

ADRIAN ROGERS

LEGACY

C O L L E C T I O N



COLOSSIANS

These transcripts are taken straight from live audio recordings of Adrian Rogers during his tenure as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. As such some of the transcripts may contain stutters, stammers, transcription errors, and other authentic remarks as would be common in a live setting.

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Colossians

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How to Know the Will of God

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: August 14, 1988

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 1:3, 9–10

*“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray
for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will
in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”*

COLOSSIANS 1:9

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Introduction

Take God's holy Word, please, and turn with me to the book of Colossians chapter 1. We're going to read verse 3, and then verses 9 and 10. And as you're finding it, and as you're looking it up, I want you to listen to this question I have for you today. I want you to imagine first of all that you are face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we know He's always with us. He lives in us. We understand that. But I want you in your imagination to imagine that Jesus Christ in a bodily form, face to face, eye to eye, is standing before you. Now, of course, right away you'd just want to fall on your face and worship Him and praise Him. But now, let's suppose that you had an opportunity to ask Jesus Christ one question: what would you ask Him? You have an opportunity to say, "Lord Jesus, there's something I want to know: would you please tell me?"

I have an idea. I know what you would ask. I believe you would ask Him the same thing the Apostle Paul asked him when the Apostle Paul met him face to face. And what the Apostle Paul said to him was, "Lord, what would you have me to do?" (Acts 9:6) As a matter of fact, the Apostle Paul asked the Lord Jesus that day on the road to Damascus the two greatest questions that could ever be asked: number one, "Who art thou, Lord?"; (Acts 9:5) number two, "What would you have me to do?"—"Who are you?" "What do you want me to do?" And he spent the rest of his life discovering the answer to those two questions: just who Jesus is, and what Jesus wants him to do. "What would you have me to do, Lord?" Not, "Lord, what do you want others to do?" Not, "Lord, what do others want me to do?" But, "Lord, what would you have me to do?"

When we take surveys and we say, "What do you want to hear a sermon on?" people will always say, "Tell us how to find the will of God for our lives; I want to know the will of God for my life." Now when you pray for your loved ones, what do you pray for them? Do you pray for them that they'll be healthy, wealthy, and successful? Or do you pray for them that they'll know the will of God for their lives?

Notice how Paul felt about the church at Colossae—verse 3: "*We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.*" (Colossians 1:3) Paul prayed for this church. Wouldn't you like to know what he prayed for them? Well, wonderful—let's skip on down to verse 9: "*For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will.*" (Colossians 1:9) Paul said, "This is what I pray for you: that you would be filled with the knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." And, by the way, as we're going to see in the message, that's primarily the way you're going to find God's will: by wisdom and spiritual understanding. And today we want to

help give you that spiritual understanding. The title of our message is “How to Know the Will of God”—“How to Know the Will of God.” “Lord, what will you have me to do?”

Now Paul says in verse 10 that he makes this prayer: *“that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.”* (Colossians 1:10) Now, friend, you cannot walk worthy of the Lord until you know the will of the Lord. A worthy walk is a walk in His will. And that’s what pleases God. Nothing outside of His will pleases Him. And if you please God, it doesn’t matter whom you displease. And if you displease God, it doesn’t matter whom you please. And the way to please God is to walk in His will, a worthy walk; and then, that will make you fruitful: *“Being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”* (Colossians 1:10)

Now Paul says, “I want you to know the will of God. And I pray for you that you might know the will of God. My prayer for you...” But He is the dynamic. God makes it possible for you to do His will. He shows you the way. And then He clears the way. He makes straight your paths. We’re so blessed. We have a Father above who is controlling all things. We have the Savior beside us directing our footsteps. We have the Spirit within us impressing our hearts. God says, “I will guide you.”

Now, listen. God has a will for your life. Learn this about the will of God: There are three kinds of the will of God.

I. God’s Sovereign Will

I thought about these and I decided I’d call the first His sovereign will—His sovereign will. That’s where God rules overall. And God’s sovereign will is always done. God allows sin. God allows rebellion. But I want to tell you, dear friend, that God is sovereignly working to make the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. (Revelation 11:15) And Jesus shall reign. That is His sovereign will.

Many times we don’t understand His sovereign will. *“Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?”* (Romans 11:34) Paul asks. Let me give you a great verse—Deuteronomy chapter 29 and verse 29: *“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God.”* (Deuteronomy 29:29) There are some things you’ll never know. Never make the mistake of saying, “Oh, if I were God, I would have done this. If I were God, I would have done that.” You’re not big enough, wise enough, or smart enough. *“Who hath known the mind of the Lord?”* (Romans 11:34) His ways are not our ways. (Isaiah 55:8) *“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.”* (Deuteronomy 29:29) That is, there are some things God doesn’t reveal; that’s His sovereign will—or we could call it here His secret will—His sovereign, secret will.

II. God's Standard Will

But now, wait a minute. There's another kind of will that He has, and that's what I want to call His standard will—His standard will. There are certain things that are always right, and certain things that are always wrong: the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes—all of these things. It's always wrong to steal, and to lie, and to cheat. And it's always right to tell the truth, and to do these certain things that are commanded in the Bible. That's just God's standard will. Now, folks, it's never right to do wrong. God has a standard will. And it's never wrong to do right. It's just there are certain things that apply to you, me, every one of us. That's just simply plain. We read it there in the Bible.

III. God's Special Will

But now, wait a minute. There's His sovereign will. There's His standard will. And then, there's His special will. God has a special will for you.

You see, God doesn't deal with people *en masse*. God deals with people as individuals. He has as many plans as He has people. He has as many methods as He has men. And you are not an accident; you are an incident. You are special in the plan of God and the mind of God. And God has a very special way for you. And listen: If you had been the only person who ever lived on this earth, Jesus Christ would have died for you alone. You're very, very special to God. And God has a plan for your life.

I believe it was God's sovereign will that I be saved. And I believe that God chose me in Him before the foundation of the world. (Ephesians 1:4) I don't understand that, but I bless God for it. That's His sovereign will. But I believe it was God's standard will that I only marry a Christian, since I was saved, and God wanted me not to marry an unbeliever. But I believe it was God's special will that I marry Joyce. See?

I can remember when I would date Joyce and walk her home. After I took her, we'd walk home from church, or walk home from school. We lived in the same neighborhood. We grew up together. I lived on the corner of 38th Street and Calvin Avenue. She lived on the corner of 39th Street and Spruce—one block from the Junior High School and the Grammar School, two blocks away from the church—our little neighborhood there. I believe that God sovereignly moved her near me. But I also believe that God standardly said, "Adrian, you're to marry a Christian girl." But I believe that God specially gave me Joyce. I thank God for that. And I used to walk home and say, "Thank you, God, for Joyce. O Lord, let me marry Joyce. Please, God, make her love me." And I would just pray, "O God, I want your will to be done in my life." And I believe that God chose that precious girl for me. And I thank God for His special will.

Now what we're talking about is how you as an individual can know that very special will that God has for your life, what God wants you to do. How wonderful that is! Now,

let me tell you something, friend. There are some very common mistakes that are often made about knowing and doing the will of God.

A. **People Think the Will of God Is Like a Roadmap**

One mistake is that some people think that the will of God is like a roadmap, that God just gives it to you, and there it is; here's where you're going to start, and there's where you're going to finish, and here's the way you're going to go. Thank God it is not a roadmap; it is a relationship. Learn that: *The will of God is not a roadmap; it is a relationship*. It is a relationship with God. I'm glad that God doesn't show you the future ahead of time. I'm glad that when I was a preacher boy just surrendering to preach God did not tell me I would have to preach to congregations this size. It would have scared me to death. But God just simply said, "Son, just trust me, and follow me."

When God led the children of Israel through the wilderness, He didn't give them a map; He gave them Himself: a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire to lead them. They didn't have to worry about where they were going. They just had to make certain that they saw the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. Today, you don't have to know the future; you just have to know Jesus. You have to know that there's nothing between your soul and the Savior.

B. **People Think That God Is a Celestial Killjoy**

Now there's another mistake that you might make concerning the will of God. And that is that God is somehow a celestial killjoy, some sort of a God up there that has some will that you really wouldn't want to do if you knew it, so you're afraid to ask Him what it is. Now, my dear friend, I want you to learn this about God: that God is a loving heavenly Father; that He loves you. And the Bible says, "*The LORD thy God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*" (Psalm 84:11) "Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning." (James 1:17) God's will is good, perfect, and acceptable, (Romans 12:2) as we're going to see later on. Don't be afraid of the will of God. Dear friend, the will of God is not something that you *have* to do; it's something that you *get* to do. He is a loving Father.

C. **People Think That God Only Has a Will for Certain People**

Now there's third mistake that a lot of people make concerning the will of God—and they get the idea that God has a will only for certain people: that God has a will for the pastor, the evangelist, the minister of music, the missionary, the church worker, but God doesn't just have a will for everybody. Yes, He does. His will is for the plumber as well as the preacher; for the secretary as well as the missionary. Everybody is important to God. "*The very hairs of your head are all numbered.*" (Matthew 10:30) And listen, dear

friend: You are important to Him.

D. People Think That God Reveals His Will in a Cataclysmic Experience

And don't make this mistake: to think that when God reveals His will to you, He's going to do it in some great cataclysmic experience, some great dramatic happening is going to show the will of God for your life. You remember Elijah the prophet? He got perplexed and frustrated, and got out of the will of God, and got upset a little bit. And so God had to take him to a vacation retreat up in the mountains. And God spoke to him there. In 1 Kings chapter 19, beginning in verse 11, here's what happened. God said to Elijah, *"Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."* (1 Kings 19:11–12) And God was in that still small voice.

Don't think that if God speaks to you, it's going to be something radical and dramatic, and that you have to be an *earthquaker*. You can just be a *quaker*. You can just let God speak. Don't make the mistake of looking for something radical, something dramatic.

E. People Think That the Will of God Is Only for Young People

All right now, next: Don't make the mistake of thinking that the will of God is only for young people; that if you're an old person, you ought not to seek the will of God. You must seek the will of God fresh every day. I don't care how old you are. And if you miss the will of God as a youth, you can still get in on it. And one of the great promises of the Word of God is Joel chapter 2, verse 25, where God says, *"I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten."* (Joel 2:25) Isn't that a wonderful promise? Maybe the locusts have eaten the years, the best years of your life; but that's all the more reason—all the more reason—even though you may be sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety years of age—for you to say, "O God, show me; I want to know, and I want to do your will for my life."

F. People Think God Hides His Will from Us

And another mistake that some people often make is that God hides His will from us, that somehow it's like an Easter egg hunt; that we must somehow try desperately to discover His will. As a matter of fact, you get your heart right and the will of God will find you. You don't have to find it. I mean, God reveals His will to those who want to know and those who will operate as according to certain principles that I'm going to show you in a moment. Now Psalm chapter 32 and verse 8 says this: *"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go."* (Psalm 32:8) God's not hiding His will from

you. It's not something hidden that you must find; it's something that God reveals that you should obey.

1. Guidance Is Promised

Now, let me say, dear friend, that guidance is promised.

2. Guidance Is Provisional

But now, let me say something else: Guidance is provisional. What I mean is this: God will show you His will, provided you do certain things; provided you have certain attitudes, so God can speak to you. I want to mention four of them.

a. There Must Be a Willingness

First of all, there must be a willingness. You see, John chapter 7 and verse 17 says, *"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."* (John 7:17) "If any man wants to do God's will, you'll know the doctrine." Are you willing to do the will of God? Now if you're not willing to do the will of God, then you're not going to know God's will.

Sometimes, we say we're willing, but our minds are already made up.

I heard about a man who was a vagabond. He would just go here or there—just a happy hobo, just walking around. Somebody said, "Well, what plan do you have? Where do you travel?" He said, "I just go wherever I want to go." And they said, "Suppose you're walking down the road and there's a fork in the road: how do you decide whether to go to the right, or how do you decide to go to the left?" "Oh," he said, "it doesn't make any difference to me. I just have a stick and I just throw it up. Whichever way it lands, that's the way I go." He said, "Sometimes I have to throw it up as many as six times to make it land the right way."

Now sometimes we are like that: "O God, it doesn't make any difference. You know, whatever you want, I want to do." But we all in the back of our mind have in our mind what we want to do. And we keep on praying, we keep throwing the stick up, till finally we think it comes down our way. And then we say, "Oh, isn't it wonderful? I've found the will of God for my life," which is really just your own subconsciousness trying to force your will upon God. There must be that willingness.

b. There Must Be a Meekness

And I'll tell you something else there must be, dear friend: There must be that meekness—meekness. Listen to Psalm 25, verse 9: *"The meek will he guide"* (Psalm 25:9)—*"the meek will he guide."* Do you know what the word *meek* means? It actually means "teachable." In the olden days, when a horse would be trained and broken, they would say the horse had been *meeked*, or the horse had been made meek. That is, he would respond to the reins. Now, are you guidable? Are you meek? Are you teachable? Some people are not teachable. Some people who are listening to me right now, you're

mentally arguing rather than listening. That's the reason you don't learn. A boy drops out of school when he's little. He says, "They can't teach me anything." He's probably right—because he's made up his mind they can't teach him anything.

c. There Must Be an Openness

Now not only must there be that willingness, and that meekness; my dear friend, there must be that openness. The Bible says in Romans chapter 8 and verse 14, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God." (Romans 8:14) Now, what is the Spirit of God? The Spirit of God is that still small voice. The Holy Spirit never shouts, and He never shoves. He never shouts, and He never shoves. If you find between your shoulder blades something just shoving you like that, that's a compulsion—it's from the devil. The Holy Spirit leads. If you find something shouting at you, that's not God. There's a still small voice.

Now, how are you going to hear that voice? You're going to have to listen to the Lord. Do you have a quiet time? Do you have a time when you get away and shut the door from all of the noise of the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, so you can hear that still small voice? When you are alone with God, and when you get alone with God, do you listen to God? Or do you just come to God with a shopping list and say, "God, I need this, I need this, I need this, I need this, I need this"? Rather than saying, "Speak, Lord, your servant hears," you say, "Listen, Lord, your servant's talking."

d. There Must Be a Yieldedness

There must be, my dear friend, willingness. There must be meekness. There must be openness. And then, there must be yieldedness. How important it is! Listen to Romans chapter 12, verses 1 and 2: "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service*"—just underscore that: "*which is your reasonable service.*" "*And be not conformed to this world:*"—don't be squeezed in by this world—"but be ye transformed"—metamorphosed—"by the renewing of your mind..."—and then you will know—listen—and then you will know—"...what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1–2)

Question—question: If God were to offer you a contract today and say, "Will you sign this contract at the bottom, committing yourself to do my will," would you sign it? You say, "Well, wait a minute: you never sign a contract without reading it first." Would you sign His without reading it first? If not, you'll not know God's will. You say, "Show me your will, Lord—and I'll do it." God says, "No, you just present yourself a living sacrifice, completely." You say, "That's not reasonable." God says, "It is your reasonable service." Why? Because of the mercies of God.

Jesus Christ died for you in agony and blood on the cross. Can you trust Him? Can

you trust the One who loved you enough to give His life for you? Yes, you can trust Him—anybody who loves you that much. You can say, “Lord, I don’t even know what it is; but I’ll do it.” You say, “I still would like to know.” All right, I’ll tell you three things about it: It’s good, perfect, and acceptable. Then, you will *“prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”* (Romans 12:2) Do you need to know any more than that?

There must be a yieldedness to do the will of God. Are you committed to say to God, “Anytime, any place, anywhere, any cost?” Are you? Think about it: “Anytime, anywhere, any place, any cost. Any time, anywhere, any place, any cost: I want the will of God.”

Now, my dear friend, those are provisions: willingness, meekness, openness, yieldedness; willingness, meekness, openness, yieldedness; willingness, meekness, openness, yieldedness. The reason that many of us do not know the will of God is we do not put ourselves in a place to receive the will of God for our lives.

3. Guidance Is Very Practical

Now, let me give you a third thing: Not only is guidance promised, and not only is it provisional, but it is very practical. I want to tell you six ways now—very practical ways—that you can know the will of God for your life. These are very practical ways.

a. The Word of God

Number one is what we call the Word of God—the Word of God. Much of the will of God for you is revealed right here in the Bible, especially what we call God’s standard will—God’s standard will. Now God’s special will may not be revealed—which girl to marry, which college to go to, and so forth—but certainly God’s standard will is revealed for you. For example, the Bible says, “Don’t be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” (2 Corinthians 6:14)

So if you come to me as a teenager and you say, “Pastor, I need to counsel with you. I want to marry Susie. Do you think I ought to marry Susie?” “Well, is Susie a Christian, Bill?” “No, Susie’s not a Christian; but I sure do love her. Do you think it’s God’s will that maybe I’d marry her and lead her to Jesus?” No, it’s not God’s will. It is not God’s will. I mean, if the Bible says, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers,” that ought to settle it, right? I mean, that is the Word of God.

Now you’d better learn how to study the Word of God so you can understand the Word of God. You don’t just open the Bible and do what I call a *lucky dip*, or take some text out of context. You can make it say anything if you do that. You have to study the Bible. But listen. Here’s the way God leads—Psalm 119, verse 105: *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”* (Psalm 119:105)

b. The Providence of God

And I want to tell you that one of the ways that I know the will of God for my life is that I have certain biblical principles that I try to apply to my life day by day by day. And they help me to know His will, especially what I call His standard will.

Now, listen to your pastor, and listen big and plain. Never pray for guidance about what God has already commanded or what God has already forbidden. All right? Never pray for guidance about what God has already commanded or God has already forbidden. That is an open door; it's all honey and no bees. You see, the door to the room of opportunity often swings on the hinges of opposition; and you must be careful therefore to think that that if it's an open door, then there won't be any problem, any difficulty. Paul said, *"A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."* (1 Corinthians 16:9) And in my own life, I've seen God guide me by opening doors and closing doors, and opening doors and closing doors.

c. The Spirit of God

Now I'll give you the third way that God guides. First of all, I said what? The Word of God. Secondly, the providence of God. Now here's a third way that God guides—and it's what we want to call the Spirit of God—the Holy Spirit of God. Now Romans 8, verse 14: *"For as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God."* (Romans 8:14)

Now the Holy Spirit is that still small voice that speaks to you mystically. Galatians chapter 5, verse 18: *"But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."* (Galatians 5:18) The Holy Spirit guides. But remember, He doesn't shout; He doesn't shove. You must learn to listen intuitively to the Spirit. The Holy Spirit will never tell you anything contrary to the Word of God. But the Holy Spirit may tell you some things that are not specifically mentioned in the Word of God, and it may not make sense to you logically or emotionally.

Let's go back again to the privilege I have of being your pastor. When the pulpit committee invited me to come up here, very frankly, I did not want to come—because I'll tell you why: I was in a church in Florida, and God was blessing that church, and the church was growing. I was very happy there. I had a very fruitful ministry there. And I lived in a part of the country that I loved to live in. I love the ocean. I love water. I had a beautiful home in a grapefruit grove there right near the Indian River, where I had a little sailboat. I enjoyed that. I enjoyed the church. I enjoyed it all. Besides that, my mom and dad lived in Florida. All of my friends that I grew up with were in Florida. And I'd seen that church grow and had baptized most of those people. And, emotionally, psychologically, and even physically, I had no inclination to come here.

That's not to say anything bad or negative about this area, but just to tell you where I was at that time. It's not to say that I'm unhappy here. I am very, excitedly happy. But at that moment—at that moment—when you invited me to come, and I prayed about it,

agonized, and fasted, and went through every means that I know to find the will of God, I felt finally in my spirit the Holy Spirit of God speaking to my spirit that I should come. And I made a commitment to come. But I want to tell you it took about twelve to eighteen months for my soul to catch up with my spirit, for God to confirm in my mind, emotion, and will what He had told me down deep in my spirit—that still small voice. Now, my dear friend, that's getting where we really have to depend upon God to so pray, so fast, so study, so yield, and so listen that God can speak through His Holy Spirit.

I believe that God does speak. The Bible says in Colossians chapter 3 and verse 15, *“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.”* (Colossians 3:15) Do you know what that means? That word *rule* means “umpire”; it means “arbitrate.” The Holy Spirit of God is an arbitrator; He is an umpire. And when you get out of bounds in the game of life, He blows the whistle. And so you let the peace of God arbitrate or umpire in your heart. Sometimes in your life, as you're praying, you're going to do something: the Holy Spirit just blows the whistle and says, “Don't do that.” “Why not?” “Just never mind: don't do that.” The Holy Spirit just gives you not a jingle, but a jangle. The jingle of excitement may be there: that's okay. But the jangle: no. When that shrill whistle that you as a child of God know is from the Lord Jesus, who said, *“My sheep hear my voice”*; when the Lord blows the whistle, you say, “No, I'm not going to do that.” (John 10:27) Or when the Holy Spirit of God gives you that assurance in your heart, then you're being led by the Spirit of God.

d. The People of God

Now I want to mention a fourth way that He's going to lead you: not only the Word of God, the providence of God, and the Spirit of God; now the fourth way is the people of God. God will lead you through counselors. Proverbs chapter 24 and verse 6 says this: *“By wise counsel thou shalt make thy war.”*—if you're getting ready to go to war, you'd better get some counselors to talk to you—*“and in a multitude of counsellors there is safety.”* (Proverbs 24:6)

Now, talk to human counselors, but make certain, number one, that they're mature; and that they're spiritual; and, number three, that you remember that the Holy Spirit is the Supreme Counselor. But God will give you friends. And none of us live to ourselves. None of us are so wise and so self-sufficient that we need not pray with counselors. And if you're a teenager, you'd better take your parents into consideration. God has given your mother wisdom, young lady, that you may never dream she has. She can know more by looking at a young man in ten seconds than you can in twenty-four hours. You say, “Do you really believe that?” I do. I believe it's a gift of God that God gives moms and dads. And the Bible teaches that you need the wisdom of your parents. In a multitude of counselors there is wisdom.

e. The Wisdom of God

Now, the next way that God speaks to you is not only the people of God, but the wisdom of God. Ephesians chapter 5, verse 15: *“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.”* (Ephesians 5:15) Let me tell you what wisdom is. Let me tell you what J. I. Packer says that wisdom is—and I quote—and I think this is tremendous: “Wisdom is the power to see and the inclination to choose the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it.” Listen. You see the best goal. You choose the best goal. And then, you understand the surest way of reaching it. That’s wisdom—that’s wisdom!

Now, folks, a lot of the will of God is found right here: between your ears. I mean, you wake up in the morning, and some people are so foolish, they say, “Now, Lord, I want you to lead me today. What tie should I wear?” Wear one that matches your suit. See, there’s a certain amount of wisdom that is really sanctified common sense. And God gives you wisdom. You have the mind of the Lord. And God is going to give you wisdom.

Listen. I want to give you six character qualities. This is just a sub-point right now; but you jot these down if you want wisdom, because, my dear friend, this wisdom is the sum total and the homogenization of all of these other things that I’m talking about. And wisdom is not emotion. It’s not getting wet around the lashes, warm around the heart. It is sanctified common sense. And here are six character qualities if you want this wisdom.

i. If You Want Wisdom, You Must Have Reverence

Number one: reverence. Proverbs 9, verse 10: *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.”* (Proverbs 9:10) Do you have a feeling of awe before Almighty God?

ii. If You Want Wisdom, You Must Have Humility

Now not only reverence, but humility. Proverbs 11, verse 2: *“With the lowly is wisdom.”* (Proverbs 11:2) You strut and swagger—you’ll not know God’s will.

iii. If You Want Wisdom, You Must Have Teachableness

Number three: teachableness. Proverbs 9:9: *“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”* (Proverbs 9:9) Are you teachable?

iv. If You Want Wisdom, You Must Have Diligence

Number four: diligence. Proverbs 8, verse 17: *“I love them that find me...”*—wisdom is speaking—*“I love them that find me; and those that seek me early shall find me.”* (Proverbs 8:17) Do you have a time when you get up early and get in the Word of God and seek wisdom from God? God says, “You seek wisdom, you’ll find it.”

v. If You Want Wisdom, You Must Have Uprightness

Now, listen: uprightness. Proverbs 2, verse 7: *“He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.”* (Proverbs 2:7) If you have sin in

your heart and in your life, it blinds you. Do you know what confession is? It's the windshield wipers that clear the windshield so you can see the road ahead. You see, that's what God does. When you confess, it just takes all that cloudiness, that blurriness out, that sin that dulls your mind. *"He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous."*

vi. Faith

And then: faith. James 1, verse 5: *"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith."* (James 1:5–6) Wisdom is certainly a way to know the will of God, and wisdom is thinking the thoughts of God after Him.

f. The Miracles of God

Last of all, I want to mention this—I must, to be fair: and not only the wisdom of God, but the miracles of God. God sometimes speaks through voices and visions and miracles and dreams—not frequently; very infrequently. And I daresay in this day and this age when we have the Word of God complete as we have it, the need for that has largely vanished, in my opinion. And even in the book of Acts, it's very seldom that we find God speaking—just a handful of cases these ways. But I would be less than honest if I did not tell you that God may, and God sometimes has; and for all I know, God can do it again if He wants to. But that's not the primary way that God speaks.

Conclusion

Now those, my dear friend, are very practical ways for knowing the will of God for your life. It's not as complicated as you may think. It's hard to steer a ship that's not moving. *The way to understand the part of the Bible you don't understand is to obey the part you do understand.* "To him that hath shall be given. To him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." (Matthew 25:29)

Discovering Your Treasure

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: February 9, 1986

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 1:9–20, 2:3

“In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

COLOSSIANS 2:3

Outline

Introduction

- I. The Sovereign Determination of His Preeminence
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 - B. He Is Preeminent in the Regulation of the Universe
 - 1. He Is the Power of Creation
 - 2. He Is the Preserver of Creation
 - 3. He Is the Purpose of Creation
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- III. The Sacred Demands of His Preeminence
 - A. His Deity Demands It
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 - 1. Give Him the First Thought of the Day
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 - 3. Give Him the First Fruits of Your Income
 - 4. Give Him the First Consideration in Any Decision

Conclusion

Introduction

Would you take God's precious Holy Word and open to the book of Colossians chapter 1 tonight. We're going to have a good time in the Word tonight, because we're just going to brag on Jesus. I begin reading in Colossians chapter 1—I begin in verse 9: *“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and*

hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” (Colossians 1:9–20) And then, in chapter 2 and verse 3, it says, *“In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”* (Colossians 2:3)

Tonight, I want to help you to discover the treasure that you have in the Lord Jesus Christ. Many years ago, the Spanish Armada was sailing off the coast of Florida. A hurricane struck, and those ships that were laden with millions of dollars in gold and silver lingots went to the bottom, in shallow water. People knew the treasure had been lost, but they didn't know where the ships had gone down. One ship went down near Vero Beach, near Fort Pierce, there in Florida.

