and what started out to be a reign filled with the blessing of the Lord, ended in complete disgrace!

There never was an abundance of righteous men in Judah, and so the death of Uzziah had to be one of the lowest hours in all of the prophet Isaiah's life. "In the year that king Uzziah died." What a warning this ought to be for the rest of us! We are not in as great a position as Uzziah was, but there have been many of the Lord's people, enjoying the blessing of the Lord, who became proud about their blessing, and so fell under the judgment of God.

A man who had been one of Isaiah's greatest encouragements was gone, not in the honor in which he had lived most of his life, but in the disgrace of having disobeyed and dishonored the Lord God.

But God will never let His word fail; He will never let His work fail. And so it was in the same year that Uzziah died that Isaiah saw the Lord.

## II. ISAIAH'S VISION OF THE LORD IN HIS GLORY (Isa. 6:1b-4).

My purpose today is not to give a full exposition of Isaiah 6, but to see in this chapter the evidence of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, which in turn was identical to that of God the Father.

— The first evidence of His glory is to be seen in:

A. The place which the Lord occupied.

We have this in the latter part of verse 1. He saw the Lord "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train [i.e., his royal robes] **filled the temple.**" He saw the Lord Jesus Christ as a King, as a Sovereign, more exalted than the throne of any king of Israel could occupy, and more glorious than any of the kings of the earth. For our Lord's robes to fill the temple was a scene in itself of indescribable glory!

Our Lord Jesus is called in verse 3, "the Lord of hosts," and He is given the same title in verse 5. This speaks of His tremendous power, and is translated in the NIV, "the Lord Almighty." The sovereign power of our Lord is a part of His essential glory. He is Lord over all of the earth. There is none greater than He. There is no one who can call Him to account for anything that He does. He was expressing the glory of His power when He told His disciples just before His ascension, "All authority in heaven and earth is given unto me" (Matt. 28:18).

It would have been very unusual if Isaiah had not put a great deal of confidence in King Uzziah, praising God many, many times that such a king was on the throne of Judah. But Uzziah failed Isaiah. He was removed from the throne by his own sin. And he died a leper. In that very year God showed Isaiah that there was a King, a Sovereign, upon the throne of the universe Who would never fail him or anyone else, Whose power was without limit, and Who was well able to accomplish all of His purposes and to keep all of His promises.

We need this understanding of the Lord today. The world has gone crazy with its sin. Standards which have been recognized in the past have crumbled. People don't think about our Lord, and don't want to think about Him. But He is where He has always been. It may not look like He is in control, but He is! There is none greater than He. He is "the Lord of hosts," the Lord Almighty!

— So, when John said, "We beheld his glory," this is a part of what He meant. And when we withhold sovereignty from any area of life, including salvation, we are robbing our Lord of the glory which rightfully belongs to Him. He is sovereign over the United States of America. He is sovereign over

Oregon, and over Portland. Presidents and governors and mayors are in positions where they are responsible to Him! He is in charge, and all of us will save ourselves a lot of trouble if we will know this and remember it. Our Lord Jesus Christ is sovereign in the life of every person on the face of the earth; He always has been, and He always will be.

But let us notice another aspect of our Lord's glory.

It is to be recognized in:

- B. The words with which the seraphim worshiped our Lord.

See verses 2 and 3. We see it in the words, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." Let me take it just that far.

Our Lord's holiness is an essential part of His glory. Some explain the repetition of the word "holy" as meaning that it applies to the Trinity. Now there is no question but that the Father is holy, absolutely holy, and that the Holy Spirit is holy, absolutely holy, and that our Lord Jesus Christ is holy. They are all holy, absolutely holy, equally holy. But it seems to me that the words here are applied to our Lord Jesus alone. And since He is immutable, unchanging, what He was before He became a Man, He continued to be after He became a Man.

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her that she would have a child, and she asked how that could be since she wasn't married, Gabriel answered here in these words:

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

It is possible to translate the latter part of the verse: Therefore, that which is to be born of thee shall be called holy, the Son of God.

You see, the angel Gabriel knew that the humanity of our Lord would in no way change His Deity. As our Lord walked this earth He was always holy. He never had an unholy thought. He never said an unholy word. He never committed an unholy act. The Apostle John said of our Lord in 1 John 3:3 that "He is pure." Two verses later he wrote, "In him is no sin." The Apostle Peter said of our Lord that He "did no sin"

(1 Pet. 2:22), and before that in 1 Pet. 1:19 he said that we have been redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb **without blemish and without spot.**" The Apostle Paul said that our Lord "knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). And in the

book of Hebrews we read that our Lord, after enduring all of the temptations that were thrown at Him while He was here on earth was found to be "without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Our Lord had no hesitation whatever in challenging His enemies with the question, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" (John 8:46a). And no one could! The Holy Spirit did not hesitate to drive our Lord into the desert to be tempted by the Devil because He knew before the Lord was tempted what the outcome would be. The temptation of our Lord by the Devil showed not only that our Lord would not sin, but that, being God, He could not sin!

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." And this is a part of His glory. Uzziah was a holy king, but not perfectly holy. His sins of pride and anger and disobedience showed that he was still a sinner. He was a great disappointment to Isaiah, but the Lord would never disappoint him. Among all of the people who have ever lived upon the earth, our Lord Jesus Christ is the only One Who can be called Holy without our having to add some qualification or exception. The seraphs of heaven know that He is holy. The prophets knew that the Messiah would be holy. The apostles were unanimous in recognizing that He was the holy Son of God. If He hadn't been perfectly holy, He could never have been our Savior.

But let me point out another aspect of our Lord's glory which was shown to Isaiah:

C. "The earth is full of his glory" (Isa. 6:3b).

The glory of the Lord is all around us if we have the eyes to see it. King David wrote those familiar words:

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.
- 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.
- 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.
- 4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world (Psa. 19:1-4a).

And to David's words we can add those powerful words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:20-23:

- 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:
- 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but

became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Creation reveals God's eternal power and Godhead. It is not just that the Lord Jesus created all things, but He continues to uphold all things by the word of His power, and is carrying human history along to the fulfillment of all of His purposes. See Heb. 1:1-3.

It was Nahum the prophet who wrote, "...the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet (Nahum 1:3b).

I really get tired of weather people or anyone else who talks about Mother Nature. Who is she? Our Lord sends the rain, even floods, and earthquakes. He causes the sun to shine. There is nothing in the weather but what we should see the hand of the Lord. And the people who say that God would not send storms and all of the upheavals that we see in nature ought to be very thankful that the Lord is not giving us much worse, which He will, if we don't wake up to how many ways we are grieving Him with our sins.

But let me add one more way in which the glory of the Lord is to be seen from Isaiah 6:

D. The glory of the Lord is to be seen in the way that man reject the truth.

I said to begin with that I was not planning on giving an exposition of all of Isaiah 6, and I am going to stay by that word. But let me point out that this vision of our Lord which was given to Isaiah was originally for Isaiah's benefit, for his spiritual benefit. It was as he saw the holiness of God exalted by the angels that he became aware of his own sin and uncleanness. And one of the angels took a live coal off of the altar, flew to Isaiah, touched his lips, with the announcement, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."

And then came the call of the Lord Jesus to Isaiah, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for US?" (Notice the reference to the Trinity here.) After Isaiah responded by saying, "Here am I; send me," the Lord said this: (Read Isa. 6:9-12.)

It is very interesting to me that when the Apostle John was writing about the glory of the Lord, he singled out Isa. 6:10 as indicating the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah was being sent to preach the Gospel to people who would not receive it, nor believe it. But this is the way the Apostle John expressed it:

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him (John 12:39-41).

Let me ask you a question: Have you ever thought that it was for the glory of our Lord when men do NOT believe, as well as when they DO believe? Well, it is! This does not take away from any person the responsibility to hear the Gospel, and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. But when they do not, it is also for God's glory! It shows that God is sovereign in who are being saved. Man in his pride feels that he can deal with God any time he gets ready. He doesn't know that His eternal destiny is in our Lord's hand, not in his! The unbelief of man confirms the truth of the Word of God.

Earlier in John's Gospel the Lord said to the Jews,

But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you (John 10:26).

Paul in writing to the church at Rome quoted from Exodus 9:16 when he was showing the sovereignty of God in salvation. And this is what we read in Rom. 9:17-23 of that quotation and what the Apostle explained afterwards:

17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

23 And that he might make known the riches of

his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.

— This is not what we are accustomed to hearing, is it? And yet it is the Word of God, and so it has to be true. Make it your habit never to argue with the plain teaching of Scripture. God's Word will be confirmed. God's righteousness will be upheld. God's power will be displayed. God's wrath against sin will be satisfied. Thus, even hell itself exists for the glory of God.

Concl: In conclusion let me borrow a question from the Apostle Paul: "What shall we then say to these things?" And let me give you the answer from Isaiah 55,  
 6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:  
 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

— God has not told us who is going to be saved, and who isn't. But He has told us that some will be, and some won't. What He has done is to tell us to preach the Gospel, to warn people to flee from the wrath to come, and that the only way of salvation is through His Son, the Lord of glory, Jesus Christ Who came to die for sinners. And the promise is that if you come to Him and trust in Him, you will be saved. And when you do, you will realize that it was not your doing that cause you to come, but God working on your heart by His Holy Spirit to bring you to Christ. And that will cause you to glorify Him for all eternity for His mercy and His grace to you. So come to Christ today. Acknowledge that you are a sinner worthy to suffer eternal judgment. But trust in the shed blood of Christ for your forgiveness and the gift of eternal life.

## CHRIST'S GLORY AS A CHILD

Luke 2:41-52

Intro: I hope we have all learned by this time that when we speak of the glory of Christ we are speaking of those incidents in Scripture, both Old and New Testament, when in some way there is a manifestation of Christ's Deity. And since our Lord is the eternal Son of the living God, we can expect to see those evidences of His Deity in all phases of His life--in eternity past, in His pre-incarnate OT appearance, His life upon earth, His resurrection and ascension, His time now in heaven, His return in glory, and then on throughout eternity to come.

One period of our Lord's life about which not much is revealed in Scripture is His childhood. We know that He was born in Bethlehem in fulfillment of Micah's prophecy. We know that when the days of Mary's purification were completed, Joseph and Mary took him to temple in Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord as their firstborn. Not long afterwards, as Matthew related in his Gospel (cf. Matt. 2:12-14), Joseph and Mary fled from Jerusalem and to take the baby Jesus to Egypt to escape the edict which had been issued by Herod that all babies two years old and under be killed. Later, according to Matthew 2:19-23, when Herod was dead, Joseph and Mary brought our Lord back to the Holy Land. However, they did not settle in Jerusalem, or even go there, because they were afraid that Archelaus, Herod's son, who was king then, might decide to kill the babies as his father had done. And so they returned to Nazareth, and our Lord was raised there as a carpenter's son.

The only other incident in our Lord's life on earth which is recorded after the family got back to Nazareth and the beginning of our Lord's public ministry, is the one I would like for us to consider together today. It has to do with the time when our Lord was twelve years old when He went to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. Luke is the only Gospel writer which has recorded this for us, and you have heard the account read in our Scripture reading a few minutes ago.

Since this one event was singled out by the Holy Spirit to show what went on during the childhood of our Lord, let us ask: What evidence do we have in this account of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ? Or, in other words, what evidence do we have here of His Deity?

Let me call your attention to three details given to us in this passage:

- 1) The Lord with the theologians in the temple. The Greek word which Luke used means masters, or teachers. They



were the teachers of the Law, or of the OT Scriptures.  
That is why I have referred to them as theologians.

- 2) The Lord's comment to His mother when she found Him in the temple with "the doctors." He said, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business"?
- 3) The Lord's submission to His mother and Joseph.

# I. THE LORD WITH THE DOCTORS (Luke 2:42-47).

Let me review this incident with you.

The Lord had gone with His parents to the annual observance of the Passover. Evidently a large group of friends and relatives had traveled together from Nazareth for this very special occasion in the life of the Jews. It commemorated that night in Egypt when the Lord had said that He was going to pass over the land of Egypt. The firstborn of all of the people, Israelites and Egyptians, as well as the firstborn of their animals, would die unless the blood of the Passover Lamb had been applied to the side posts and upper door posts of their homes. When the Lord saw the blood He would "pass over" the home, and protect it so that the destroyed could not kill the firstborn son. This event really marked the birth of the nation Israel, and so it was very important to the Jews. And actually, on this occasion, the Jews were in bondage to another nation, Rome, and there may very well have been the hope that in observing the Passover faithfully each year, the Lord would deliver them again.

The Passover Lamb was a type of the coming Messiah. John the Baptist would preach, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). But the Apostle Paul was even clearer on this point when he wrote to the Corinthian church, and said, "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:b).

So the doctors did not know, nor did the masses of Jews who were in Jerusalem for the Passover, and it is even doubtful if Mary and Joseph fully understood what was taking place, but the Passover Lamb was present at this particular Passover in the Person of a twelve year old boy Whose Name was JESUS! And He was more than just a twelve year old boy; He was the Son of God in human flesh!

How did our Lord get with these doctors?

Luke has related that when the people from Nazareth had left at the end of the Passover, the Lord stayed behind. It evidently was such a large group that Joseph and Mary just assumed that Jesus was in the group that they went a full day

before they discovered that He was missing. So, while the others went on, Joseph and Mary returned to look for Jesus.

They had been on their way for one day before they realized that the Lord was not with them. It must have taken another day for them to return. And they apparently spent a third day looking for Him in Jerusalem before they found Him in the temple with the doctors. It must have been that they did not expect that He would be where they found Him.

But before we get to that, let us look at Luke's account of what the Lord was doing with the doctors. (Read verses 46 and 47.)

It may have been that others were standing around listening to the teaching, the questions that were asked, and the answers that were given by the doctors as well as the answers that were given by this twelve year old boy. This is where they found Jesus. Everybody was "astonished at his understanding and answers." They were amazed at Him. They marvelled at His understanding. We understand anything when we are, as it is often said, able to put everything together. So it was not just that the Lord was acquainted with a lot of facts, but He understood them. He was able to relate truths to each other in a way that showed His amazing comprehension of the Word of God. We are not told what they discussed, but it would be surprising if the discussion were upon anything but the Passover and what it meant.

This kind of amazement continued throughout our Lord's ministry on earth. Cf. Luke 4:16-22, 31, 32.

Then listen to Matthew 7:28-29. At the conclusion of Matthew' account of the Sermon the Mount, this is what we read:

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

On one occasion when our Lord was in the temple in Jerusalem teaching, we are told this by the Apostle John,

And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned (John 7:15)?

To this question the Lord answered,

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him (John 7:16-18).

- Following this the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest the Lord. See John 7:32. But the officers came back without the Lord, and their only explanation for not arresting Him was this: "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

So we are taking a very superficial look at what happened in the Temple when the Lord was with the doctors if we simply say that the Lord was a very precocious child, and simply demonstrated unusual wisdom for a twelve year old. This was the first evidence we have from the Lord Himself that He displayed the infinite wisdom of God because He was not just the Son of Mary, but He was the Son of God. He was, and is, the very wisdom of God. It is true that as a Man He increased in wisdom, but even at twelve the truth of God was expressed through Him to the astonishment of the doctors. He did not fail to answer any other their questions, giving them better answers than they had ever had before, giving even them a greater understanding of the truth.

- One of the first ways that men discovered that Jesus was the Son of God was by His teaching. Thus His glory was displayed by the truth that He taught. And that was apparent when He was twelve!

But let us go on to the second point:

## II. THE LORD'S RESPONSE TO HIS MOTHER (Luke 2:48-50).

Any parent can imagine the relief that Joseph and Mary felt at this time. It had been three days since they had seen Jesus, and you can imagine the thoughts that must have passed through their minds at that time. We are not told where they spent the night before, probably because they went without sleep, so anxious were they to find their Son.

See Mary's question in verse 48.

- Do you remember what Simeon said to Mary in the temple several years before? His words are found in Luke 2:35. This must have been the first time that Mary felt that sword piercing her soul, and all "that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Who knows what God did in the hearts of those doctors that day, as well as in the hearts of others who were listening to our Lord's questions and answers?

What was the Lord's answer? (Read verse 49.) The gist of the Lord's answer seems to be, Why have you spent so much time looking for Me and sorrowing over Me; didn't you know that this is where you were sure to find Me? This was a rebuke, but how lovingly and tenderly our Lord must have said what He said. Oh, the gentleness of Christ even when He was only twelve!

The word "business" is not in the Greek text, neither is the word "house" which is supplied in the NASB and in the NIV. It is one of the verses where the translator needs to supply a word. Probably the word things would be as accurate a translation as possible. It means what the Lord expressed several other times during His time on earth. E.g., John 6:38, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

Here we see evidence of the Lord's glory again. He was claiming that God was His Father, a claim for which the Jews wanted to kill Him because they knew that in making such a claim He was saying that He was equal with God—a claim to Deity. Cf. John 5:17, 18:

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

The Lord made this claim when He was twelve years of age. He knew that He was here on a mission. His first responsibility was to do His Father's will, to be about His Father's business.