Many times I've been in that water there by the Sebastian Inlet and other places. Many times I've been in that water swimming, scuba diving, snorkeling, spear fishing right around that area, but I didn't come up with any millions; I didn't come up with any silver or any gold. The ships were there in shallow water. Fisherman doubtless fished over that spot sometimes. They would hang a hook perhaps on a lump of gold and curse their luck, because they had hung a hook down beneath the water on something they could not see.

Then one day some explorers said, “The ship must be here.” They went out and they made the surveys; they tested, and they went under. And there it was: in shallow water, so shallow that any of us who could swim normally could have gone to the bottom. They brought up millions of dollars. There it was, but they didn't know it was there.

I believe tonight that many of us are yet to discover the full treasure we have in Jesus Christ. Oh, dear friend, in Him—in Jesus Christ—*“are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”* (Colossians 2:3) Think of that: all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge! And it's all in Jesus!

Now, how can those treasures be yours? Well, there's a key verse, and I want you to see that key verse. It's chapter 1 and verse 18—look at it: *“And he—that is, Jesus—is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;—* now here's the key phrase; watch it—*that in all things he might have the preeminence.”* (Colossians 1:18) I want to talk to you tonight about recognizing God's eternal plan: that

in all things Jesus may have the preeminence.

I. The Sovereign Determination of His Preeminence

Now the very first thing I want you to see is what I'm going to call the sovereign determination of His preeminence. I read verse 18. Look, if you will, in verse 19: *"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."* (Colossians 1:19) What does that mean? It pleased the Father that in all things—verse 18—Jesus should have preeminence, for it pleased the Father that in Him—in His Son—should all fullness dwell. (Colossians 1:18–19)

There is a confusion of Scripture here. Dear friend, when you understand that—listen—you are going to unlock the key to the mystery of history, and to all eternity. God has one eternal plan—just one—and it is that his Son, the Lord Jesus, will have the preeminence. Understand that: *"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."* And Paul is going to tell us in Colossians that this is a part of the vast eternal plan of God. It is the purpose of history.

Why did God send the Holy Spirit? That Jesus might have the preeminence. Jesus said, "When he is come, He will not speak of himself; He will glorify me." (John 16:13–14) The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ. And, incidentally, folks, you beware of any so-called Christian movement that has the Holy Spirit for a figurehead. The Holy Spirit—very God of very God—has as His office work to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. Why, the final judgment—even the final judgment—is that in all things Jesus will have the preeminence. Why? Listen. God is going to judge the world. Why? *"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* (Philippians 2:11)

Now, listen. If you want to get in on what God is doing, if you want to understand what God is up to, if you want to bring your life in line with almighty God, then make it the purpose of your heart and of your life that God's purpose will be your purpose, that Jesus will have the preeminence. Now, my dear friend, you can never know the fullness of God in your life until the one single aim of your life is that Christ and Christ alone will be exalted.

S. B. Gordon was a great preacher. He said, "In every heart there is the throne." He said, "When self is on that throne, Christ is on the cross. But," he said, "when self is on the cross, Christ is on the throne." Now I want to ask you a question. In your heart right now, more than anything else, is Jesus Christ preeminent? I want to tell you something, and I want you to hear it and hear it well: *Jesus Christ is not looking for a place in your life; He doesn't want a place in your life. Jesus Christ is not looking for prominence in your life; He does not want prominence in your life. Jesus Christ deserves and demands preeminence in your life.* Jesus Christ is not someone that you can tack onto

your life. Jesus Christ doesn't want to be the spare tire, dear friend; He's the steering wheel. Jesus Christ is to be Lord of your life. *"It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."* (Colossians 1:19)

And so the very first thing that I want you to understand, if you would discover your treasure, is the sovereign determination of His preeminence. This is the mystery of history. All that God is doing is that His Son might have the preeminence.

II. The Sweeping Dimension of His Preeminence

Now, the second thing I want you to understand is what I am going to call the sweeping dimension of His preeminence. What should He be preeminent in? Well, look again, if you will, in verse 18. It says, *"that in all things he might have the preeminence"—"in all things."* (Colossians 1:18)

A. He Is Preeminent in the Revelation of the Father

He is to be preeminent in the revelation of the Father. For example, see in verse 15, Jesus is *"the image of the invisible God."* (Colossians 1:15) He is preeminent in revelation. Dear friend, God is unseeable, God is unknowable, and God is unapproachable, apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. You will never know God apart from the preeminence of Christ. You cannot know God through reason. You cannot know God through religion. You cannot know God through ritual. The only way that you can know God is through Jesus Christ. The preeminent Christ has a monopoly on the revelation of God.

I want you to listen to this marvelous verse in Matthew chapter 11 and verse 27. Jesus Christ said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."* (Matthew 11:27) The only way—the only way—you can know God is for the Son to reveal Him to you. If you worship God any other way other than through Jesus Christ, you're worshipping an unknown God. Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14:6) He has cornered the market on revelation, dear friend. He is preeminent in the revelation of the Father.

B. He Is Preeminent in the Regulation of the Universe

Now, secondly, not only is He preeminent in the revelation of the Father—verse 15; but He is preeminent in the regulation of the universe—verse 16: *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."* (Colossians 1:16) Jesus Christ is preeminent, dear friend, in the regulation of the universe.

1. He Is the Power of Creation

Jesus is the power of creation. It was all done by Him. Who created this vast, mighty world? Who was it that flung out the stars? Who was it that scooped out the seas? Who was it that heaped up the mountains? Who is it that paints the rainbow? Who is it, dear friend, that sculpts the mountains? Who is it? It is Jesus Christ.

And I want to tell you, that little baby of Matthew chapter 1 is the mighty God of Genesis 1. There was not one blade of grass made, not one grain of sand created, without the Lord Jesus Christ. And when Jesus Christ came into this world as a little baby on the breast of His mother, He was the One who had already created His mother. And when He was born, He was older than His mother and as old as His Father. Jesus Christ spoke, and it stood fast.

There are some today who try to tell us that they believe in evolution. I spoke to a seminary president the other day who told me that he did not believe in Adam and Eve as literal persons. He did not believe that this world came about as a direct creation of God. He believed, rather, that it all came about by some evolutionary process.

Well, dear friend, if that is true, you've got three problems. Number one, you've got a problem with the Bible—with the Scriptures—for the Bible tells us that *“the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”* (Genesis 2:7) *And if this book is not sufficient to tell me where I came from, it's not sufficient to tell me where I'm going, dear friend. If it's wrong about the origin of the species, it's wrong about the destiny, also.* And I thank God for the Bible that tells me *“whence I came, and whither I go.”* (John 8:14)

I'll tell you something else, dear friend: If I don't understand that Jesus made it all, then not only am I going to have problem with the Scripture, but I'm going to have a problem with salvation. You see, if man just simply evolved, if there was no Garden of Eden, if there was no fall in the Garden of Eden, if we are not by nature sinners, if we're just evolving onward and upward, then we don't need to be saved; we don't need to be born again. But the Bible says, *“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”* (1 Corinthians 15:22) *And if Genesis 3 is a myth, John 3 is a farce: we don't need to be born again.*

But not only will you have a problem with the Scriptures, and not only will you have a problem with salvation, but you're going to have a problem with society. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: *You teach people that they came from animals, and before long they're going to be living like animals.* And that is what is wrong with us today right where we are.

2. He Is the Preserver of Creation

Jesus Christ is the power of creation. Not only is He the power of creation, but He is the preserver of creation. Look in verse 17: *“And he is before all things, and by him all*

things consist.” (Colossians 1:17) Jesus Christ holds it together. Jesus is the glue of the galaxies. Jesus Christ is the One who regulates the universe. Jesus Christ is the One who fuels the sun so that it can burn. Jesus Christ is the One who veils the moon with beauty. Jesus Christ is the One who guides the stars and the planets in their mighty orbits. The scientist talks about natural law. There is no natural law; it is the law of God. Jesus is the One who regulates the universe. He is preeminent in the revelation of the Father. He is preeminent in the regulation of the universe.

3. He Is the Purpose of Creation

Not only is He the power of creation; not only is He the preserver of creation; but, dear friend, He is the purpose of creation. Look again in the last part of verse 16: *“All things were created by him, and for him.”* (Colossians 1:16) You want me to tell you why this mighty universe? Because of Jesus. Did you think it was made for you? Dear friend, it was made *by* Him; it was made *for* Him—and that word *for* is a preposition, and it means “movement toward an object.” It means that this universe is coming to Him. It was made *for* Him, and it is coming *to* Him. *People say, “What’s the world coming to?” I’ll tell you, my dear friend: It is coming to Jesus.* It is all for Him, and life would be meaningless if you didn’t understand the purpose for creation. Why, it’s all here!

Jesus is preeminent. He is preeminent in the revelation of the Father. You cannot know God unless you know Him who is the image of the invisible God. Jesus is preeminent in the regulation of the universe. He is the power, He is the preserver, and He is the purpose of creation.

C. He Is Preeminent in the Reconciliation of the World

I’ll tell you thirdly, dear friend, He is preeminent of the reconciliation of the world. Continue to read in verse 18: *“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”* (Colossians 1:18–20) Jesus made peace through the blood of His cross.

I want to say with all of the emphasis of my soul; I want to underscore it; I want to put an exclamation point behind it; and I want you to hear me, dear friend: There is no salvation apart from Jesus Christ. He is preeminent in salvation. He made peace with the blood of his cross. And my dear friend, if you tell me there’s some other way to get to heaven apart from Jesus Christ, then I will tell you that you are a heretic. There is no way apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a matter of fact, if there is some other way other than Jesus Christ, then Jesus Christ is none of the ways at all. If there’s some other way apart from Jesus Christ, then

Jesus Christ is a fake, a fraud, a liar, and a deceit. Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”* (John 14:6) If there's another way other than Jesus, then the apostles are false witnesses, for the Bible says, *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”* (Acts 4:12)

And I'll tell you something else, dear friend: If there's another way other than Jesus Christ, then I lose my respect for the One who is called God. And I'll tell you why: If God allowed His darling Son to die in agony and blood upon that cross when there was some other way, then God should have taken it. I mean, dear friend, if God allowed His Son to die that agonizing, excruciating, death, and there was some other way, I'd hate to meet that God in a dark alley.

I'm telling you something, dear friend: that Jesus Christ is preeminent. He is preeminent in the revelation of the Father. He is preeminent in the regulation of the universe. He is preeminent in the reconciliation of the sinner. And he made peace by the blood of his cross. What a Savior we have! There's none like the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank God for the Lord Jesus!

III. The Sacred Demands of His Preeminence

Now I've talked about the sovereign determination of His preeminence—*“It pleased the Father”*; (Colossians 1:19) I have talked about the sweeping dimensions of His preeminence—*“that in all things he might have the preeminence”*; (Colossians 1:18) now, thirdly, I want to talk to you about the sacred demands of His preeminence. What does this mean to me? What does it mean to you? Well, it means, dear friend, that in my heart and in my life He must have the preeminence. There are two things that demand that Jesus have first place in my life.

A. His Deity Demands It

Number one: His deity. And verse 18 says, *“And he is the head of the body, the church.”* (Colossians 1:18) Now Jesus Christ is God, and He is head. He is King, and therefore He has a right to demand of me His preeminence. Because of His deity, He is God. This is not some Baptist preacher; it is God who speaks. There can be no rival. There can be no refusal. There can be no rebuttal. Christ is God, and because of that—because of His deity—He demands preeminence.

B. His Death Demands It

But not only because of His deity, but because of His death. Verse 20 says, *“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross...”* (Colossians 1:20) When you put verse 18 through 20 together, then you understand why I must bow the knee to Jesus Christ. Number one: He is God, and He died for me. Number two: because of His deity,

and because of His death. “Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.”

Paul was talking to the carnal Corinthians. They had forgotten the preeminence of Christ. And Paul told them in 1 Corinthians 6:19, *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”* (1 Corinthians 6:19) Oh, friend, He bought you. He bought me, and I have no right to my life. I must turn it over to Him completely. This is the sacred demands of His preeminence.

C. What Does That Mean to Me?

Now, how is that going to work out in my life? If Jesus Christ is Lord—and He is if he died for me, and He did; if God has determined that in all things Jesus Christ should have the preeminence, then what does that mean to me? May I suggest several things that it means to me, and, God help us, that it ought to mean to all of us?

1. Give Him the First Thought of the Day

Number one: If Christ is on the throne of my life, if Christ is to have preeminence, then what does that mean? Well, that means He comes first; that means I must give Him the first thought of the day. Psalm 5:3 says, *“My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.”* (Psalm 5:3) Is the first thought in the morning of the Lord? It ought to be. So many times I like to open my eyes and just greet the Lord.

*Every morning, lean thine arms awhile
Upon the window-sill of Heaven,
And gaze upon the Lord...
Then, with vision in thy heart,
Turn strong to meet the day.*

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

2. Give Him the First Day of the Week

Give Him the first thought in the morning. Give Him the first day of the week. I told you this morning it is not the Sabbath; it is the Lord's Day. It belongs to Him. Acts chapter 20 and verse 7: *“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.”* (Acts 20:7) First Corinthians 16, verse 2, says, *“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.”* (1 Corinthians 16:2) Oh, friend, give Him the Lord's Day. Don't just give Him Sunday morning or Sunday evening; give Him all day Sunday.

What should a Christian do on Sunday? What kind of recreation? What kind of sports? What kind of visiting? What kind of business should a Christian do? The New Testament does not lay down rules. It is not the Old Testament Sabbath; it is the Lord's

Day. But, dear friend, it is the Lord's Day. I'm not going to make any rules for you; but I tell you what you must do: You must bow and give this day to Jesus Christ.

3. Give Him the First Fruits of Your Income

Give Him the first thoughts in the morning. Give Him the first day of the week. Give Him the first fruits of your income. Proverbs chapter 3, verses 9 and 10, say, *"Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."* (Proverbs 3:9–10) You don't pay all of the rest of your bills—the mortgage and all of the rest of it—and then see what you have left for God. My dear friend, are you listening to me? You take God's tithe off the top and give it to God. No, I take it back: Pay it to God. The tithe is the Lord's. It belongs to God. If you keep it, you rob God. You steal from God. Proverbs 3:9 says, *"Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase."*

You say, "Well, if I did that, I couldn't pay my bills." Bless God, if you do that, then you can pay your bills. That's what he's saying. Proverbs 3:10 says, *"So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."* (Proverbs 3:10) That's the reason He said in Matthew 6:33, *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* (Matthew 6:33)

4. Give Him the First Consideration in Any Decision

Give Him the first thought in the morning. Give Him the first day of the week. Give Him the first fruit of your income. And give Him, dear friend, the first consideration in any decision. Second Corinthians 8:5 says, *"But first gave their own selves to the Lord."* (2 Corinthians 8:5) Just give him all; give it all to Jesus.

Conclusion

A man who loved Jesus with all of his heart was getting ready to propose to his girlfriend, and this is what he said to her. He said, "I love you deeply, and I want to ask you a question: Are you willing to take second place in my heart?" She said, "Yes, I am." And they were married. I want to tell any woman here that the best thing you could ever do would be to marry a man who loves Jesus more than he loves you, because he'll love you in a way that he could never have loved you before.

I say it and I mean it: that Jesus Christ deserves and demands preeminence. And when you begin to give Him preeminence, then you're going to find the treasure that is hid in the Lord Jesus.

I want every head bowed, every eye closed, and I want to ask you this question—solemnly ask this question: Is Jesus Christ preeminent in your life? I'm not asking, does He have a place? I'm not asking, do you intellectually believe in Him? I am asking, is He totally and completely the Lord in your life? Are you willing to first give yourself to Him?

Are you willing to give Him the first thought in the day? Are you willing to give Him the first day of the week? Are you willing to give Him the first fruit of your income? Are you willing to give Him the first consideration in any decision—to say, “He is Lord, and there is no refusal, no rebuttal—He is Lord?”

Why I Reject Evolution

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: July 27, 2003

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 1:12–17

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”

COLOSSIANS 1:16

Outline

Introduction

I. I Reject Evolution for Logical Reasons

A. The Origin of Life

B. The Fixity of the Species

C. The Second Law of Thermodynamics

D. The Non-Physical Properties Found in Creation

II. Moral Reasons

III. Theological Reasons

Conclusion

Introduction

Colossians chapter 1. Before I tell you what I don't believe, let me tell you what I do believe. I can give it to you in a few verses, with gratefulness. I want to join the Apostle Paul in saying, *“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who”—this is Jesus—“is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him”—that is, “by Jesus—“were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”* (Colossians 1:12–17) Can you say *amen* to that? Friend, that's my faith. Without any stutter, stammer, apology, or fear of contradiction from above, that is what I believe.

The big question is this: Did God make man, or did man make God? That is, is man in the image of God, or is God in the imagination of man? Is man just an animal, just a

clever creature? Did mankind come up here somehow accidentally and spontaneously? Did we all arrive from prehistoric slime? Well, if you go to public schools, that's what you're going to learn.

Time magazine carried an ad for the *Time-Life* book series. Now the *Time-Life* book series is called *The Emergence of Man*. I want to read that advertisement to you. And, by the way, this book, *The Emergence of Man*, is found in almost all public libraries, and it's found in most of our public schools—elementary and junior high schools, that is. So, let me read from the ad that is common fare in the public libraries and public schools. Here's the ad—and I quote: “Today, that creature who first began to raise himself above other animals no longer exists. He has become unique, set apart from the two million other species living on the planet by a thumb that makes your hand a precision tool, by a means that locks you into a comfortable upright position, and by your capacity for abstract thought and speech.” You see, that's what they say differentiates you from an ape or some other creature. And then they go on to say, “All of this and more has enabled your species to dominate the earth and let you share with every other creature that ever lived the same origin.” Now, listen to this: “The same accident that led to the spontaneous generation of the first-celled slimy algae, three and a half billion years ago.” It's always interesting to me how they know these dates—“three and a half billion years ago.” Then they ask, in this advertisement, “How did it all happen? What was the evolutionary process that led man and his conquest of a harsh and hostile environment? You will find the amazing story in *Time-Life Books'* new series *The Emergence of Man*. You will feel a sense of immediacy, invisible adventure, in incredible lifelike, pictorial, technical photo painting.”

Now I want you to listen to that phrase: “You will feel a sense of immediacy, invisible adventure, in incredible lifelike, pictorial, technical photo painting.” I mean, you look at it; you say, “Wow, here are the pictures! Just look at that! They all have pictures. Here are the ape-men. We can see them progressing. And there's the lifelike, technical photo painting of these creatures.”

Well, just what is evolution, anyway? Darwin wrote his book *The Origin of Species*. And he was a famous evolutionist, the father of evolution. And he says this—on page 424, Darwin says this: “Analogy would lead me...to the belief that all animals and plants have descended from some one prototype.... All organisms start from a common origin...from some low and intermediate form, animals and plants may have been developed...all organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form.”

Now, what is the primary tool of evolution? Well, the primary tools of the evolutionary process, according to Darwin, are two things: one is mutation, that things keep changing; and then, next, natural selection, which has led to the survival of the fittest.

And so over billions of years we see man, who starts out as some primordial ooze, slime, and he becomes primitive protozoa. Somehow, magically, accidentally, mysteriously, nonorganic matter, nonliving matter, gains a spark of life; and you get a one-celled organism, a protozoon. And given a few billion years, that becomes an unsegmented worm. You didn't know you were once a worm? And then, that unsegmented worm becomes a fish. And then, that fish becomes an amphibian. And then, that amphibian becomes a reptile. And then, that reptile becomes a bird. And then, that bird becomes a mammal. And somehow that mammal turns into man. Now here's what they were asked to believe, and here's what in public schools you must be taught: that nothing plus time plus chance changes amoebas to astronauts, molecules to monkeys, and then to man.

Now, friend, I submit to you—and I'm not really trying to be funny—that is a fairytale for adults. They believe that time plus chance can turn frogs into princes. The late great Dr. W. A. Criswell used to quote a little poem:

*Once I was a tadpole beginning to begin.
Then I was a frog with my tail tucked in.
Then I was a monkey in a banyan tree.
And now I am a professor with a Ph.D.*

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

That's what they believe.

Now I want to say again that I wholeheartedly reject this monkey mythology. And I don't want to be convoluted; I want to be very simple. I want to give you three basic reasons why I reject evolution.

I. I Reject Evolution for Logical Reasons

First of all, I reject evolution for logical reasons—I reject it for logical reasons. Now, don't get the idea that you have to check your brain behind the door not to believe in evolution. Many intelligent and well-trained scientists—listen to me—are moving away from this theory, and it is not necessarily because they are Bible believers; it is because of the lack of evidence for evolution. And many of our kids are only hearing one side of the story.

Let me tell you what some scientists, not Baptist preachers, are saying—but some well-known, respected scientists like Dr. Newton Tahmisian, a physiologist for the Atomic Energy Commission. Here's what he stated—and I'm quoting him: “Scientists who go about teaching that evolution is a fact of life are great conmen, and the story they are telling may be the greatest hoax ever. In explaining evolution, we do not have one iota of fact”—“In explaining evolution, we do not have one iota of fact.” That's an eminent scientist who says that.

Let me quote you another. Sir Ambrose Fleming, president of the Philosophical Society of Great Britain, explained this—again, I quote: “The evolutionary theory is purely the product of the imagination.” Now this is a scientist—not an ordinary scientist, an extraordinary one—the president of the Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

The late president of the Royal College of Surgeons in Great Britain, a leading British surgeon, Dr. Cecil Wakeley, has said this—listen: “When I was a medical student, I was taught the theory of evolution; but I never believed it.” Now this is a leading scientist and surgeon.

Swedish embryologist Dr. Søren Løvtrup wrote this—I want you to listen to this quote: “I believe that one day the Darwinian myth will be ranked the greatest deceit in the history of science. When this happens, many people will pose the question: ‘How did this ever happen?’” Now again I want to remind you this is not some Bible-thumping preacher. I have nothing against Bible-thumping preachers, which I happen to be one. But that’s not who’s saying this. This is an embryologist of no mean repute.

Don’t get the idea that it’s just evangelical Christians, fundamentalists, who refuse evolution. Many of the greatest scientists who’ve ever lived in the past were creationists. Let me name some of them. This is the Hall of Fame in science: Michael Faraday, Lord Kelvin, Joseph Lister, Louis Pasteur, Isaac Newton, Johannes Kepler, Sir William Ramsey, Lord Francis Bacon, Samuel Morris. And we could name others. All of these men were great scientists, and all of them were creationists.

Now I said I rejected evolution. The first reason is for logical reasons. There are four bridges that the evolutionist cannot cross; and I want to mention these, and this is all under the heading of logical reasons.

A. The Origin of Life

The first bridge the evolutionists cannot logically cross is the origin of life—the origin of life. Now, from whence came life? Well, if you’re a Bible believer, you know what the Bible says in Genesis 1, verse 24: *“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.”* (Genesis 1:24) What does the evolutionist say? Well, he’s reduced to guesses. From whence came life?

One theory is—and you won’t believe this, but it’s been advanced by men who are supposed to be men of science—that some germ of life from some distant place in space hijacked a meteor, or was carried by a meteor, to earth—and that’s how life originated on earth. All that does is just move the question back: How did life originate somewhere out yonder in space?

Others talk about something called spontaneous generation. That is—the way they love to explain it sounds so scientific—a fortuitous concourse of atoms. Well, that means kind of a flash of lightning through gas vapors, or green scum or something.

Here's this original soup, and now, ipso facto, it somehow just comes together: *bing*, there's life.

Let me tell you something: Dr. George Wald, Professor Emeritus of Biology at Harvard University—he won the Nobel Prize in Biology in 1971—writing in *Scientific American* on the origin of life has said this—and I want you to listen carefully: “There are only two possibilities as to how life arose. One is spontaneous generation arising to evolution; the other is a supernatural creative act of God. There is no third possibility.” And we would all say *amen*. Either God did it, or it just happened accidentally. All right, but now, let's go on. So far, he's doing good. He said there's no third possibility. “Spontaneous generation, that life arose from non-living matter was scientifically disproved 120 years ago”—that was 120 years from when he made this statement—“by Louis Pasteur and others. That leaves us with the only possible conclusion that life arose as a supernatural creative act of God.” So far, so good. But now, tune your ears and don't miss this. I want you to hear what this Nobel Prize winning scientist, Professor Emeritus of Biology at Harvard, said. Now, remember, he said there are only two possibilities: Either there's a creative act of God, or it is spontaneous generation that arises or moves to evolution. He said—and I'm continuing to quote: “I will not accept that...”—what *that* is he referring to? That it is a supernatural creative act of God—“I will not accept that philosophically because I do not want to believe in God. Therefore, I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible; spontaneous generation arising to evolution.” Two theories: God did it. It just happened. “To say it just happened is impossible; but I believe it because I don't want to believe in God”—written in *Scientific American*.

Let me tell you, another evolutionist, Sir Arthur Keith, confessed this: “The only alternative to some form of evolution is special creation which is unthinkable.” “That's the only alternative,” he says, “that God did it.” He said, “Man, that's just unthinkable.”

Scientist D. M. S. Watson displayed his prejudice when he wrote, “Evolution [is] a theory universally accepted not because it can be proven by logically coherent evidence to be true, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible.” “We accept it,” he says, “not because it can be proven; but to believe in God, oh no! So we have to believe it.”

Now what I want you to see is therefore that evolution is not truly science. It is philosophy. It is a bias against God. It is the next best guess of those who will not accept divine creation with regard to the origin of life. For two thousand years man believed in spontaneous generation of life because they did not know what Louis Pasteur discovered. And so men would see some slimy water, and after a while there would be wiggle tails in that water. They say, “Ah, life comes from that!” They would see some putrefaction on the ground, and after a while they would see maggots working in

that putrefaction. “Ah, life comes out of putrefaction!” Or they would see some rags—cheese rags, or whatever—and after a while mice would appear. And so they said, “Look, that’s where life comes from! It comes spontaneously.”

But then, more than a century ago, Pasteur said that was impossible, and he proved spontaneous generation of life impossible. And I want to tell you a basic axiom of biology: that life only arises from life. That is a basic axiom of biology. No biologist today would dare say that you can get life from anything other than life. They would say, scientifically, it is impossible to get life from nonliving matter. This law in science is called the law of biogenesis. It is a basic law of science. And the evolutionist, without any proof—none, nada, none—would say it happened: “We know it’s impossible, but it had to happen, because we don’t believe in God.” No evolutionist—none—can show the origin of life. But in order to prove evolution, friend, he’s got to start with the origin of life. He cannot cross that bridge.

B. The Fixity of the Species

The second bridge the evolutionist cannot cross is the steadfastness, the fixity, of the species—that is, “the basic categories of life.”