I love what Luke tells us here about the response of Mary. She could have been very irritated with the Lord because of the anxiety that He had caused them. But if that were the case, her irritation was soon gone. Verse 51 does not tell us about the response of the doctors, nor even of Joseph, but it tells us that "his mother kept all of these sayings in her heart." The NASB translates the word "kept" that she "treasured all these things in her heart." Verse 50 tells us that neither Joseph nor Mary understood what the Lord said to them, but Mary was at least beginning to see the glory of her Son. And perhaps this wasn't the beginning, but just another addition to the glory that she had seen before.

This ought to teach us that we ought always to look for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ when we come to the Word of God. We won't see it all at once, but we can see it more and more, and as we do, we will find that the Spirit of God is working that glory in our hearts as He changes us to be more

like Mary's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

But let me give you one more evidence of the glory of our Lord.

— We see our Lord's glory:

III. IN HIS SUBMISSION TO MARY AND TO JOSEPH (Luke 2:51, 52).

Where do we see the Lord's glory in the words, "And He went down with them to Nazareth, and was subject to them"?

We see it in His obedience to the Word of God. The Word of God says, "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Eph. 5:2). When the Apostle Paul wrote these words to the church at Ephesus he was quoting from the Law--Exodus 20:12. It was the fifth commandment of the Decalogue, that is, of the Ten Commandments. And Paul pointed out that it was the first commandment with promise, a promise that was never really fulfilled in the case of our Lord. That promise was that it would go well with the obedient child, and that the child would live long on the earth. It was not the Father's purpose to fulfill that promise with His Son, but that did not relieve the Son from the necessity of obeying the command.

— But this is where we see the glory of the Lord. Our Lord was living in a day when even the teachers of the Law were inclined to set the Word of God aside when it seemed beneficial to do so. There were those who refused to care for their parents saying that they were giving what they might have used for their parents as a gift to the temple. But what would you expect from the Son of God? You would expect perfect obedience to the Word of God, wouldn't you? And this is just what we see in the Lord. Did He not say, "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29b)?

The Lord manifested His glory by His obedience to Joseph and Mary. And this is an important lesson for all of you dear children and young people who are here today. How can we show that we belong to the Lord? Listen to these words from the Apostle John:

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked (1 John 2:4-6).

Our obedience is never perfect like our Lord's was, but if we want to be like Him, we must follow His example, trusting Him to give us the desire and the power to follow in His steps.

Concl: And so what can we learn from this passage that will be of help to us in our lives, help that we need by seeing the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ even when He was only twelve?

We have seen in this passage three evidences of the glory of our Lord. Each one has a lesson for us.

First, let us remember that while we do not know the Word of God like our Lord did even when He was twelve, yet the Lord has taught us many things from His Word which many other Christians do not know, and which the people of the world certainly do not know. The Apostle Paul told the Corinthian believers that if the princes of this world had known the wisdom of God, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8b). Let us remember this about people. We are not to ram the truth down their throats, but in love and meekness we need to be looking for opportunities to tell others what we do know about our precious Savior, to explain what we know about the infallible Word of God.

Second, let us make sure that the work of God has the priority with us that it had with our Lord. We need to serve the Lord with greater diligence, and with greater faithfulness. There is much to be done, and often if we delay in serving the Lord as we should we find that the opportunities are gone. That is what gave our Lord such urgency in the way He served the Father.

Finally, as I have already pointed out, let us be diligent in our obedience to the Word of God. Don't ever feel that there is a sufficient reason for being disobedient to the Lord. There is no greater way of showing that we love the Lord and belong to Him than in making sure that the Word continues to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

May God enable us to be like our Lord, faithful in telling other what we know of the Word, zealous in our service, and obedient to the Word day by day.

CHRIST'S GLORY AT HIS BAPTISM  
Matthew 3:13-17

Scripture Reading: Matthew 3.

Intro: The Gospel make it clear that two events immediately preceded the beginning of our Lord's public ministry. The first was His baptism; the second was His temptation. It is His baptism which I want to consider with you today.

Personally I have no question as to the method which John the Baptist used when he baptized the Lord. John was baptizing people in the Jordan River, which would be the right setting for an immersion. We read in our text, verse 16, that "Jesus, when he was baptized, **went up straightway out of the water.**"

In John 3 tells us that John the Baptist "was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, **because there was much water there**" (John 3:23).

After the ascension of our Lord you will remember how Philip, one of the original deacons, was used to lead the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ. As Philip and the eunuch rode along in the eunuch's chariot, we are told that "they came to a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). Philip agreed that he could and should be baptized. And so Luke went on to record what happened. This is what we read in Acts 8:38-39:

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still:

**and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.**

39 **And when they were come up out of the water,** the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:38-39).

And so this, too, supports the idea that Philip immersed the eunuch in the water when he baptized him.

We can add to this a passage in Romans 6. Paul was describing our salvation as being "baptized into Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:3). He was not speaking of water baptism or we would have to agree with those who say that baptism is necessary before a person can really claim to be saved. That is never taught anywhere in Scripture. Salvation is by grace through faith completely apart from works of any kind. But I want you to notice how the Apostle Paul defined this work of God in which we were united to Christ in His death. Listen to what the apostle wrote:

4 **Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up**

from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection (Rom. 6:4-5).

What I want you to notice about this statement is that baptism is spoken of here as a burial followed by a resurrection. The crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord are pictured by baptism. And so our water baptism is to picture our death with Christ, and our resurrection with Christ. And the baptism of Christ was to picture His death for us, and His resurrection for us. In other words, the baptism of our Lord pictured our Lord, taking our place, dying as our Substitute, bearing our sins on the Cross, but then being raised from the dead. Baptism is to portray death and resurrection, and this is done by immersion, putting a person down into the water, and then raising that person up out of the water.

Finally, we can add to all of this evidence the meaning of the word baptize. It means to dip, or to submerge, to plunge into water. And the purpose of the dipping is to cleanse that which is being immersed.

So the symbolism is very beautiful, and it is very important that we understand the message which baptism is meant to convey to us. I have given you this brief lesson on baptism so we will all be able to understand more fully what happened at the baptism of our Lord. This was surely a time and place where our Lord's glory was clearly seen.

Often when I ask people why they want to be baptized, they say, "Because the Lord was baptized." And I have to tell them that that is not really the right answer. We are baptized in the same way that He was baptized, that is, by being put down into the water, and then raised up again. But His baptism had to be uniquely different because He is the One Who saves us, but we are sinners who are being saved. I trust we will all see the uniqueness of Christ's baptism as we go through our text.

Let us notice first:

I. OUR LORD'S PURPOSE IN COMING TO JOHN THE BAPTIST (Matt. 3:13).

It is stated very clearly in this verse, isn't it? He came to John the Baptist to be baptized. There is no question about our Lord's purpose.

However, one unique thing about the Lord is that we are told in verse 5 that the people who were being baptized were from



Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all of the region around the Jordan River. But the Lord had come from Nazareth which was in Galilee. Our Lord traveled between 60 and 70 miles "as the crow flies," but we know that no road is as straight as that, so while we don't know how far the Lord traveled, it was more than 60 or 70 miles. This shows how important He felt that it was that He be baptized.

The second thing that we see in our text is:

## II. THE RELUCTANCE OF JOHN TO BAPTIZE THE LORD (Matt. 3:14).

"Forbad" means that John absolutely refused to baptize Jesus. When we compare Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism with that of the Apostle John we realize that our Lord had not yet been positively identified as the Son of God. He had simply been told that the One upon Whom the Spirit would descend, would be the One Who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. See John 1:33. But that had not happened yet when the Lord came to John the Baptist to be baptized. But somehow John realized that the Lord was different. And so he said, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" This had to have been spoken in utter amazement. It is clear that the one doing the baptizing had a higher position before God than those who were being baptized. John the Baptist had refused to baptize the Pharisees and Sadducees who had come to him because they did not show that they were truly repentant for their sins. But this case with Jesus was different. John the Baptist clearly felt inferior in the presence of Jesus of Nazareth. He felt that Jesus should have baptized him, and there is no indication that John ever felt that way about any other person who came to him to be baptized.

Now notice:

## III. THE LORD'S RESPONSE TO JOHN THE BAPTIST (Matt. 3:15).

Please notice that the Lord did not disagree with John. As great as John was by the words of our Lord Himself, yet John was far inferior to the Lord, infinitely inferior, and John needed all that anyone else needed in order to be made acceptable to God.

So the Lord told him to let it be that way, or to consent to baptizing the Lord even though their roles would be reversed. And then our Lord said, "For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." And John the Baptist consented.

The words which the Lord spoke are of the greatest importance. The Lord's baptism was to symbolize at the beginning of His ministry one of His two purposes in coming to the

earth. The first was to complete the revelation of God; the second was, as He said here, "to fulfil all righteousness" for people like John the Baptist. But what did our Lord mean?

By fulfilling "all righteousness" He meant doing everything that was necessary to satisfy the righteousness of God. If God is going to justify sinners, He must do it in a just way. He cannot overlook sin; the penalty against sin must be carried out to the full, nothing can be lacking. God is the One Who determines what salvation is, and it cannot be less than what His righteousness would demand. Christ came to "fulfil all righteousness." And in order to do that, He had to take the place which actually belonged to John the Baptist in order that John the Baptist, and everyone who would ever be saved, would have a position with God equal to that of Christ.

This is how the Apostle Paul expressed it in 2 Corinthians 5:21:

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

But I like the way this verse is translated in the New King James:

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Do you get the picture here? The Lord Jesus took John the Baptist's place as a Sin Bearer so John the Baptist could be forgiven of his sins, and clothed in the righteousness of God. And what this exchange declared about John the Baptist, it declared about every sinner who will ever be saved. Regardless of whether a person stand high in moral standards as far as the world is concerned, or the chief of sinners, there is only one way that anyone can be saved, and that is through the Lord Jesus taking his place so that that sinner, whoever might be, is covered in the righteousness of God.

So in the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ we have this wonderful picture of our salvation. He died, He was buried, He arose from the dead having put away our sins, that we might be declared righteous before God. And the Lord left nothing undone. There is nothing that we need to add; there is nothing that we could add. The hymn writer was right:

Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe;  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow.

The last point in our text is:

IV. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS (Matt. 3:16, 17).

Notice carefully what Matthew has recorded for us here. This is all prophetic of what our Lord came to do. For Him to be baptized spoke of His death and burial. And when He went up straightway out of the water, we have a picture of His glorious resurrection from the dead. He died, but He did not remain dead; He did not stay in the grave. "He arose the Victor," as another hymn says. He, as far as the picture is concerned, finished what He came to do, and finished it completely.

But as the Lord came up out of the Jordan, an amazing thing happened--actually two amazing things! John the Baptist saw something that he had been looking for, and he heard a voice which he had not been expecting to hear.

John saw "the heavens...opened unto him." Some MSS say simply that "the heavens were opened"--with no "unto him." But John the Baptist saw what he had been looking for: "the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him," i.e., lighting upon the Lord.

And then out of the heavens he heard a voice, which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

You talk about GLORY! What could be more glorious than this? All three Persons of the Godhead manifesting their presence at the same time: The Son of God in the flesh, the Spirit of God descending like a dove and resting upon God's Son, and then the Father's voice from heaven declaring Who Jesus of Nazareth was. Here we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And do you need evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was fully God? Here it is, the testimony of the Father! And His statement was very emphatic, "This is," not was, but "is my beloved Son"--fully God and fully man. And, in the light of what had just been done, the Father declared that He was "well pleased."

Now remember, all of this was in type. This pictured what the Lord would do. If the Lord had not eventually died on the Cross, and been raised again, this picture would have been meaningless. But He did die, He was buried, He arose again, and the heavens were opened to receive Him back, because He, and what He did here on His mission to earth, were both well pleasing to God.

God never spoke before, nor has He spoken since, and said this about anyone. The Lord Jesus would not only do all that

sinful people needed for their salvation, but He would do all that the Father would require. This alone is our hope of salvation.

There have been many suggestions throughout the history of the world as to how man can get right with God, but this is the only one which has the divine imprimatur, the approval of God, and that is what counts! Other ways of salvation might sound good, but they end in death, eternal death.

The Apostles Peter, James, and John heard this voice and these words when they were with the Lord in the Holy Mount. Peter's comment on it in 2 Pet. 1:17 was that the Father was giving Him "honour and glory" when He spoke these words. The same was true here at His baptism. He was receiving "honor and glory" from God.

Concl: I am sure that you would agree with me that even in reading the words which we have read here in Matthew 3, and commenting on it, and thinking about it, we are standing on holy ground! Oh, how glorious our Lord Jesus Christ is. He accomplished for us what we could never have done, taking the penalty, the full penalty for our sins, paying it in full, and then making us the righteousness of God. What wisdom is here, what infinite wisdom! What amazing love and amazing grace! What glory there is even in the humiliation of the Lord Jesus Christ! He is glorious in His Person. He is glorious in His work. He is glorious in the completeness of His work. His work is sufficient to take away the sins of every person whom the Father gave to Him. He is glorious in the pleasure that the Father and the Spirit Both find in Him.

My, how we ought to love our Savior! He took our place that we might have His, not taking His place away from Him, but sharing with Him the place that He has with the Father. We are "accepted in the beloved," and will never again be turned away.

If people ask us if we are certain about our salvation, we can confidently say, "Yes, yes, yes!" Why can we be so sure? Because our acceptance is in Christ, and God is infinitely pleased with the work of His Son. And so our confidence is not self-confidence, but confidence in Christ to Whom belongs all of the glory for our salvation!

May we all make sure today that our faith is in the Son of God Who died in our place, took our penalty and paid it in full, and whose work has been fully accepted for all who are trusting in the Savior. If you are one who has had some other ideas about salvation, cast them away, and come to Christ today. Trust Him as your Savior. He alone can save

you. That is how John the Baptist got to heaven. That is how Saul of Tarsus got there. That is how Rahab the harlot got there. That is how the Philippian jailor got there. That is the only way anybody can get there. That's how I know I am going to get there. And so come to Christ, He will see to it that you get there, too. There is only One Who can save us. His Name is the Lord Jesus Christ, God's glorious Son.

## CHRIST'S GLORY IN HIS TEMPTATION

Matthew 4:1-11

Intro: When we consider the temptation of our Lord most of us probably remember what we are told in Hebrews 4:14-16. Let me read verse 15 first, and then show how verses 14 and 16 are related to it:

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Actually this verse is stated negatively, probably for the sake of emphasis. But stated positively it would read like this:

For we have an high priest which can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities because He was tempted in every way like we are, but He never sinned.

Our Lord is able to sympathize with us in our weaknesses because He was tempted in all the ways that we are with the exception that, while we often yield to temptation, He never did!

This has a very direct bearing upon our lives, and points to the way of victory for us over temptation and sin. This is brought out when we read verses 14 and 16 with verse 15. Let me read them for you.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The word "For" in verse 15 and the word "therefore" in verse 16 tie these three verses together. We can hold fast to our profession, or our confession, of Jesus as the Son of God, actually for many reasons, but here in Hebrews 4 because He successfully faced all of the temptations which the Devil put before Him without sinning a single time! And this in verse 16, we see, is the basis upon which we are to "come boldly unto the throne of grace," etc. No human being has ever been able to withstand all temptations like our Lord did. We have all been tempted, and failed. And we will continue to fail unless we learn to overcome sin by getting mercy and grace

from our Great High Priest in times of temptation. So all of us have, or should have, a special interest in the temptation of our Lord Jesus Christ. If He had sinned it would have been a denial of His Deity, and we would be left without one who could not only save us, but help us and deliver us, and who would be able to sympathize with us in our infirmities.

It has been several weeks since I last had the privilege of speaking to you about the glory of Christ, and so let me remind you of what we need to be thinking about when we speak of Christ's glory. Christ's glory is His Deity. This was the issue as far as the Devil was concerned. Twice he presented his temptation with the word, "If thou be the Son of God..." Our Lord was concerned that people know that He was the Son of God, but it would have been sin for Him to submit to the Devil in any way so as to prove it. "Devil" means an accuser; in the Devil's case, he is a false accuser. And his whole purpose was to draw the Lord into sin in much the same way that he had drawn Eve into sin many years before this.

But we might ask, "Didn't the Devil know that Jesus was the Son of God?" The answer has to be, YES! But apparently what the Devil did not know was what effect, if any, our Lord's humanity had upon His Deity. If it has changed His Deity, then he, the Devil, could draw the Lord into sin and thus defeat God's whole redemptive plan. So we can see that great issues were involved in the temptation of our Lord.

And all of this was for the confirmation of our faith because we know now that Jesus Christ not only did not sin, but that He could not sin! To say that He could have sinned would be to make Him less than God, and if He were less than God, then He could not have been our Savior. At no time in the earthly life of our Lord do we see greater evidence of the perfect humanity of our Lord as well as His absolute Deity than in His temptation. These two natures of our Lord are apparent at other times, but never more so, in my opinion, than at His temptation.

But let us also remember that the fact that the Lord could not sin did not in any way lessen the fact that it was a genuine temptation. Sin would have been far more abhorrent to our Lord Who never sinned than it would be to us who were born in sin. So His temptation was real, and it marked one of the deepest episodes in our Lord's humiliation.

The temptation of our Lord is mentioned in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, although very briefly and in just two verses in Mark:

12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty

days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him (Mark 1:12-13).

But Luke's account is as lengthy as Matthew's, although he listed the temptations in a different order. One explanation for the difference in the order is that the Devil must have presented His temptations to the Lord more than once. We can often resist temptation a time or two or even more, but the Devil keeps after all of us hoping eventually to break us down so that we will commit sin. And so it is to be expected that the Devil would act the same way toward the Lord. In fact, Luke tells us that our Lord was "forty days tempted of the devil" (Luke 4:2).

But as we begin to examine this passage, let us notice:

#### I. THE SETTING OF THE TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:1, 2).

It is interesting that the King James translators did not capitalize "spirit" in Matthew 4:1, but they did in Luke 4:1. It is also interesting that in Luke they translated the Greek word for spirit as "Ghost" the first time, "the Holy Ghost," and then they translated the same word "Spirit" the second time. The Holy Spirit is not a Holy Ghost, but the Holy Spirit.

Anyway--the Lord was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, or better, desert, "to be tempted of the devil." And Luke added the information that the Lord was "full" of the Holy Spirit.

One thing we should notice about this is that the Holy Spirit is actually the One Who was in control. This temptation was not set up by the Devil, but by the Holy Spirit. And so we can say that the Devil was not in charge, but the Holy Spirit was. The Devil was perfectly agreeable to tempting the Lord, but the outcome was going to be far different from what he thought it would be. This is the first of many times that the Devil would be defeated before the Members of the God-head.

The Lord had evidently been fasting and praying in anticipation of the beginning of His public ministry, and the Devil was hopeful of being able to ruin the whole thing.

The Lord had not eaten anything for 40 days and nights, and so that was a perfect setting for the first temptation. It looked like everything was playing into the Devil's hands.

This was the setting for the temptations. And so we come to



the first temptation.

## II. THE FIRST TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:3, 4).

Now if the Lord were really the Son of God, unchanged from all eternity, it would be expected that He could change stones into bread. Perhaps you remember that earlier in the ministry of John the Baptist, John said that God could do something greater than make bread out of stones; He said that God could make human beings out of stones! Cf. Matt 3:9:

And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

And think of what the Lord did when He fed the 5,000, and then fed the 4,000. He took a lunch and fed eight to ten thousand people on those two occasions. So turning the stones into bread would have been nothing for our Lord. What, then, was wrong with temptation?

There were several things wrong. First, the Lord had not come down from heaven to do the Devil's will, but to do the Father's will. Cf. John 6:38. If the Lord had done the will of the Devil, that would have been sin. Second, creatures, whether people or angelic beings, are convinced of divine truth by miracles. Pharaoh wasn't convinced by all that Moses did in Egypt. The scribes and the Pharisees were not convinced by the miracles which the Lord did. In fact, the Lord indicated in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus that people would not be convinced if one were to rise from the dead and go to them with the message. Cf. Luke 16:30. Third, the Devil knew that Jesus was the Son of God. In Luke 4:33-37 we have the story of the demon-possessed man who was delivered in the synagogue. Before the Lord cast the demon out, the demon said, "I know thee who thou art: the Holy One of God" (Luke 4:34). If a demon knew the Lord, we can be sure that the Devil did. Fourth, the Devil was making the mistake that he caused Eve to make, and which he has caused millions and millions of people to make throughout the history of the world, and that was to ignore the Word of God. It is not by eating bread that people are going to find the help that they need; it is when they are willing to hear the Word of God.

It is interesting that in each temptation the Lord referred to the Word of God. He did not say something new, but quoted that which was written already. Cf. Deut. 8:3. If people will not receive the Word, they will not be convinced by any miracle that could be performed. It is the Word which gives life. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

The Devil's philosophy is that if he sees, he will believe. However, he did not even promise that much. Our Lord did not come to save demons; He came to save human sinners. And God puts faith first. We believe, and then we see. So everything depends upon our reaction to the Word of God.

Anyone who has read the Gospels cannot help but see the influence of the Devil upon the crowds who stood around the Cross. Listen to Matthew's account of what they said.

39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. **If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.**

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, **let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.**

43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: **for he said, I am the Son of God.**

44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth (Matt. 27:39-44).

### III. THE SECOND TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:5-7).

The Devil took the Lord from the wilderness into the city of Jerusalem, and sat Him up on one of the top corners of the Temple. Again the Devil threw before the Lord the challenge, "If thou be the Son of God..." So this was still the issue. And here the Devil appealed to something that would have been even more spectacular than what he suggested in the first temptation. The idea was this: Think of how people would be persuaded if He were to jump, and angels would swoop down from heaven to catch Him before His body would hit the ground. If the angels failed, it would have meant certain death for him. And the Devil was undoubtedly intent on keeping the Lord from going to the Cross to provide salvation for sinners.

And the Devil introduced something here which has become one of his master strokes: He quoted Scripture. He quoted from Psalm 91, verses 11 and 12.

You will remember that, when the Devil tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden, he sought to expound the meaning of what the Lord had told Adam. We must not be deceived by people just because they use the Word of God. The most dangerous cults are those who use Scripture.

What was wrong with the Devil's quotation? You can easily see what was wrong if you read it. The Psalmist, speaking by the Holy Spirit, was not talking about casting ourselves off of a high place, expecting that when we do angels would come to deliver us. He was talking about how the Lord cares for us through the trials of life, and that angels even have a part in that care. But nowhere are we to presume upon God, to test God into doing what the Devil was suggesting. We don't set the agenda for the Lord. If we do, we will find, as many have found, that the results are disastrous.

And so again we see that the Lord resorted to the written Word of God for His guidance. "It is written." It has been written, and it stands written. Never are we to presume upon the mercy of God, doing foolish things, supposedly to demonstrate how great our faith is.

The Lord was quoting from Deut. 6:16, "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God."

#### IV. THE THIRD TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:8-10).

Anyone who reads the Bible knows that our Lord is destined to be King of kings and Lord of lords. He will reign until He has put down all rule and all authority. The kingdoms of this world are destined to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.

And so the Devil took Him up into some high mountain where they could see all of the kingdoms of the world, **"and the glory of them."** Now we know that the Devil is "the god of this world." And we also know that the Devil not only has in mind taking over the whole world and reigning himself in the place of our Lord, but he has his sights set on the heavens as well. This is clearly taught in Isaiah 14. But what is he doing here? He is offering the Lord the Messianic throne without the Cross. The price? The Lord must fall down, and worship him.

This all sounded very good, but the Word of God gave the Lord the guidance which He needed. He was referring to Deut. 6:13. But listen to the context of that verse which the Lord would have known very well:

13 Thou shalt fear [which includes worship] the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

14 Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

15 (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the

face of the earth (Deut. 6:13-15).

In our text (Matt. 4:10) the Lord told the Devil, "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written..." The Holy Spirit set up the temptation. The Devil did the tempting. But the Lord brought it to a conclusion.

And so the conclusion of our text marks:

V. SATAN'S DEPARTURE (Matt. 4:11).

Luke added the words, "for a season" (Luke 4:13). He left, but not for good. He would be back. However, he had tempted the Lord "in all points," in all ways. We have had in order:

- 1) "The lust of the flesh."
- 2) "The pride of life."
- 3) "The lust of the eyes."

All that is in the world is included under these three headings. They may take different forms, but every form of sin can be classified under one of these headings. We don't know how many times the Devil approached the Lord with these temptations which were designed especially for Him, but never was the Devil successful, and so he went away, awaiting another time when he could attack again, but in different ways.

Concl.: How do we see the Lord's glory in this time of temptation?

Let me suggest three ways:

- 1) In His sinlessness.
- 2) In His submission to the Word of God.
- 3) In His total obedience to the Father.

But out of this we see that we have a Great High Priest Who is sympathetic with us in our temptations, and Who has mercy and grace sufficient for us in all of our needs, especially in the battle with sin which we face every day of our lives. There may be many things that we cannot fully understand, but we can understand enough to be able to see the glory of our Lord displayed in His temptation. It is for our encouragement, and the for the strengthening of our faith. Our Lord and Savior is far more wonderful than any of us are capable of understanding. Let us begin each day in the realization that with the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we have all we need for our keeping throughout our lives here on earth, and for our ultimate glory in heaven with Him.

## CHRIST'S GLORY AT CANA

John 2:1-11

Intro: This morning we are thinking again of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when we speak of His glory, we are concerned about Who He was, the fact that He was more than just a man; He was indeed "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). When the Apostle John wrote those words he probably was not thinking of just one instance when he saw the glory of our Lord, as for example on the Mount of Transfiguration, but of many times like the one we are considering today. It seems that it was over a period of weeks, and perhaps even months, that the full realization of Who Christ was fully grasped even by the apostles. All three of the Synoptic writers record the time when the Lord was with His disciples on the Sea of Galilee when the storm arose, and the disciples thought that they were going to die. But the Lord just spoke to the wind and the waves, "and there was a great calm" (Matt. 8:26). It was then that the disciples said,

What manner of man is this, that even the winds  
and the sea obey him (Matt 8:27)!

Obviously this was one of the many times that they were learning what it meant that Jesus was the Son of God. This does not mean that they were not saved, but it meant that they were growing in their understanding of Who the Lord was, in the same way that you and I are hopefully learning more and more every day about the Deity of our Lord. How much we know about the Lord is, like the disciples, displayed by the way we react in times of trial, and by what place the Lord has in our lives from day to day. Many people say that they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but you could never tell it by the way they live. Daniel 11:32 tells us "that the people that do know their God shall be strong." The Apostle Paul was well along in his life as a Christian when he wrote to the Philippians about Christ, saying, "That I may know him" (Phil. 3:10). He didn't mean that he did not know the Lord, but that he longed to know the Lord better.

And so we must not miss what the Apostle John wrote at the conclusion of his record of the miracle at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. (Read John 2:11.) In this miracle of turning water into wine, the Lord "manifested forth his glory." Let me spend just a moment on those word, "manifested forth," so we will be more prepared to see what was taking place here.

John speaks of this as the Lord's purpose in the miracle. This is what the Lord did according to His own sovereign will. He was rendering apparent that which people would

never see if they simply looked at our Lord. Physically to the human eye He looked like any other man, but the performance of the miracle was intended to show that He was more than a man; He was the eternal Son of God--uniquely the Son of God. Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son. There is no other Son of God in this sense. The Lord was taking action to begin the unfolding, the manifestation, the revelation of this great reality! More evidence was to come, but this was a beginning. And it seems that He did it in such a way that people were talking more about the wine which He made than they were thinking about Him Who made it! It seems that those who really got the point were the disciples. But even for them it was only a beginning.

But let us look at the miracle and begin as we did last week thinking about the temptation of our Lord by looking at:

#### I. THE SETTING OF THE MIRACLE (John 2:1, 2).

One of the evidences that the Lord was the Son of God is to be seen in what He chose to do as His first miracle as well as the place where He performed it. We might get the impression from the text that the Lord was in Cana almost by accident, and that He didn't plan on performing the miracle until the people giving the marriage ran out of wine! But we know that the Lord doesn't work that way. He is always the One in control of the circumstances, even ordering the circumstances. So we have to say that it was divinely ordained before the Lord ever came to the earth that He would perform His first miracle in the insignificant town of Cana and at a miracle where we are not even told who the bride and groom were! Would you have planned the Lord's early ministry this way? Probably not if you expected to make the biggest impression by what the Lord did.

It would have been more reasonable to have chosen Nazareth where the Lord grew up. As far as we know Cana was probably just eight miles away from Nazareth. It is only mentioned four times in the Gospels, and all four times are in the Gospel of John. It is mentioned twice here in John 2 (vv. 1 and 11), once in 4:46, and once in 21:2. But Matthew, Mark, and Luke never mentioned Cana. Why not go down to Capernaum, or even more, to Jerusalem. But why did the Lord choose Cana?

And then we might ask, Why did He choose to make this His first miracle--turning water into wine at a marriage feast? Why not raise some person from the dead, or cast a demon out of somebody, or cleanse somebody from leprosy? Why not take a boy's lunch and feed 10,000 people? That would have attracted more attention, and given the Lord a stronger start

in His ministry.

I'll tell you why. It is because the Lord's ways are far different from our ways. He never did things just for the sake of doing something spectacular so as to attract attention. His wisdom is so much greater than the wisdom of men that there is no way that the two can be compared. The Lord Jesus was doing things His way, at His time, and for His own purposes. And we have already seen that it had to do with the men who came with Him to the marriage: HIS OWN DISCIPLES!

Can we see anything glorious about this? We certainly can! It shows the Lord Jesus to be "meek and lowly in heart" as He described Himself in the words found in Matthew 11:29. And it is significant that at the time the Lord was inviting people to come to Him that they might "learn of" Him. Our Lord was capable of doing anything that He wanted to do, but He sought to introduce His ministry in an almost obscure way so that even in the circumstance surrounding the performance of the miracle people might catch a glimpse of the great lowliness of the one who had come to save sinners. The miracle was performed in such a way that expositors have argued from that day to this as to just when the water was changed into wine. The Lord didn't ask people to watch what He was doing, as a magician would; He simply let the product speak for itself.

But I'm getting a little ahead of myself. Let us consider in the second place:

## II. THE NEED FOR WINE (John 2:3, 4).

We don't know why they ran out of wine, but they did. Maybe more people came to the wedding than they expected. Or it might have been that the original wine was so good that people just drank a lot of it. Anyway, the wine that they had was used up, and they had no more.

And it was our Lord's mother who told Him about it. See verse 3. And He responded in the words we find in verse 4. (Read.)

Now the Lord was not being disrespectful when He called His mother, "Woman." It sounds rude to us. I remember one time when my Dad impressed upon me and my brothers that our Mother was not a woman, but that she was a lady. So woman had a kind of a belittling tone to it. But not so in the Greek. In fact, it is a term of endearment. When the Lord was dying on the Cross you will remember that He said to His mother, "Woman, behold thy son!", and to the Apostle John, "Behold

thy mother!" And then we are told that "from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." Cf. John 19:26-27. So our Lord was showing the greatest respect for His mother when He said, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come."

But let me give you a more literal interpretation of what the Lord said. A. T. Robertson, a well-known Greek scholar says that the literal translation is this: "What is it to me and to thee?" Now it is important to understand this.

When we go to a wedding, we don't worry about the refreshments that are served, do we? No, unless it happens to be our wedding. The Lord's mother and the Lord and His disciples were like most of the people there: guests. It was not their problem that there was no wine. And the Lord introduced an expression at that time that runs through the Gospel of John: "My time is not yet come." And we realize the more we see this that He meant His time to die, His time to do what the Father had sent Him to do, His time to full His responsibility toward the people He came to save. But that was not yet! But to provide wine for the wedding was not His responsibility. Although He could do something about it, please note that He was under no obligation!

What does this tell us about the Lord since we know that He went on to provide wine? IT TELLS US THAT WHAT HE DID HE DID IN PURE GRACE! And what is more outstanding about the glory of our Lord than His grace? In John 1:14 when John was reporting that he had beheld the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ he said that Christ's glory was "full of grace and truth"! For those who had the eyes to see it, that company of people at that marriage in Cana of Galilee on that day had a demonstration, a marvelous demonstration of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ! It was in a material provision, to be sure, but it was provided in pure grace!

But now let us look at the miracle itself.

### III. THE MIRACLE OF TURNING WATER INTO WINE (John 2:5-9).

Here we see evidence of what John said about our Lord in John 1:3. (Read.)

We see the Creator at work. The Lord Jesus made the water which people have always had to drink. And He made the grape vine from which we get grape juice, or wine. But it is no problem for Him to take water and turn it into wine without using grapes!

When we think of our Lord as the Creator of all things, what



does it tell us about Him. It speaks of His infinite wisdom and His sovereign power. John does not tell us that the Lord asked His mother what they ought to do, or that He was even for a time uncertain as to what could be done, or should be done. The Apostle Paul asked the question, "Who has been His counsellor?" (Rom. 11:34). Paul may have been speaking mainly about God, but the same is true of the Lord Jesus Christ. His mother very wisely said, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." The Greek is even more forceful: "Whatsoever He says to you, DO!"