Now, what does the Bible say about the species? Well, Genesis 1, verses 11 and 12: “*And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit*”—now, listen to this phrase—“*after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*” (Genesis 1:11–12) You continue this passage. Ten times God uses this phrase “after his kind”—“after his kind”—“after his kind”—because like produces like.

Now the evolutionist must believe that reproduction does not always come kind after kind. There has to be a transmutation between species, that you can become a protozoon; and then you can become an un-segmented worm; and then you may become a fish; and then you may become a reptile, and move from one species to another. Now all of us know there is such a thing as mutation. If you have roses, you can get various varieties of roses. If you have dogs, canines, you can have everything from a poodle to a Great Dane, but they’re still canines; they’re still dogs. The scientists have bombarded fruit flies with gamma rays or some kind of rays to cause mutations, and they get all kinds of strange fruit flies. But they never get June bugs; they’re still fruit flies. You see, there are variations and adaptations that God has built, but you never have one species turning to another species. You never have a cat turn into a dog that turns to a cow that turns to a horse. You just don’t have that.

Now men have tried to do that. I heard one time about a marine biologist who tried to take one of these beautiful shell creatures called an abalone and cross it with a

crocodile. What he got was a crock of baloney. And anytime anybody tries this, that's exactly what they come up with!

Now you say, "Pastor Rogers, why are you so certain about the fixity of the species, the steadfastness of the species?" Number one: because the Bible teaches it—and that's enough for me. But let's move beyond that. We're not talking about theological reasons now; we're talking about logical reasons. Friend, if this is true, you would expect to find transitional forms in the fossils. There are billions of fossils; there are trillions of fossils—multiplied fossils. In not one instance—are you listening?—in not one instance do we find a transitional form. None—there are none!

Now there are some people who will attempt to show you a proof of these, but I can tell you that eminent scientists have proven that these are not true. You would think if man has evolved for millions and billions of years, and that life has evolved from one-celled life, some amoeba, to what we have today, that in the fossils in the earth we would find these transitional forms. But they're not there. The people talking about finding the missing link—friend, the whole chain is missing—the whole chain is missing! Now you ask them to prove it, that that is not true; and they cannot come up with evidence. Well, you say, "But, pastor, they seem to have the proof. What about these ape-men? What about these people who lived in caves—these cave dwellers?" We have cave dwellers today. People have lived in caves through the years. "But what about these things that we see in the museum? What about these creatures in this *Time-Life* advertisement?" Those are the products of imagination and artistry and plaster of Paris.

Some years ago—in 1925, I believe it was—in Tennessee—Dayton, Tennessee—we had something called the Monkey Trial. Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan were in a court case. A teacher had taught evolution in school, and there were people who sued that evolution should not be taught in school. Now it is reversed: you're sued if you don't teach evolution in school. But there was a great debate, and Clarence Darrow, who was a very brilliant lawyer, was presenting evidence for evolution. Part of the evidence that Clarence Darrow presented was Nebraska Man, and he had all of these pictures.

Now what had happened is there was a man named Harold Cook. And Harold Cook had found a piece of evidence, and out of that piece of evidence the artist had created this half-man, half-ape, this Nebraska Man. Well, what was it that Clarence Darrow used as evidence that Harold Cook had discovered? It was a tooth. I didn't say, "teeth"; I said, "tooth." He had a tooth, and with that tooth he had devised a race: male and female.

I was interested in reading in my research for this message where a creationist went to the University of Nebraska where they have the campus museum. And since he's named Nebraska Man, they have the replica of Nebraska Man there in the museum. So

this creationist went in there and said, “I want to see Nebraska Man.” So they took him in there, and in a case were the skull and the skeleton of Nebraska Man. And the creationist said, “Are these the actual bones of Nebraska Man?” “Oh,” he said, “no, they’re not the actual bones.” “Well,” the man said, “where could I see the actual bones?” “Oh,” he said, “we don’t have the bones. These are plaster of Paris casts of Nebraska Man.” “Well, you must have had the bones to make the cast.” The man in charge seemed embarrassed. “We don’t have any bones. All we have is a tooth.” That’s Nebraska Man. And what they had done was to take a tooth, take some imagination, take an artist, take plaster of Paris, take some paste and some hair, and glue it on him—make a male, make a female, make a civilization called Nebraska Man out of one tooth.

When I was in school, I studied about the Java Ape-man. If you go back as far as I do, you studied about the Java Ape-man. Where did he come from? Well, in 1891, Sir Eugene Dubois found in Java the top of a skull, the fragment of a left thighbone, and three molar teeth. He announced the missing link had been found—750,000 years old. These bones that he found—these sparse bones—were not found together, and they were found scattered, over the space of one year. Twenty-four eminent scientists got together to investigate these bones; they were from Europe. There was no agreement. Ten said that they were the bones of an ape. Seven said that they were the bones of a man. Seven said that it was the missing link. Later, Dubois himself had to confess that it was the remains of an ape. But in the museum he is called *Pithecanthropus erectus*: “the ape-man who stands up.” But he’s just an ape.

What about the Piltdown Man? I in college was introduced to the Piltdown Man. Where did we get his name? Well, Charles Dawson in Piltdown, England, found in a gravel pit a piece of a jaw, two molar teeth, and a piece of a skull. For fifty years, this was known as the Piltdown Man, but it was later shown to be a hoax. And *The Reader’s Digest* in 1958 said this—and I quote: “The great Piltdown hoax was an ape only fifty years old. Its teeth had been filed down and artificially colored.” Well, we laugh at that, and we say anybody could have a joke pulled on him. Yes; but, friend, the scientists took this and put it in the museum for fifty years. Do you see how anxious man is to make a monkey of himself? I mean, it was a hoax!

And a well-known biologist of the Smithsonian Institute said this—listen to this; this is Smithsonian: “There is no evidence which would show man developing step by step from lower forms of life. There is nothing to show that man was in any way connected with monkeys. He appeared suddenly and in substantially the same form as he is today. There are no such things as missing links. So far as concerns the major groups of animals, the creationists appear to have the best argument. There is not the slightest evidence that any one of the major groups arose from any other.” Folks, again, not that

I'm embarrassed at being a Baptist preacher, but that's not a Baptist preacher speaking; that's a biologist at the Smithsonian.

There's a man today who's going about speaking on college campuses. His name is Dr. Phillip E. Johnson. He's a Harvard graduate and also a graduate of the University of Chicago. He's an attorney—and no mean attorney. He has served as a law clerk for the Chief Justice of the United State Supreme Court. And, by the way, Mr. Johnson, whose books are in our library and in our bookstore, I believe, is a true believer and does not believe in evolution. He's brilliant. And he tells the following story of a lecture given by Colin Patterson at the American Museum of Natural History in 1981. Let me tell you who Patterson is. Patterson is a senior paleontologist—that means, just simply, someone who studies ancient events and creatures and so forth—he is a senior paleontologist at the British Natural History Museum. And I've been to that museum. As you walk in, the first thing you see is the head of Darwin there—the bust of Darwin. Colin Patterson is the senior paleontologist at the British Natural History Museum, and he is the author of that museum's general text on evolution. So this guy's no “6” or “7.” When it comes to science, he's a “9” or “10.”

Now Phillip Johnson, who is this lawyer from Harvard, quotes Colin Patterson, and he says this happened. Patterson is lecturing now, and Phillip Johnson is talking about it, and here's what Phillip Johnson says: “First, Patterson asked his audience of experts a question which reflected his own doubts about much of what has been thought to be secured knowledge about evolution.” Now here's this man; he's asking his colleagues this question: “Can you tell me anything you know about evolution—any one thing—that is true?” A good question: “Can you tell me...”—now, listen; it's kind of funny—“Can you tell me anything—any one thing—you know is true?” Now here are these learned men sitting out there. And let me tell you what happened. He said, “I tried that question on the geology staff at the Field Museum of Natural History, and the only answer I got was silence. I tried it on the members of the Evolutionary Morphology Seminar in the University of Chicago”—*morphology* means “to change from one form to another”—“a very prestigious body of evolutionists, and all I got there was silence for a long time. Eventually, one person said, ‘I do know one thing: It ought not to be taught in high school.’”

Now, get the setting. Here is a man, a brilliant scientist from the British Museum, who has written a book on the thing. And he gets these high muckety-mucks out there, these intellectual top waters, and he said, “Can you tell me one thing that you know to be true?” Silence. Only thing one of them said: “I know that it ought not to be taught in high school.”

You see, folks, there are some bridges that they cannot cross. One bridge is the origin of life. George Wald said, “That's impossible; but I believe it—spontaneous

generation—because I don't want to believe in God." The other is the fixity of the species. We don't have any evolutionary fossilized remains, missing links.

C. The Second Law of Thermodynamics

The third bridge that the evolutionist cannot logically cross is the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Now, what is the Second Law of Thermodynamics? This law says that energy is never destroyed. Everything tends to wear out, to run down, to disintegrate, and ultimately to die; but energy just moves to some other form. All processes by definition involve change; but the change—now, listen very carefully—is not in the upward direction of complexity, as the evolutionist declares. But change left to itself is always in disintegration, not in integration. Now that's the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Left to itself, everything collapses, deteriorates, grows old, and dies, sooner or later: it's called *entropy*.

Well, why would that be? Well, I preached on that this morning. We have a creation that is under judgment. And because it's under judgment, it involves decay and death. Romans 8:22: *"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."* (Romans 8:22) Left to themselves, things do not organize; they disorganize. They collapse. They deteriorate. They grow old. They die. They wear out. You can have a beautiful garden. Leave it alone: what happens to it? Leave your body alone; don't exercise; don't take care of it, and see what will happen to it. Take a brand new automobile; park it in the woods; go off and come back in a few years and see what has happened to it. Or even a boy's bedroom, leave it alone; see what is going to happen to it.

Now the evolutionist says, given enough time, these molecules are going to organize themselves; they're going to synthesize themselves. The parts are going to come together from simplicity to intricacy. Well, if you would take the parts of a new automobile and fly at the height of ten thousand feet and dump them out, would they assemble themselves into an automobile before they hit the ground? Suppose I drop the disassembled parts of a car from an airplane at ten thousand feet. Would they assemble themselves before they hit the ground? "Well," you say, "of course not! They'd be just spread out all over." The evolutionist would say, "Well, you just don't have enough time." Okay, rather than ten thousand feet, let's take it up to a hundred thousand feet. Now, is it going to be more organized or less organized?

You see, the more that time goes on, the more disintegration you have. Everything we see disintegrates, not integrates, when left alone by itself. That is called the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

D. The Non-Physical Properties Found in Creation

Now here's the fourth bridge that the evolutionists cannot logically cross—and that is

the non-physical properties found in creation. Now, what do I mean by the non-physical properties found in creation? Music, Brother Ken—the love of music, art, beauty, a hunger for God, worship. What is there in the survival of the fittest—what is there in the evolutionary process—that would produce these things? How can they be accounted for under the survival of the fittest? Where do these things come from? Genesis 1, verse 26: “*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*” (Genesis 1:26) You see, we have these inner things—this love for beauty, for art, for truth, for eternity. That didn’t come from some primordial ooze; that came from the God who created us.

Now I’ve mentioned all of this under one heading. It’s the first of three reasons; all of this is the first of three reasons. I reject evolution for logical reasons. There are four bridges that the evolutionists cannot cross; has not crossed; will not cross.

II. Moral Reasons

Now here’s the second reason therefore that I reject evolution: I reject evolution—and the next two points will be shorter, so don’t get too nervous—I reject evolution for moral reasons—for moral reasons.

Now there were two atheists who lived in the time of Darwin who believed Darwin’s teaching and locked onto it. One was a man named Nietzsche, and the other was a man named Karl Marx. From Nietzsche we got Nazism. Hitler was a student of Nietzsche, who was a student of Charles Darwin. The other was Karl Marx. Karl Marx was the father of Communism—also a student of Darwin. And, you see, it’s easy to understand, if there is no God, how something like Communism, which is based on godlessness, and Nazism, which is based on raw brutality, could come. People talk about all those who’ve died in religious wars—and many have, and that’s tragic—but I want to say that far more—multiplied many more; millions, and millions, and multiplied millions—have died not because of religion, but because of anti-godly evolution.

You think of those who were destroyed by Nazi Germany. Think of the gas camps. Think of the multiplied millions that were put to death under Stalin and the others, the atrocity of Communism. Well, why that? Why these immoral things? Well, if you believe that you came from animals, if you believe that everything is an accident, ultimately, there can be no standard of right or wrong. *You teach people that they’ve come from animals, and after a while they’ll begin to live like animals.* It follows, as night follows day. What do animals live for? Self-gratification, self-preservation, self-propagation. And that’s what the average American is living for. But the Bible teaches that man did not spring from the beast; he is headed toward the beast—that is, the Antichrist.

Peter Singer, who is an ethicist, so-called, at Princeton, believes that we ought to be able to kill little babies if we don’t like them, if they’re not perfect enough for us. Now I’m not talking about babies in the womb; I’m talking about pure infanticide. He believes that

a live chimpanzee is of more value, if that chimpanzee is healthy, than an unhealthy baby.

When I was in Israel, I was a guest there of the Israeli government. They gave me the best guide that they had in Israel. And that man in Israel—I'll not call his name, because, thank God, I believe he listens to this program; and I'm grateful he does, because I'm still trying to witness to him—but this man, a brilliant man, the curator of the Rockefeller Museum there, became a friend. We sat up one night late talking. I said, "Sir, do you believe in God?" He said, "No, I do not." I said, "Why don't you believe in God?" He said, "The Holocaust. What kind of a God would allow that to happen?" That deals with the message I preached this morning: because of the Holocaust. I said, "Then Hitler has caused you not to believe in God?" He said, "Yes, I detest Hitler." I said, "Well, you're on the same side as Hitler. Hitler didn't believe in God, as such; you don't believe in God. Hitler believed in evolution; you believe in evolution. Evolution is the survival of the fittest; you believe in the survival of the fittest. And Hitler had his gas ovens, because he thought that the Aryan race was superior to your people, sir. You've become very much like the thing that you fight." It's only a short step from believing in evolution to the gas ovens or whatever.

You see, folks, if there is no God, you can choose what you want. I said to this man, "Sir, if you don't believe in God, then let me give you a proposition. If there's a sick baby and a healthy dog, which one would you choose?" In a moment of honesty, he said, "If it were my dog, I would choose the dog." Let the baby die; let the dog live—why? There's no God, no creation. Man is not distinct from the animals. All we are is an animal with a thumb juxtaposed to five fingers, with a knee that causes him to stand upright, with the ability to articulate and to think abstractly. If that's all the difference there is, I submit to you, the man was right. And who can say what is right, or who can say what is wrong?

Therefore, I reject evolution on the moral basis. And I want to tell you, folks, the battle lines are being drawn today. Over what? Homosexuality. Over what? Euthanasia. Over what? Genetic engineering. Over what? Abortion. Over what? A basic sense of right or wrong. Now if evolution is true, then all of these things are up for grabs. We have morality by majority: whatever a person wishes to believe or think. Self-autonomous man wants to have it his way.

III. Theological Reasons

Now here's the third and final reason: I reject evolution not only for logical reasons, and not only for moral reasons; but I reject evolution for theological reasons. Now this may not apply to others; but, friend, it applies to me, because the Bible doesn't teach it, and I believe the Bible. And you cannot have it both ways. There are some people who say, "Well, I believe the Bible, and I believe in evolution." Well, you can try that if you want;

but you have pudding between your ears. You can't have it both ways.

H. G. Wells, the brilliant historian who wrote *The Outlines of History*, said this—and I quote: “If all animals and man evolved, then there were no first parents, and no Paradise, and no Fall. If there had been no Fall, then the entire historic fabric of Christianity, the story of the first sin, and the reason for the atonement, collapses like a house of cards.” H. G. Wells says—and, by the way, I don't believe that he did believe in creation—but he said, “If there's no creation, then you've ripped away the foundation of Christianity.”

Now the Bible teaches that man was created by God and he fell into sin. The evolutionist believes that he started in some primordial soup and has been coming up and up. And these two ideas are diametrically opposed. What we call sin, the evolutionist would just call a stumble up. And so the evolutionist believes that all a man needs—he's just going up and up, and better and better—he needs a boost from beneath. The Bible teaches he's a sinner and needs a birth from above. And these are both at heads, in collision.

Now, remember that evolution is not a science. It may look like a science; it may talk like a science; but it is a philosophy. It is science fiction. It is anti-God. It is really the devil's religion. And the sad thing is that our public schools have become the devil's Sunday School classes.

What is evolution? Evolution is man's way of hiding from God, because if there's no creation, there is no Creator. And if you remove God from the equation, then sinful man has his biggest problem removed—and that is responsibility to a holy God. And once you remove God from the equation, then man can think what he wants to think, do what he wants to do, be what he wants to be, and no holds barred; and he has no fear of future judgment.

Aldous Huxley admitted this in his book—and I'm almost finished, but listen to this; it's very revealing—Aldous Huxley said in his book *Ends and Means*—I quote—“I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning... For myself, as no doubt for most of my friends, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom. The supporters of this system claimed that it embodied the meaning—the Christian meaning, they insisted—of the world. There was one admirably simple method of confuting these people and justifying ourselves in our erotic revolt: we would deny that the world had any meaning whatever.” Aldous Huxley: “We didn't want anybody to tell us that our sexual ways and perversions were sin, so what we did: we just simply told God, ‘God, get out of the way.’”

But as surely as I stand in this place, there is a God. He created us. And God will bring every work in judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Conclusion

Those are the reasons I reject evolution: for logical reasons, for moral reasons, and for theological reasons. Now Darwin wrote about the destiny of the species. Man wants to know from whence he came. A bigger question than that is, “Where is he going?”

Friend, where you came from is a settled thing: that’s over; it’s done. Where you’re going is not yet settled, if you don’t know Jesus. And I want to tell you, friend, the wisest thing, the best thing, you could ever do would be to be concerned not with the origin, but the destiny, of the species, and primarily with your own personal destiny.

Who is Jesus?

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: December 10, 2000

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 1:12–21

*“And he is the head of the body, the church:
who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;
that in all things he might have the preeminence.”*

COLOSSIANS 1:18

Outline

Introduction

- I. Jesus Reveals the Father
- II. Jesus Rules the Future
 - A. Jesus Is the Power of Creation
 - B. Jesus Is the Preserver of Creation
 - C. Jesus Is the Purpose of Creation
- III. Jesus Reconciles the Fallen

Conclusion

Introduction

Now I want to talk to you today about Jesus. Be finding Colossians chapter 1; and when you've found it, look up here and let me speak to you—Colossians chapter 1.

Some time ago you watched, as I watched, the program hosted by Peter Jennings, “The Search for Jesus.” As a matter of fact, I watched for a while, and then could not take it any longer. And I turned it off and walked out of the room. I had just as soon watch a group of men with a bag over their head in a cave with a jar full of lightning bugs trying to find the noonday sun as to watch these people talk about their search for Jesus. The reason they never really came down with anything definitive is they were looking in the wrong place. He is there to be found if you want the authentic, the real, the genuine, the very Son of God.

Bryant Gumbel was interviewing Larry King on CNN, and Bryant Gumbel asked Larry King this question: “If you could ask God only one question, Larry, what would it be?” Larry King said, “I would ask Him if He had a Son.” Very interesting. Great question. Answer: “Yes, He does, and His name is Jesus.”

John Blanchard has estimated that of all of the people who have ever lived since the dawn of civilization, there have been about sixty billion people that have walked Planet

Earth. Of those sixty billion people who have walked Planet Earth, only a handful have made any real, lasting impression, have actually changed the world. And in that handful of people, there is One who stands head and shoulders above all of the others—and His name is Jesus. More attention has been given to Him; more devotion has been given to Him; more criticism has been given to Him; more adoration has been given to Him; more opposition has been given to this one person than all of the others. Every recorded word that He said has been more sifted, analyzed, scrutinized, debated—every word—than all of the historians and the philosophers and the scientists put together. Yet He was here two thousand years ago. And after two thousand years, there is never one minute on this earth that millions are not studying what He said. Think about it—think about it: Here’s a person who lived in a miniscule, tiny little land two millennia ago; and yet His birth divides the centuries: AD, BC—Before Christ and *Anno Domini*, the year of our Lord.

He never wrote a book that we know of—and yet library after library could be filled with the volumes, the multiplied millions of volumes, that have been written about the Lord Jesus. He never painted a picture, so far as we know—and yet the world’s greatest art, the world’s greatest dramas, the world’s greatest music, the world’s greatest literature has Jesus Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, as its source. Jesus never raised an army, so far as we know—yet multiplied millions have died for Him. He never traveled very far from His birthplace—and yet His testimony has gone around and around and around the world. He only had a handful of little followers that followed Him there in His ministry—and yet today over thirty percent of the world’s population names His name—the largest such grouping on earth today: Jesus of Nazareth. A ministry of only three short years—public ministry; and yet here we are two thousand years later saying, “Jesus, your name is wonderful,” because His name is. He had no formal education. He didn’t attend the university or seminary—and yet thousands of universities, and seminaries, colleges, and schools are built in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. And in my estimation, in my humble but correct opinion, no one can call himself, herself, educated who does not understand Jesus Christ.

The great historian Kenneth Scott Latourette said this—listen to this quote: “Jesus has had more effect on the history of mankind than any other of His race who ever existed.” That’s not just a Baptist preacher speaking that. *To explain Jesus Christ is impossible; to ignore Jesus Christ is disastrous; to reject Him is fatal. Understand who Jesus Christ is: to know Him is to love Him; to love Him is to trust Him; to trust Him is to be radically, dramatically, and eternally changed, to be transformed.* I’m talking about who is Jesus. Human speech is too limited to describe Him. The human mind—too small to comprehend Him; and the human heart can never really, completely, totally absorb who Jesus Christ is.

Let's read Colossians 1, and I want to begin reading. We're going to have to break in; let's break into verse 12: *"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet"—or "fitting"—"to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:"*—now, folks, that's talking about you. He's talking about your inheritance. If somebody wealthy left you a legacy, would you not be interested? Then, pay attention—*"who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."* (Colossians 1:12–13) Larry King, there's your answer. God does have a Son, and God said, "He is my dear Son." And He has a kingdom.

Now, let's talk about the inheritance that we have: *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;"*—and here's the key to it all—*"that in all things he"*—Jesus—*"might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him"*—that is, in His Son—*"should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him"*—by Jesus—*"to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."* (Colossians 1:14–21)

We're going to talk a little bit now about the Lord Jesus Christ: that in all things He might have preeminence. *He doesn't want a place in your life. He doesn't wish for prominence in your life. He deserves and demands preeminence.* Three reasons I want to give—they're right here before us.

I. Jesus Reveals the Father

Reason number one: Jesus reveals the Father—Jesus reveals the Father. Look in verse 15: Jesus is *"the image of the invisible God."* (Colossians 1:15) God is Spirit—invisible, unfathomable, unapproachable. How are we going to know God? Jesus is *"the image of the invisible God."* The visible Jesus makes the invisible God known. The word *image* is the word *eikon*. We're going to talk about that in a moment. How are you going to know God? Not by reason. How are you going to know God? Not by religion. How are you going to know God? Not by ritual. You're going to know God only by revelation, and Jesus Christ has come to reveal God to you. You can never fully know God the Father apart from God the Son.

Now, look again at verse 15—look at it: *"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature."* (Colossians 1:15) Put those two words down; lock your

mind on those two words: *image* and *firstborn*—Colossians 1:15—*image* and *firstborn*. The word *image* is the Greek word *eikon*. If you have a computer, you have icons on your computer. It means a “a representation.” Now Jesus is the *eikon* of God. The Greek word means “the exact representation.” Jesus is the express image of the invisible God. He is the *eikon* of God. And go to Colossians chapter 2 and verse 9. See how Paul sums it up there: “*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*” (Colossians 2:9) All of God was in Bethlehem’s stable. He is the *eikon*—the express image—of God.

You want to know God? Friend, Jesus Christ has cornered the market. He has a monopoly on revealing the Father. That’s the only way you’re going to know God. Let me give you a verse; put it in your margin—Matthew chapter 11 and verse 27. Here’s what Jesus Christ Himself said: “*All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*” (Matthew 11:27)

Now, either that’s true, or it’s not true. I believe it’s true. He says, “Nobody knows my Father but myself, and you can’t know Him unless I introduce Him to you.” That’s a big statement. Why? Because Jesus is the express image of God. You’re never going to figure God out. How can the finite understand the infinite? Not by reason, but by revelation. Any other god that you worship is the god of your guesses, and that’s a form of idolatry. You don’t conjure up some god to worship him. Jesus came to reveal the Father.

You say, “Well, Pastor Rogers, that’s narrow-minded.” Well, you could be so broad-minded that your mind gets thin in the middle; be so open-minded that your brains may fall out.

I want my doctor to be narrow-minded. I don’t want him to say, “Well, you’re sick. Here are ten bottles of medicine. Let’s just take one of them and see what happens.” I want my airplane pilot to be narrow-minded, and not try to land with the landing gear up. I want my banker to be narrow-minded. But in the thing that matters the most, my eternal destiny, I think I’m not ignorant to want a little certitude, a little certainty.

You can’t know the Father apart from Jesus Christ. Jesus didn’t say, “I’m a way”; He said, “I am the way.” He didn’t say, “I am a light”; He said, “I am the light. I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6) You see, God was manifest in the flesh.

My pastor friend Jerry Vines imagines Jesus Christ going into the temple and having a conversation with the teachers when he was a twelve-year-old boy, and one of the learned doctors there strokes his beard and says, “Son, how old are you?” “Well,” He says, “On my mother’s side, I’m twelve years old; but on my Father’s side, I’m older than my mother and as old as my Father.” You see, He was both God and man. Now on His mother’s side, He got thirsty; on His Father’s side, He said, “I am the water of life.”

On His mother's side, He got hungry; on His Father's side, He took a little lad's lunch and fed five thousand. On His mother's side, He was homeless and didn't have a place to lay His head; on His Father's side, He owned the cattle on a thousand hills. On His mother's side, He wept at the grave of Lazarus; on His Father's side, He said, "Lazarus, come forth," and raised him from the dead. He was God in human flesh. That's the word *image*.

Look at the word *firstborn* there in verse 15. Now, don't get the idea that *firstborn* implies a beginning. Jesus never had a beginning. There never was a time when Jesus was not. Jesus said over there in the Gospel of John, "*Before Abraham was, I am.*" (John 8:58) Not "I was"; "I am." He is the great "I AM." He never had a beginning. He has always existed in a state, never a start. He didn't have His beginning at Bethlehem.

What does the word *firstborn* mean? Now the Jehovah's Witnesses tell us that there was a time when Jesus was not, that He was created; and this is one of the verses that they try to use, but they mishandle the word *firstborn* altogether. The word *firstborn* speaks of honor and privilege, as God said of David in Psalm 89, verse 27: "*Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.*" (Psalm 89:27) *Firstborn* speaks of His exalted position. Look in verse 17: "*And he*"—Jesus—"is before all things." (Colossians 1:17) He could not be created. Why? Because all things were created by Him. It is obvious that whether there are things in heaven, things on earth, everything was made by Jesus, and for Jesus.

II. Jesus Rules the Future

And so, you want to know God the Father? Would you like to know what the great, invisible God is like—who He is? Would you like to know His heart? Friend, Jesus reveals the Father. Thank God for that. Second point: Not only does Jesus reveal the Father; He is the image of the invisible God—the firstborn, the highest of all creation and above all creation. But, secondly, Jesus rules the future—Jesus rules the future. Begin now in verse 16: "*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him*"—now, watch this—"to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Colossians 1:16–20)

Now, what is this taking about? It's talking about One who rules the universes; One who not only has this whole world in His hands but He has the past, the present, the

future in His hands. People ask, “What is the world coming to?” Answer: “It’s coming to Jesus”—“It is coming to Jesus.” All things were created by Him, and for Him; and it will all climax in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. **Jesus Is the Power of Creation**

Now, let me point this out just a little bit. First of all, he says, Jesus is the power of creation. Look, if you will, in verse 16. Jesus is the power of creation: “*For by him were all things created.*” (Colossians 1:16) He is the power of creation. *The little baby in Matthew 1 is the mighty God of Genesis 1.* There was nothing made without Him. John tells us, “*All things were made by him.*” (John 1:3)

“Adrian, don’t you believe in evolution?” Not for a skinny minute. No, I don’t believe in evolution. After I studied it, I wouldn’t believe in evolution even if I weren’t a Christian. It’s the next best guess of those who do not know the Word of God. Now if evolution is true, you have problems with the Scripture. If the Bible can’t tell me from whence I have come, how can it tell me where I’m headed? You have trouble with salvation. If there’s no creation, no Adam and Eve, no Garden of Eden, there was no fall into sin. And if there’s no fall into sin, there’s no need for a new birth. Man is just progressing onward and upward. But Jesus said in John 3, “*Ye must be born again.*” (John 3:7) If Genesis 3 is a myth, John 3 is a farce. You have a problem with salvation. I’ll tell you something else: If you believe in evolution, you’re going to have problems in society—and that’s why we have so many. As we’ve often said, *you teach the boys and girls they come from animals, it ought not to surprise us that they begin to act like animals.* Listen. It was all made by Jesus.

Do you think all of this just happened? Do you think it’s just by some random chance; it all came out of some sort of primordial ooze that came out of lifeless matter? In your own body there are 300 trillion cells in the human body—all of them incredibly complex.

There’s a book out you need to read called *Darwin’s Black Box*. You know, all scientists and inventors and pseudo-scientists selling snake oil or whatever, they have a little black box, and they say, “Well, you can’t look in there. That’s my trade secret.” Well, Michael Behe just kind of pried open Darwin’s black box; and I don’t want to get too complicated, but he talks about irreducible complexity. You take life and just reduce it back until you can’t reduce it any simpler. And when you look at the simplest part, it is so complex that there’s no way possible that just one cell could have come about by evolution, because all of the components of that one cell are interdependent. It takes one for the other to be there; one could not have come out of the other.

I want to say again that you have in your human body 300 trillion cells. Now in that one cell, you have rods known as chromosomes. And in these chromosomes, you have

genes, or your genetic makeup. And that's determined by something today that we call DNA. And they look now at the DNA and they say, "There's a mind there. There's intelligence there. There's design there. There's not randomness there." In the DNA, in one cell—one cell—there is enough information that printed in books it would take 600,000 books to write down the code of the DNA that is in one of the trillions of cells in your body that determines your intellect, the color of your hair, your personality—all of those things—encoded right in there. Who did all of that? Jesus. *"All things were made by him."* (John 1:3) He, friend, is the power of creation.

B. **Jesus Is the Preserver of Creation**

I'll tell you something else: He is the preserver of creation. Look in verse 17 of this same chapter: *"He is before all things, and by him all things consist."* (Colossians 1:17) Do you know what the word *consist* means? They stick together. Jesus Christ is the glue of the galaxies. What is it that keeps it all from falling apart or coming apart? Jesus. Jesus is the One who feeds the sun with its fuel. Jesus is the One who guides the planets in their orbit around the sun. Jesus is the One who has set out all of the stars. Talk about natural law—there is no natural law. They're the laws of Jesus that nature obeys. It is by Jesus that all things consist.

I was looking recently at Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 26. Listen to it—a great verse: *"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things..."*—sometime, take time on a dark night to go out and look up. That's what he says—*"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things,"*—do you think that everything came out of nothing? You say, "I can't believe in an eternal God." You believe in eternal, inanimate matter? Now, listen to this—*"[he] bringeth out their host by number:"*—he's talking about the stars—*"he calleth them all by names."* (Isaiah 40:26)

I was listening to radio the other day and they said, "You want to give a Christmas present? We'll name a star after you. You choose somebody, and we will name a star for that person, and we'll put it in a book." Friend, too late! Too late! Every one of the billions and billions and billions and billions and billions and billions and billions and billions—and I could go on until the service ends—Jesus has named every one of them. He is the preserver of creation. He guides it all.

Light travels at 186,282 miles per second. How fast is that? All right, let's hijack a light beam and travel around the earth—been around the earth seven and a half times right there, around the circumference. You want to go to the sun? The sun's ninety-three million miles away. You can get there in eight and a half minutes, traveling on a light beam. You want to go to the nearest star? It would take you four and a half years, traveling at 186,282 miles per second, to get to the nearest star. Friend, that's twenty-seven trillion miles away. And that's the closest one! There are more than a hundred

billion stars in our galaxy. To go from side to side, rim to rim, in our galaxy, would take you a hundred thousand light years, traveling at 186,282 miles per second. Who did that? His name is Jesus—His name is Jesus! He's the One by whom all things consist.

C. **Jesus Is the Purpose of Creation**

He is the power of creation. And, friend, He is the preserver of creation. And He is the purpose of creation. Look, if you will now, in verse 16—look at it: *“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him,”*—now, watch it—*“and for him.”* (Colossians 1:16) Why all of this? Did you think it was for you? No, it's for the Lord Jesus Christ.

For is a preposition that speaks of direction. It's the Greek word *eis*—“moving in the direction.” Now we in America have been invaded by Eastern religions. Eastern religions are circular. Everything goes round and round and round and round. That's the reason they believe in reincarnation. I've always thought reincarnation was putting the milk back in the can. You'll get that later. They believe in reincarnation. That is, everything is circular. And so you have to live with good karma. And if your karma is not good, then in your next life you may come back as a roach. But if you've been good, you might come back as a cow. That's the reason they don't eat meat. You might be eating your grandmother.

Now they believe that it's all circular. But it's not circular; it is all headed in a direction. The Bible is linear. We're moving to the time when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. (Revelation 11:15) That's the reason He taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:10) I can hardly wait!

And, by the way, think of what's going on today in history. Let me give you a verse my wife pointed out to me yesterday; I've been living on it—Isaiah chapter 33, verse 22: *“For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king;”*—got it? Judge, lawgiver, and king. What are the three parts of our government? The judiciary—the judge; the legislative—the lawgiver; and the executive—the king. Did you know Jesus is all three? You talk about a balance of power, He doesn't need any balance of power; He is the power! The Lord—He is the judge; He is the lawgiver; He is the king. And then it says—and this is Isaiah 33, verse 22—*“he will save us.”* (Isaiah 33:22) Friend, it is all headed to Jesus. It was all, it is all, for Him—for the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the key to the mystery of history.

I'm told that a young man was taking a philosophy course. He'd studied and studied and studied, and he came to the final exam, and the philosophy professor had a little bit of a sense of humor. He wanted to see how much philosophy these young people knew,

how well they could think. The final examination was one word: “Why?” A student thought for a while, wrote one word down, and walked out: “Because!” I would add two more words: “Because of Jesus”—“Because of Jesus”—“Because of Jesus.”

He is the mystery of history. Why is it all me? *“All things were created by him, and for him...and by him all things consist.”* (Colossians 1:16–17) And history has a date with Deity.

III. Jesus Reconciles the Fallen

The last thing of these three things I want to lay on your heart: Not only does Jesus reveal the Father; not only does Jesus rule the future; but Jesus, thank God, reconciles the fallen. That’s why He came. Look in verse 18 now—look at it: *“And he”—Jesus—“is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet hath he reconciled.”* (Colossians 1:18–21) That’s so wonderful! This Jesus, who declared the Father; this Jesus, who dominates the future; this is Jesus, who delivers the fallen, reconciles God and man.

You see, Christians are not just nicer people. They’re not just people who give intellectual assent to certain doctrinal things. But you have to see the contrast. I mean, what is Paul saying? Paul is saying, “Look, He is the One who made everything. He made it all; it all belongs to Him. And yet He hung naked on a cross.”

Think of it. God the mighty Maker died for man the creature’s sin. You have to get it in its context. You have to understand what he’s talking about. He has set you up. He’s telling you how great, how awesome, how mighty is Jesus. And then he speaks of the blood of His cross. He died on a cross.

The One who made every seed, every limb, every tree—He dies on a tree. The One who made the oceans and the fountains and the rivers and the streams said, “I thirst.” The One who flung that sun out into space is the One who’s blistered by the noonday sun. He is dying. His death and His deity are put together. Other people have died; but, friend, it’s His deity that makes His death meaningful. And it is His death that makes His deity knowable. The two are together.

When Jesus created the universe, He did it with His Word. He said, “Let it be,” and it was; and universes sprang from His fingertip. But when He saved us, it took every drop of His blood. He didn’t have to do that. Larry King, He does have a Son. He died for you. Peter Jennings, He’s not the Jesus of some finger-thumping philosopher; He’s the Son of God revealed in the pages of His Holy Word. He’s the One that took my sin—

your sin, our sin—to the cross and there made peace with the blood of His cross. And on His cross He took sinful man with one hand, holy God with the other hand, and reconciled God and man.

A woman was dying. They didn't know who she was. She was in a hospital apart from friends and family. They said, "Get a minister." The minister came in, bent down, and whispered in her ear, "They say you're dying. Have you made peace with God?" She shook her head. They huddled a while and came back. And the minister, wanting to press the point, said, "Dear lady, you're dying. Don't you think you need to make peace with God?" She shook her head again in the negative. The third time, they said, "You need to make peace with God." She said, "No, I don't. I am resting in the peace that Jesus has already made. I cannot make peace with God. Jesus made peace with the blood of His cross." And what we need to do is to enter into that peace by faith and trust the Lord Jesus.

Conclusion

Now I've come to the end of the message. What is the bottom line? Listen to it—don't miss it: *"that in all things he might have the preeminence."* (Colossians 1:18) Question to you: Does He have preeminence in your life?

Ellis A. Fuller was one of our great preachers of yesterday. Ellis Fuller had a girl that he loved very much and wanted to marry her. Let me tell you how he proposed to her. He said to her, "Would you be willing to take second place in my life?" Jesus is, and always will be, number one. Joyce knows she's not number one in my life. She knows she's number two. And she'd much rather have it that way, because she knows that I can love her in a way that I never could love her if she were number one.

Does Jesus Christ have the preeminence in your life? If not, what right do you have to call yourself a Christian? *"That in all things"*—everything—*"he might have the preeminence."* Who is Jesus? Friend, He is the Jesus of this book.

The Cradle That Rocked the World

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: December 19, 1993

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 1:15–21

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

COLOSSIANS 1:18

Outline

Introduction

- I. Jesus Christ Has Preeminence in the Revelation of the Father
- II. Jesus Christ Has Preeminence in the Regulation of the Universe
 - A. Jesus Is the Power of Creation
 - B. Jesus Is the Preserver of Creation
 - C. Jesus Is the Purpose of Creation
- III. Jesus Is Preeminent in the Reconciliation of the World

Conclusion

Introduction

Find God’s Word and turn to Colossians chapter 1, and in a moment we’re going to begin reading in verse 15—and because it is an extended passage, we’re going to break into the middle of a sentence—Colossians chapter 1.

John Blanchard has estimated that of all of the people who have ever lived since Adam and Eve till today there would be in round figures about thirty billion people that have lived on the face of Planet Earth, and of those thirty billion, many of them—most of them, almost all of them—have lived, have died, and have been forgotten. There have been just a few people, just a handful of people, who have risen to great prominence, whose names are known through history, whose names today are household names. But there is one person of all history who’s absolutely, totally, uniquely in a class by Himself. That one individual has been the subject and the combination of more attention, more devotion, more criticism, more adoration, and more opposition than any other person of all of the thirty billion who’ve ever lived. Every recorded word that He spoke has been studied, analyzed, discussed, scrutinized, and criticized by generations of philosophers and scholars and theologians and historians. There’s not a single

moment since His life here on this earth till this very present time in which there are not millions of people who are talking about, or talking to, Him. It's an amazing thing. This individual, that person, that singular person, that unique person, the person that Betty Stalnecker just sang about—His name—say it with me: Jesus. Jesus: that is His name—a man born in Bethlehem about two thousand years ago. And when He was born, His cradle rocked the world.

I want us to look at this scripture here, breaking in at verse 15. It speaks of Jesus, *“who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him”*—that is, in Jesus—*“should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”* (Colossians 1:15–21) Hallelujah! What a wonderful passage of Scripture!

This is an amazing person. Jesus Christ, when He was born, divided all of history into two categories: B.C. and A.D., A.D. simply meaning *Anno Domini*, “the year of our Lord.” He splits the centuries. It is amazing to think of the influence of the Lord Jesus when you consider these factors: He never wrote a book; but more books have been written about Him than any man in history. He never painted a picture, so far as we know. He never wrote a poem or composed a song. Yet think of the art; think of the music; think of the literature; think of the sculptures; think of the pictures, the films, and the videos that have been done concerning this person. He never raised an army; and yet millions have laid down their lives in His cause. His travels—why, He only went a few miles from His birthplace! But today in Memphis, Tennessee, and around the world, His influence is felt.

When He spoke, He never spoke at one time to more than a few thousand people; but today over thirty percent of the world's population names His name and worships Him—the largest religious grouping that has ever been known worldwide. Why, His ministry lasted only three years. His public ministry and His influence at that time were compacted. But today His name is being broadcasted on radio, television, by publishing houses. And the very word that I'm speaking now will go up to a satellite and come back down, and these very words will be broadcasted in the Middle East, in Lebanon; these very words will be broadcasted in Jerusalem; these very words will be broadcasted in Egypt, telling about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And huge satellites have been put

into nether space to send the message of Jesus Christ around this world.

It is an amazing thing. He never had a formal education. He was a carpenter's son. And yet more universities and seminaries and schools and centers of learning have centered around Him than any other person. He never really owned any property. When He wanted to sail, He had to borrow a boat. When He wanted to feed, He had to borrow someone's lunch. When He wanted to ride, He had to borrow a donkey. When He wanted to pay His taxes, He had to find a coin in a fish's mouth. And yet, think of the buildings and the edifices that have been erected to preach and teach the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I want to say again, in His lifetime, His influence at that moment was very, very small. But if you were to take a recent edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and open up to "Jesus," you would find more than thirty thousand words on this one man, the Lord Jesus Christ. The great historian Kenneth Scott Latourette said—and I want you to listen to this quote; listen to this—"Jesus has had more effect on the history of mankind than any other of its race who ever existed." "Jesus..."—listen to it again—"Jesus has had more effect on the history of mankind than any other of its race who ever existed."

Now I want to say to every educator, how can any child be educated who doesn't know about Jesus, who has affected the human race? Like it or not, friend, Jesus Christ is one man in thirty billion; He is absolutely, totally unique.

As you come into this building, if you'll come in through the lobby—the foyer out there—on the front is a bronze Bible. That bronze Bible is open, and on that bronze Bible is written the tribute to Jesus Christ by the former pastor of this church—one of our former pastors, Dr. Robert G. Lee. This is what he said about Jesus Christ—it's on that Bible; you ought to take your children out there and read it to them and talk to them about it: "Jesus Christ: Son of man without sin, Son of God with power, literature's loftiest ideal, philosophy's highest personality, criticism's most supreme problem, theology's fundamental doctrine, Christianity's cardinal necessity, heaven's bread for earth's hunger, heaven's water for earth's thirst, heaven's glory for earth's shame, heaven's grace for earth's guilt, heaven's hope for earth's despair, heaven's love for earth's hate, heaven's peace for earth's strife, heaven's forgiveness for earth's sins, heaven's life for earth's death." That's who Jesus Christ is.

May I have your attention? To explain Jesus Christ is impossible. To ignore Him is disastrous. And to reject Him is fatal. I am talking to you about Jesus Christ. May I say, on the other hand, to know Him is to love Him. To love Him is to believe on Him. And to believe on Him is to be saved. And to be saved is to be radically and dramatically transformed for time and eternity.

I feel so inadequate today because human speech is too limited to describe the Lord Jesus Christ. The human mind is too finite to comprehend Him, and the human heart is

too small to contain this One that we call Jesus Christ. And in the scripture that I've read to you, verse 19 sums it up: *"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."* (Colossians 1:19) That's a great verse. That word *fullness*—*pleroma*—what does it mean? It means the sum total of all that is, is in Jesus. And the word *dwell* does not mean simply "to abide," but it means "settle down permanently." All that is and ever will be is in that one wonderful name: the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. Jesus Christ Has Preeminence in the Revelation of the Father

And so the Bible says that it is God's plan that in all things He should have the preeminence. Look in the last part of verse 18: *"That in all things he might have the preeminence."* (Colossians 1:18) Let me talk to you for a few moments about His preeminence. Jesus Christ is preeminent in the revelation of the Father. You will never know God as you would or should without knowing Jesus Christ.

Look in verse 15. The Bible says here that He is *"the image of the invisible God"* (Colossians 1:15)—*"the image"*—the *eikon*—*"of the invisible God."* God is a Spirit, and God is un-seeable. God is transcendent, and God is unknowable. God is holy, and God is unapproachable. How are we going to know God? Reason cannot bring us to God. The finite can never understand the infinite. Religion can never bring us to God. That's the works of men's hands. Ritual cannot bring us to God. Without Jesus Christ, you could not fully and freely know God.

Let me give you a verse—Matthew chapter 11 and verse 27. Put it in the margin of your Bible. Jesus said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."* (Matthew 11:27) No one knows the Father unless Jesus reveals the Father. Jesus has a monopoly on revelation. Did you hear that? He has cornered the market. The only way that you can know God as you ought is for Jesus Christ to introduce Him to you. Jesus Christ said in John chapter 14 and verse 6, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14:6) You say, "Pastor Rogers, that sounds narrow-minded." It is extremely narrow. *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* He's not a good way to the Father; He is the only way to the Father.

"Well," you say, "I don't like people who are narrow-minded." I think you'd want your pharmacist to be narrow-minded. He won't just say, "Well there, ten bottles of medicine: choose one. Let's just see what happens." I certainly want my airplane pilot to be narrow-minded. We like for our banks to be narrow-minded. But somehow when it comes to the most important thing in the world, our relationship to God, we say, "Well, it really doesn't make any difference."

It makes the one great difference. He, Jesus Christ, is preeminent in the revelation

of God the Father. He is called in this verse *“the firstborn.”* Look at it: *“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.”* (Colossians 1:15) What does that talk about? It does not speak of His creation, because He was never created. This passage of Scripture tells us that He always was. He made all things that are made. If He made all things, then He Himself was never made, because He could not have created Himself. He made all things that were ever made. (Colossians 1:16) What does the word *firstborn* mean here? It does not speak of a time when He came into existence, as some who will go from door to door peddling their false doctrine will try to tell you. The word *firstborn* here means rank. It speaks of first importance.

Let me give you a key verse—and it is Psalm 89 and verse 27. It speaks of Solomon. And David says of Solomon, *“Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.”* (Psalm 89:27) Now Solomon was not David’s firstborn son. David had many sons before he had Solomon. But what David is talking about here is that he is the one of the highest rank. And that’s what God is talking about here. Jesus Christ outranks, out-reaches, out-loves all others. He has a name that is above every name. He is the firstborn.

Do you have the first thought? Jesus is preeminent in the revelation of the Father. Do you want to know God? Then, know Jesus—know Jesus. And if you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, you can never understand God as you ought, because He came to manifest—to reveal—the Father. Thank God for Bethlehem, which was God with us. The Word became flesh, that we might know and feel the heart of God.

II. Jesus Christ Has Preeminence in the Regulation of the Universe

Now here is the second way that Jesus Christ has preeminence; here’s a second way that this cradle rocked the world: first of all, in the revelation of the Father; secondly, in the regulation of the universe.

A. Jesus Is the Power of Creation

I love this passage. I come to it and I just get happy when I read it. Look in verse 16: *“For by him were all things created.”* (Colossians 1:16) He is the power of creation. Who? Jesus Christ, this one man in thirty billion, He is the power of creation. The little baby in Matthew 1 is the great God of Genesis 1. The baby in Matthew 1 was the One that created His mother. And when He was born, He was as old as His father and older than His mother.

Now there are some people who just believe that it all happened; they want to explain it all apart from Jesus, and they believe in evolution. Well, if you believe in evolution, you’ve got four major problems. You’ve got problems with the Scripture, because the Scripture doesn’t teach it; and if I can’t trust the Scripture to tell me from

whence I came, how can I trust the Scripture to tell me where I'm going? And not only are you going to have trouble with the Scriptures; you're going to have trouble with salvation, because if evolution was true, there was no Garden of Eden. If there was no Garden of Eden, there was no Fall. If there was no Fall, there's no sinful nature. And if Genesis 3 is a myth, then John 3 is a farce—that says we have to be born again. I want to say you're going to also have trouble with society if you believe in evolution. If you believe that man came from a beast, before long, men are going to be acting like beasts. It was this philosophy of evolution that built Hitler's gas ovens. You're going to have trouble also with science if you believe in evolution. Scientifically, evolution is a hoax.

Sir Fred Hoyle at the British Academy of Science, a leading mathematician, a leading astronomer, shook up a lot of people in the scientific community when he said this—listen: “We must now admit to ourselves that the probability of life arising by chance, by evolution, is the same probability as throwing six on a die five million consecutive times.” Now, get a die, and begin to throw it; and if you can throw six, it will land on six five million times in a row: that's the probability that life could arise by spontaneous generation. He went on to say—this is Sir Fred Hoyle—“Let us be scientifically honest with ourselves. The probability of having life arise to greater and greater complexity in organization by chance is the same probability of having a tornado tear through a junkyard and form a 747 on the other end.” What is this great scientist saying? That random and impersonal chance does not create complexity in design—that's what he's saying.

Dr. George Wald, a professor of biology at Harvard University—he's a professor emeritus there, a winner of the Nobel Prize in Biology—in 1971 wrote this in *Scientific American*; he was talking about the origin of life. He said, “When it comes to the origin of life, we only have two possibilities of how life arose: one, there's spontaneous generation, and arising evolution.” That's one possibility: *poof*—it just happened. He said, “The other possibility is the supernatural creative act of God.” He said, “There's no third alternative. Either it was spontaneous generation, or it was a supernatural creative act of God.” Now this is a Nobel Prize winner at Harvard. Now here's what he said about these two possibilities. He said, “The first possibility”—that is, spontaneous generation—“was proven to be a scientific impossibility by Louis Pasteur and others 120 years ago. We know that there is no such thing as spontaneous generation of life.” He said, “That only leaves one other conclusion:”—listen to this—“the supernatural creative act of God.” But now, wait a minute. He then said, “I cannot accept the supernatural creative act of God, because I do not choose to believe in God.”

Do you see this? He says it's impossible that it could have happened apart from God, but he said, “I cannot accept the belief in God.” He went on to say, “I choose to

believe to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible: spontaneous generation, and arising evolution”—“I choose to believe what I know to be impossible.” Why? Because he will not accept the Word of God. *“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”* (Romans 1:22) How did it all happen? The Son of God, the Lord Jesus, spoke, and He said, “It is so.”

B. **Jesus Is the Preserver of Creation**

Jesus—Jesus—is the Creator of all things. He is the power of creation. And Jesus is the preserver of creation. Look, if you will, in verse 17: *“He is before all things, and by him all things consist.”* (Colossians 1:17) Now that word *consist* means that everything holds together. Jesus is the glue of the galaxies. Scientists are still trying to explain what gravity is. They know how it works, but they don’t know really what it is. You ask a scientist, “What is gravity?” and he says, “Well, that’s the force that holds us to the earth.” And you say, “Well, what’s the force that holds us to the earth?” And he says, “Well, you fool, that’s gravity.”

But Jesus is the glue of the galaxies. It’s Jesus that fuels the sun so that it might burn. It’s Jesus who veils the moon with beauty. It’s Jesus who guides the planets through their journeys. The scientists talk about natural law. There’s no natural law. All there is are God’s laws that nature obeys. Jesus keeps it all; He regulates the universe. *“By [Jesus] all things consist.”*

Let me give you a verse—a beautiful verse—Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 26: *“Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things...”*—Joyce and I on a recent vacation went out at night to lie down on a dock and look up at the stars for hours—just to look, as it were, in the face of God. This is what he’s saying—*“Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.”* (Isaiah 40:26) What does that verse tell us? It means that God created the host of the heavens, the stars that hang like a candelabra in the black velvet of midnight. God created those to display His majesty and His glory, and we’re going to find out that that God, who made all of that, is Jesus, and He considers you more important than all of these things.

If you were to highjack a light beam and travel at the speed of light—and how fast is that? 186,282 miles per second. How fast is that? Well, that’s around the world seventy times in the time it takes you to blink your eyes. Blink your eyes, and light has traveled around the world at its equator seven times—that’s the speed of light—186,282 miles—not an hour, a second. That’s how fast light travels. Now if you were to highjack a light beam and say you’re going to travel to the sun—how far is the sun away? Ninety-three million miles—how long would it take to get to the sun? Eight and a half minutes. In

eight and a half minutes, you'd be ninety-three million miles away. But if you wanted to go out past Mars and Jupiter and Pluto and the rest of the planets; if you wanted to go out past the sun and the moon to the nearest star; do you know how close the nearest star is, or how far away? It's four and a half light years away. Now, what is a light year? Well, that's how far light travels in a year, not in a second. It travels a good distance: 186,282 miles in a second. Then, how far has it traveled in a year? Well, you'd have to travel at that speed for four and a half years to get to Alpha Centauri, which is the closest star in our Milky Way—that is twenty-seven trillion miles. Four-and-a-half years it would take you to travel twenty-seven trillion miles.