The Lord told the servants to fill the six water pots with water, and then to take it to the governor of the feast. They did -- and sometime between filling the pots, and pouring it out for the guests, the water became wine! And William Hendriksen in his commentary says that the six pots contained somewhere between 100 and 150 gallons of wine! See p. 116. And with the exception of Mary and our Lord's disciples and the servants no one knew where the wine had come from. Maybe they asked about it, but the text does not say that they did.

Think of having the Creator of the heavens and the earth at your wedding, and displaying His power to meet the needs of the wedding party and the wedding guests. They could have survived without more wine, but it shows another part of the Lord's glory in that He blesses us with blessings that are really over and above what we actually need. We all could get along with a lot less than we have, but God in His grace keeps giving and giving and giving again!

My last point as far as the miracle is concerned has to do with:

#### IV. THE QUALITY OF THE WINE (John 2:10).

(Read v. 10.)

What the Lord gives is far better than the best that men can provide for themselves. The governor of the feast had no hesitation in telling the bridegroom to tell him that he had served the worst first, and saved the best until the last.

Isn't this like the Lord? What He gives is far better than anything that we can do for ourselves. He does "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

When Peter and James and John saw the Lord in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, they wanted to stay there. It's far better to be a Christian than not to be a Christian, isn't it? Would we want to change places for a moment with

anyone who doesn't know the Lord? We experience His blessings over and over again here in this life. He loads them upon us. And yet Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit, said that "to depart, and to be with Christ...is far better" (Phil. 1:23). Oh, how great and wonderful and glorious is our Savior. No one can possibly compare with Him. His glory is beyond our comprehension. What will it be like when we see Him face to face?

But now for the conclusion.

Concl: Who benefitted from all of this? It would seem that most of the guests went away saying, "That was the best wine I ever drank!" If that was all that they could say, it would have been the tragedy of tragedies. But you know, that is often the way we are when we go to church and hear about the Lord. We come away talking about non-essentials, and overlook the glory of the One we have come to learn about and to worship. We are glad to see each other, but have we seen something of the Lord's glory today.

The disciples did at that marriage in Cana. They saw His glory. It wasn't as clear then as it would be later, but they saw some of it. And the Apostle John said in closing this part of the chapter, probably speaking about himself as well as the other apostles who were there, "And his disciples believed on Him."

This doesn't mean that this was the time when they were first saved. They all had been saved before. But this means that it was at this marriage feast when they saw glimpses of the Lord's glory, that their faith was strengthened, they were learning to trust the Lord more, and learning to love Him more as they saw those glimpses that they had seen of the glory of the Lord.

There is no joy like the joy of seeing the Lord. We don't see Him physically, but we see Him by faith. We can see Him and ought to see him when we read the Word. We see Him when through the preaching of the Word Christ is set before us. And the evidence that we are seeing His glory is seen when, by His grace, the glories of Christ begin to be seen by us, but also in us. May the Spirit of God give us eyes to see Him and ears to hear Him so that we will not miss anything that He is doing in our lives to show Himself to us. May it be said of us even this morning as it was said of our Lord's disciples so long ago, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20).

## CHRIST'S GLORY AT GALILEE

Luke 5:1-11

Intro: You may be wondering about whether or not this passage has anything to do with the glory of Christ since the word glory is not found in these verses. I am well aware of that, and am sympathetic with those of you who are wondering. But this was one of the Lord's miracles, and we can say all of the Lord's miracles were a display of His glory in one way or another. Christ's glory is anything that has to do with His nature as the Son of God, and I believe I am right in saying, anything that has to do with His nature as the Son of man. The two are as closely intermingled with each other as the meal and the oil were in the OT meal offering that they are inseparable.

The Apostle John was saying that the miracles were a manifestation of the Lord's glory when he spoke of the miracles, or signs, as he called them, which we find in his Gospel record. This is what he said. His words are found in John 20:31:

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

In this particular miracle which we are considering today, we see that Peter in particular was overwhelmed, we might say, with what the Lord did, and so he cried out in amazement, as we read in verse 8, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." And before he said this, Luke tells us that in His astonishment "he fell down at the Lord's knees." We may not be able to know all of the reasons for Peter's words at this point, but this is certainly a passage which we need to consider if we are going to look into the glory of our Lord. Here, near the shore of the Sea of Galilee, our Lord manifested His glory.

But the Sea of Galilee is not mentioned either. In verse 1 we read that "he stood by the lake of Gennesaret." What is the connection?

During the time that our Lord was on earth, the Sea of Galilee was so named because it was in that section of Israel known as Galilee. However, previously it had been known as the Sea of Chinnereth, named after a section of Naphtali, which bordered this Sea. It was also known as the Sea of Genesaret, a town on the Sea of Galilee just south of Capernaum. Actually it was a large lake, and was often referred to as a lake, as it is in verses 1 and 2 of Luke 5. So when we speak of this body of water in northern Israel as Chinnereth, or Genesaret, or Galilee, we are simply using three names to speak of the same "sea," or "lake."

But now let us consider our text. In the first three verses we have:

# I. THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF OUR LORD (Luke 5:1-3).

— This was one of those times which must have delighted the heart of the Lord. Many times the crowds were more interested in seeing the Lord perform a miracle than they were in His teaching, but this was one time when they not only wanted to hear Him teach, but they were urging Him to teach them. "Pressed upon Him" is a good translation. This was on the shore of the lake.

Evidently the physical pressure of the crowd was such that it was difficult for Him to teach them. And so He got into a fisherman's boat that was there, and the Lord asked him to push his boat out a little way into the water, and the Lord taught the crowd from the boat. We are not told what He taught them, nor are we told how long He taught them, simply that He "taught the people out of the ship" (Luke 5:3a). Obviously the teaching was not the main point in this story; it was the miracle our Lord performed after He had finished teaching. It was the teaching, and how He did it, that prepared the way for the miracle.

— But let us not minimize our Lord's teaching. The teaching the Lord did actually had precedence over the miracles which He performed, and before I get through with this series on the glory of Christ I plan, the Lord willing, to bring at least on message on Christ's glory in His teaching. No one before Him ever taught like He did, and no one has surpassed our Lord since then. And so His teaching will give us another opportunity to see His glory revealed while He was here on earth.

# II. THE MIRACULOUS CATCH OF FISH (Luke 5:4-7).

— The Lord knew that the fishermen had spent all night fishing without catching a single fish! He intended to change that, and so He told Peter to take the boat farther out into the water, and to let the nets down "for a draught" (pronounced, draft). D-r-a-u-g-h-t is the spelling used primarily in Britain. It means a catch of fish. The Lord was not telling them just to try fishing a little longer; He was telling them to let down their nets expecting that they would catch fish! They were washing their nets, according to verse 2, because they felt that there was no point to fish any longer. They were probably planning to go out again that night.

Now the Lord was not dealing with men who knew nothing about fishing. These were experienced fishermen. Their fathers had

been in the fishing business before them, and probably their family for several generations back. So, if fish were to be caught, they knew how to catch them. But that particular night had been totally fruitless!

— Peter related this to the Lord, but then went on to say, "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." It may have seemed to Peter like a foolish and useless thing to do, but at the Lord's word he did it!

Archbishop Trench made a very interesting statement on this part of the text which I would like to read to you. This is what he said, speaking of the Lord's words to Peter:

This He says, designing Himself, the meanwhile, to take the fisherman in his net. For He, who by the foolish things of the world would confound the wise, and by the weak things of the world would confound the strong, who meant, as Augustine has it, to draw emperors to Himself by fishermen, and not fishermen by emperors, lest his Church should even seem to stand in the wisdom and power of men rather than of God—He saw in these simple fishermen of the Galilean lake the aptest instruments for his work (Notes on the Miracles of our Lord, p. 139).

— Our Lord always worked with purposes in mind, eternal purposes, and this event was no exception. Many expositors link this event with the call of Peter and Andrew and James and John which is recorded by both Matthew and Mark. Cf. Matt. 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20. In the light of what we read in Luke 5:11, this idea is probably right.

What happened?

They suddenly gathered so many fish that their nets began to break. And when they, i.e., Peter and Andrew, called for help, James and John came. (See v. 10.) They started filling both boats and continued until the boats were so full that they began to sink. It is evident that those four men had never had an experience like this one!

Again let me quote to you from Archbishop Trench:

It was not merely that Christ by his omniscience knew that now there were fishes in that spot... Rather we behold in Him here the Lord of nature, able, by the secret yet mighty power [Trench used the word magic.] of his will, to guide and draw the unconscious creatures, and make them minister to the higher interests of his kingdom; we recognize in Him [Christ] the ideal man, the second

Adam, in whom are fulfilled the words of the Psalmist: 'Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou has put all things under his feet, ...the fowl of the air, **and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas**' (Ps. viii. 6, 8) (Op. cit., p. 140).

And then Trench went on to say that there was probably no part of the dominion which God gave to man at creation that had escaped him more than this dominion over fish! And this is what completely "astonished" Peter and Andrew and James and John—but most of all, PETER! (We read this in verse 9.)

Do you agree with me now that here we have an amazing instance when the glory of our Lord was revealed? There can't be any question about it. And Peter knew it!

Now let us consider more in detail,

### III. THE EFFECT OF THE MIRACLE (Luke 5:8-11).

Let me go down to verse 9, first of all, to call your attention to a word which I have already mentioned, the word "astonished."

This means they were dumbfounded, for the moment, speechless. The words which Luke used speak of this event holding those four men in its grip. Robertson said that it held them fast. See Vol. II, p. 71.

But the important thing is what Peter did, and what he said. Listen to his words:

**Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord**  
(Luke 5:8).

Instantaneously Peter knew that he was not fit to be in the presence of the Lord, and that what rendered him unfit was his sin.

I think it is interesting to contrast Peter's reaction when he saw the Lord glorified on the Mount of Transfiguration with his reaction here. On the mount he wanted to stay there with the Lord; here he called upon the Lord to depart from him. It probably can be explained only in terms of the Lord's purpose in each of those two instances. At the beginning of Peter's ministry, it was important for him to be impressed with the holiness of the Lord. And along with His holiness, His amazing, sovereign power. And when Peter had this glimpse of the glory of the Lord, he immediately saw himself for the sinner he was, completely unworthy for the next thing that the Lord was to say to him.

Can you read this without thinking of the call of Isaiah in Isaiah 6? Isaiah was given a glimpse of the Lord Jesus Christ in our Lord's preincarnate state, that is, before He had become a man. And he heard the seraphim as they cried to one another,

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory (Isa. 6:3).

What was Isaiah's reaction? The same as Peter's:

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts (Isa 6:5).

There is nothing that will make us realize our great sinfulness more than when we begin to have some understanding of the holiness of our Lord. How could we ever consider ourselves as being able or worthy to serve Him? The familiarity which some professing Christians manifest today in their relationship to the Lord shows that they have a very low understanding of Christ's absolute holiness and His sovereign power over us and everything else. I hope that we have all gotten beyond that in our fellowship with the Lord. But if not, a passage like this can bring us low before the Lord as it did Peter.

Do you know what stands in the way of our progress spiritually, as well as hindering our usefulness? It is our pride! Even when God begins to bless us, we are prone to take some of the glory for ourselves. To cure us, the Lord brings us into some situation where we see how insignificant we are, and how helpless, and at the same time we see the glory of our precious Lord, and how sufficient He is! It was the Lord who kept Peter and Andrew, and probably James and John, from getting any fish that night. I doubt if they had many nights like that. But the Lord gave them a lost night so they would be prepared for what He would do for them the next day. And it was all a part of their training in the grace of God. What meaning this experience gives to Peter's words in 1 Pet. 5:6, 7 where we read:

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

How wonderful it is that the Lord did not depart from Peter! That was not the Lord's purpose neither in showing Peter His own glory, nor in showing Peter his sin. Instead, look at our Lord's gracious response to Peter in verse 10. (Read.)

Matthew Henry made this comment on verse 10:

When by Peter's preaching three thousand souls

were, in one day, added to the church, then the type of this great draught of fishes was abundantly answered (Vol. V, p. 632).

And please notice that the Lord's statement about catching men was just as positive and certain as what He had earlier told Peter about the draught of fish! Mark's account of our Lord's call to Peter and Andrew is this:

And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men (Mark 1:17).

Luke 5:11 gives us the response of Peter and Andrew and James and John. (Read.)

Concl: Undoubtedly all four of these men had been saved before this particular experience. But here the Lord was calling them to serve Him. He called them in a most unusual way, and they came to Him.

None of us can be called to be an apostle. And probably most of you will not be called give your life to preaching, or to missionary work. Does this mean that there is nothing in this for you? Certainly not! You may earn your living at a certain job, or you may be a student in school, or possibly you are alone and are not doing what you once did. You may have very limited strength. Whatever our condition, let us remember that we are all not only the Lord's children, if Christ is our Savior, but we are the Lord's servants. So there is something in this passage for all of us.

What are some of the lessons? Let me give you just a few very briefly in closing.

It is clear that the Lord uses sinners, redeemed sinners, to be sure, but still sinners. The Lord did not contradict what Peter said about himself. We are sinners saved by grace, but still sinners, still able to sin against the Lord. That is the reason our continuing need of the Lord is so great.

Secondly, the Lord wants us to be obedient to Him. If we have something that He wants to us, let Him use it. If He tells us to do something which we have already been doing without success, do it. He probably will surprise you with the results like he did Peter and those who were with Him.

Third, walk humbly with the Lord. Be aware of all that He is doing in your life to show you His glory. He succeeds where we fail. He has power you and I don't have. His wisdom far surpasses ours, and His ways are always better; in fact, His ways are perfect.



Finally, in gratitude for what He has done for us, let us seek to "catch men," meaning, men, women, and children. We are not to try to force people into the kingdom of God, but we do what the Lord was doing, spread the Word, and then we need to trust Him for the results. He has a work for all of us to do. Let us not grow weary and quit. But let us give more and more of ourselves to the Lord, spreading the Word, and praying that the Lord will use us in any way He sees fit to bring others to Him. Look at the glory of Christ as He is revealed in the Word, and then go tell others what you have seen.

CHRIST'S GLORY AS A TEACHER  
John 7:46

Intro: Among the many evidences of the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, one that cannot be overlooked was His teaching! That is very apparent to anyone who reads the Gospel records with any understanding at all. And there are comments in the Gospels which indicate that the people who actually heard the Lord teach were deeply impressed with what they heard. Let me read some of them to you.

I am using as my text John 7:46 which you heard in our Scripture reading. The officers who had been sent by the Pharisees and the chief priests to arrest the Lord Jesus, came back without the Lord, but said, "Never man spake as this man."

Earlier in this same chapter (John 7) some of the people in Jerusalem who had been listening to the teaching of the Lord, were surprised that the leaders had not apprehended the Lord as they wanted to, and they said this:

Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do not the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? (John 7:25b, 26).

They couldn't figure out why they had not arrested Him.

In this present series we have noted that our Lord, as a twelve year old, while meeting with the doctors of the Law in the temple, "astonished" them "at his understanding and answers" (Luke 2:47).

As the Lord was just beginning His ministry, Luke had this to say about our Lord's teaching. The Lord was in the synagogue in Nazareth, and was asked to read from the Scriptures. He read that wonderful section at the beginning of Isaiah 61 which was prophetic of His own ministry. After He had finished the reading and taken His seat, He said to them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). And then Luke recorded this reaction of the people: And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? (Luke 4:22).

It must have been along this same line that our Lord later when He was in Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles, taught in the temple. This was the response of "the Jews." Remember that that term speaks of the religious leaders of the Jews. Here is John's report found in John 7:15:

And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

We don't know what the Lord had been teaching, but it probably had to do with the Feast of Tabernacles. And the Jews were amazed that someone who had not been trained under the rabbis would know the truth that our Lord knew. We know that He taught as He did because He was the Son of God.

At the end of Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount, we have two comments regarding the teaching of our Lord. The first was that the people who heard Him "were astonished at His doctrine." This is same amazement was displayed by the people when the Lord was explaining to the Sadducees about the resurrection. This is what Matthew recorded in chapter 22, verse 33:

And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.

In Marks 11:18 we read about the same reaction at another time in our Lord's ministry:

And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

The other statement that is made at the end of Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount is this:

For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes (Matt. 7:29).

As far as the response of the people generally, we have two statements in the Gospels, and possibly more. But the first that I want to mention is in Luke 19:47, 48:

47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

Mark tells us a very similar thing in Mark 12:37b: "And the common people heard him gladly."

We know that the Lord primarily did two things during the years of His ministry on earth:

- 1) He performed many miracles.
- 2) He was a teacher.

We have already seen in this series on the glory of Christ that our Lord's Deity was manifested in the miracles which He performed. Now we can say the same about His teaching. We see the Lord's glory, His Deity (which is what His glory means) in His teaching. And the emphasis in the Gospel records is not only on what the Lord taught, but how He taught.

Now let me take you back to my text, John 7:46, before we look at a few of the other verses as well.