They tell us now that there are more than a hundred billion stars in our galaxy, the Milky Way. If you were to travel from rim to rim in the Milky Way, traveling at the speed of light, it would take you a hundred thousand years to go from rim to rim in the Milky Way at the speed of light. Yet on Mount Palomar they have this great two-hundred-inch telescope, and they have taken that two-hundred-inch telescope and looked through just the cup in the Big Dipper—you know what the Big Dipper is; they just looked through the cup of the Big Dipper—and they say, in the cup of the Big Dipper, they estimate there are one million galaxies like our galaxy, the Milky Way. They've looked on the furthest thing they can see, which is what they call a *quasar*. It's fifteen billion light years away: the speed of light traveling 186,282 miles a second for fifteen billion years. That's getting out there—that's getting out there! That's a quasar. And they say that a quasar, whatever it is there in space, generates enough power, enough electrical energy, in one second to fuel all the needs of the world for one million years—just in one second! That's how much power is coming from that quasar that is out there in the nether reaches of space ninety billion trillion miles away. Who made it all? Jesus—Jesus! He made it all, and *“by him all things consist.”* (Colossians 1:17)

This is what turned a young atheist, Albert Einstein, into a believer in God. In 1932, Albert Einstein was an atheist; but in 1950 he said, “I cannot be an atheist. There is a God; there has to be a God.” He looked out at the great universe and he said, “It's formulated by mathematical laws and principles, and behind mathematical laws and principles there must be an intelligence; and to have intelligence, you must have a person.” That God he had known—that person—is Jesus. Jesus: He is the One. *“By him all things consist.”*

That's the reason I love Psalm 139, verses 17 and 18: *“How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.”* (Psalm 139:17–18) Take a bucket of sand and begin to count the grains. He says that God's thoughts of you are more in number than all the grains of sand on all the earth: that's how much this God, who made it all—that's how much He cares for you.

C. **Jesus Is the Purpose of Creation**

Listen. He is a personal God. He made it all. The God who made the universe is Jesus. He is the power of creation. He is the preserver of creation. He's also the purpose of creation. Look again in verse 16: *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."* (Colossians 1:16) Did you think it was all made for you? No, it's made by Jesus; and it's made for Him. The word *for* is the Greek word *eis*, and it has the ideas of preposition. It's something that is moving toward something: it's all coming to Jesus. People ask, "What is this world coming to?" It was made by Him, and it was made for Him. It is coming to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the reason for it all. It's all made for Him. Therefore, life without Him is meaningless. Your life can never have meaning apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. **Jesus Is Preeminent in the Reconciliation of the World**

Now that brings me to the third thing: Jesus is preeminent in the revelation of the Father. Jesus is preeminent in the regulation of the universe. And Jesus is preeminent in the reconciliation of the world. Look, if you will, in verse 18: *"And he is the head of the body, the church..."*—and, by the way, the head of the Church is not in Nashville or Rome—*"he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all"*—the *pleroma*—*"the fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."* (Colossians 1:18–21)

The Bible says that Jesus is preeminent in reconciliation. His death and His deity are inseparably linked. Not only is He the One that reveals the Father; not only is He the One who regulates the universe; but He is the One who has redeemed His Church. And His death makes His deity knowable, and His deity makes His death meaningful. And you cannot separate His death from His deity. He was born to die for our sins.

Now I talked about the fact that He's the power of creation. He's the power of creation. How did He create everything? By a word. He spoke, and it was so. He spoke. With a word He brought everything into existence. But how did He create the Church? How did He purchase the Church? With His own blood. It took the last drop of His blood to save you. That's the reason you're more valuable than all of the stars of all of the universe. And wherever the universe reaches, dear friend, no matter how far it may go, it does not compare to the love He had for you when He suffered in agony and blood, and laid down His life on that cross.

One of my favorite stories is about a boy who came to his pastor and he said, “Pastor, in all those billions and billions and billions of stars and planets and bodies out in space, do you think there’s extraterrestrial life? Do you think there’s life on those planets out there?” And the pastor said, “No, I really don’t think there is.” And then he said, “You mean, in all the billions and billions, don’t you think that the law of probability indicates that there’s life out there?” He said, “No, I really don’t believe there is.” And the boy said, “Then, why did He go to all that trouble to make all that?” The pastor said, “What trouble? What trouble? He spoke, and it was so.” May I say it reverently: The only time that God ever knew trouble was dark Calvary.

Jesus suffered and bled and died to reconcile. You see, we are sinners. On one side, here’s man in his pitiful plight, separated, alienated, from God. The passage that I read said “*enemies*.” On the other side is the great God of the universes, Jehovah God, the thrice-holy God—absolutely, totally holy—who has a hatred burning against sin. But He loves the sinner, and His heart is moved by the pitiful plight of sinful man. On one side, man knows that there’s a God: he has a God-shaped vacuum in his life. He wants to know God. He reaches out somehow, some way, and he tries to build bridges that cross this chasm. And he builds these bridges that we call religion, and ethics, and philosophy, and morality, and all of these bridges. The plans come out of his own mind. The motivation comes out of his own heart. And he tries to cross this bridge and cross that chasm; but all of these bridges crumble and fall; and those who try to pass over them fall into the chasm that has been eroded by centuries of sin, and they perish.

On one side, God looks at sinful man. God’s great heart of compassion is moved. And God is a God of love, and God says, “I’ll bridge that chasm.” And on the other side, God puts down a foundation: His absolute deity. And then, Christmas happens; and on this side God leaves heaven and He comes to earth. On Christmas morning, He lays another foundation: the absolute humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ—His deity, His humanity—His humanity, His deity. And then, with the rough-hewn timbers of a cross He builds a bridge between God and man, to reconcile God and man in Jesus Christ, who is as much man as if not God at all, as much God as if not man at all. Jesus Christ, one in thirty billion, took man by one hand and God by the other hand, and by the blood of His cross He reconciled God and man. That’s what it’s all about. That’s the reason we sing, “I must needs go home by the way of the cross; there’s no other way but this. I’ll ne’er catch sight of the gates of life, if the way of the cross I miss.”

Conclusion

There’s never been another like Jesus—never another like Jesus! He is our solitary Savior. What a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful Savior we have in Jesus! And I want you to know Him today. He deserves preeminence in your life for two reasons: number

one, His deity; number two, His death. Because He's deity, how can you refuse Him? There can be no refusal, no rebuttal, no rival. And because of His death, how can you refuse Him? "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all." Is He preeminent in your life? He doesn't ask for a place. He doesn't ask for prominence. He desires and He demands preeminence.

Ellis Fuller, the great preacher of yesteryear, fell in love with a beautiful girl. When it came time to propose, this is what he said to her: "Would you mind, would you be willing, to take second place in my heart?" And she said yes, because she knew that when she said yes, and took second place, her husband would love her with a love that he could never love her with if she were first place.

Because in all things Jesus Christ is to have the preeminence, I want to give Him today in my life a new and a fresh preeminence—because in Him—in Him—all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. (Colossians 2:9) His birth—His birth, His cradle—rocked the world.

Jesus, the One and Only

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: October 14, 2001

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 1:19

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

COLOSSIANS 1:19

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Introduction

I have an idea that we as a nation right now are in the refiner's fire. And I believe that we're going to come out stronger than ever before. I believe that God is drawing this nation to Himself; and in spite of all of the heartache, the tears, the fears—in spite of it all—we're going to give God the glory. And if this is the refiner's fire, we want to come out on the other side pure and clean.

I want you to take God's Word and find Colossians chapter 1; and when you've found it, look up here. Last week, we talked to you about the one true God, and we told you it's not enough to believe in one God—if you believe in one God, and he's the wrong God, that's doubly dangerous. There is one true God. He is Jehovah, the triune God of the Bible. And today, we're talking on this subject: "Jesus, the One and Only." Let me tell you why I'm preaching this. There are so many people today who want to make Jesus just one among many: "He's just one of the ways to heaven."

As a matter of fact, recently, there was a conference, a Parliament of World Religions, and let me tell you what a minister from one of the mainline denominations said; and I'm not going to give the name of his denomination, because I'm sure there

are others in his denomination who would be hurt if I gave his name. But here's what this man said—listen to this: “So what's the big deal about Jesus?” That's what he said: “So what's the big deal about Jesus?” And this is the Executive Director of the Council for a Parliament of World Religions. His name is Ficca, and he warned that we as Christians—listen—we ought not to attempt to make converts; we ought not to attempt to share Jesus; we ought not to evangelize. And here's what he called Christian evangelism: “ethnic cleansing.” Well, hey, folks, that's in the world today.

And, you know, just recently, Peter Jennings in a primetime special put on a program—I saw it until I could take no more, and turned it off—“The Search for Jesus.” And he had some so-called theologians, a part of the Jesus Seminar, who pooled their ignorance. They were searching for Jesus. They never found Him—because they were looking in the wrong place. I'd just as soon trust a group of blind men in a dark cave blindfolded with some lightning bugs in a jar looking for the noonday sun as these people to find the true Jesus.

A while back, Bryant Gumbel on television was interviewing Larry King. And Bryant Gumbel said to Larry King—and Larry King's a Jew—“Larry, if you could ask God one question, what would you ask Him?” He said, “I would ask Him if He has a Son.” That's a good question.

Now, let me tell you something, folks. Of all of the people who have ever lived on this terrestrial ball ever, since creation to this time, scholars estimate there have been about sixty billion—about sixty billion—about six billion on earth right now. And I can tell you that out of the billions and billions and billions who've ever lived, only a handful of people have really made a lasting, dramatic imprint upon society. But there is one person who stands head and shoulders above all the others, and His name is Jesus. Out of all sixty billion, I want to tell you that this man, Jesus—who is more than a man, as we're going to see in a moment—has received more attention, more devotion, more criticism, more adoration, and more opposition than any of the sixty billion who have ever lived. Every recorded word that Jesus Christ ever said has been studied, scrutinized, analyzed, dissected, thought about, compared—every word that He has written. And today, more than twenty centuries after Jesus Christ was here on this earth, there is not a moment—not a moment, twenty centuries later—where literally millions are not studying His Word—not one second. They're thinking about the significance of His words and His actions.

Now Jesus Christ lived in a tiny little place, which today we call Bethlehem. He lived there about two thousand years ago. And yet His very birth divides all history. It's 2001 AD—*anno Domini*, “the year of our Lord.” BC is “before Christ.” Listen. He never wrote a book that we know of; and yet the thousands and millions of volumes that have been written about Him fill the libraries of this world. He never painted a picture that we know

of; never did a sculpture that we know of; and yet He has been the inspiration behind the greatest art of this world. Go into the great art museums of this world and you're going to find out that Jesus Christ has been the progenitor of the greatest art. He never wrote a song that we know of; but just think of the songs that we have sung this morning adoring the Lord Jesus Christ; and around this world today, millions and millions and millions are singing the songs of heaven based in Jesus. He never raised an army that we know of; certainly, He didn't. But He has an army of followers, not who are willing to kill others for Him, but who are willing to die for Him, to live for Him, to share His love. His travels were limited. So far as we know, He never in His earthly travels went outside the circumference of that little land of Israel; and yet around the world today the sun will not set on people worshipping our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He only started with a handful; and yet today, friend, over thirty percent of the world's population say they believe in Jesus Christ. He only taught for three years, and two thousand years later we're still studying every word that the Lord Jesus said. He had no formal education; and think of all of the universities, think of all the seminaries, that have been founded in His name.

The noted historian, Kenneth Scott Latourette, said this—listen to this quote: “Jesus has had more effect on the history of mankind than any other of its race who ever existed.” Can you say *amen* to that? Listen. *To explain Jesus is impossible; to ignore Jesus is disastrous; to deny Him is fatal.* Oh, we need to understand who Jesus Christ is!

And as I try to preach this morning, I understand that my speech is too limited, my mind is too finite, and my heart is too small to tell you what I want to tell you about the Lord Jesus Christ. But in Colossians 1, verse 19—look at it—this verse would sum it up: “*For it pleased the Father that in him*”—in Jesus—“*should all fulness dwell*” (Colossians 1:19)—“*It pleased the Father that in Jesus should all fulness dwell.*” Now we're going to find out that *Jesus is not to be prominent in our lives; Jesus is to be pre-eminent. Jesus doesn't just show the way; He is the way. Jesus doesn't just give life; He is the life. He doesn't just tell the truth; He is the truth.*

Now there are three things I want you to learn about the Lord Jesus Christ today. And look, if you will now, in Colossians chapter 1. And I wish I just had more time to tell you what the book of Colossians is about in its entirety, but we're going to have to cut to the chase, and you're going to have to listen in a hurry, if we get these three things said. We're talking about “Jesus, the One and Only.”

I. Jesus Alone Reveals the Father

Let me tell you this: Jesus alone reveals the Father—Jesus alone reveals the Father. Look in verse 15. It speaks of Jesus. We're going to break right in the middle. It speaks

of Jesus, *“who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.”* (Colossians 1:15) Now God Himself is invisible. God in His essence is Spirit. God is unseeable, unknowable, unapproachable, unless we have some way to come to Him, someone to bring us to Him, someone to reveal God the Father. Reason is not enough. Friend, religion is not enough. Ritual is not enough. Jesus Christ Himself is the One who makes the invisible God knowable. He is the image of the invisible God. I’m telling you, you can never fully know God the Father unless you know God the Father through God the Son. Jesus, the Bible says, “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.”

Now I want you to think with me about those two words. Those two words are very, very important in verse 15. Look at the word *image*. Do you see it, the word *image*? I want you to look at this word *image*. This is Colossians 1, verse 15—look at it: *“Who is the image of the invisible God.”* Underscore that word *image*. It’s the Greek word *eikon*, and what it means is “the exact representation.” Jesus is the express image of the invisible God. Jesus is God in human flesh.

Now, go back again to Colossians 2, verse 9: *“For in him”—in Jesus—“dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”* (Colossians 2:9) What do we mean by *“the Godhead”*? God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Now Jesus—listen—He has a monopoly on revelation. Jesus has cornered the market. The only way that you can know the Father, according to the Scripture, truly know Him—you might know about Him; you might know He exists from creation and conscience—but the only way that you can know God as Father is through Jesus Christ.

Put this verse in your margin—Matthew 11 and verse 27. Jesus said, *“All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him”* (Matthew 11:27)—black print on white paper. Now I submit to you that what Jesus said is either true or false; and if you don’t like it, if you think that I’m narrow-minded, don’t argue with me. Just take your Bible and read Matthew 11, verse 27, the words of Jesus, and take it up with Jesus, okay? Jesus said, “You can’t know God unless I reveal Him to you, unless I introduce Him to you.” Other than that, you’re worshipping the God of your guesses.

Now you say, “Well, that’s narrow-minded.” Well, we just had a young medical doctor to stand up here and sing. I hope he’s narrow-minded when he writes prescriptions. I just flew from Seattle last night. I wanted my pilot to be very narrow-minded. I didn’t want him to land with the landing gear up. I want my banker to be narrow-minded.

Jesus is the image of the invisible God. He has cornered the market. The only way that you can know God is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

I love the story of Jesus going to the temple when he was a twelve-year old boy. I wish I could have been sitting in a corner. And all of the wise doctors there, the learned theologians, were questioning the Lord Jesus Christ. They might have said to Him, “Well, son, how old are you?” He could have said, “Well, on my mother’s side, I’m twelve years old; on my Father’s side, I’m older than my mother and just as old as my Father,” because there never was a time when Jesus was not; He always has been. On his mother’s side, He got thirsty; on His Father’s side, He created the oceans and every brook and every lake and every spring. And on His Father’s side, He said, “I am the water of life. If you’re thirsty, come to me and drink.” (John 7:37) On His mother’s side, He got hungry; on His Father’s side, He fed five thousand. He said, “*I am the bread of life.*” (John 6:35) On His mother’s side, He lived in poverty and was homeless; on His Father’s side, He created the universe and owns the cattle on a thousand hills. On His mother’s side, with a broken heart He wept at the tomb of Lazarus; on His Father’s side, He said, “*Lazarus, come forth,*” (John 11:43) and Lazarus came out of that grave.

And so, the first word I want you to see is the word *image*—*eikon*. He is the express image of the invisible God. He could say, “*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*” (John 14:9) But also He’s called in that verse “*firstborn.*” Do you see that? Again, look in verse 15: He is the firstborn.

Now I want to slow down here and talk a little bit about the word *firstborn*, because that might seem to some people that He was created. But the word *firstborn* here—be very careful; listen to it—it does not refer to time; it refers to position, to status. It doesn’t mean that Jesus was the first being ever created. Now we know already that He’s the One who created all things, and we’re going to see in verse 16, “*For by him were all things created.*” (Colossians 1:16) Well, He couldn’t be created if He’s the One who created all things. So *firstborn* certainly doesn’t mean that God one day created Him.

By the way, our friends the Jehovah’s Witnesses will use this verse to say, “Well, Jesus had a beginning.” No, He never had a beginning. There was never at time when Jesus was not. Jesus is before all things, above all things, whether things in heaven or things on earth, principalities or powers—we’re going to see this. The word *firstborn* refers to His status: it means that He is over everything. Let me give you a good verse in your margin. I gave you this before when we preached on this passage. Psalm 89, verse 27—God says, “*Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.*” (Psalm 89:27) It speaks of status.

So, what do we see in verse 15? That Jesus Christ is the exact representation, He is the visible image of the invisible God, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is higher than all the kings of the earth and He is King of kings; He is Lord of lords; He is in the high spot of all. So, number one, Jesus alone reveals the Father. Say *amen*.

II. Jesus Alone Rules the Universe

Number two: Jesus alone rules the universe. Begin now in verse 16: “For by him”—Jesus—“were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” (Colossians 1:16–17) Now, friend, not only does He reveal the Father; He rules the universe.

A. Jesus Is the Power of Creation

You see, Jesus is the power of creation. Jesus made everything. *That little baby in Matthew 1 is the mighty God of Genesis 1.* That little baby on His mother’s breast is the same God who created it all. That’s the reason I said that Jesus when He was born was older than His mother and as old as His Father.

I don’t believe in evolution—not for a skinny moment! Now when I was younger, I didn’t believe in evolution because the Bible taught against it. Now that I’ve gotten older, I wouldn’t believe it if I were an atheist. I really wouldn’t. I mean, it is absolutely stupid to believe that nothing times nobody equals everything. Think about it. Friend, I want to tell you, you can’t have it both ways. You can’t say it all just happened and believe in Jesus. No, it all didn’t just happen. He created it all. And if you don’t believe in the creation by the Lord Jesus Christ, you’ve got three problems.

1. If You Don’t Believe in Creation, You Have a Problem with Scriptures

Number one: You’ve got a problem with the Scriptures. If you can’t believe the Scripture when the Scriptures tell you from whence you’ve come, how can you trust the Scriptures when it tells you where you’re going? And, you know, we need to be worried not only about the origin of the species but the destiny of the species, amen? I mean, where are you headed?

2. If You Don’t Believe in Creation, You Have a Problem with Salvation

And not only are you going to have trouble with the Scriptures; you’re going to have trouble with salvation. You see, if you believe that man just slowly emerged and came out of some primordial ooze and kept on going up and up and up, then you don’t believe in a creation; you don’t believe that man was made perfect and that he fell into sin; you don’t believe in a Garden of Eden; you don’t believe in a Fall. Well, listen. If Genesis 3 is a myth, then John 3 that says you must be born again is a farce. If you don’t believe in a direct creation, you’re going to have trouble with salvation.

3. If You Don’t Believe in Creation, You Have a Problem with Society

And then I’m going to tell you something else: You’re going to have trouble with society. *When we teach young people that they just sort of came from animals, we ought not to*

be surprised when they begin to act like animals. An animal lives for three things: self-gratification, self-preservation, and self-propagation. That's what most people are living for today, because they don't understand that they are made in the image of God. And we see today sort of an animal rights movement, like animals have the same rights as human beings. They don't. Animals are distinct. God gave man body, soul, and spirit. He gave no animal a spirit. Animals don't know God. They can't worship; they cannot pray. Certainly, we don't believe in cruelty to animals; but don't ever get the idea that man is just an intelligent animal. He is made in the image of Almighty God, and we need to understand that.

And, friend, random and impersonal chance is not going to create complexity and design. If you want a good book to read—and it's not a real hard read, but you can't just dash it off—I want you to read *Darwin's Black Box* by Michael Behe. And he has a principle that he calls *irreducible complexity*. You know, in the day of Darwin, they didn't realize how complex, for example, a cell is—just one cell, a human cell that you have to put under a microscope to see. And, folks, I want to tell you that in the human body we have about 300 trillion cells. I counted them last night, so I'm sure of this: 300 trillion cells in a human body. Now you have to put them under the microscope, but in these cells, if you look inside the cell, you'll find some rods, and these rods are known as chromosomes. And in these chromosomes we have what we call the genes. And in those genes, encoded in those genes, is what we call DNA. And that DNA is a detailed description for every part of your body. If you were to take the DNA, the code that is in your cell, one of those cells—just one of those 300 trillion cells—and take the code that is out of there, and put it in a book, it would be a book of 600,000 pages.

Now that's one of the minutest parts of that minute part called the cell. And what Michael Behe says is this: “If you reduce it down till you cannot get it more simple—irreducible,” then he says, “it is so complex that in the cell not one part could exist without the other part. One cannot come from the other. Or it can't come by steps. It all has to come together.” And I'm telling you, he's been going around debating evolutionists till they don't want to debate him anymore. And this man is a brilliant man. Get the book.

B. **Jesus Is the Preserver of Creation**

Listen, folks. Jesus is the One who created it all. He is the power of creation. Secondly, Jesus is the preserver of creation. Look again in verse 16: *“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things,”*—now, watch this—*“and by him all things consist.”* (Colossians 1:16–17) That means they all stick together. He is the glue of the galaxies.

He is the One who preserves creation.

Now a lot of times you'll hear people spout about *natural law*. There's no natural law—none! The laws of nature don't exist. They're God's laws: nature obeys them. By Jesus, all things consist. He's the One who fuels the sun with power. He's the One who veils the moon with beauty. He's the One who keeps the stars in their courses.

I wish I had studied astronomy when I was young, because I'm so enthralled by it. I think of the speed of light: 186,282 miles per second. That, friend, means that a light beam goes around the earth seven times in one second. If you could turn on a flashlight and shine it around the earth, it would go around the world seven times before you could turn it back off, traveling at 186,000 miles per second. Traveling at that speed, the speed of light, it would take it eight and a half minutes to reach the sun, which is 93 million miles away. It would take it four and a half years to reach the nearest star, traveling at the speed of light—four and a half years to reach the nearest star. Oh, if you were to look out at *Proxima Centauri* and see that star, know that the light you're seeing has been four and half years getting here, traveling at the incredible speed of light. And you just think, friend, that's just in the Milky Way. The Milky Way, our galaxy, there are a hundred billion stars in our galaxy. And our galaxy, they tell us, is just one of billions of galaxies. Who did all of that? What's His name? Jesus! Who is it that keeps it all running together?

You probably heard the story of a nuclear physicist who was traveling, going from one grand university to another, lecturing on the complexities of the universe, and nuclear physics, and all of the dynamism in nuclear matter. He had a chauffeur that drove him from school to school. Finally, the chauffeur said, "Listen. You have given that speech so many times—I have listened to it so many times—I've memorized it; I could give it." And the learned doctor said, "Well, to tell you the truth, I'm getting a little bored. I'll tell you what: Let me put on a chauffeur's uniform. The next university we go to, you stand up there and give the speech, and I'll sit out there in the audience and act like the chauffeur."

They thought it would be jolly good fun. So the chauffeur got up there in this great university and gave this lecture on nuclear physics, and he was brilliant. He had it down to an ant's eyelash, but he spoke a little faster than the learned professor. And so the chancellor of the university said, "Well, I see we've finished twenty minutes early. We have time for some questions and answers." So one student stood up and he said, "Sir, you know, in the center of the atom there are these protons, and both of them have a positive charge. And we know that positive charges normally deflect and resist one another, but these seem to cohere; these seem to hang together. Sir, can you tell me why the nucleus of the atom does not disintegrate?" The chauffeur said, "I have traveled for a long time. I've been to many universities. But that, beyond any doubt, is the

dumbest, most stupid question I have ever heard. I can't understand how you even got into this university." He said, "Even my chauffeur could answer that question." He brought his chauffeur up to answer the question. Friend, I want you to know that chauffeur and that learned doctor, neither one can answer that question.

What keeps the whole thing from flying apart? I can answer it. His name is Jesus! Friend, He is the glue of the galaxies. He's the One who holds it all together.

C. **Jesus Is the Purpose of All Creation**

Now, listen. It was all made by Him; it is all controlled. He is the Creator. He is the Preserver. And, friend, He is the purpose of all creation. Look in verse 16 now, the last part: "*All things were created by him, and for him.*" (Colossians 1:16) What is this world coming to? It's coming to Jesus. What's this universe coming to? It is coming to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the Eastern religions have come into America, and the Eastern religions teach that life is cyclical; that is, it goes around in a cycle. And so they believe in reincarnation—that you keep getting born until you get it right. You just go round and around and around. Now if your karma is good, you may make progress. If your karma is bad, you may not make progress. So if you've been a bad boy, you may come back as a roach; or maybe a little higher: you may come back as a cow. That's the reason they won't eat meat: they think they're eating their grandmother, maybe. And so that's what they believe: that life is cyclical.

No, that's not what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that life is linear; that history is linear; that we're moving toward a climax. And I believe we're getting close to the climax of history, where Jesus Christ is crowned King of kings and Lord of lords; and I can hardly wait. We are moving toward that. It was all made by Him, and it was all made for Him. It is controlled by the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. **Jesus Alone Reconciles the Lost**

Well, let's come to the third thing about our solitary Savior, the one and only Jesus Christ. Friend, Jesus alone reveals the Father. Jesus alone rules the universe. And I'm going to tell you something else about Him: Jesus alone reconciles the lost. Jesus alone reconciles the lost—no other way to be saved. Look, if you will, in verse 20 of this wonderful chapter here: "*And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him*"—Jesus—"to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." And let's go to verse 21: "*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.*" (Colossians 1:20–21) Oh, hallelujah! Glory to God! This One who created it all; this One who preserves it all; this One who is the *eikon*, the express image of Almighty God; this

One is who is the firstborn, the highest of the high, the Lord of lords and the King of kings—can you believe it?—He stepped out of heaven and died on a cross! When you see His deity, then you'll understand the greatness of His death.

Now, listen, folks. His deity makes His death meaningful. His death makes His deity knowable. His deity—His deity—makes His death meaningful. Other people may die, but we sing that song, Brother Whitmire, that God, the mighty Maker, died for man the creature's sin, that He would die for me; that the blood that was poured out at Calvary was the blood of the very Son of God; that Jesus, who was the God-man, God in human flesh, as much man as if He were not God at all; as much God as if He were not man at all—not half God and half man, not all God and no man, not all man and no God; but the God-man—the God-man—came to this earth, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, was nailed up on a cross with a broken heart dying for me.

The One who created every seed, every shrub, every tree, every limb, was hung on a tree, on a cross. The One who scooped out a place for the seas; the One who created every lake, every pond, every brook, every spring, He was the One who said, "I thirst." The One who flung out the sun and ignited the sun with a word was the One who suffered under that broiling noonday, Middle-Eastern sun. He was the One who had flung it into space. Let me tell you something, folks: When He created the universe, do you know how He did it? With a word! He just spoke, and it was so. He said, "Let it be," and universes dripped from His fingers. He just spoke it into existence.

A college student asked his pastor, "Do you think there is life on other planets?" And the pastor said, "No, I don't think so." He said, "You mean, all those billions and billions and billions of planets out there—don't you think there's life out there?" He said, "No, I really don't think so." He said, "Then why did God go to all that trouble to make all that stuff?" The pastor said, "What trouble?" No trouble: He spoke, and it was so. The only trouble that God ever had was bloody Calvary.

Oh, when Jesus died, He didn't just speak and say, "Be forgiven." No, by the blood of His cross, He paid the sin debt, and became both just and the Justifier of those that believe in Jesus. (Romans 3:26) He never overlooked sin. One-half of one sin will never be overlooked. Sin must be paid for or punished. And your sin will be pardoned in Christ or punished in hell; but it will never be overlooked. God is a holy God. He is the thrice-holy God of Israel.

And God knew, in order for you to be redeemed, for me to be redeemed, for us to be reconciled, without the shedding of blood is no remission of sin, (Hebrews 9:22) "*for the wages of sin is death.*" (Romans 6:23) And on one side is His deity, and on the other side is His humanity. We're on this side. We're humans, and we're sinful. On the other side is Almighty God, and He is holy and He is righteous. And between a holy God and sinful man there is a chasm of sin, and man is separated from Almighty God by sin.

Jesus is going to reconcile, and He's going to build a bridge that will span this chasm. And over here, the Lord Jesus Christ puts down the foundation of His deity. He is God. And on the other side, He puts down the foundation of His humanity. He is man. He is taking our place. He is dying for us. And then, with the rough hewed timbers of a cross, He reconciled us, God and man.

Conclusion

Hallelujah! What a Savior! Friend, I am telling you, He is Jesus, the One and only. He is the One who reveals the Father. He is the One who rules the universe. And He is the One who reconciles the lost. And I am so glad that I can tell you He is my Savior and Lord, and I love Him with all of my heart, and I want you to love Him.

Jesus, the One and Only

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: October 14, 2001

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 1:19

“For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.”

COLOSSIANS 1:19

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Conclusion

Introduction

You know, I have an idea that we as a nation are in the refiner's fire right now. My prayer is that we will come out purer, cleaner, truer than we've ever been. And we need to let God have His way in these wonderful days in which we live—and I say wonderful, because in my estimation there has never been a greater day, a greater hour, to preach the glorious gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ than this day and this hour. I want you to take God's Word and turn to Colossians chapter 1; and when you've found it, look up here. Last week, we talked to you about the one true God. There's only one: His name is Jehovah, the one true God. Today, I want to speak to you on this subject: “Jesus, the One and Only”—“Jesus, the One and Only.”

Not only is there only one true God; there is only one way to that one true God, and that is through Jesus Christ. You say, “Adrian, that is narrow.” It may be narrow; but it is true.

And, you know, I want people to be narrow. I have a doctor: I want him to be narrow when he writes the prescriptions. I just got off an airplane last night: I wanted the pilot to be narrow; I didn't want him to try to land with the gear up. I like my banker to be narrow

when I ask him to hold my money. And, friend, the most important thing in life is our eternal destiny. We can't be just simply willy-nilly, haphazard, about the way to God.

Let me read to you—let me give you a statement: “So what’s the big deal about Jesus?” Why, you would expect a man of the world maybe to say that: “So what’s the big deal about Jesus?” But do you know who said this? A Presbyterian minister. Now, by the way, if you’re Presbyterian, I’m not picking on Presbyterians, because we’ve got some Baptists who are *looney tunes*, also. But this was a Presbyterian minister, and he said this at a recent conference. Rev. Dirk Ficca, Executive Director of the Council for a Parliament of World Religions, warned that Christians ought not to attempt to make converts of non-Christians, and described Christian evangelism as “ethnic cleansing.” That is, if you share the Lord Jesus Christ, you’re some sort of a terrorist, sharing your religion, saying that Jesus Christ is the only way. In my estimation, that man ought to turn in his credentials as a minister and get an honest living. Yeah, I believe that. We need to understand in this day and this age just exactly who Jesus Christ is.

Peter Jennings recently—and many of you saw it—had a primetime special, “The Search for Jesus.” And he had these so-called scholars on there, and they pooled their ignorance. They were going to examine Jesus. They might have been a group of blind men with a jar full of lightning bugs trying to examine the noonday sun; or blindfolded in a dark cave, looking for the sun. They didn’t find Jesus. Of course, they didn’t find Jesus: they weren’t looking for Him in the right place!

Bryant Gumbel interviewed Larry King. Now, generally, it’s the other way around; but Bryant Gumbel on national television interviewing Larry King, he said, “Larry, if you could meet God and ask Him one question, what would it be?” Now, remember that Larry King is a Jew. He said, “I’d ask Him if He has a Son.” Interesting question. Well, I can tell you, He does, and His name is Jesus.

Did you know that scholars tell us, of all the people who have ever lived in the history of the world, starting from Adam—or whenever they believe creation was—up to the present time, there have been approximately sixty billion—sixty billion—who have ever lived upon the face of this earth. Now that’s a lot of people—sixty billion! But out of that sixty billion, only a handful of people have ever made any lasting impact on the world—only a handful of sixty billion. And out of that handful, there is one personality that stands head and shoulders, and towers, above all of the others—out of sixty billion. He is Jesus, the One and Only—the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, give Him a hand. Praise His name. I tell you, Jesus Christ has attracted a combination of attention and devotion and criticism and adoration and opposition like no other person. Now every recorded word that Jesus ever spoke that we have in the Bible recorded has been analyzed, studied, dissected, scrutinized, labored over, memorized—every word that He said, this Lord Jesus. He lived twenty centuries ago,

but there's not a single moment—not a single moment, not one second—in which there are not millions of people studying what He said. Think about it. Right now, millions of people—millions of people, this second—are studying what He said.

He lived in just a tiny little land about two thousand years ago. He was born, laid in a feeding trough; and yet his birth divides the centuries—AD, *anno Domini*, or “the year of our Lord”; BC, *before Christ*—His birth, this baby. Every time you write a check, every time you put a date on anything, you're acknowledging the birth of this baby, the Lord Jesus Christ. He never wrote a book, yet libraries—libraries and millions of books—have been written about the Lord Jesus Christ. He never painted a painting, did a sculpture, or anything like that; but He has been the Creator, through inspiration, of many of the great artworks of this world. And you can go to museums and places where they do art and see the greatest art of this world dedicated to Jesus Christ. He never wrote a song; but right now millions of people are singing to Him, and about the Lord Jesus Christ.

He never raised an army; He didn't raise an army to kill people. He Himself died for people that they might live. And there are millions today who are willing to die for Him and millions who have died for the Lord Jesus Christ. He never traveled far out of—well, He didn't travel, as far as we know—outside the little tiny little land of Israel; and yet all around this world today, from pole to pole, and all around the equator, Jesus will be magnified and worshipped, and the sun will not set upon the worship of our Lord Jesus Christ today. And when He started, He started with a little handful of disciples; and, today, folks, over thirty percent of the world's population names the name of the man of Galilee, the Lord Jesus Christ. He had no formal education; and yet, think of the universities and the seminaries and the schools that have been built because of the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to tell you something, friend: You can't claim to be educated if you don't know about Jesus—you just can't! And I'm going to preach to you today about “Jesus, the One and Only.”

But to explain Him is impossible; to ignore Him is disastrous; to reject Him is fatal. And I don't have the vocabulary; I don't have the thoughts; I don't have the heart in me to do credit to the person who is my Lord and Savior that I want to tell you about today—and His name is Jesus; and He is Jesus, the One and Only.

You're in Colossians chapter 1; look in verse 19, for it says, “*For it pleased the Father that in him*”—in Jesus, in the Lord Jesus—“*should all fulness dwell.*” (Colossians 1:19) And so we're going to look at the Lord Jesus today: “Jesus, the One and only.” Now there's much we could say about Him, but I have to distill it down to three things, and they're going to come right out of this first chapter of Colossians; three things I would pray the Holy Spirit of God would write upon your heart and etch into your consciousness and cause to reverberate through your soul.

I. Jesus Alone Reveals the Father

Number one: Jesus alone reveals the Father—Jesus alone reveals the Father. Look in verse 15—it is speaking of Jesus, and it says of Him, “*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.*” (Colossians 1:15) Now God is invisible; that is, He is un-seeable. And because He is infinite, He is unknowable. And because He is holy, He is unapproachable. And there’s no way that we could come to God, or understand God, or fully know God. Reason would not allow us to do that; religion would not allow us to do that; ritual would not allow us to come to God. Somehow we have to know God by revelation. If we’re going to know God, somebody has to take us by the hand and introduce us to God. And Jesus alone is the One who reveals the Father.

Now, look in verse 15 again, and there are two words I want you to see. One is the word *image*, and the other is the word *firstborn*. Now I don’t want you to miss either one of those words, because Jesus is the image of the invisible God; He is the firstborn of every creature.

Now, what does the word *image* mean? It’s the Greek word *eikon*. And what does *eikon* mean? Well, those of you who have computers, you know there’s a little symbol up there, an icon. But what does the word mean in Greek? It means “an identical and exact replica”; it means “an exact image.” Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God. He is the *eikon* of God. He is the exact representation of God. He is God in the human flesh. Colossians 2, verse 9: “*For in him*”—Jesus—“*dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*” (Colossians 2:9) All of God is in Christ. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily; that is, in human flesh. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are combined in the Lord Jesus Christ. And what this verse says is this: that the only way that you can know God as Father is through Jesus.

Now you can know God as Creator. You can know God as sovereign. You can know about Him. But how can you know Him? How can you have intimate fellowship with Him? Not just simply know *about* Him, but how can you know Him? Only through Jesus Christ! Now that may sound narrow; but I want to tell you something, folks: Jesus has cornered the market on revelation. I mean, the only way that you can know Him is through the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is saying, “The only way you can know the Father is for me to introduce Him to you.” Let me give you a verse—write it down. Now, look at it—Matthew chapter 11, verse 27. I’ll read it to you. Jesus said, “*All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*” (Matthew 11:27) Now unless Jesus reveals God the Father to you, you can never know Him as Father—unless the Son reveals Him to you. Other than that, He’s just the God of your guesses.

Now I know what I’m saying today is very politically incorrect, because today we just

want to amalgamate everything and, as I said last week, come out with a *Mush God*, but Jesus is the One who reveals the Father. He is the only One who could say, “*He that hath seen me has seen the Father.*” (John 14:9) Now I’m sure—because I’ve preached long enough—I’m sure that some will take what I’ve said today and call it narrow-minded; and there may be a few of you in this congregation, and I’m glad that you’re here. But if I’ve insulted you by what I’ve said, I do not want you to come up and tell me. I want you to take your Bible; I want you to open it to Matthew 11, verse 27; I want you to read it to Jesus and say, “You’re wrong.” Don’t come talk to me. I’m not the editor; I’m just the newsboy, and I want to put the paper on the front porch: not up in the bushes somewhere; on the roof. And what I’m trying to tell you is Jesus said, “No man knows the Father except the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” (Matthew 11:27)

You see, Jesus is the *God-man*; He is the *God-man*. He is both God and man at the same time. He is God in human flesh. “*The Word*”—the *logos*—“*was made flesh, and dwelt among us.*” (John 1:14) Now when I say, “He is the *God-man*,” don’t get the idea that He was God just masquerading as a man—oh, no! He was a man as much as any man in this building is a man. He’s fully human and totally divine, the *God-man*—not all God and no man, not all man and no God, not half-God and half-man; He is the *God-man*: as much man as if He were not God at all; as much God as if He were not man at all.

He is the *eikon*. He is the direct representation of God. He is God in the human flesh. Can you imagine the boy Jesus when He went into the temple as a twelve-year-old lad? Do you remember that story? And the doctors of the law were questioning Him. He was there among these scholars. I can see them with their long flowing beards, and their phylacteries, and all of their accoutrements of religion. And here’s this boy in the temple; and they see Him, and they say, “Well, son, how old are you?” “Well,” He says, “On my mother’s side, I’m twelve years old; but on my Father’s side, I’m older than my mother and as old as my Father.” You see, on His mother’s side, He got thirsty; on His Father’s side, He had made every ocean, every river, every stream. On His mother’s side, He got hungry; on His Father’s side, He fed five thousand, and said, “*I am the bread of life.*” (John 6:35) On His mother’s side, He was homeless and a peasant; on His Father’s side, He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. On His mother’s side, He was moved with compassion and wept at the tomb of Lazarus; on His Father’s side, He could stand before that hungry grave and say, “*Lazarus, come forth,*” and Lazarus came out of that grave. (John 11:43) He is the *God-man*.

Now I want you to notice not only the word *image*, but I want you to notice a second word—and it is the word *firstborn*. Look at it in verse 15: “*the firstborn of every creature.*” (Colossians 1:15) Now the word *firstborn* does not speak of time; it speaks of status.

Now if you don't understand that, you can get mixed up. *Firstborn* is a term that means "the chief, the highest of the high." Now those who don't believe in the eternal deity of the Lord Jesus Christ try to make Jesus have a beginning: "Sometime, when He started..." But He never had a beginning. *"In the beginning was the Word."* (John 1:1) He always was, always will be. He is the great I AM: not, "I was"; not, "I will be"; the great I AM. There never was a time when Jesus was not. Jesus did not have His beginning at Bethlehem; He had His birth at Bethlehem as a human. But He is the firstborn.

The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, will tell you, "Well, you know, Jesus here is the firstborn. He's the first One that God created, the first thing that God created." Well, you can prove that to be wrong. Just look in verse 16: *"For by him were all things created."* He wasn't created; He created all things. He is the non-created One. What does the word *firstborn* mean? It means "above all things," whether they're things in heaven, or things on earth, or principalities, or whatever. He describes that in verse 16: *"For..."*—that means, "That's why we call Him the *firstborn*"—*"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers."* (Colossians 1:16) He's over all of these things.

Let me give you a scripture that I gave you a year or two ago when I preached on this passage. Psalm 89, verse 27—God says, *"Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth."* (Psalm 89:27) There He speaks of the word; the *"firstborn"* speaks of His privilege, His greatness. He is King of kings. He is Lord of lords. He is the highest of the high. He is the image of the invisible God. He is the firstborn of every creature. He is above everything. Can you say *amen* to that? Yes. So here He is. Jesus alone reveals the Father.

II. Jesus Alone Rules the Universe

Number two: I want you to see that Jesus alone rules the universe. Now, begin in verse 16, and let's look in verses 16 and 17: *"For by him"*—that is, by Jesus—*"were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth,"*—He made every angel, friend. He made every tree—*"visible and invisible,"*—He made those things that you can see and those things that you cannot see; there's an invisible world—*"whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."* (Colossians 1:16–17) It is Jesus who rules the universe.

A. Jesus Is the Power of Creation

Jesus is the power of creation. He created everything. That little baby that you read about there in Matthew 1 is the mighty God of Genesis 1. The baby who is lying in a

manger, whose dimpled feet are being tickled by that straw, that same Jesus is the mighty God who spoke the universe into existence. For the Bible says, “*All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made,*” (John 1:3) speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You say, “Well, pastor, I believe in evolution.” You do? Well, go put your face in the corner. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. I’m serious! Listen. When I started out, I didn’t believe in evolution because I was a Christian. I want to tell you, now, even if I weren’t a Christian, I wouldn’t believe in evolution. It’s a fairytale for adults. I mean, you think about it: that nothing times nobody equals everything—it all just happened!

Do you know the evolutionists now are having their backs put to the wall because people are coming out with some science that the evolutionist is not able to explain? They used to think that a cell was a kind of an ordinary small little thing and one of the building blocks of human life. But there’s a man named Michael Behe. And, by the way, if you want to get a good book to read—it’s not exactly an easy read, but it’s not all that difficult—read the book *Darwin’s Black Box*. And Michael Behe has written this, and what he has done is—you know, the Darwinian philosophers had the idea that you can take this primitive protozoa, which is relatively simple, and watch it get more and more organized, as if out of random chance organization would come until you finally progress up, until we have life as we know it—but Michael Behe has scientifically reduced life to what he calls *irreducible complexity*. Get it as simple as you can get it; just reduce it to where an organism cannot exist without its other parts; and once you get it that simple, it is so complex that one part cannot exist without the other part: they all have to come together. The one cannot grow out of the other; it is *irreducible complexity*.

For example, in your body you have about 300 trillion cells. I counted last night, and I think that’s right—about 300 trillion cells. And every one of those cells is so complex. For example, in that cell you would have rods. We call those rods chromosomes. And on those chromosomes, out of those chromosomes, we have what we call genes, or DNA. That gives the description of your body—a detailed description for every part of your body. That DNA is sort of a code. If you were to take one of the DNA particles in your body and try to write the code down, according to the source that I read, it would take 600,000 pages of information to write down just the DNA code in your cell—one of those trillions of cells! I mean, it is so complex! And somebody says, “Well, all that just happened.”

1. If You Believe in Evolution, You Have a Problem with Scriptures

Friend, I want to tell you, if you believe in evolution, you’ve got trouble with the Scriptures. If the Scriptures can’t tell you where you came from, how are they going to tell you where you’re going? You know, it’s not just the *origin* of the species—what

about the *destiny* of the species?

2. If You Believe in Evolution, You Have a Problem with Salvation

Not only do you have trouble with the Scriptures; you're going to have trouble with salvation. You think that man's just on his way up, he just started out as some sort of primordial ooze, and he's just evolving? If that is true, then we're getting better and better every day, and we don't need a birth from above; all we need is a boost from beneath. *If Genesis 3 is a myth, then John 3 is a farce.* No! Man was created in perfection; he fell into sin; he needs to be redeemed. You're going to have trouble with salvation if you believe in evolution.

3. If You Believe in Evolution, You Have a Problem with Society

And I'm going to tell you something else: You're going to have trouble with society if you believe in evolution. It's just a half step from evolution to the gas ovens of Hitler. If you don't believe in God, what do you believe? That man is just an animal. And if you believe that man is just an animal, then he's just a part of creation; he's not above creation. He has King Kong for a cousin, and we're all in this thing together. And our children are being taught in humanistic Sunday School classes, which are public schools, every day that they have come from animals; they've descended from animals. Should we be surprised when they act like animals? What does an animal live for? Self-gratification, self-preservation, self-propagation. What are most people today living for? Those same three things.

Now I'm not saying that all public school teachers are bad. God knows some of the greatest Christians on this earth are teaching school. I've got a son-in-law who's a public school teacher. I'm not against these people. I'm just simply saying what a shame it is that we can put on our money "In God we trust," and that we can say, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights," and we can't even tell boys and girls that they were created. You know, is that not an irony? Is that not an irony? But we've allowed people to position us into this sort of a thing, and then we wonder why we're having the mayhem that we're having.

I was on an airplane last night and I saw a boy wearing a T-shirt. On the back, it said, "God, explain to me why you allow all this violence in our schools"—a concerned student." The answer: "I'm not allowed in your schools'—Almighty God."

Well, obviously, we can't keep God out of any place—not in the literal sense. But in the spiritual sense, we say, "God, we don't want you in our education."

B. Jesus Is the Preserver of Creation

No, I am telling you, precious friend, that it is the Lord Jesus Christ who rules the universe. He is the power of creation. And He's also the preserver of creation. Look in

verse 17 of this same chapter: “*And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*” (Colossians 1:17) Now the word *consist* means they “coalesce,” they “hang together.” *Jesus is the glue of the galaxies.* I mean, what keeps it all from flying apart? These billions of stars in the universe, our solar system with the planets orbiting around it, are cells that have the nucleus and the neutrons and the protons and all of this going on, what keeps all of that together? By Him—Jesus—it all consists. If He were to take His hand off of it, what would happen to it? It would all come apart.

There’s a story about a man who was a nuclear physicist, and he was going from university to university lecturing on nuclear physics. He had a chauffeur who drove him from place to place. After a while, the chauffeur said, “You know, doctor, I’ve heard you give that speech so many times I have memorized it. I could give it word for word just like you give it.” The doctor said, “Could you?” He said, “Well, you know, the truth of the matter is I’m getting bored giving this speech. Let’s just play a game. Let me put on your uniform and I’ll pretend I’m the chauffeur. You pretend that you are the physicist and you give the lecture at this next university.” They were going to have great fun.

So the chauffeur got up there, stood in front of all of those learned professors and intellectuals and this student body, and with precision and exactitude he gave that speech flawlessly—except for one thing: he gave it even quicker than the physicist would normally give it. So the chancellor of the university stood up and said, “Well, look: we have a few minutes. We have time for questions and answers. We’ll take questions from the student body.” And one student stood up and said, “Sir, would you answer this question?” He said, “In the center of the atom there are protons, and both of them have a positive charge; and we know that positive charges repel one another, but the nucleus of the atom, it doesn’t disintegrate; it holds together. What keeps it from flying apart, sir? Would you please answer that question? Because according to physics, it should fly apart, but it doesn’t; it holds together.”

That chauffeur said, “I’ve been lecturing for a long time, but I believe that must be the dumbest question I’ve ever heard. I cannot believe that you could have passed the examination to get into this university with such an inane question.” He said, “Even my chauffeur could answer that question. Sir, would you come up and answer that question?”

Friend, I want you to know, neither the chauffeur nor the physicist could answer it. The only person who can answer that question is Jesus. He’s the One who holds it all together. It’s by Him—by the Lord Jesus Christ—all things consist. (Colossians 1:17) Jesus is precious.

C. **Jesus Is the Purpose of Creation**

Friend, He is the power of creation. He is the preserver of creation. And He is the

purpose of creation. Look in the last part of verse 16: *“All things were created by him, and for him.”* (Colossians 1:16) Did you think it was all made for you? It’s all created by Him and for Him. That’s the reason when somebody says, “What’s the world coming to?” you can say, “It’s coming to Jesus.” It is coming to Jesus. It was all made for Him. He is the purpose of it all.

Now, today in America we are being invaded by Eastern religions. And the philosophy of New Ageism and Eastern religions is this: they believe that life is circular; it goes round and around and around. They believe in reincarnation. And so if you didn’t do it right the first time, you go through again and you get another chance. And you’re born again—not spiritually born again, but physically born again. And if you had good karma, you may come back to a higher level. But if you had bad karma, you may come back as a roach. Or if you had fairly good karma, maybe you could make it to a cow. That’s the reason they don’t eat meat: you know, you might be eating your grandmother at McDonald’s. So they just believe that you just keep getting reincarnated, because it’s circular.

There’s not a shred of Scripture that teaches reincarnation—not at all! The Bible teaches that history is linear, that we’re headed toward a climax, we’re headed toward a purpose: It is all made for Him. What’s this world coming to? It’s coming to Jesus. And the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. (Revelation 11:15) And you’d better get saved before you die, because that’s the only opportunity you’re going to have. “It’s appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27) And everything is coming to Jesus. He, friend, rules the universe. He is the power of creation. He is the preserver of creation. He is the purpose of creation. It is all about the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the answer to the mystery of history.

III. Jesus Alone Reconciles the Lost

Now, here’s the third thing I want you to see today: Not only does Jesus reveal the Father, and rule the universe; He reconciles the lost. Jesus alone reconciles the lost. Look, if you will, in verse 20: *“And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him”—that is, by Jesus—“to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”* (Colossians 1:20–21) Hallelujah! Amen for the Lord Jesus Christ! He did this. He reconciles us by the blood of His cross.

Now, pay close attention. I want you to see how Paul is setting this up. He is showing the glory, the magnificence, the deity of Jesus. He is the image of the invisible God. He’s the firstborn of creation. He made everything. He controls everything. It’s all

coming to Him. And then he says, “He died on a cross.” Friend, it’s His deity—it’s His deity—that makes His death so remarkable—that God, the mighty Maker, died for man the creature’s sin. Oh, friend, His deity makes His death meaningful. His death makes His deity knowable. He died on a cross. He who made every seed, and caused every plant to grow, and made the limb on every tree, died on a tree. The One who made the oceans and caused the clouds to send forth rain is the One who said, “I thirst.” The One who fueled the sun with fire and flung it out there is the One who was baked by that torturous noonday sun as He hung on a cross.

A college student asked his pastor this question: “Pastor, do you think there is life on other planets?” The pastor said, “No, son, I don’t believe so.” He said, “Now, pastor, have you studied astronomy? Don’t you know that there are billions and billions and billions of bodies out there—planets like ours, perhaps? Don’t you just think that somewhere in one of those planets there might be life?” The pastor said, “No, I really don’t think so.” “Well,” he said, “then why did God go to all the trouble to make all that?” The pastor said, “What trouble?”

Friend, He spoke, and it was so. He spoke, and universes came from His fingertips. He spoke it all into existence. He said, “Let it be,” and it was. The only time God ever had any trouble was bloody Calvary. Friend, He made the world with a word; but He saved the world with His precious blood. And that’s the reason that God had to step out of heaven and become a man: because man’s estate was lost by a man, and it had to be regained by a man. And God could not just simply overlook sin and forgive sin and just simply say, “Well, it’s okay: I forgive you.” If He did that, He would not be a holy God. If you had one word that would describe God, it would not be *love*; it would be *holy*. God cannot let one-half of one sin go unpunished. If He did, He’d cease to be holy. God will punish sin, your sin. Your sin will never get by. *Your sin will either be pardoned in Christ, or punished in hell; but it will never be overlooked.* That’s the reason that Jesus died upon that cross on bloody Calvary. He made peace with the blood of His cross. He reconciled God and man.

Let’s say over here on this side of this carpet is a holy God: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts”—that’s what we preached last Sunday morning. Over here on this side, separated with a chasm of sin, is sinful man: sinful, broken, undone, worthy of death. And there’s a chasm between a holy God, and a holy God cannot overlook sin, because He’s holy; a sinful man cannot bridge that chasm. He has a God-shaped vacuum, and he tries to bridge that chasm through good works and ritual and religion and philosophy; but all of his feeble bridges just crumble and fall as he tries to pass them. And there is a gap between God and man; and man and God need to be reconciled, and God and man need to be reconciled. And the Lord Jesus Christ is the answer. Jesus Christ comes to this side of the chasm and He puts down the foundation

of His absolute Godhead. He is God. The fullness of God dwells in Him. But He puts down on the other side of the chasm His absolute manhood. He identifies Himself with sinners. He takes our sin upon Him. He is the *God-man*. And then the Lord Jesus Christ, never another like Him, takes holy God by one hand, and He takes sinful man by the other hand, and by the blood of His cross He makes peace with God and man. That's what He has done.