The statement of the officers (plural) indicates that they considered our Lord to be:

I. THE GREATEST OF ALL TEACHERS (John 7:46).

— There is an interesting account in John, chapter 11, regarding Caiaphas, the high priest. Let me read it for you, beginning with verse 47 and going down through verse 52. (Read.)

The Apostle John did not say this about the officers who had gone to arrest Jesus, but I wonder if the same were not true. We don't know how many officers there were who were sent on that mission, but however many they were, they were agreed that "Never man spake like this man." Now they obviously could not have known every teacher who had ever lived, but as far as they were concerned, they had never heard a teacher who was better than our Lord Jesus Christ! And yet, if we were to expand their words to include every teacher who had ever taught, the words will still be true. There never has been, and never will be, a greater teacher than our Lord was. This has to be the case since He was the Son of God. Obviously no one could have had greater knowledge than He. He was omniscient, all-knowing. And no one would have been greater at teaching to reach the hearts of people than our Lord was.

— Matthew Henry wrote about this verse:

(1.) This was a very great truth, that never any man spoke with that wisdom, and power, and grace, that convincing clearness, and that charming sweetness, wherewith Christ spoke; none of the prophets, no, not Moses himself.

(2.) the very officers that were sent to take him were taken with him, and acknowledged this. Though they were probably men who had no quick sense of reason or eloquence, and certainly had no inclination to think well of Jesus, yet so much self-evidence was there in what Christ said that they could not but prefer him before all those that sat in Moses's seat. Thus Christ was preserved by the power God has upon the consciences even of bad men.

— (3.) they said this to their lords and masters, who could not endure to hear any thing that tended to the honour of Christ and yet could not avoid hearing this. Providence ordered it so that this should be said to them, that it might be a vexation in their sin and an aggravation of their sin. Their own officers, who could not be suspected to be biassed in favour of Christ, are witnesses against them. This testimony of theirs should have made them reflect upon themselves,

with this thought, "Do we know what we are doing, when we are hating and persecuting one that speaks so admirably well?" (from Matthew Henry's Commentary, V, 977).

It was not just how the Lord spoke, but what He had to say. There was power in His words to convince those who did not come to be convinced, and to give them the boldness to declare how they felt even to their superiors. It certainly could have led to their dismissal, if not to their own deaths, so severe was the hatred of the chief priests and Pharisees toward our Lord. From the preceding verses it appears that the officers were close to believing that the Lord was really Israel's long-awaited Messiah. And yet we have no indication from Scripture that these officers became believers. Maybe they did, but maybe they did not. At this point, however, they were not far from the Kingdom—whether or not they ever entered in.

It is hard to think that they were this close to salvation without actually trusting in Christ. What a warning this ought to be to any today who may be convinced of the truth of the Gospel, but have not turned to Christ. It is not enough for us to believe that Christ is the Son of God. As the Apostle John said in that verse in John 20:31, we must also go on to put our trust in Him as the One and only One Who can give us everlasting life with all that that means.

To get the full impact of the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, one needs to read and reread the Gospels. And there is no better suggestion that we can make to anyone concerned about knowing God than that he or she read the Gospels over and over until their message becomes clear to the heart.

But what was it that made the teaching of the Lord so powerful and so convincing. From the verses which I have read to you at the beginning of my message, let me point out three characteristics of our Lord's teaching that stand out as very unique, and yet characteristics that we do well to follow today.

Let me call this:

## II. THE GLORY OF OUR LORD'S TEACHING.

The first characteristic of the words of our Lord was this:

- A. It was doctrine, and doctrine simply means, teaching.

Matthew 7:28 says that the people "were astonished at his doctrine." Matthew 13:54-58 tells us the same thing:

54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Almost 40 times it is mentioned in the Gospels that our Lord taught, and we know that He taught the truth, "the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." The object of teaching is to impart knowledge. Our Lord taught that people might learn what they did not know, but also that they might apply what they were learning to their own lives. How sad it is to read that people were astonished by the things that the Lord was teaching, and yet were offended by Him.

I don't know how many of you saw the TV special which was prepared and narrated by Peter Jennings called, In the Name of God. He showed what several charismatic groups are doing in their churches in order to get people to come to church. What was portrayed ought to make people turn away in disgust from evangelical churches. You heard the sermon ridiculed, and the singing of hymns ridiculed. Let me say today that if we are not teaching the Word of God, we are not doing what the Lord Jesus did, and what the Apostle Paul did, and what the Apostle Paul charged Timothy to do. And if the people who were shaking, speaking in tongues, and falling all over the floor, knew more about the Word of God, they wouldn't be doing what they were doing. People ought to come to church to learn about God, to learn what the Bible says about people, and to learn how their needs before God can only be met by a true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ Who died on the Cross to save sinners. Churches and pastors need to get back to the Word of God, and to trusting the Holy Spirit to use that Word to bring people to Christ, instead of using the ridiculous and blasphemous methods that are being used in many churches on such a large scale today.

The Lord preached doctrine. He was a Teacher of the Word of God. And we read that the multitudes followed Him and heard Him gladly! If we want to see a work of God in our day, the Bible is our most powerful weapon when blessed and used by the Spirit of God. Let us never apologize for teaching, and

let us never quit doing it--teaching God's precious and powerful Word.

But there was a second thing that characterized our Lord's teaching.

B. He taught with authority.

In Matthew 7:29 we read,

For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

What does it mean that "he taught them as one having authority," and how was this different from the teaching that they had gotten from the scribes?

It meant that there was power in His teaching--convincing power, transforming power. It meant that He taught with conviction, that He knew His subject, that He had mastered it, and that He knew that He was right, that He was teaching the truth. Although He was the Son of God, He claimed that the words He gave to men were words that the Father had given Him to proclaim, and that He limited Himself to the Father's words.

We shouldn't be surprised if the world has lost respect for the church if we have turned from Scripture to politics, or to social problems, or to psychology, but have quit teaching the Word of God. The Lord didn't rave and rant against Rome. He didn't try to make people feel good about themselves. He wasn't in the entertainment business--and neither are we! His glory was displayed by the power, the authority, which was evident when He taught. People did not always agree with Him, but they couldn't resist the power with which He spoke. They had to admit that they have never heard such a powerful teacher as our Lord was. He was not out to please men, but to please God. And His purpose was not to make people feel good about themselves, but to realize that they were sinners in need of a Savior. He warned them to flee from the judgment of God which was certain to fall on them if they did not repent and turn to the Savior.

There is much more that I could say about the teaching of the Lord, and the display of His glory in His teaching, but let me close with just one more point.

C. The Lord taught graciously.

It is said in Luke 4:22,

And all bore him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

What are "gracious words"? You will find out what they are if you notice what our Lord read that day in the synagogue. Listen to what He was reading -- Luke 4:17-19:

- 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,  
 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,  
 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

What are "gracious words"? They are words of grace. They are words which no human being deserves to hear. They are words of hope. They are words that bring joy. They are pleasing words. They are words that show what is pleasing to God. They are words which impart the love and mercy of God. They are words (by definition) that are designed by God to touch the heart and change the life.

The Jews weren't used to hearing "gracious words," words which speak of what God has done for us through Christ. They were used to hearing Law—what they needed to do, and to keep doing, if they were ever to escape the wrath of God. I can assure you that when the Lord finished reading, and then saying what He said afterwards, there was a difference in the atmosphere in that synagogue from what those people had ever experienced before. Oh, the "gracious words" of Scripture, and how much more gracious they sounded when spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Concl: When you have the teaching of the Word of God, taught with authority, with power, and delivered with words of grace, you have the kind of teaching the Lord did, teaching which always displayed His glory as the Son of God.

And when people come to church, this is what they ought to be able to see and hear: the Word of God, with power, and with grace. This is one way the glory of Christ is to be reflected in us. Let others laugh, and shake, and fall on the floor, and jabber in what they call tongues, and any other ridiculous thing they want to do, but let them realize sooner or later they are going to face judgment from God for so blasphemously desecrating the ministry. But for us, let us stick by the Word of God, and follow our Lord, seeking always to please Him, and trusting Him for the blessing in grace that He may seek to give us. May God forbid that the ministry at Trinity Bible Church should ever be anything else. May the Lord enable us to do what we are doing in a much better way, but may we never turn away from the ministry our



Lord had as He in His work gave positive evidence that He was the Son of God.

If you are without Christ as your Savior, remember that God wants you to see yourself as a sinner. And you can only learn how bad you are in the Word. He wants you to know that you can never expect to go to heaven some day even though you may be trying to be a good person. Nobody is good enough to go to heaven. We need Christ. You can only learn that from the Word. We need Him to save us. That is why He came to die on the Cross. This is what we learn in the Word. And His resurrection proves that He did all that God required for the forgiveness of our sins, and for the gift of eternal life. Otherwise the Lord would still be in the grave. So seek the Lord today. Put your trust in Him, and He will save you by His wonderful grace. Our Lord promised that those who come to Him He will never reject nor cast away. So come to Him now. Put your trust in Christ. He will save you, and save you now.

## CHRIST'S GLORY ON THE HOLY MOUNT

2 Peter 1:12-18

Scripture Reading: Matthew 17:1-13.

— Intro: Early in this series on the glory of Christ I had occasion to refer to the statements made in Scripture by both the Apostle John and the Apostle Peter when they claimed to have seen the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those claims had to do primarily with the transfiguration of Christ when He took them up into a high mountain where they saw Him in His glory. But I mentioned at that time that the transfiguration of Christ was not the only time that they saw the glory of the Lord, although it was the outstanding time! In this series I have been tracing several of the other times during our Lord's ministry when His glory was apparent, but nothing was as clear as the time when Peter, James, and John saw the Lord in the mount. We have heard about this in our Scripture reading this morning.

In order to understand what took place on that special event, we need to remember that the glory of our Lord was concealed behind and within His humanity. If we had seen the Lord when He was living upon the earth, we would have seen a Person Who looked like every other person. But listen again to what the Apostle John wrote about the transfiguration of the Lord. I am reading John 1:14, and the Apostle John was referring to the Lord by one of His titles, the Word:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,  
(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the  
only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and  
truth.

John was in this verse declaring the true humanity of our Lord in the first part of the verse, and His absolute Deity in the latter part of the verse. Most people only saw His humanity, and only thought of Him as merely a man. But the Apostle John was given the privilege of seeing the veil lifted, so to speak, and then the glory of the Lord, His majesty, His Deity, overshadowed the Lord's humanity.

Now we might think that this was just the enthusiasm of a devoted apostle making this statement, but we also have Peter's declaration of the same thing, plus the written records of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. We have heard Matthew's account. You will find Mark's account in Mark 9. Luke's account is given in Luke 9. There was absolutely no doubt in the minds of Matthew, Mark, or Luke as to the truthfulness of the claim made by Peter, James, and John.

— So we have the testimony of five of these six men (excluding James) as to what the three apostles saw when the Lord took

them into "the holy mount."

Now listen again to Peter's account:

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, **but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.**

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which **came** from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount (2 Pet. 1:16-18).

And so Peter recorded not only that they "were eyewitness of his majesty," but that they also heard the Father's voice speaking from heaven, giving "honour and glory" to His Son, when He declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Father had given this same testimony to the nature of Jesus following our Lord's baptism. There were many other times during our Lord's life on earth when His glory was displayed in a less spectacular way, but this was the greatest display of His glory.

The word that Matthew used to describe what happened to our Lord, is the word "transfigured." See Matt. 17:2. Mark used identically the same word in the Greek. See Mark 9:2. Luke used a different expression. He said that "the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening" (Luke 9:29). But Luke added in Luke 9:32, speaking of the three apostles, that "they saw his glory."

Now if anyone is skeptical about this event, let us remember that we have more than the two or three witnesses which were required in the OT, as well as in the NT, to confirm that such a thing actually took place. There evidently were those people in the first century who doubted the testimony of the apostles because Peter assured his readers that they had not followed "cunningly devised fables." Peter said that they saw the Lord in His glory. John said the same thing. And Matthew, Mark, and Luke included it in their gospels as being just as certain as anything else that they recorded in their books. So let there be no doubt in any of our minds but that this actually took place.

But the real question is, What took place? What did Peter, James, and John see?

Let us examine the word which Matthew and Mark used:

I. A TRANSFIGURATION (Matt. 17:2; Mark 9:2).

I have already mentioned that Matthew and Mark used identically the same word in the Greek. If I give you the Greek word you will hear the sound of a word which we use in English. In fact, it is a word which has been brought into the English from the Greek with very little change. Listen to it in the Greek: μεταμορφώθη. Our Lord underwent a change, not from what He had been before, but in appearance. Suddenly out of what was the mere human appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, the indescribable glory of the Lord Jesus Christ was clearly evident. He appeared to His apostles as the Son of God. Before the glory had been veiled by His humanity; now His humanity was still there, but a glory never before seen by the apostles was clearly evident. Matthew said that looking at the Lord's face was like looking directly into the light of the sun! Mark said that it was a light as white as the snow. Luke said that the Lord's appearance "was altered," meaning that it was different from what it had ever been before, and strange--"white and glistening" (Luke 9:29). The NIV translates that expression saying that "his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning."

In Peter's account in his second epistle he said that they were with the Lord, and they saw what happened to Him, and they heard the voice from heaven. It is important to note that in John 1:14 and 2 Peter 1:16 and 18, both apostles used the word, "we"! Peter said, "We...were eyewitnesses of his majesty."

It is probably true that there were no words in any language that were fit to describe adequately the glory of what Peter, James, and John saw when the Lord was "transfigured" before them. Scientists have adopted this word to describe sudden changes which take place in certain creatures, but no earthly illustration could possibly describe the change which the apostles saw in the Lord Jesus Christ on that day.

And to add to the glory and wonder of that day, Moses and Elijah appeared with the Lord, talking to Him about, as Luke tells us, our Lord's coming death in Jerusalem. They were alive. Luke says that they "appeared in glory." And it seems that Peter, James, and John immediately recognized who they were. Moses had died, you will remember, and the Lord buried him. No one was ever able to find his grave. Elijah, on the other hand, was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire. But here they both were--glorified! I am not going to say whether this was permanent for them, or not, because I don't know. BUT WHAT WE ALL NEED TO SEE IS THAT THIS SCENE PORTRAYED THE CONDITIONS THAT WILL BE ETERNAL WHEN WE GET TO HEAVEN.

From the details we have examined thus far, it would seem that this would have been a terrifying experience for the apostles. But was it? Let us look now at:

## II. THE REACTION THIS ALL HAD UPON THE APOSTLES.

The first thing that we will have to say is that:

A. They were glad to be there.

How do we know? All three of the Synoptic Gospel writers recorded what Peter said. And all three indicated that he was expressing the way the other two felt: "Lord, it is good for us to be here" (Matt. 17:4; Mark 9:5; Luke 9:33).

Thayer in his Greek dictionary said that the word "good" in this context means "it is pleasant, delightful" (p. 322). They didn't understand all that was going on, but the effect upon them was immediately pleasing to them.

The Lord had gone up to the mountain to pray, according to what Luke recorded. See Luke 9:28, 29. The apostles became very sleepy, and actually went to sleep like they would do later in Gethsemane. But it was while the Lord was praying that His appearance suddenly was changed. This awakened the apostles, and when they saw the Lord in His glory, with Moses and Elijah who appeared in their glory, that is when Peter said, "Master, it is good for us to be here."

Let me ask you a question: Do you think that the apostles may have thought that suddenly they were in heaven? I don't know, but the possibility seems to be there. But whatever the actual feeling was in the hearts of the apostles, we know that they were not only glad to be there, but they were perfectly content to stay! How do we know that? Because Peter wanted to build three tabernacles--one for the Lord, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. This is a word which has a wide variety of meanings. It can mean a booth made out of green boughs such as the Jews made and lived in at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, or it can be used to describe the Temple, as it is in Heb. 13:10. Or it is used in Heb. 8:2 of "the true tabernacle" in heaven, "which the Lord pitched, and not man." So there is nothing in the word that would keep us from saying that Peter, speaking for the others, was thinking of a permanent arrangement.

Don't you think that this gives us an idea of how our loved ones who have died felt, and continue to feel, in heaven? Would they not say, "It is good for us to be here, so good in fact, that we don't want to go back to earth."

B. The apostles were afraid.

But I said that while they felt it was good to be there, they were also afraid. Wouldn't you have been? Talk about a new experience! But Mark records this after giving us Peter's words:

For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid (Mark 9:6).

And their fear was increased when suddenly they were covered by bright cloud, and the Father spoke those wonderful words to them:

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5).

When the disciples heard this, Matthew went on to record:  
And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid (Matt. 17:6).

What did the Lord Jesus say to them? He said, "Arise, and be not afraid" (Matt. 17:7). And at that moment Moses and Elijah were nowhere to be found, and they were alone with the Lord.

I don't know for sure, but the climax of this experience where they were left alone with the Lord, may have been to show them that the Lord and His glory were far greater than either Moses or Elijah and the glory which was to be seen in them. Maybe in building three tabernacles the apostles were yet to learn the uniqueness of the Lord's glory. The Father didn't say anything about Moses or Elijah, but He gave, as Peter wrote later, honor and glory to His Son.

For he [our Lord Jesus Christ, not they--Moses and Elijah] received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (2 Pet. 1:17).

Moses and Elijah were great men of God, greatly blessed and greatly used. But they were not to be compared with our Lord Jesus Christ. And it must have been wonderful for Peter and James and John to get a glimpse of what it would mean for the people of God to be glorified. But the glory of Moses and Elijah was not to be compared with the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Moses and Elijah were members of the family of God. But our Lord Jesus Christ was uniquely THE Son of God! And so He was the One they needed to hear. Let us thank God for all of the Moseses and Elijahs and Peters and Pauls that He has used to bless us, but let us remember that our Lord Jesus Christ is pre-eminently and infinitely above them all. What a message there was for the apostles (and for us), when we read in Matthew 17:8,

And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw  
no man, save Jesus only.

Let me give you one more point, and then a word of conclusion. The point is this:

### III. THE CHARGE GIVEN TO THE THREE APOSTLES.

We find it in Matthew 17:9:

And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus  
charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man,  
until the Son of man be risen again from the  
dead.

I can imagine that this might have been a little disappointing to the three apostles. They must have been looking forward to telling the other apostles what they had seen and heard. If they were like people are today, they would have been thinking about the book they were going to write. But the Lord completely closed the door on telling anyone what they had seen and heard.

WHY? Let me give you a couple of reasons.

First, because the Lord wanted the message of this vision to get into the hearts and understanding of those three men. Sometimes we are so quick to tell others what we have seen in the Word that we don't take the time to let it get firmly established in our hearts. The Lord could have taken all twelve of the apostles up on the mountain with Him. They all could have seen what Peter and James and John saw. But the Lord didn't take the others. And He didn't want the three apostles to be so eager to tell others that they would miss the point of the message the Lord had for them.

But let me give you a second reason. The Lord did not want this experience to become a matter of pride in the lives of the apostles. Later, you will remember, the Lord caught the Apostle Paul up into the third heaven, and he saw many things which he was never permitted to tell anyone else. We don't know to this day what he saw, or what he heard. And to keep him from becoming proud about it, the Lord gave him a thorn in the flesh so that instead of feeling great about himself, he would remember how much he needed to trust the sufficiency of the grace of God in his life, day by day.

I hope we will all remember that not everything that the Lord gives us is for publication. But even if we are to pass on what we know to others, let us make sure that we have gotten the message ourselves, and that we do not let pride take over in our hearts when we ought to be humble and grateful that

the Lord takes the time to teach us anything.

Concl: In conclusion, let me point out a very wonderful truth which actually results from the transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When I was seeking to explain to you the meaning of the word "transfigured," I mentioned that the Greek word that is used there is the word from which we get our English word metamorphosis. Well, the word that the Gospel writers used to describe the transfiguration of our Lord, is the same word that Paul used to describe our transfiguration in 2 Cor. 3:18. Listen to the verse which many of you could quote, and which I have read to you many, many times:

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The words that I want you to notice are the words "are changed." We could translate it, are being changed, or are being transformed, or are being transfigured--the same word that is used of our Lord's transfiguration.

With the Lord it was sudden (because His glory was always there). With us it is gradual. The Father transfigured the Son; the Holy Spirit is transfiguring us. Peter and James and John saw the Lord in Person; we see the Lord in the Word. The effect upon Peter, James, and John was to be seen in the days to come as they continued to dwell on what they had seen. Our transfiguration takes place gradually as we see the Lord in the Word, meditate upon what we see, and then walk day by day in fellowship with Him.

Our Lord's glorification was complete. Some day ours will be too. Then "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). We will never be Deity, but we are going to bear the likeness of our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. One definition that the dictionary gives of a metamorphosis is "a striking alteration in appearance, character, or circumstances." With us it will be all three, but it is important for us to know that those changes are taking place now. How thankful we can be if, by the grace of God, people take knowledge of us as they did of the early Christians, that they had been with Jesus. May we be so devoted to our Lord, and so faithful in digesting the Word of God, that the changes the Lord is making in our lives will become clear enough for others to see. This is the purpose of our redemption, and it is all for God's glory, not ours.



CHRIST'S GLORY IN GETHSEMANE  
Matthew 26:36-46

Parallel passages: Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46.

Intro: Every event in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus

Christ was a sacred event—from His birth to His ascension! But among all of them one which would have to be considered among the most sacred was the time that our Lord spent in Gethsemane. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all give us an account of it. The agony which our Lord experienced is brought out by Luke and by the writer of the book of Hebrews, who probably was the Apostle Paul. Luke tells us this in Luke 22:44:

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly:  
and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood  
falling down to the ground.

No words of mine could adequately express what the Lord must have been going through at that moment which Luke has given to us to describe the terrible agony our Lord was going through in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The other passage which I have in mind is Hebrews 5:7. The writer of Hebrews had to be referring to our Lord's praying in the Garden of Gethsemane just prior to His arrest, trials, and crucifixion. Listen to what we find in the Hebrews passage. I will read Hebrews 5:7-10. Speaking of our Lord, the Apostle wrote:

7 Who in the days of his flesh, **when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death,** and was heard in that he feared;  
8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;  
9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;  
10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

If when Moses stood before the burning bush, and when Joshua stood before the captain of the Lord's hosts, they were standing on holy ground, the we are standing on holy ground today when we consider together the time which our Lord spent in the Garden of Gethsemane. It makes the betrayal of our Lord by Judas that much more despicable when we realize that it was following these sacred moments which our Lord spent crying out to His Father that Judas came to turn the Lord over to His enemies, identifying Him by giving Him a kiss. Cf. Matt. 26:48; Mark 14:44. It is Luke who has given us the Lord's response to what Judas did. We find it in Luke 22:47,

47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, **Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?**

It must have been that at that very moment our Lord's head and face and hands and clothing were stained by His own blood. And yet Judas proceeded with his treachery. The Apostle John says that Judas knew where he would find the Lord "for Jesus oftentimes resorted there with his disciples" (John 18:2).

As we approach another Easter season when supposedly our thoughts are to be turned toward the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, all of us would do well to spend as much time as we can reading and re-reading the accounts given to us in the four Gospels of terrible things our Lord experienced in paying the price for our redemption. If our hearts have at all grown cold toward our Savior, such reading and meditation under the blessing of the Holy Spirit will rekindle our love for the Lord Jesus Christ. It will make all of us love Him more as we realize the terrible humiliation He suffered on the Cross, and even before He got there.

But let us look at Matthew's account, and yet occasionally I want to refer briefly to what Luke and Mark have written.

We have, first of all,

I. OUR LORD'S WORDS TO PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN (Matt. 26:36-39).

I think that we can safely assume that all of the Lord's apostles were with Him (except for Judas), but that eight of them were left just inside the Garden, while he took Peter and James and John with Him into the inner part of the Garden. While, as the Apostle John has recorded for us, the Lord often went there with His disciples, yet we have no record that He ever prayed with them. Whether or not what we have read about this particular occasion was always the arrangement, I don't know, but at least we know what happened on this occasion.

The Lord told the three apostles to stay in a certain place, but it was not just to wait. The Lord wanted them to watch with him. See Matt. 26:38.

This meant that they were to stay awake, and to be careful lest they would be overcome, but the only way they could do that was in prayer! In fact, when the Lord came back to them

after He had prayed by Himself, He found them asleep, and He rebuked them with the words which we find in Matt. 26:41.  
(Read.)

So their responsibility at this time was to pray, to pray for themselves. None of them realized the critical hour this was in the life of our Lord. None of them could have possibly imagined what our Lord was going to have to endure to be their Savior and ours. Nor did the disciples realize that in a lesser sense this was an hour of testing for them as well as for the Lord. The Lord had just told Peter that He would deny knowing the Lord. Peter did not believe it, and promised, along with all of the others, that they would never deny the Lord, nor forsake Him.

But I want you to notice the words which Matthew used, and which our Lord used, to describe our Lord's condition as He entered the Garden to pray. In verse 37 we read that our Lord "began to be sorrowful and very heavy."

Hundreds of year before this Isaiah had described our Lord as "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3).

But then Isaiah went on to say,

Surely he hath born **our griefs**, and carried **our sorrows**: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted (Isa. 53:4).

A great heaviness came over our Lord as He entered the Garden, a great depression of spirit. It was an extreme sadness which was leading Him to death. Gethsemane was not the place of His sacrifice, but it was where the keen awareness of what His sacrifice would mean to Him, that had started to grip His heart. This was a deep, inward grief. Perhaps the Lord was beginning to understand in His humanity in a deeper way what it was going to mean to Him not only to be the Bearer of the sins of His people, but what it was going to mean to be "made sin" for us. Matthew's words in verse 37, and our Lord's words in verse 38, picture for us the deepest kind of depression. Here we can see a little more clearly what it means that He was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. 4:15), and yet it was "without sin." There was no distrust of the Father. There probably never has been one who could adequately expound what our Lord was experiencing at this time. I don't feel like I can. But I know that regardless of the kind of depression and oppression any of us may have experienced, none of us has experienced what our Lord experienced as He anticipated His work on the Cross.

It is very interesting to me that in this dark hour of our Lord's life, he sought the fellowship of His disciples. It was a part of the comfort that the Father was ministering to

Him that they were with Him. Of all that our Lord experienced while He was here on earth, nothing manifested His true humanity more than this.

And then we are permitted to know how our Lord prayed. This is the second point in the chapter.

## II. OUR LORD'S PRAYER (Matt. 26:39).

(Read verse 39.)

Notice the position our Lord took. "He...fell on his face"--on the ground. Notice how He addressed God: "O my Father." Notice the burden of His prayer: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

What did he mean by "this cup"? John tells us that when Peter tried to defend the Lord against His enemies when they came with Judas to arrest Him, He stopped Peter with the words, "The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?"

Thayer wrote in his Greek dictionary that this was "a figure common to Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, and not unknown to Latin writers, one's lot or experience, whether joyous or adverse, divine appointments, whether favorable or unfavorable, are likened to a cup which God presents one to drink" (p. 533).

We have a familiar use of the word "cup" in Psa. 23:5:  
Psa. 23:5

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence  
of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil;  
my cup runneth over.

David was rejoicing in the Lord's dealings with Him, and how he was comforted by the Lord's presence and care for him.

There is a similar expression of joy in Psa. 16:5, 6:

5 The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance  
and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.  
6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

But it is different in Psa. 11:6:

Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and  
brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be  
the portion of their cup.

And also in Isa. 51:17, 21-23:

17 Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which  
hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his  
fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of  
trembling, and wrung them out.

21 Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine:

22 Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

23 But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

The cup which the Father was giving to His Son, the cup which had been appointed to Him from all eternity, was to be "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). And the weight and grief and suffering involved was taking its toll on our Lord as His hour drew near.

And He prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." This is a part of our Lord's prayer which those people need to notice who try to tell us, or to convince themselves, that there is some other way of salvation except through the crucified Savior. Was there any other way that the righteousness of God could be satisfied? **No!** Was there any other way that man's sin could be forgiven? **No!** Was there any other way that sinful people could be clothed in divine righteousness? **No!** Or to state it simply and clearly, was there any other way that there could be salvation? The answer again is, **NO!** One thing God cannot do is to forgive sinners of their sins until the penalty for sin has been paid. Nobody will be in heaven who has not trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Savior.

The Lord knew this, but in His humanity He was very sorrowful and very heavy as He realized more and more what it would mean to Himself to be the Savior.

Where do we see the Lord's glory in this? It seems on the surface of things that the Lord was trying to get out of the very thing that He came to the earth to do. No, don't think of it that way at all. And you see it in the final words of the Lord's prayer: **"Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."**

Does this mean that it was not the will of our Lord that He should die for us? Does this mean that He suffered and died against His will? No! We know from John 10 that He laid His life down of Himself. No man took it from Him. And He had the authority to take it again, which He did when He raised Himself from the dead. But our Lord's glory is to be seen in

PSA. 40:8  
JOHN 5:30  
"4:34 - 'MY MEAT  
IS TO DO THE WILL  
OF HIM..."

the fact that, having counted the cost, and shrinking from it in His humanity, He willingly and joyfully submitted Himself to the Father's will, to die for the salvation of those whom the Father had sent Him to redeem.

— But let us follow Matthew's account. The next thing we see is:

III. THE LORD'S RETURN TO THE THREE APOSTLES (Matt. 26:40, 41).

The Lord found the Apostles asleep, and He graciously rebuked them. You can see that He was not concerned about their prayers for Him, but about their prayers for themselves. They did not realize what was ahead for them. Their spirits were fine. They had declared their love for the Lord. They had no intention of forsaking the Lord. But what they did not realize was that their flesh was weak! And, oh, how weak it is--in all of us! How quickly we declare what we will do, or not do. But then just as quickly we do what we say we wouldn't do, and we don't do what we say we would do! If the Lord needed to pray (and He did), how much more do we need to pray. One difference between the Lord and the disciples was that He knew He needed to pray; they didn't know how great their need was.

— But there is an amazing continuation of this account of what happened in the Garden.

IV. THE LORD'S SECOND AND THIRD TIMES OF PRAYER (Matt. 26:42-44).

The Lord went back by Himself, and prayed essentially the same prayer again. He came back and found the disciples asleep. Then He went away the third time, and prayed the same prayer that He had prayed before.

I don't profess to be able to explain the Lord's actions completely, but let me make two suggestions about His praying which I hope will be an encouragement to us all.

The first is this: For the Lord to continue to pray, "If it be possible," etc., shows how great was His sorrow and His heaviness of heart. I am sure that the Lord went to the Cross oppressed by the burden of what was before Him.

— We see in the Lord's case that He did not hesitate to pray the same prayer over and over. This was not unbelief on His part, but an expression of the terrible burden He was carrying. We must not be discouraged if our burdens continue even though we pray more than once about them. Our Lord under-

stands and cares for our needs.

But I am equally sure of another thing that I want to point out, and this should encourage us even more. Just as we see how greatly burdened the Lord was with His mission which was before Him, He was equally determined that the will of God be done. He never faltered in His obedience to the Father's will.

WOULD 2 COR.  
12: 8-10  
APPLY TO  
OUR LORD?

WHAT DID OUR LORD RECEIVE IN ANSWER TO HIS PRAYER.S? M. HENRY SAID  
TWO THINGS - (1) STRENGTH FOR HIS SOUL - PSA. 138: 3; (2) HE WAS DELIVERED  
FROM THAT WHICH HE FEARED (Y. J. 391).

Let us never think that it was an easy thing for the Lord to die for us. It meant sorrow and pain and heaviness of spirit far beyond what any man has ever experienced. But we know from what happened in Gethsemane that there was no other way that you and I could be saved, and that our Lord was determined that nothing would stand in the way of His fulfillment of the work that the Father had sent Him to do.

Look at:

#### V. HIS FINAL WORDS (Matt. 26:45, 46).

This was His third return. Their humanity was revealed in a different way from the Lord's humanity. His struggle in prayer led to the greatest victory which anyone has ever achieved; their failure was to lead to even greater defeat and humiliation.

Concl: The glory of our Lord in Gethsemane was to be seen in His total surrender to the Father's will. Man is inclined to think that his glory is in doing what he wants to do. That is especially true today. But the glory of the Christian life is like that of the life of our Lord, in surrendering ourselves day by day, and prayer by prayer, to the Father's will, not for any saving merit that it has, but that the purposes of God might be fulfilled in us to the glory and honor of His own holy Name.

## CHRIST'S GLORY AT HIS TRIAL

John 19:1-18

Intro: One of the most amazing things about the life of our Lord on earth is the way in He talked about His approaching death by crucifixion. Equally amazing is the way He made His way to Jerusalem, knowing what was going to happen to Him there. There are many Scripture passages in the Gospels which show that the Lord knew what was going to happen to Him. For example we read that when the Lord was in Caesarea Philippi, the place where Peter made his great confession of Christ, that Matthew recorded these words in Matt. 16:21:

From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Note the word "must" in that verse, "He must go unto Jerusalem." In our studies in the Gospel of John many of us learned that the word must as it is used here (and many other places in the Gospels particularly) means something that had to be done because it was a divine appointment. This was something which had to take place because it was established by the decree of God Himself. This was the primary purpose of our Lord's mission to the earth. But a part of this, an inseparable part, was that throughout our Lord's life on earth He would display His glory, His Deity, as He moved in the direction of the Cross.

We even find that when Moses and Elijah appeared with the Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration, they talked to Him about His approaching death in Jerusalem. Let me read Luke 9:30-31:

30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

After the transfiguration, and after the Lord had delivered the demon possessed son, and while they were still in Galilee, we read this in Matthew 17:22, 23:

22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

It was at this same time that Luke recorded for us:

And it came to pass, when the time was come that



he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51).