Conclusion

Hallelujah for Jesus! Friend, there is no other Savior like our Lord Jesus Christ, who stepped out of the glory, took our sin upon Himself, carried it to cruel Calvary, paid in full the sin debt, and walked out of that grave to show beyond the shadow of any doubt that He is Lord of lords and King of kings. And I'm not ashamed to tell you that I love the Lord Jesus Christ. He's real to me. He is not the best way to heaven; He's the only way to heaven. He is Jesus, the One and Only.

How to Walk in the Spirit

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: December 2, 2001

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 2:1–10

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”

COLOSSIANS 2:6

Outline

Introduction

- I. The Circumference of the Walk
 - II. The Commencement of the Walk
 - A. Salvation Is Not a Creed
 - B. Salvation Is Not a Code
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 - D. Salvation Is Not a Church
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 - IV. The Continuation of the Walk
- Conclusion

Introduction

Now, take your Bibles and find, if you will, Colossians chapter 2, and in a moment we're going to read the first ten verses. But this is a wonderful, wonderful passage of Scripture! Now what this scripture is teaching us is how to live victoriously in the Christian life, and it's going to be very simple. Now the Christian life is not so high that you can reach it; it's so low that you get down to it. The Bible says God *“preserveth the simple.”* (Psalm 116:6) And an ordinary person surrendered to the Lord can understand how to live the victorious life. You don't have to have a Ph.D.; you don't have to learn the Greek and the Hebrew to learn what we're going to learn tonight. Somebody said about the Bible, “The Bible is such a wonderful book. It is shallow enough that a little child can come and get a drink without fear of drowning, and so deep that the scholars can swim in it and never touch bottom.” I love that. That is so true about the Bible.

Let's read, beginning in chapter 2, verse 1—Colossians chapter 2, verse 1: *“For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;”*—now when he says *“conflict,”* he means “have a deep concern in my heart for you”; and here's what it was that he had the desire for those in Colossae—*“that their hearts might be comforted, being knit*

together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ...—remember this morning we talked about the mystery of the Spirit? That's what he's talking about right now—*“the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom...”*—now here's a key verse right here. Two key verses: this is one of them—*“in whom...”*—that is, in Jesus—*“in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.”* Now here's the key verse—I have it marked in my Bible: *“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:”*—we're talking about how to walk in the Spirit. Now, how are you to walk in Him?—*“rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him”—*that is, in Jesus—*“dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.”* (Colossians 2:1–10)

Now Paul is saying that there is an incredible treasure for you. Go back to verse 3—he speaks of Jesus, *“in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”* (Colossians 2:3) In Jesus: it's all in Jesus! In Him you're complete. You don't have to look for anything else. All the treasure is in the Lord Jesus Christ. It's hidden in Christ. Why did God hide it? So you and I could have the joy of discovering it. The treasure is available; it's all for you. But you may not be aware, because the treasure may be hidden to you. So what you have to do is to discover and appropriate your treasure.

Years ago I read about a ship that was out in the ocean off of Brazil, and the ship was without water. And the people on board the ship, though surrounded with salt water, were dying of thirst. They saw another ship, and they sent a message to the other ship by semaphore and said, “Do you have any water? We need water.” The other ship sent a message back and said, “Let down your buckets where you are.” They said, “No, you don't understand.” They sent another message: “We need drinking water.” They sent back the message again: “Let down your buckets where you are.” They let down their buckets and came up with fresh water, because they were at the mouth of the mighty Amazon River, and that Amazon River of fresh water was flowing out into the ocean and bringing fresh water way out into the ocean where they were. Here they were, thinking they were dying of thirst, and surrounded by water to drink. But they failed to appropriate that which was all around them.

And when I see a congregation like this, and I see many people who are living in spiritual thirst, almost dehydration, I want to say with the Apostle Paul, “I don't want you

to miss the blessing that can be yours.” And, tonight, I want you to let down your bucket where you are.

They say that the South African diamond mines were first discovered when somebody noticed little boys playing with beautiful stones. They were using them like marbles. They were diamonds. They had them in their hands—treasure—but they didn’t realize the treasure that they had.

Now the devil will do everything he can do to keep you from hearing the message tonight—so don’t you let him. Don’t you let him steal it away. Pay attention, because the devil’s trying to keep you from doing this.

Notice verse 4. Paul said, *“And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.”* (Colossians 2:4) Look, if you will, in verse 8: *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of this world.”* (Colossians 2:8) The devil wants to keep you from understanding the blessing that you can have in the Lord Jesus Christ. The devil wants you to say, “That’s absurd to say that everything’s in Christ; that’s absurd to say that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ.” There’s more. That’s exactly the lie that he told in the Garden of Eden. He said, “Eve, God’s holding out on you. There are other things. You don’t need to be hemmed in by the will of God. You need to get outside the will of God to discover all that you can have and know.” And there are people today who will teach you that once you receive the Lord Jesus Christ now you’ve got to go on and get a second blessing. Folks, let me tell you, in Jesus you have everything. “In him,” this scripture says, “you are complete.” (Colossians 2:10)

Every now and then people will say to me—you know, I get kind of animated—they come up and kind of look at me and say, “You’ve got the second blessing, don’t you?” I say, “Yes, I do.” “Oh,” they say, “tell me about it.” I say, “The second blessing is discovering what I got in the first one.” Amen? Now I’ll tell you what: I also have the third blessing. And the third blessing is discovering I didn’t get it all in the second blessing. And there’s more and more to learn about the Lord Jesus Christ. Precious friend, you can go deeper into Jesus; but you’ll never go beyond Jesus. It’s not Jesus *plus*. It is Jesus completely, totally. In Him you are complete. And notice verse 10: *“And ye are complete in him.”* (Colossians 2:10)

Now if a person is complete, what else do they need? When you have Jesus, when you’ve said Jesus, you have said it all. Now the key and the secret of finding everything in the Lord Jesus Christ, and letting everything in the Lord Jesus Christ express itself through your life, and living victoriously, is found in verse 6. Now, remember I told you that God the Holy Spirit wants to inhabit your human spirit, and your human spirit is to speak to your mind and your emotion and your will, which is your soul; and your mind, emotion, and will are to motivate and drive your body out in this world as you walk the

Christian walk and live the Christian life. Now, look at it again in verse 6: “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord...”—do you see that?—“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” (Colossians 2:6)

Four things I want to tell you about your walk in the Lord: “How to Walk in the Spirit.”

I. The Circumference of the Walk

And, first of all, I want you to think of what I’m going to call the circumference of the walk. It’s very strange language here. Look at it; look at it carefully. He doesn’t say, “Walk after the Spirit.” He doesn’t say, “Walk with the Spirit.” He says to “walk in the Spirit.” (Colossians 2:6) That is, the Spirit is the sphere, the territory, of your walk.

Let me illustrate. If I said to you, “Walk in this building,” where are you to walk? In this building. The parameters of this building are to contain your walk. This building would be the boundaries, the circumference, of your walk.

Now you’re told to walk in the Spirit. Now the natural man says, “I don’t like that. I don’t want to be hemmed in. Are you just telling me that this is all there is to it? How dull that would be! Adrian, are you just telling me that that’s all I can do—is just walk in the Spirit? I want more.” Well, friend, if you want more, it’s because you don’t understand verses 2 and 3. Look at it again. Paul says, “[I’m concerned] that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches...”—underscore that—“all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Colossians 2:2–3)

Now you are to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ. What I’m trying to say is—listen to me; listen carefully—there is nothing worth having outside of Jesus—nothing worth having! You say, “Well, what about my car, my automobile?” No, no. You can have a house. You can have a car. You can have your clothes. You can have all of these things. But all of these things simply are things that are a subset of knowing the Lord Jesus. That is, if Jesus allows you to have them, if they’re a gift that He gives to you, that’s fine. But if you have to go outside of Jesus to get any of these things; if you have to transgress the law of God to have something else, then, friend, you don’t need it; you don’t have to have it. Everything that you need, He will supply. He will “supply all of your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19) He, Jesus, is the circumference of your walk.

Now, how do you know therefore when you get out of bounds? Well, go over to the next chapter, chapter 3, and look, if you will, where he tells us that we’re to have a certain boundary in our lives. Look in chapter 3 and verse 15—I love it: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” (Colossians 3:15) Now the word *rule* there means “referee”; it’s a word that

means “an arbiter, a referee, a judge.”

Now, let's suppose that this rug right here represents the Christian life, and the Holy Spirit is the referee, and I'm to play the game of life on this rug. If I get out of bounds, He blows the whistle. He says, “You're out of bounds, Adrian.” Well, how do I know when I'm out of bounds? What does the whistle sound like? Well, he says, “Let the peace of God referee in your heart.” Now if you've been walking with the Lord very long, you know exactly when you step out of bounds. You know how? The whistle goes off. What's the whistle? You lost your peace. That's all there is to it.

There are times sometimes that I'll get cranky and fussy and I'll say something to Joyce that I think is logical and right, and the whistle blows. God says, “Adrian, you're out of bounds. You can't act that way. You can't talk that way.” I have to go back and I say to Joyce, “Honey, I'm sorry.” You know how I know that I'm out of fellowship with God? I don't have the peace. It's such a simple thing. The circumference of my walk is in the Spirit; and when I get out of bounds, He'll blow the whistle. And, friend, I'm telling you, He will blow the whistle on you.

You let the peace of God referee in your heart. The circumference of your walk is the sphere of the Spirit. You are to walk in the Spirit; and when you step out of the Spirit, He'll blow the whistle on you, and you will lose your peace. There is nothing worth having outside of Him. I'll tell you, nothing! Absolutely, totally, nothing! No possession! No relationship! Anything you can want, if you can't have it in Jesus, you don't need it. And when you start getting out bounds, He'll blow the whistle on you.

II. The Commencement of the Walk

Now I want you to notice not only the circumference of the walk—you walk in the Spirit—but I want you to notice the commencement of the walk. How do you walk? Friend, you begin a walk by taking the first step. Again, the Bible says here in chapter 2, verse 6, “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.*” (Colossians 2:6) How do you start the walk? Well, you receive Jesus Christ. Walking begins with a step. Now that's profound, isn't it? But walking begins with a step. What is the first step to walk in the Spirit? It is to receive Christ Jesus the Lord. You can't begin the Christian walk until you receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord.

Now this is very important. I want to slow down here, because I think there are a number of people who are listening to me tonight through radio and some who will listen later by tape and some in this building tonight who have not ever really received Christ.

A. Salvation Is Not a Creed

Now some have received a creed. You're not saved by a creed. You say, “Well, I know the plan of salvation.” Well, wonderful. You can know the plan of salvation and go to

hell. *You're not saved by the plan of salvation; you're saved by the Man of salvation*—not a creed.

B. Salvation Is Not a Code

It's not a code. You say, "Well, I live right. I obey the rules of the Bible." Well, you may just be a Pharisee on your road to hell. "Well," you say, "I serve the Lord."

C. Salvation Is Not a Cause

Well, salvation's not a creed. It's not a code. It's not a cause. You can work yourself to death in the church. Jesus said, *"Many will say unto me in that day,"*—talking about the Judgment Day—*"Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* (Matthew 7:22–23) What you call *"wonderful works,"* He called *"iniquity": "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* "I never knew you." These are not people that had salvation and lost it; they never had it.

D. Salvation Is Not a Church

What is salvation? It's not a creed. It's not a code. It's not a cause. It's not a church. You say, "Well, I'm a member of Bellevue Baptist Church, and Bellevue Baptist Church is a Bible-believing church; and I was baptized into the fellowship of that church." You're still not saved. That won't save you. It's not a church. It's not a cause. Not a code. Not a creed. *"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord..."* (Colossians 2:6)

There was a lady who gave this testimony. She said, "I started coming to church, and I enjoyed it. I was busy. I was in the ladies' work. I was in the music. I was in the social programs. I was enjoying it all, and I was relating to all of it. I related to the social programs. I related to the music. I related to all of this, and I was enjoying my church membership, when I got in a class, and the teacher in that class began to talk about Jesus, and she began to talk about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. She began to talk about Jesus as a person, somebody that she knew, and she had a relationship with Jesus Christ. And," that woman said, "I realized I did not have a relationship with Jesus Christ."

And I'm afraid that our churches are crammed with people who can relate to programs. They can relate to music. They can relate to activities. They can relate to social ability. They can relate to all of these things. But the commencement of the walk—to live victoriously—is to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord.

III. The Character of the Walk

Now, think with me, thirdly, about the character of the walk. What is walking in the Spirit? Well, again, it's in verse 6: *"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,*

so walk ye in him.” (Colossians 2:6) When you walk in the Spirit, when you walk in the Lord Jesus Christ, that means that Christ is the Lord. He demands, deserves, absolute control of your life. When you walk in the Lord, you’re under new management.

Go back, if you will, to chapter 1 and look in verse 10: *“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”* (Colossians 1:10) And I’ve put down as an ancillary verse 1 John chapter 2 and verse 6: *“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”* (1 John 2:6) Now if I’m walking in the Spirit, my life is to manifest the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. You ought to be able to see Jesus in me. I ought to be able to see Jesus in you. The character of the Lord Jesus Christ is the character of our walk. We walk in the Lord. *“As you receive Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.”* (Colossians 2:6) To walk in the Spirit is to walk in the Lord; it is to be like the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, folks, that’s what baptism is all about; that’s why we are baptized. Look, if you will; go down a few verses and see what he says about baptism in verse 12. Look at it: *“Buried with him”—with whom? With Jesus—“in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”* (Colossians 2:12) What is baptism all about? When you get saved, we take you up here to this tub and we plunge you beneath the water. What’s that all about? Friend, that’s a funeral. That baptistry is a liquid tomb. The old person you used to be is dead and buried—buried with Christ by baptism. According to verse 12, even as Jesus came out of the grave to a new, abundant life, He took your sins and carried your sins to the grave of His forgetfulness, and your sins are buried with Christ in baptism. And then you are raised to walk, the Bible says, in newness of life. (Romans 6:4)

Now I’m not asking you whether you tithe. I’m not asking you even if you obey the commandments. I’m asking you, is the genuine life of the Lord Jesus Christ manifested in you? When God the Holy Spirit comes to the human spirit, the human spirit speaks to your mind, emotion, and will, and motivates your body, you’re going to walk as Jesus Christ walked, and He’s going to be the Lord of your life. You know, in the New Testament He’s called “Savior” twenty-four times; He’s called “Lord” 434 times. That ought to tell us something.

IV. The Continuation of the Walk

Now here’s the next thing I want you to notice. I want you to notice the continuation of the walk. Now, look again in verse 6. It says, *“So walk.”* (Colossians 2:6) Now the Greek tense—and I don’t want to get too complicated here; I’m certainly not a Greek scholar; I was exposed to it, however—the word here *walk* literally means “to keep on walking”—“to keep on walking.”

Now a lot of people are looking back to an experience. Well, we said that in a walk there must be a commencement. But that's only one step. You have to keep on walking. Now you're not saved because you keep on walking; you keep on walking because you're saved. There is a continuation of walking in the Lord.

Now, what is walking? It is but a series of steps. Now if you take one step and don't take another, you can't stand. The only thing you can do is put both feet down at the same time, because when you walk, you're off-balance. You take another step, and you're off-balance. You take another one, and you're off-balance. But as you continue to walk, the balance is maintained. But you can't step and stop unless you stand. Well, if you stand, you're stuck. What you're to do is to walk and not stand. And so one step has to follow another step.

"Well, Adrian, what does it mean therefore 'to walk'?" Well, we know what it means to walk, because he says this in verse 6: "*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.*" (Colossians 2:6) Now, how did you receive Jesus? By repentance and faith. Isn't that how you received Jesus: by repentance and faith? How do you walk? You walk in repentance and faith. You repent of your sin and put your faith in Jesus. Those are your first two steps: repentance and faith. That's how you receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, how do you walk? You walk exactly the way you receive Jesus. The way to live the Christian life is the way you got the Christian life. How did you receive the Christian life? By repentance and faith. How do you walk the Christian life? By repentance and faith. That's all walking is: just repentance and faith; repentance and faith; repentance and faith; repentance and faith.

You say, "Well, Adrian, I already repented." Well, so did I when I got saved. But I want to tell you something. I've done far more repenting after I got saved than I did when I got saved. And I have trusted Jesus more after I've gotten saved than I did when I got saved. You know why? Well, when I got saved, I gave all I knew of me to all I knew of Jesus—and I knew very little about either one. But, you know, I didn't have to have a Ph.D. in theology to be saved.

Romans 14:1 says, "*Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.*" (Romans 14:1) God takes weak faith. You see, it's not our strong faith that saves us; it's our strong Savior that saves us. And you put your faith, whatever it is, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and trust Him, and He'll save you. And He'll start with you where you are.

How did you receive Him? By repentance and faith. But I'll tell you, when I put my repentance toward the Lord Jesus Christ and my faith in Him, God saved me, and I began a walk. And then God convicted me of some particular sin: I repented, put my faith in Christ, and He revealed Himself to me, and I repented. And you just go through life one step at a time, repenting and trusting, repenting and trusting. And, friend, I want

to give you some news. You're not going to stop repenting till the Rapture—if you're walking in the Spirit.

You say, “Well, pastor, do you ever do anything wrong?” Well, I almost got angry at my deacons tonight talking about Tennessee winning that ballgame. Don't you clap, now.

You know, you never reach the place in your Christian life where you don't need to repent. As a matter of fact, Joyce came up to my study the other day, and the sunlight was coming in the window, and she looked at the glass-top table, and she said, “Look at that dust.” I said, “Honey, if it hadn't been for that sunlight, you never would have seen that dust.” But the sunlight was coming in, and it came on that glass table.

Friend, a person who says, “You know, I don't need any more repenting,” just tells me they're not walking in the light. You know, they're in the twilight zone. The closer you get to the Lord, the more imperfections you'll see in your own life. How do you walk in the Spirit? Repentance and faith. How did you receive Jesus? By repentance and faith. *“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”* (Colossians 2:6) And, friend, if you'll do that, you will discover the treasures that are in the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, repentance is turning from self. Faith is turning to Jesus. And the more you turn from yourself, and the more you turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, the more real He will seem to you.

Conclusion

Now that's the way to live the Christian life—is to walk in the Spirit. You know, there are too many Christians who are looking back to some experience that they've had a long time ago, rather than walking in the Lord.

Now it's a very simple thing—a very simple thing: You come to the Lord, and you say, “O God, I'm a sinner, but I received Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior, and I take the first two steps of repentance and faith.” He begins to walk and work in me. And as I continue to walk, turning from self—repentance—turning to Him—faith—my life begins to progress, and I get more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. And then, those treasures that are in verse 3, I discover, and I say, “You know, it is really true. All the treasures are in Him, and in Him I am complete.” (Colossians 2:3) And once you do that, it's the cure for self-consciousness. It's the cure for greed. It's the cure for competition. It's the cure for comparison. You're just complete in Him. You're like the little guy who misquoted the twenty-third psalm—but I think he got it right when he said, “The Lord is my shepherd; I've got all I want.” You are complete in Him. You can go deeper into Him, but you'll never go beyond Him, amen?

Don't Miss God's Best

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: June 2, 2002

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 2:6

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

COLOSSIANS 2:6

Outline

Introduction

I. The Boundaries of the Faith-Walk

II. The Beginning of the Faith-Walk

III. The Balance of the Faith-Walk

Conclusion

Introduction

Would you take God's Word and find Colossians the second chapter, and I want to talk to you tonight about God's best. You know, the devil would try to keep you from getting saved. And if he can't keep you from being saved—and, by the way, he can't, if you want to be saved—but if he can't keep you from being saved, he will try to keep you from discovering God's best.

Now Paul did not want Christians to miss God's best. Colossians chapter 2, and let's begin in the first three verses. Paul says, *"For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you,"*—now what he means by that is, "I am really concerned about you who live in Colossae"—*"and for them at Laodicea,"*—Paul just had a burden; he calls it a *"conflict"*—*"and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;"*—he said, "I wish I could sit down face to face with you and tell you why I am so concerned." Now, what was his desire?—*"that their hearts"*—the hearts of those in Colossae and Laodicea—*"might be comforted, being knit together in love,"*—now here is the phrase; look at it—*"and unto all riches"*—just underscore that if you don't mind underscoring something in your Bible—*"of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;"*—now here is the key; look in verse 3—*"in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* (Colossians 2:1–3)

Folks, don't let that go past you. When Paul says, "Look, I am so concerned. I wish I could sit down face to face and heart to heart with you. I don't want you to miss it. I want you to know all—not some, but all—the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in

Christ.” What a tragedy if you miss it! God has treasures, and all of the treasures are in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now Christ is in you if you are saved. But wouldn’t it be a tragedy if you knew Christ and did not know what you have?

The South African diamond mines—you know, most of the diamonds come from South Africa, I am told; the richest diamond mines are there—do you know how they were discovered? They saw little boys playing marbles with shiny rocks, and these little boys were playing with diamonds: incredible wealth; but to them, just pretty rocks. I wonder if there are some of us like that who are playing marbles with diamonds: we don’t understand what we have in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, every passage of Scripture has a key that unlocks it. And the key that unlocks this passage of Scripture is verse 6. Look at it: “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.*” (Colossians 2:6) Now the way to know these treasures of wisdom and knowledge is to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now you expect Paul to say something very complicated; but the Bible says God “*preserveth the simple.*” (Psalm 116:6) And, you know, it doesn’t have to be complicated to be deep. Every now and then we hear a preacher preach, and somebody will say, “Well, you know, he really must be intelligent: I didn’t understand him.” Just because a river is muddy, it doesn’t mean it is deep. And Paul is talking here in very simple terms. He is talking about something that we all can understand. You see, the faith really is not so high that you get up to it; as a matter of fact, sometimes it is so simple that some of us never get down to it.

“As you have received the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him.” A wise person said that the Scriptures are shallow enough that a little child can come and get a drink without fear of drowning, and yet deep enough that the scholars can swim it and never touch bottom. I love that. That is true about this passage of Scripture. “As you received the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him.”

Now, who doesn’t want you to learn this? Well, the devil doesn’t want you to learn it. Go back up to chapter 2 and verse 4. Paul says, “*And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.*” (Colossians 2:4) Then, look in chapter 2, verse 8. Again he says, “*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*” (Colossians 2:8) Satan is a smooth talker. Satan does not want you to understand what I am going to try to teach you tonight. As a matter of fact, if you are not careful tonight, the devil will draw away your mind, entice you, and keep you from concentrating and listening. If you are a teen, you might be passing notes, talking about where you are going after the service, or anything to keep your mind from the truth of God’s Word. Now Satan is a smooth talker. He does not want you to discover your treasure.

Now, remember Paul talks about the treasures in the Lord Jesus Christ. He talks

about how we have these riches and treasures in verse 3; and then he says in verse 6, “*therefore*”—“*therefore*.” So the *therefore* is linked to the first five verses. Now you have been around long enough to know that when the Bible says “*therefore*,” you stop and ask yourself, “What is it *there for*?” Okay? He is going to get very practical. He gives you a truth, a deep truth, and then he says, “Therefore, now you are to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Look at it again—here is our key verse: “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye*”—now, be careful here—“*in him*.” (Colossians 2:6) Now it doesn’t say, “Walk with Him”; it doesn’t say, “Follow after Him”; it says, “Walk in the Lord Jesus Christ.” That is a little strange. It almost sounds awkward. How do you walk *in* a person? “Walk in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Now, listen to me again. The devil doesn’t want you to hear this; he would beguile you. Paul says, “Now, you listen to me. I have a conflict for those in Colossae and Laodicea. They might miss this.” He has a conflict for you right here at Bellevue Baptist Church, that you might miss it. Are you listening? Nod your head. Are you excited? Lift your hand. Will you pay attention? Lift your hand again. Okay now, we are talking tonight about some great, great truth. This is not incidental; it is fundamental. Paul says, “I just have a conflict in my heart that some people may not learn this truth and they might miss God’s best.” So we are going to talk about walking in the Lord.

There are three simple things I want you to see.

I. The Boundaries of the Faith-Walk

First of all, what I want to call the boundaries of the faith-walk. Now the boundaries of the faith-walk are these: “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him*.” (Colossians 2:6)

Now if I were to tell you to walk in this building, that means the boundaries of your walk are this building. That means you are not to get outside of this building. This building is to be the element and the atmosphere of your walk. Now, what does this mean to you spiritually? Spiritually, Jesus Christ is to be the boundaries of your life. Spiritually, you are to be closed into Him and His will, and that’s all. You are to walk in Jesus—in Jesus! He is the boundary.

Now if you are a person who is very selfish, if you are not a spiritual person, the first thing your mind said to you when I said, “You are to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ; He is the boundaries; He is the circumference of your walk,” your natural mind said, “Hey, don’t fence me in.” That’s the natural mind: “Don’t fence me in; I don’t want to be fenced in.” And the natural mind says, “You know, that would be dull, just to walk in Jesus. To be fenced in, to be hemmed up, how dull that would be!”

Well, if you think that is dull, go back again to verses 2 and 3: “*That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance*

of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Colossians 2:2–3) Now, you call that “being hemmed in”? And you are saying, “Don’t fence me in”? That would be like a minnow being hemmed in by the Atlantic Ocean. No, you are to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ. The devil doesn’t want you to understand this. Now what God wants you to understand is there is nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing, worth having outside of Jesus Christ—nothing! You are to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now if you are not careful, you can get out of bounds and get outside the element that you are supposed to walk in. Now, how does God keep you in bounds? How do you know when you get outside the boundaries? Well, there is a referee who will tell you when you are out of bounds. Look, if you will, in chapter 3, verse 15. The Bible says, *“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.”* (Colossians 3:15) Do you see that? Chapter 3, verse 15—the word *rule* there is the word for “referee.” *“Let the peace of God [referee] in your hearts.”* So that’s the way God keeps you in bounds.

Scotty Shows, where are you? Did you come to church tonight, Scotty? Come up here. Scotty is a basketball player. John Caldwell, are you here? Come up here. John Caldwell is a referee. That’s what he does: John calls these games. Now, Scotty, give me that whistle over here. Put that around your neck. All right now, Scotty, this rug is the boundary of your game. Now you are a basketball player, and if you get out of bounds, he is going to blow the whistle on you, okay? Now there are going to be some people trying to get you out of bounds here. We will call you “the world.” We will call you “the flesh.” And I will call you “the devil.” Now what I want you to do is to see if you can get Scotty to get out of bounds. Now if Scotty gets out of bounds, you are the Holy Spirit. You blow the whistle, okay?