Isaiah spoke of our Lord intention to do the Father's will in a great passage when He was speaking of Christ: Isa. 50:5-7:

5 The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

7 For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

Listen to the words found in Matthew 20:17-19:

17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Even when the ten disciples were angry because James and John and requested the seats at the right hand and left hand of the Lord in His kingdom, the Lord sought to humble all of His disciples with these familiar words:

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28).

And what could have been more majestic than what we find the Lord said as He spoke of Himself as the good Shepherd:

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father (John 10:11, 18).

The Lord went to Jerusalem, not only knowing that He would die, and how He would die, but He was fully aware of all that He would have to suffer even **before** He died.

The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Philippian church, spoke of the humiliation our Lord experienced here on earth. And Paul indicated that it was all done in the full realization

of His Deity, His glory, which is what we are considering. Although our Lord had the very same nature as God, He voluntarily refused to take full advantage of His divine attributes, and became a servant, becoming obedient to God in all things, even to the extent that He would die on a Cross.

We see glimpses of our Lord's glory even before He got to the Cross. The first was:

#### I. AT HIS ARREST.

If your Bible is open at John 19, let me ask you to look at the eighteenth chapter for some evidence of the glory of our Lord. This all was prior to His trial, and yet related to His trial.

Verse 5 of John 18 tells us that when Judas came with the Roman soldiers and the officers of the Jews with their lanterns, torches, and weapons, the Lord spoke first, asking them, "Whom seek ye?" When they responded and said, "Jesus of Nazareth," then the Lord said a remarkable thing. Our KJV says that He said, "I am he" (which is a perfectly proper translation. But it is much more forceful and emphatic in the Greek. What the Lord said was simply, "I am," making the "I" emphatic!

You recognize this immediately as an OT Name for God, the Name God gave to Moses when he asked the Lord what he would say to the people of Israel when they wanted to know who had sent him to them.

But the Lord's statement was not only emphatic; it was powerful! And that is to be seen in the fact that when He spoke those words, John recorded that "they went backward, and fell to the ground" (John 18:6). We should have no doubt but that, if the Lord had not wanted to be arrested, at that moment He could have gone free--and no one could have laid a hand on them!

When I read this passage I can't help but think of those verses in Philippians 2 I referred to a moment ago. When Paul referred to the coming exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ, you will remember that he said this:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10-11).

If every knee will some day bow before the Lord, and every tongue confess to His Deity, then you know that what happened

to those men that night rendered them completely powerless to lay a hand on the Lord Jesus Christ. This was a startling display of His glory, and He could have walked out of that Garden without any further trouble from them if He had chosen to do so. The whole Roman army and all of the power of the Jews was no match for the Lord Jesus Christ as He stood as a Man before them! Just think about this until the truth of it really grips your heart.

But let me add something to that which the Apostle John did not completely record. Peter determined to stand by his word that he would not forsake the Lord, took out his sword and proceeded to attack the men who were there. He cut off the ear of Malchus who was a servant of the high priest. John tells us that the Lord told him to put up his sword, asking Peter if He, the Lord, should not drink of the cup that the Father was giving him. But Matthew said that the Lord also asked this question:

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels (Matt. 26:53)?

Not too long ago I had occasion to refer to this passage, and I told you at that time that a Roman legion consisted of 6,826 men. This was 6,100 foot soldiers and 726 cavalry men. A little multiplication will tell us that 12 times this number is 81,912 angels! And the Lord said, "More than twelve legions of angels"!

Do you remember when the Lord sent one angel to defend his people against the Assyrians? Listen to what happened:

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses (2 Kings 19:35).

If one angel could do that, what chance would Rome and the Jews together have had against more than 82,000 angels? But this is not taking into consideration the power of the Lord Jesus Himself! What condescension the Lord displayed in allowing Himself to be arrested by creatures He could have destroyed with a single word! His glory was felt there in the Garden.

But now let us consider our Lord on trial before Pilate.

## II. OUR LORD BEFORE PILATE.

The Lord was taken before Pilate after He had been examined all night in a Jewish court. The procedure of the Jews was in violation of their own law. But there were at least three

things which happened in court before Pilate which speak of the glory of our Lord.

A. Our Lord's silence.

The Lord admitted to Pilate that He was the King of the Jews, but beyond that He did not seek to defend Himself. The Jews brought false witnesses in, but even then they could not agree. See Mark 14:59. However, Pilate was not accustomed to the way the Lord behaved before Him. Listen to the account which we have in Matthew 27:11-14:

- 11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.
- 12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.
- 13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?
- 14 And he answered him to never a word; ~~insomuch~~ **that the governor marvelled greatly.**

This was evidence of our Lord's glory. If the Jews' hearts had not been so full of hatred for our Lord they might have remembered an important prophecy which was given by the prophet Isaiah concerning this very thing. I am referring to Isaiah 53:7:

- He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, **yet he opened not his mouth:** he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, **so he openeth not his mouth.**

The Apostle Peter referred to this when he wrote of the Lord as being our Example, but he also related it to the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. Most of you know these words, but let me read them to you again:

- 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:
- 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:
- 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed (1 Pet. 2:22-24).

Pilate was amazed at our Lord's silence. He was used to prisoners either pleading with such fervor that no one could silence them, or cursing the system if there were no way for them to escape. Death by crucifixion was so terrible that prisoners would do anything to escape it. But the Lord, in submission to His Father, was laying down His life, and Pilate was baffled beyond words himself.

But notice a second example in which we see the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. The dream which Pilate's wife had.

This, too, is found in the Gospel of Matthew. Cf. Matt. 27:19:

When he [Pilate] was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

Wouldn't you like to know what she suffered, and how she suffered? But where did this dream come from? Remember that when she spoke these words the NT was not even begun. We are still on OT ground when it was the case that God spoke at different times, and in different ways. I say without any hesitation, "God gave her that dream." God was speaking to her, and, just as it happened, through her to her husband. And it got to her husband in plenty of time for him to have set the Lord free.

What a picture this was of the grace of God! The Lord was going to die, but even though that was God's appointment for Him, it did not mean that those involved in it were not responsible for their part in it. What Judas did was predicted in OT Scripture, but still the Lord said that it would have been good for him if he had never been born!

The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born (Mark 14:21).

The Lord had to die, but God warned his wife that he should not condemn a just man, and the warning got to Pilate in plenty of time. But Pilate did not listen to the message which God had sent to him, and so we can say of him that it would have been better for him if he had never been born.

Pilate's wife gave testimony to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ! Don't miss it. The message came straight from heaven. Pilate can never claim before God that he did not have a chance to do just the opposite of what he did. But just as Judas loved money more than he loved God, so Pilate feared the people more than he feared God. The cost to them can never be measured.

From my last point I want to take you to John 19. This had to do with:

C. The authority of Pilate.

In verse 1 we read that Pilate scourged our Lord. This probably meant that others did it, but Pilate was responsible for it. One of the purposes of scourging was to make a prisoner talk, make him confess His crimes. Edersheim, in his work, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (Vol. II, p. 579) says that scourging was "the terrible introduction to crucifixion--'the intermediate death.'" He described the preparation for the scourging this way:

Stripped of His clothes, His hands tied and back bent, the Victim would be bound to a column or stake, in front of the Praetorium.

And then Edersheim portrayed the scourging in these words:

The scourge of leather thongs was loaded with lead, or armed with spikes and bones, which lacerated back, and chest, and face, till the victim sometimes fell down before the judge a bleeding mass of torn flesh (Ibid.).

See the picture that this gives us of what the Apostle John recorded from verse 2 on -- the crown of crown of thorns, the purple robe, smiting our Lord in the face, the cry of the Jews for Him to be crucified.

When the Jews cried out that he ought to die according to their Law because He had made Himself the Son of God, Pilate became more afraid than he had been before. He knew that he was doing the wrong thing. And so let me pick up the account at verse 9. (Read vv. 9-12.)

Pilate made this a question of authority. That is the word he used for power in verse 10, and the Lord responded in verse 11 using the same word for power: authority!

Our Lord was speaking of authority given by the Father, but if we need any proof of that we have it in James 1:17 where James linked the word "above" with "the Father of lights."

There is no question but that Pilate had great authority. He did not authority from Rome to put a prisoner to death, or to set him free. But he did not realize that every bit of that authority had come from God, not Caesar, and that it was impossible for him to do anything to the Lord Jesus unless what he did was approved by God.

What a statement of glory this was! Who was in charge? Was it Pilate? Was it Rome? It appeared that this was the case. But God was the One in charge, and nothing was being done to the Son except that which had been foreordained by the Father.

Listen to what Peter said as he preached in Jerusalem on the

Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain (Acts 2:22-23).

When Peter and John were released from prison, and went to meet with the people of the church in Jerusalem, they prayed for boldness to continue with their ministry. But this was a part of their prayer:

27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done (Acts 4:27-28).

Do you see the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ in this? His body bruised and bleeding, with scarcely the strength to stand before Pilate, some of the most majestic words our Lord ever spoke came from His lips at this most crucial hour in His life.

Concl: Do we need any greater evidence of the sovereignty of our God, and even of our Lord Jesus Christ? Pilate was ruling by authority delegated to him by Almighty God, and he could not have done a single thing that he did if God had not been in charge.

But let me remind you of something else. We not only see the sovereignty of God in the life of His sovereign Son, but we see a most astonishing and a most humbling display of the love of God and of Christ for Their own. Remember that our Lord still had not gotten to the Cross at this point. But what He had suffered was all a part of what our Lord was ordained of God to endure in order to provide salvation for those whom the Father had chosen.

When the Lord said, "Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin," to whom was He referring? It surely meant Judas, but it also meant the Jews, and Caiaphas would have been included, too. From this we know that there are degrees of sin. Pilate was charged here with sin, but the others with greater sin. However, whatever the degree of our sin, any will condemn us forever. How we need to make sure that we are trusting in Christ to forgive all of our sins.

## THE GLORY OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS

Luke 23:33-49

Intro: The subject which I have chosen for my message today could easily be the subject of a series of messages: THE GLORY OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS. We have four accounts in the New Testament of the crucifixion of our Lord. In addition to those records, we have many OT passages which have to do with the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. And then if we go on into the book of Acts, the epistles, and even into the book of the Revelation, we find many passages have to do with the Cross of our Savior where we find numerous evidences of His glory.

But it has not been my purpose to deal thoroughly with the glory of our Lord in any of the themes which I have taken up in this series. I have wanted you to see what the Lord has been pleased to show me in the hope that as you continue to see Christ throughout the Scriptures, OT and NT, you would be aware of many ways in which the glory of our Lord is to be seen in all of the Word of God. If Christ is the main theme of Scripture (and He is), then we have to say that we can look for His glory from Genesis to Revelation. Remember that His glory is His Deity. And that is what we are looking for in the passage from Luke 23 which I have chosen as my text for today.

One of the greatest theologians that America has ever had, a man who was recognized throughout the world for His writings on Biblical subjects, was Dr. B. B. Warfield. In 1886 he began to teach at Princeton Theological Seminary, and he continued in that position until he died in 1921.

One of the many books he wrote was entitled, The Lord of Glory. The subtitle of this book was, A Study of the Designations of our Lord in the New Testament with Especial Reverence to His Deity. He began with Mark's Gospel, went on to Matthew, then to Luke, and after Luke, to John. Then he had a chapter on Acts, a chapter on Paul's epistles, a chapter on the General Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude, a chapter on Hebrews, and a chapter on the book of the Revelation of our Lord. And in all of these he was pointing out the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a very worthwhile book to have. The glory of Jesus Christ is the theme of all of Scripture! Dr. Warfield could have done the same with the OT.

I mention this to show you that today we are focusing in on a very small part of a tremendously large subject. And I hope that these Sunday mornings we have spent considering the glory of Christ while He was here on earth, will make all of



us more aware of the glory of Christ to be seen everywhere in our Bibles. In fact, THE GLORY OF CHRIST, would be a good title for our Bibles to carry.

In the last chapter of this Gospel of Matthew we find that our Lord took those two disciples whom He met on the road to Emmaus on a journey through the OT to do on a larger scale, and in a far better way, what we are doing today. If you will turn a page or two on in your Bible to Luke 24:27 you will find these words:

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

How did it affect those disciples. Let them tell us in their own words which we find later on in that same chapter in verse 32:

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

There is nothing that will give us greater blessing as we read our Bibles than to see the glory of our Lord wherever we read. May the Lord give us burning hearts today as we look at one small part of all that the Scriptures have to say about THE GLORY OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

As you look at this passage you will find that it contains three of the seven statements that our Lord made while He was on the Cross. You can spot them immediately if you have a red letter edition of the Bible. For those of you who do not have red letters showing the words of our Lord, let me quickly point out these three sayings of our Lord. You will find them in verses 34, 43, and 46. (Read.)

I have said there were seven. John gives us three that Luke did not mention. You will find them in:

- 1) John 19:26, 27: "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, **Woman, behold thy son!**  
Then saith he to the disciple, **Behold thy mother!** And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."
- 2) John 19:28: "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, **I thirst.**"
- 3) John 19:30: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Matthew and Mark give only one saying each, and they record the same saying:

- 1) Matt. 27:46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with

a loud voice, saying, **Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?** that is to say, **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"**

- 2) Mark 15:34: "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?** which is, being interpreted, **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"**

We do not know the exact order that these words were spoken, but let me give you a possible order:

- 1) "Father, forgive them..."
- 2) "Today thou shalt be with me..."
- 3) "Woman, behold thy son... Son, behold thy mother."
- 4) "My God, My God, why..."
- 5) "I thirst."
- 6) "It is finished."
- 7) "Father, into thy hands..."

If this is the proper order (and I do not say positively that it is because I don't know)--but if it is, then what Luke has given us are the first, the second, and the last sayings of our Lord on the Cross. But one thing is sure: Luke is the only one who has given us these sayings. They are not in Matthew, Mark, or John. Nor are they in any other book with the exception of "Father, into thy hands..." because that, in part, is a quotation from Psa. 31:5 where we read,

Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

These were words which David spoke of himself, and prophetically he was speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, with that background, let us look together at Luke 23.

I want to divide this passage into three sections, based upon where these three sayings of the Lord are found in the passage:

- 1) Vv. 33-38.
- 2) Vv. 39-43.
- 3) Vv. 44-49.

Let's call the first section:

#### I. THE GLORY OF FORGIVENESS (Luke 23:33-38).

There seems to be little doubt but that these were the first words which our Lord spoke from the Cross. As we try to picture this scene in our minds, let's remember that the Lord was not arrested, taken through various courts, and then nailed to a Cross just like He had been when He was arrested. The Lord had been scourged. His body had been torn with the beating. They had pulled hair out of His face and head. They had spit upon Him. He had had the crown of thorns

rammed down upon His head. His body was so emaciated that, as Isaiah prophesied long before this, it was hard to imagine that He was actually a human being.

The leaders of the Jews had demanded that Pilate crucify Him. The Jewish people had cried out against Him, also calling for His crucifixion. And then to add to the shame that He suffered in being crucified, they crucified our Lord between two malefactors. A malefactor is one who has broken the law; he is a criminal. By the confession of one of them which we have in verses 40 and 41, they were getting what they deserved, but he also said concerning our Lord, "This man hath done nothing amiss." He was saying that the Lord was not a criminal. He had done nothing that caused Him to deserve the death He was dying. However, in the eyes of the people our Lord was a criminal, and being crucified between the two malefactors meant that He was considered to be the worst of the three!

It was in this situation, with all that had taken place, that we see an amazing display of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ when He prayed to the Father, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Our Lord had been condemned unjustly by Jewish and Roman courts. But there is a much higher court than any court on earth, and that is the court of heaven. And all of these people were guilty of the worst sin that anyone could possibly commit. They had condemned the Lord of glory to the shameful death of the Cross. They had condemned Him to die as the worst of sinners.

What did they deserve? They deserved the worst judgment that God could give to guilty sinners. It should have been thought utterly impossible that anyone who had any part in the death of Christ would ever be saved. They gave the Lord the worst death they could give Him; they deserved the worst judgment in hell as a result of what they had done. We would not have been surprised to read that God had struck that whole crowd dead even though His Son was to die on that Cross.

But what do we hear--the wrath of God? No, we hear a prayer of grace--a grace of forgiveness. Our Lord in His weakened, bleeding condition, cried out from the Cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." The word "forgive" means to release. It is like the prayer that Stephen prayed later of those wicked men who stoned him to death. As he was dying he prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). Our Lord was praying that the Jews and the Romans who were responsible for His death would not be

charged with this sin in the court of heaven.

I believe that if the Lord had not prayed that prayer, not a single one in that crowd could ever have been saved. But because our Lord prayed, I am sure that we are going to meet people in heaven who had a part in making sure that the Lord was put to death.

But let me point out another thing before we go on to the second point. It is this: our Lord knew when He prayed that prayer that the people were not through with their heartless behavior and their taunts and jeers.

Look at what the soldiers did. See verse 34b.

Then look at what the people and the rulers and the soldiers said in verses 35-37. (Read.)

What I want you to see is that the Lord prayed for their forgiveness when He knew that they were not finished with the evil things that they were still going to do and say after He prayed for them!

What greater evidence do we need of the grace of God in Christ. Christ's grace is one of the greatest parts of His glory.

But let us go on to the second part. Let us call this:

## II. THE GLORY OF ASSURANCE (Luke 23:39-43).

One of the malefactors joined in with the crowd in railing at our Lord. This means that he was blaspheming the Lord, reviling Him, speaking evil of Him. Matthew 27:44 tells us that at the first both of the thieves joined with the crowd in blaspheming the Lord.

But right there on the Cross a marvelous change took place in the heart of one of the thieves. Instead of continuing to revile the Lord, he suddenly rebuked the other thief with the words which we find in verses 40 and 41. (Read.)

But he also did more than that. He turned to the Lord and appealed to Him in the words we find in verse 42. (Read.)

The crowd could not see it, but a miracle of God's grace was taking place right there on one of the crosses. This was not something that the thief did for himself. He was just as blind as the rest of the people until the Lord opened His eyes, and He realized that his only hope of getting to heaven was if the One dying beside Him would have mercy upon him,

and let him into His kingdom.

What was our Lord's response? "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (v. 43). What did the thief do to deserve a promise like that? Nothing. In fact, what he had done, not only stealing, but also blaspheming the Lord earlier, meant that he, too, deserved to be cast into hell. And so with nothing but a bad record, and no time to do a good work, no time to be baptized, no time to show that he was sincere, the Lord Who knew His heart, and Who had already opened his eyes and had given him life, said, "Today shalt thou be with me..."

Today in the popular method of evangelism, we tell people how to pray, and we have them pray after us. When a person is truly born again, they don't need anyone to tell them how to pray. They just open their hearts and tell the Lord what they want, and He guarantees that their prayer will be answered, not later, but NOW! Suddenly continuing to live on earth meant nothing to the thief. What was important was being wherever the Lord was.

Who can forgive our sins? Christ can. Who can guarantee that even the chief of sinners will be in paradise with Him? Christ can. And He can because, although our Lord had no sins of His own to die for, among others He died to save that thief from the everlasting judgment which should have been his.

Those words which our Lord spoke were a manifestation of His glory.

Now for the last point:

### III. THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN DEATH (Luke 23:44-49).

Darkness covered the earth for three hours--from noon until three in the afternoon. Creation itself was clothed in darkness at the treatment the Lord was receiving.

But something else happened? Verse 45 tells us the "the veil of the temple was rent in the midst." A new and living way had been opened. The Lord by His death was finishing the work that He had come to do. And so He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Where do we see the glory of Christ in this?

Most of you will remember that shortly before the Lord died, He was with His disciples and with others when He said,  
Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay  
down my life, that I might take it again.

**No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father (John 10:17-18).**

If you think that Pilate was in charge of all that was going on, or if you think that the Jews had finally had their way, you have only seen the human side of this picture. Actually the Lord Jesus Christ was in charge of His death, and He was the One Who determined the very moment that He would die. This again was His glory. The Jews didn't take His life from Him. The Roman soldiers did not take His life from Him. He laid it down when His work had come to an end.

But let me point out two more wonderful things which took place at the Cross.

The first had to do with the centurion—evidently the Roman soldier who was in charge of crucifying the Lord. When He saw what was going on, "he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man." What do you think this means? Why did the Holy Spirit have Luke include this in his Gospel? I believe it was because there by the Cross, when his terrible work was done, God touched the heart of the man in charge, and saved him.

But there is another thing to notice before I close. Note what verse 48 tells us. (Read.)

As the Lord was dying, God not only saved the thief on the cross, and the centurion who was in charge of the crucifixion, but many of the people who had been scoffing at the Lord earlier now started to beat upon their breasts. In Luke 18:13 we read that it was the publican who "smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me (lit.) the sinner."

Concl: Do you see why we speak of THE GLORY OF CHRIST AT THE CROSS? It was, without question, the darkest hour in human history. The suffering and the humiliation of our Lord was beyond description. But through it all God was dealing with His Son as the Substitute for all who would ever be saved, and the work of salvation was to be seen in the shadow of the Cross. Lenski, a Lutheran commentator, said, "The came to witness a show; they left with feelings of woe" (quoted by Hendriksen, The Gospel of Luke, p. 1037).

Undoubtedly many people left that day happy about what had happened. But with others God was at work, and He showed that the Cross was not a place of defeat for Christ, but the place of triumph and victory. The glory of our Lord continued to be seen when on the Day of Pentecost, over a month

later, three thousand was drawn to Christ, and saved.

I hope that all of us who know the Lord have seen today that although we did not have a part in actually putting the Lord Jesus to death, yet we did because it was for our sins that He died. And we were just as unworthy of salvation as anybody who was saved that day--the thief, the centurion, or however many there were among the people who were saved. We didn't contribute anything to our salvation. We have all been saved by grace. If God had given us what we deserved, we wouldn't be here today. How thankful we should be that we are saved, but as with the centurion, to God belongs all of the glory. Let us give it to Him every day.

Possibly there are some here today who do not know the Savior. You can see the sin of the thief. You can see the sin of the centurion. You can see the sin of the people who started out blaspheming Christ, and ended the day beating themselves in remorse and repentance for their sins. But do you see your own need, and your unworthiness to claim any blessing from God? Do you learn from the thief that salvation is not a reward for our works? The only way that any of us can be saved is by the grace of God, and because it is by grace, it brings glory to God alone. May the Lord work today in our midst meeting the need of each one of us as He sees what our need is.

## CHRIST'S GLORY IN RESURRECTION

Matthew 28:1-8

Intro: It would be wonderful if we could take the time today to read all of the four accounts of the resurrection of our Lord which are found in the four Gospels. There surely is no more triumphant message, nor any message that is more significant for all of us than the words which the angel of the Lord spoke to the women who went to the tomb of our Lord early on the first day of the week following His crucifixion. The angel of the Lord said,  
Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.  
He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.  
Come, see the place where the Lord lay (Matt. 28:5b-6).

Those words, "He is not here: for he is risen," declare very clearly what I want to declare as my first point today:

I. THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION (Matt.28:6).

That fact has been disputed from that very time down to the present. Later on in this 28th chapter of Matthew we see what the Jewish leaders did to try to convince people that the Lord had not been raised from the dead. See Matt. 28:11-15. (Read.)

In addition to this there seems to have been very little understanding among the disciples themselves that the Lord would be raised, or that He was raised. The women who went to the tomb had no trouble in believing in His resurrection. Look at what the angel told them to do in Matt. 28:7, and then what they did according to verse 8. But the Apostle John indicated in his record that Mary Magdalene had trouble at first when she learned that the body of the Lord was not in the tomb. She went to Peter and John and said,  
They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him (John 20:2b).

However, following this the Apostle John tells what he and Peter did. I am indebted to G. Campbell Morgan for pointing out the way the Apostle John described his arrival, and Peter's arrival, at the tomb. We are told that the Apostle John, probably because he was the younger of the two men, got to the tomb first. He looked in, saw the linen clothes in which the Lord had been bound for burial, but he did not go in. Peter came soon after, stooped down and went into the tomb, saw the linen clothes still like they were when they had been wound around the Lord's body, and the napkin that



was about His head, lying in a separate place. He looked at it in amazement, and stood there wondering what it all meant. Apparently it was just like it would have been if the Lord's body had been slipped out of the wrapping, leaving them just like they had been about His body. Then we are told that John went it, "and he saw, and believed." God gave him to understand that the Lord had really been raised from the dead.

I won't go into all of the appearances the Lord made following His resurrection except to point out His appearances to His disciples. We are told that on that same day of His resurrection, in the evening, he appeared to His disciples in a room where they had hidden themselves because they were afraid of what the Jews might do to them. The Lord said to them, "Peace be unto you" (John 20:19b), and then He showed them His hands and His side. It is reasonable to think that they also saw the nail prints in His feet. This satisfied all of them, and John recorded this statement: "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20b).

For some reason Thomas was not with them. When the ten told him that they had seen the Lord, he refused to believe them--and he said that he would not believe them unless he could see the nail prints and the scar made in the Lord's side by the soldier's spear. Eight days later the Lord appeared to the disciples, and Thomas was with them. The Lord appeared again even though the doors were shut, and again He said, "Peace be unto you" (John 20:26b). And then we are told this:

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger,  
and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand,  
and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless,  
but believing.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord  
and my God.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast  
seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they  
that have not seen, and yet have believed (John  
20:27-29).

And so Thomas, the doubter, was convinced that the Lord Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead.

When Luke, the special historian, began writing the book of Acts, this is how he started:

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of  
all that Jesus began both to do and teach,  
Until the day in which he was taken up, after  
that he through the Holy Ghost had given command-  
ments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

**To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1:1-3).**

I think that last week I read to you from Peter's message to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius when he went there to tell them how they could be saved. Let me read that to you again. Here are Peter's words:

And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

**Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead (Acts 10: 39-41).**

In 1 Corinthians 15 the Apostle Paul recorded that the Lord appeared to different people at different times--all believers--and among those he said that "he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. 15:6). When Paul wrote that epistle most of those people were still alive, and so any skeptics who wanted to could talk to them.

In Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth he reminded them of a truth stated in the OT (Deut. 19:15) which was still true, and continues to be true even today. It was this: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Cor. 13:1b). For five hundred believers to have seen the Lord at one time establishes beyond question that our Lord was raised from the dead. And yet, an even greater testimony than that of the five hundred, was the prediction our Lord made of His resurrection, saying, for example, that He had power to take His life back again. Our Lord never spoke anything but the truth. We can add to His words also the words of the prophets. David spoke and wrote many times as a prophet. One thing he said was this, speaking of Christ, "Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psa.16:10b)--a passage which the Apostle Peter used in His message in Jerusalem on that particularly famous Day of Pentecost. In referring to David's prophecy Peter declared that, because it was the Word of God that our Lord would be raised, it was not possible that He should have been held by death in the grave.

The Lord even appeared to the Apostle Paul after His ascension. So that Paul could declare emphatically, as he did in 1 Corinthians 15:20,

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become

the firstfruits of them that slept.

Let there be no doubt in anyone's mind: Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. Some have said that there is no fact of history that has greater confirmation than the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. May no one ever try to convince us otherwise! The truth is on our side.

Now we have been thinking about the glory of Christ during His earthly ministry. I repeat, the glory of Christ is the Deity of Christ. How is His glory to be seen in His resurrection? From the Scriptures let me suggest several ways.

## II. THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN HIS RESURRECTION.

First, let me ask you to turn to the first chapter of the book of Romans, where we will look at the first four verses of the epistle:

A. Romans 1:1-4. (Read.)

I call your attention in verse 4 to the word, "declared."

Before I tell you what it means, let me say that we have seen evidence after evidence in the life and ministry of our Lord on earth to confirm that He was the Son of God. We have seen His glory again and again on the pages of Scripture. But there never was any greater evidence of the glory of our Lord than in His resurrection! The word "declared" means that when the Lord came out of the tomb, His glory was defined!

Our dictionaries tell us that when you define something you tell precisely what it is; you describe the basic qualities or nature of something. When our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, God was showing precisely Who Jesus of Nazareth was. It was in His resurrection that we see the real nature, the basic qualities of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this is the very reason that Paul could write later in Romans 6 that "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (Rom. 6:4), and also that

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God (Rom. 6:9, 10).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a message loud and clear which men deny only to their eternal doom. God has defined the glory of His Son by raising Him from the dead. There can be no doubt about it: He is the Son of God!

But let me take you to another verse. I read it to you a moment ago:

B. 1 Corinthians 15:20.

Turn to it in your Bibles, if you like, or just listen as I read it to you:

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept (1 Cor. 15:20).

We read a moment ago in Romans 6 that death no longer has any dominion over our Lord. He died once because He was dying as a Substitute, taking your place and mine under the judgment of God. But He will never die again. Let me state that in an even stronger way: He cannot die again. There were others raised from the dead before our Lord was raised, but He was the first to be raised who will never die again. He is forever beyond the reach of death.

But why is He called **"the firstfruits"** of them that slept? We will have our answer if we think for a moment of the offering of the firstfruits of the harvest in OT times. It was the first of the harvest, meaning that there was more to come. Didn't our Lord tell His disciples in the Upper Room shortly before His death, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19)?

And how shall we live? When our Lord comes, "the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16b). "And we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:52b). And what will we be like when we are changed? The Apostle John said, "We shall be like Him," that is, like Christ, "for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2b). Can we be more specific? Yes, we can. Listen to what Paul wrote to the Philippian church. I will read Philippians 3:20, 21 to you in the NKJ:

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Many of you have heard me quote Dr. Chafer who used to tell us in our theology classes that God is so delighted with His Son that He is going to fill heaven with people like He is. Let me make a similar statement in the light of what we have seen in these verses. It is this: God is so delighted with His Son that He intends to fill heaven with people who will display the glory of His Son. You see, when we get to heav-

en, everyone of us will be added proof of the glory of Christ. We will bear His glory, a glory we would not have if the Lord Jesus Christ were not really the Son of God. But He is, and we will! We will bear His glory. It will not satisfy the Father just to have us in heaven; He wants us to be just like His Son. The Father delights in His Son, and He will delight in us because He will make us like His Son. This is truly the glory of Christ in resurrection.

And, by the way, we don't wait until the Lord comes before we begin to display His glory. Cf. 2 Corinthians 3:18. I am reading it from the RSV version, a version which we have to use very carefully, but it is good on this verse:

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

And let us add to that verse, this one:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but **Christ liveth in me**: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20).

Paul could never have written that verse if our Lord had not been raised from the dead. And we would be without any hope of ever being in heaven, or ever being like our dear Savior.

But let me take you to another verse which speaks of the glory of our Lord in His resurrection. You will find it right at the end of Romans 4.

#### C. Romans 4:25.

Paul was speaking of Christ when he wrote these words:

Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification (Rom. 4:25).

Most of you know your Bibles well enough to know that we are not justified by the resurrection of Christ. In Romans 5:9 we are told that we are "justified by his blood." Our justification was accomplished by the Lord on the Cross, not by His resurrection. What then did Paul mean when he said that our Lord "was raised again for our justification"?

He meant that our Lord was raised from the dead because He had accomplished everything necessary for our justification. If the Lord had not put away our sins by His death, His body would still be in the grave today. The resurrection of our Lord glorifies Him because it declares that He, by Himself, has done everything necessary to save all whom the Father has chosen, which means all who will ever believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ. That is the reason we can sing now, and we are going to be singing all through eternity, to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to these words from Revelation 5:

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever (Rev. 5:11-13).

Such glory could never be given to our Lord Jesus Christ if He had not been raised from the dead. We shall praise the Lord of glory throughout all eternity as the resurrected, everliving One. And it would be good for all of us to be glorifying Him daily now as we worship Him here on earth.

Let me give you two more verses, and these are for all of us who know the Lord, but I am using them especially for any of you who do not know the Lord.

D. Romans 10:9, 10.

This is what they tell us:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, **and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead**, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. 10:9-10).

There is no such person as one who claims to be a Christian, but who does not believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. A person can be a church member and not believe in the resurrection of Christ, but he can't be a Christian. A person can be a respectable person in society without believing in the resurrection of Christ, but he can't be a Christian. The only people who will be in heaven are people who believe in the bodily, the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. His death was a physical death, and His resurrection had to be physical also. Paul told the Corinthian church,

And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain;  
ye are yet in your sins.

Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ  
are perished.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we  
are of all men most miserable (1 Cor. 15:17-19).

Concl: I am going to be speaking more about the Gospel  
tonight, but let me say here that it is only through  
Christ's death and resurrection that anybody will ever be  
saved. And the confession that Paul was talking about was  
not just walking down the aisle of a church, or going forward  
in an evangelistic meeting. It is the life-long confession  
of a changed life that is experience in the heart and made  
known by the mouth.

If I am speaking to any who do not know the Lord, perhaps you  
have become convinced in listening to the Scriptures that I  
have read, not only that Jesus Christ died for sinners, but  
that God raised Him from the dead as a testimony that His  
work of salvation was finished, and fully accepted by God,  
and you find yourself believing that only Christ can possibly  
save you from your sins. If you have trusted the Lord as  
your Savior, would you tell me, or tell someone else as soon  
as you can. It is the Lord Who gives us faith, and you may  
find that you are trusting in Christ before anyone tells you  
to.

Christ is the only Savior. Let us rejoice in His finished  
work on the Cross, and draw from His resurrection all of the  
hope and peace and blessing that God intends for us to find  
in our risen, glorified Lord.