Now you can’t go in here and drag him out, because when he is walking in the Spirit, you can’t get to him. I mean you’ve got to stay on the outside and see if you can get him to come out. And so I want “the world,” “the flesh,” and “the devil” to see if you can get Scotty out of bounds here. Now, remember, you can’t come over here. Well, all right, you guys, Scotty is doing pretty good, isn’t he? You wait—he won’t listen.

Okay, Scotty, come on over here and let me tell you something. All right now, brother—(*whistle blows*). See what happened? See what happened? I tricked him—I tricked him. Thank you. Go be seated. All right now, give Scotty a hand. Thank you, John. All right now, Scotty thought I was his friend there, see? I just kind of sweet-talked him, and he just stepped out of bounds. And I don’t blame him, because after all, I am supposed to be in charge here, and he is a staff member. But when he stepped out of bounds, John blew the whistle on Scotty.

Now that’s what the Holy Spirit will do for you. Friend, when you are walking in the Spirit—I mean, when you are in Christ, and He is the boundary of your life—when the

world, or the flesh, or the devil allures you, you don't have to go, because there is nothing out there that you need. There is nothing the world has; there is nothing the flesh has; there is nothing the devil has, that can allure you and take you away without your consent. And as long as you are in Christ, walking in Christ, what a wonderful protection you have! The boundary of your walk is Christ, okay? "As you received the Lord Jesus, walk ye in Him."

Joyce and I walk in the neighborhood. And in our former neighborhood, we had a dog that wasn't particularly nice. And that dog would come sometimes out there and make us feel uncomfortable. One day I saw a lot of little white flags in that yard just stuck there. Then I saw a little trench that was being built. The trench had been dug and there was a wire put underneath the ground. And then they covered it up and put those little white flags out there. It was an electric fence; it was under the ground. They put a collar around that dog. And if he would come up to that white flag and step over, zzzzzzzz, and he would go back in. It didn't take him very long to learn that he was not to step across that boundary. Then after a while, they took the flags down; but he remembered where the boundary was.

Now, folks, there is a spiritual fence around all of us. And if we are walking in the Spirit, we'll know when we are out of bounds. God the Holy Spirit will blow the whistle. Now if God the Holy Spirit doesn't blow the whistle, it's because either you are not saved, or you are so deep into sin and so far away from Christ that you can't even hear the Holy Spirit of God. You need to be very sensitive. So that's the boundaries of the walk.

II. The Beginning of the Faith-Walk

Now here is the second thing I want you to notice: I want you to notice the beginning of the walk—the beginning of the walk. Look again in verse 6: "*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord...*" (Colossians 2:6) How do you begin the faith-walk? Well, you begin it by taking a step. As you receive Him, you take the first step. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a step; but it doesn't end there. You are to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Now this is a personal encounter with Jesus; not some truth, not some doctrine, not some denomination: "As you have received Christ." As I have told you, Christianity has a creed, but it is not a creed. It has a code, but it is not a code. It has a cause, but it is not a cause. It has a church, but it is not a church. It is Jesus Christ. Churches buildings today are filled with moral worldlings who have joined churches, had an experience with religion, have gone through a ritual, have subscribed to beliefs, but have never met Jesus Christ. And so, what does it mean? You say, "Adrian, I don't understand. I thought if I believed right, I am saved—if I believed the plan of salvation." No. *You are*

not saved by the plan of salvation; you are saved by the Man of salvation. You can know the plan and go to hell. You see, you receive the Lord Jesus Christ.

A woman went to a church. She gave this testimony. She said, “I was in a Sunday School class, and they were talking about attendance; they were talking about functions; they were talking about programs; they were talking about seminars; they were talking about socials.” She said, “I loved it. And then,” she said, “something happened to my teacher, and my teacher began to talk about Jesus. And she talked about Jesus over and over again, and I could not relate to that. It was the Jesus part that I could not relate to.” And she got saved; she received the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Savior and Lord.

Now “as you have received” what? “The Lord Jesus.” Does He have absolute control of your life? I mean, are you willing for Him to be the boundaries of your life? Look back at Colossians chapter 1, verse 10. We are talking about the walk. Now, look: *“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”* (Colossians 1:10) When you leave this place, is your walk going to be a worthy walk?

I spoke to our junior high schoolers who are going on their choir tour soon, and I said to those kids, “Look, as you go, you are going to be representing the Lord Jesus Christ; and you are going to be representing Bellevue Baptist Church; and you are going to be representing your parents; you are going to be representing the youth leadership.” And I said, “Kids, you are going to be representing your pastor, because my name’s on that bus.” Walk worthy.

I would say that to every one of you deacons: Walk worthy. I would say to every member that God expects as much holiness out of you as He does any pastor or deacon. Don’t get the idea that there are some people who are supposed to live holy, and the rest of you have a pass. That’s not true. It took as much of the blood of Jesus Christ to save you as it did any of these deacons. And we are to walk worthy of the Lord. You receive the Lord.

When I married Joyce—that’s a sweet memory; I love her more today than I did when I married her, and I loved her with all my heart when I married her—but when I married Joyce, I did not get the marriage religion; I got Joyce. When you get saved, you don’t get the Christian religion, you receive Jesus. Does that make sense?

“As ye have received the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him.” Can you honestly say, “I have opened my heart; I have received Christ as Lord; I have taken myself off the throne; I put Jesus Christ on the throne of my life”? That’s the beginning—that’s the beginning of the Christian walk.

And, by the way, that’s what baptism is all about. You are in chapter 2. Look, if you will, in verse 12—look at it: We are *“buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are*

risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:12) When you give your heart to Jesus Christ, we baptize you. We immerse you, put you under the water, because that baptistry up there is a liquid tomb; it is a funeral tomb; it is a funeral service. The old person you used to be has died. This is your burial. The only mourner there is the devil, who hated to see you die. You are buried with the Lord Jesus Christ. His death on the cross had your name on it. His burial had your name on it. His resurrection has your name on it. And you died with Him, are buried with Him, and risen with the Lord Jesus Christ. That means that there is a new life. He is the Lord. He is Lord.

Now we say, “Accept Christ as your Savior.” Well, technically, you do that, I suppose; but that is not Bible language. Did you know that Jesus is called “Savior” twenty-four times in the New Testament; He is called “Lord” 434 times? Did you know that very rarely, especially after the Resurrection, did His followers call Him Jesus? They called Him “the Lord Jesus”—“the Lord Jesus.”

Now that’s the beginning of the walk. The boundary of the walk is Jesus. The Holy Spirit will blow the whistle when you are out of bounds. How does He blow the whistle? Not like John did: you lose your peace. *“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.”* (Colossians 3:15) When you are saying something, watching something, doing something, and you lose your peace, you are out of bounds. The Holy Spirit of God says, “Hey, knock it off. Get back in bounds. Repent, and step back in. You can’t play the game that way.”

III. The Balance of the Faith-Walk

Now here is the third thing I want us to notice: Not only the boundary of the walk, and the beginning of the walk; but I want us to notice the balance of the faith-walk. Look again at this verse: *“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”* (Colossians 2:6) Now in the Greek language, the verb literally means “to keep on walking.” It is not a finished deal; it means “to keep on walking.” Now walking begins with one step, but walking is a series of steps. So therefore the Christian life is a crisis that is followed by a process. And a journey of a thousand miles, I say, begins with a step, but it does not end there. *“As ye have received the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him.”*

Are you ready to do a little thinking? How did you receive the Lord Jesus? That’s the way you walk. *“As ye will receive the Lord Jesus, in the same way, so walk ye in Him.”* Now, how did you receive the Lord Jesus? You received Him by repentance and faith, right? That’s how you received Him. Therefore, how do you live the Christian life? The same way that you got it: by repentance and faith. You keep repeating the process that brought you to Christ. You don’t keep getting saved; but as you receive the Lord Jesus Christ, that’s the way you walk in Him.

Now, what is repentance? Repentance is turning away from self. What is faith? Faith is turning to Jesus. Now as you receive the Lord Jesus, I turn from self to Him. Repentance and faith: that's the way I walk the Christian life. Now the way to live the Christian life is how you began the Christian life: in repentance and faith.

Now when you get saved, you don't stop repenting and you don't stop believing. You see, when I got saved as a teen—and, oh, how I bless God for that; sometime ago, I went to the old church where I was sitting in that revival meeting by my dad—my dad stepped out and gave his heart to Christ, and I stepped out behind him. Now the church has changed hands. And they took that old church building, and it became a dining hall and a sort of a classroom as they built a new worship center. But I asked the people there and I said, "I want to be in there alone." And I walked in there and I said, "I believe this was just about the spot where I gave my heart to Jesus." Later on, I got it confirmed, because I had some doubts; but I really believe that's when I was saved—right there. And I got on my knees and I thanked God that He saved me. And I thank God that He has kept me saved. And I am glad I gave my heart to Jesus Christ as a young man—as a boy, really. I did it by repentance and faith.

Now at that time—I want to be honest with you—I knew very little about the Christian life, but I was sincere. I gave all that I knew of me to all I knew of Jesus. Now, since then, I have learned a whole lot more about me. And, since then, I have learned a whole lot more about Jesus. And I have done more repenting and trusting after I got saved than I did when I got saved. "As you receive the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him."

And the Holy Spirit of God will keep revealing more about you and more about Him. And you walk the Christian life seeing your bankruptcy and His treasure. You don't want to miss the treasure; you don't want to miss the riches; you don't want to miss God's best. And so the Holy Spirit of God is constantly revealing to you your own personal bankruptcy that is in me—and in my flesh is no good thing—and the great riches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now some people talk about, "Well, you know, one day I took a stand for Jesus years ago." I don't think they took a stand; I think they're stuck. You are to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me see. I need a deacon up here. Who would be a good deacon? Come up here. All right, I'll put you up here. I want you to walk. We'll have a little lesson in walking. You know, walking is a series of steps, right? You can get it here in the rug. All right now, I want you to take a step. No, that's two steps; just take a step—one step. You've got to take the other foot off the ground. Now you're ready for the next step, right? Do you think you are going to the next step here pretty soon? You doing pretty good? All right, just stand there for a while. Now he's taking a step. That's nice. I see he is an obedient deacon. There he is. How long are you going to make it? You think you can make it for five minutes? You think so? You think ten minutes? How

about a day? How about a week? How about a year? You see, what is wrong with him right now is this: He is off-balance. A step is a series. Now you can take the next step. It feels better, doesn't it? And the next one, and the next, and the next. Give him a hand.

All right now, a walk—thank you, Norm—a walk is a series of steps. If you want to take a step, and that's all, you are off-balance. You only stay there so long. The problem with many people is they've stepped into Jesus and stopped. And they wonder why they don't have any balance! Here is the way the Christian life is lived. Oh, you can stay this way for a little while, but not for long. Repentance and faith; repentance and faith; repentance and faith: all within this boundary—all within this boundary.

It doesn't mean when you walk in Christ that you are sinlessly perfect. The Lord is going to reveal to you some things that are wrong, and you repent. And listen to what 1 John 2:6 says: *"He that saith that he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."* (1 John 2:6)

Conclusion

Now if you say, "I am abiding in Jesus," you know how it's going to show? You are going to walk like Jesus walks. And people are going to see Jesus Christ in you. I ask myself this question sometimes: "Would people, when they look at me, see Jesus?" Does your neighbor see Jesus? Kids, do your parents see Jesus? Sir, does your wife see Jesus in you? You are to walk as Jesus walked. *"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."* "As ye have received the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him." We see here in that verse the boundaries, the beginning, and the balance of the Christian's walk.

Nailed to the Cross

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: December 31, 2001

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 2:13–15

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

COLOSSIANS 2:14

Outline

Introduction

- I. The Condemnation of Sin
- II. The Curse of the Law
- III. The Charms of This World
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Introduction

What I want you to do is to take your Bibles now and turn to Colossians chapter 2. It's important that you turn to the scripture, Colossians chapter 2. You know how to find Colossians. Do you get confused? I've told you this before: “General Electric Power Company”—Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. So find Colossians—just keep on going until you get there, and get in chapter 2. And let me read to you some Scripture, beginning in verse 13: *“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him,”*—now the word *quicken* means “made alive”: he's *made alive* together with Jesus. Now here's a great part—*“having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way,”*—now, don't miss the next phrase—*“nailing it”*—nailing it—*“to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”* (Colossians 2:13–15) And I'm going to stop reading there.

There's more in this chapter that we're going to read. But I have told you before, it was a custom in Rome, when a man was adjudicated guilty, condemned for a crime, if he were put in prison, they would take something and nail it to the prison door. It was called a “certificate of debt.” On that certificate of debt would be written the crime that

this man was guilty of, the number of years that he would stay in prison—days, months, or whatever. And when he had fulfilled his duty to the law, his certificate of debt was marked “paid in full.” It was taken, given to the judge, who would have it notarized, and he would carry it with him. And if anybody were to accuse him of that crime again, he could pull out the certificate of debt and say, “Yes, I may have been guilty, but I have paid in full. You’re not going to bring me into double jeopardy; I’ve already paid for that crime.”

Now, what about if a man were guilty of a capital offense? They would take the offense that he’d done and they would nail it to his cross above his head. That’s the reason that Pilate nailed above the head of the Lord Jesus, “Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews”: it was sarcasm. Here was a man who made Himself King. And that’s why Pilate allowed Him to be crucified: because it was insurrection against Caesar; it was a crime worthy of death. And the Romans would put on that cross whatever that individual had done. And they crucified people openly, in public; and they wanted people to see a man die in agony and pain and blood and anguish upon that cross. And up there on that cross would be what that man had done. And every citizen who walked by would say, “I’ll never do that. No sir, I will not buy me one of those crucifixions. Whatever it is on that cross, whatever that person did, I will never do it, because I don’t want to end up there.” You understand? So that was what they did in Rome so long ago.

Now, from God’s point of view, there was something else that was nailed to that cross—and that was God’s holy law. It’s called here in the scripture that I read to you, “*the handwriting of ordinances*.” Do you see it here in verse 14? It says He was “*blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us*.” (Colossians 2:14) God’s holy law was nailed up from the heart and mind of God on that cross. Well, had Jesus broken the holy law of God? No. But “Him who knew no sin, God had made to be sin for us.” (2 Corinthians 5:21) And so Jesus Christ is adjudicated guilty of breaking the holy commandments of God: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. This “*handwriting of ordinances*,” from God’s point of view, was nailed on the cross. They thought He was dying for sins against Caesar, but what He was dying for was our sins against God—our sins against God.

You see, He was in our place. Had you and I been up there, God could well have put the Ten Commandments up there and said we’re guilty of those, right? There’s no one here who would say, “I’ve not sinned.” As a matter of fact, the Bible says, “If we break the law in one point, we’re guilty of all.” (James 2:10) All of those Ten Commandments could be put above our head, had we hung there upon that cross.

Now when Jesus died, it was both tragedy and triumph. It was tragedy, because it was the dirtiest deed ever done. They lied on Him. They abused Him. They misused Him. And you and I were guilty of it: we were there. Our sins were the nails that put

Jesus Christ on that cross, and our hard hearts were the hammers that drove those nails. He died because of our sin. Yes, He willingly died; but had we not sinned, He never would have died, for He would not have needed to die. And so, on the one hand, it was tragedy; but on the other hand—listen—it was triumph. Now there was someone else nailing some things that day. There was someone else who was nailing some things to that cross—and His name was Jesus.

Look again at the Scripture—look in verse 13: *“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he [made alive] together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances”—that’s the law—“that was against us, which was contrary to us,”—now, watch it—“and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”* (Colossians 2:13–14) You say, “Well, Jesus was nailed to the cross by the Romans.” Yes, He was; but Jesus Himself nailed the law to the cross. Now, don’t get confused: but while Jesus, the darling Son of God, was being crucified, He Himself was nailing something to that cross.

Now what I want to do tonight for our New Year’s service, I want to mention six things that Jesus nailed to the cross. These are six enemies that you are going to face this coming year, and I want you to walk out of this building tonight saying, “Thank God, hallelujah, Jesus, my dear Savior, has nailed these things to the cross for me!” When He was being nailed to the cross, He nailed these things to the cross.

I. The Condemnation of Sin

Now, first of all, Jesus nailed the condemnation of sin; the condemnation of sin was nailed to the cross. Look in verse 13: *“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”* (Colossians 2:13) My sin, your sin, our sin was nailed to the cross. What does that mean? It means He paid my debt; He bore my punishment; and He has taken my sin, nailed it to the cross. And therefore it was buried, when Jesus was buried, in the grave of God’s forgetfulness.

Put these scriptures down. Romans 8:1: *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”* (Romans 8:1) Put this down—Romans 8:33 and 34: *“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”* (Romans 8:33–34) Now what he’s saying is this: “Who now can point the finger of accusation at me, at you, at us, because of our sin? Who can condemn us?” Now, friend, there are plenty who will try to condemn you. Has anybody ever told you to go to hell? Wait around: some will—they’ll tell you right off.

What he’s asking is not, “Who will try to do it?” What he’s asking is, “Who is qualified

to condemn us?” The only One who could ever condemn us is God Himself, and God Himself has counted us righteous. He has justified us, and the verdict of the supreme court of the universes is never going to be reversed. The Bible says, *“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.”* (Romans 8:33) Friend, you are justified by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, because your sins were nailed to the cross. And He has given you now a certificate of debt, and on that certificate of debt is written in the crimson blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, “Paid in full”—“Paid in full.”

That doesn’t mean that if you sin God’s going to overlook your sin. He’ll carry you to the woodshed. Did your daddy ever carry you to the woodshed? We didn’t have a woodshed; we had a pump house—which did just as well. I went out there on more occasions than I want to rehearse right now, but I was still my father’s son. My father would never condemn me; he would chastise me. But there’s no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

Now I want to say that the condemnation of sin was nailed to the cross. Can you say *amen* to that? I want you to think of the worst thing you have ever done or will ever do. If you are in Christ, no sin—none, not one scintilla of an iota—can ever be marked up against you. If it were, you’d be condemned; you’d go to hell, because God cannot let sin into heaven. It doesn’t mean God will not chastise you. It does mean that you can sin. As a matter of fact, if you have a desire to say, “Well, I’m saved now: I’ll sin all I want to,” I doubt you’ve ever been saved. I sin all I want to. I don’t want to. You need to get your *wanter* fixed. No, you need to get a new one. But the child of God who may sin can never, never—no, never ever—come into condemnation. That sin was nailed to the cross.

II. The Curse of the Law

Now, secondly, I want to tell you what else is nailed to the cross: Not only the condemnation of sin, but the curse of the law was nailed to the cross. Look here in verse 14: *“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”* (Colossians 2:14) Now the law is good. God’s holy law is without blemish, without fault. But, brothers and sisters, because we’re sinners, to us the law is a curse—the law is a curse.

The Bible says He took *“the handwriting of ordinances that was against us.”* (Colossians 2:13) Listen to these two scriptures. First of all, Galatians 3, verse 10: *“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”* (Galatians 3:10) Now, listen to Galatians 3, verse 13: *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”* (Galatians 3:13) When Jesus became a curse—He who

never did anything wrong—when Jesus was stretched out on that hellish cross, Jesus was made a curse for us, and He redeemed us. He removed us from the curse of the law. I'm telling you, the law is good. But the Bible says that if you try to live by the law in order to get to heaven, friend, you're cursed. I mean, the wrath of God is upon you.

You see, the people say, "I'm just going to keep the Ten Commandments: that's my religion." Well, if that's your religion, you're going to hell, because you're under a curse. Is there any here who would dare say, "I've never at any time had an evil thought, a covetous thought; never at one time lusted; never at one time told a lie; never at one time taken anything that didn't belong to me; never at one time been filled with pride, jealousy, vengeance?" Of course not! Yet the Bible says, "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*" (James 2:10)

You say, "I don't understand that." Well, suppose you're hanging over a fire by a forged chain of steel, and it has nine links of forged steel, and one is crepe paper. How safe for you! It doesn't make any difference if one link breaks or if all ten break: you go in the fire, because God demands perfection.

Now, listen to it again. Those of you who are struggling and trying to get to heaven by your own good works, stop it; for the Bible says, "*For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*" (Galatians 3:10) The only way that the law could get you to heaven would be for you from the time of your birth to the time of your death never ever one time to sin. But Jesus took the curse of the law.

Friend, according to the law, I deserve hell; you deserve hell. But Jesus on that cross became a curse for us. And when He died, He took that law—God's righteous law that has every reason to cast us into hell—and He nailed it to the cross; and therefore I'm freed from trying to save myself from my good works, and Satan can never use the law against me. Now I'm not saying the law is bad; and I'm not saying we ought not to try to live by the Ten Commandments; but never ever should I endeavor to be saved by the Ten Commandments.

III. The Charms of This World

I'll tell you a third thing that Jesus nailed to the cross, and I'm going to show you what this has to do with the New Year in just a moment: The charms of this world were nailed to the cross—the charms of the world are nailed to the cross. Now in this same chapter, look in verse 8: "*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*"

(Colossians 2:8) Now this world will try to charm you, and this world will try to entice you, and this world is like a filthy harlot that would draw away your love from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the bridegroom.

When we say “the world,” we’re not talking about Planet Earth, nor are we talking about the people. We’re talking about an ungodly system that’s against our Lord and His Christ. First John chapter 2, verses 15 and 16: *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”* Now, listen carefully. It doesn’t mean that because we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us. It means we love the world, because the love of the Father is not in us. If we love the Father as we ought, this world would have no appeal to us. *“For all that is in the world,”*—listen to this—*“the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”* (1 John 2:15–16) Now, what is *“the lust of the flesh”*? That’s sensual pleasures. What is *“the lust of the eyes”*? That’s selfish possessions. What is *“the pride of life”*? That’s sinful pride, selfish pride. All of that is nailed to the cross.

Now I want to show you how the world is nailed to the cross. Put in your margin Galatians 6:14. The Apostle Paul said, *“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom...”*—listen, listen—*“by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”* (Galatians 6:14) Do you know when Jesus died, He nailed sin to the cross and He nailed the law to the cross? And the Bible says clearly and plainly that the world was crucified when Jesus died.

Why? He died because of the charms of this world and the pull of this world; and therefore we—I, you, together—we can glory in the cross. I glory in the cross. *“The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”* Now if this world has a pull on you and this world has a charm for you, it’s because you’ve failed to glory in the cross. This world should have no more charm to you than a crucified decaying corpse should have hanging on a cross. When Jesus died, He took a hammer and He nailed my sin to the cross. He nailed the handwriting of ordinances that was against me to the cross. He nailed the charms of this world to the cross.

IV. The Corruption of the Flesh

I’ll tell you what else He nailed to the cross: He nailed the corruption of the flesh—the corruption of the flesh is nailed to the cross. Look, if you will, in verse 11: *“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him to the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”* (Colossians 2:11–13)

Now when the Bible says your flesh, it’s not talking about your body; it’s talking about that old sinful nature that you were born with. That sinful nature was nailed to the

cross. Friend, the world has no more charm, and the flesh has no more pull, because I am no longer dominated—neither are you—by the flesh. Before we were saved, we obeyed the flesh. There was nothing we could do. Every New Year's resolution was but straw. But Jesus not only died to take away my sin; He died to take away that old self, and that is nailed to the cross.

Put this scripture down—Galatians 5 and verse 24: *“And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”* (Galatians 5:24) Now if your flesh is still out of control, un-crucified, you have every reason to ask yourself, “Have you been twice-born?” *“They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh.”*

That's what baptism is all about. Look in verse 12: *“Buried with him in baptism.”* (Colossians 2:12) What does that mean? When I gave my heart to Jesus Christ, they took me up there and put me in a pool of water—why? Because the old Adrian died; he's put beneath the water; he is buried. That old flesh—that old man—is crucified with Christ. That's a liquid tomb. That was my funeral. The only mourner there was the devil. He hated to see Adrian die: he was his buddy. But I don't have to obey him anymore. Romans 6:6: *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”* (Romans 6:6) Aren't you glad that the corruption of the flesh was nailed to the cross? You see, so many of us, we have such a limited view of the cross.

V. The Control of the Devil

Number five: The control of the devil was nailed to the cross. Look now in Colossians 2, verses 14 and 15. Not only did He blot out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; but watch this: *“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”* (Colossians 2:15) When he talks about principalities and powers, what's he talking about? He's talking about the power of Satan. He said in Ephesians 6, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers.” (Ephesians 6:12)

Now the devil thought he was destroying Jesus on the cross; but Jesus was destroying the devil. Hebrews 2, verse 14: *“Forasmuch then as the children”—that's us—“are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself”—that's Jesus—“likewise took part of the same;”—He became flesh and blood. Now, watch this—“that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”* (Hebrews 2:14) When Jesus died on the cross, that devil said, “Ha! He's finished!” But Jesus said, “Satan, you're finished.” “Now is the prince of this world cast out.” (John 12:31) “He through death destroyed him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil.”

And Satan himself is nailed to that cross. His back is broken because of the cross of

our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus destroyed him on the cross. The word *destroyed* is a Greek word; it means “to make of none effect.” It doesn’t mean he’s obliterated; it means he’s wiped out; he’s put out of business. You don’t have to obey the devil anymore. *“They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb”* (Revelation 12:11)—thank God for that!

VI. The Conquest of Death

Number six: The conquest of death was nailed to the cross. Jesus’ death was the death of death. Colossians 2:12: *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”* (Colossians 2:12) It was death that was crucified that day, because Jesus was paying the penalty of death. And again I want to remind you, that’s what baptism is all about. Listen again to Hebrews 2, verses 14 and 15: *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”* (Hebrews 2:14)

Now when Jesus nailed Satan to the cross, He also nailed death to the cross. Now they said, “Jesus is dying! Jesus is there on the cross! Look at Him: He’s dying!” No, He ever lives! Sin, you’re dead! Law, you’re dead! Old world, you’re crucified! The flesh, you’re crucified! Satan, you’re put out of business! And, death, you’re obliterated by Jesus—by Jesus! That’s what He did on the cross. Isn’t that wonderful? Glory to God! Praise His name!

Conclusion

Now, what does that mean for me in a new year? Friend, I don’t have to be a slave to sin. I don’t have to be condemned by the law. I don’t have to be conformed by this world. I don’t have to be motivated by the flesh. I don’t have to be bullied by the devil. And I don’t have to be intimidated by death. Because of Jesus, I can start this New Year so wonderfully.

When Christ Is All

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: February 13, 2000

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 3:1–5, 11

*“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision,
Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.”*

COLOSSIANS 3:11

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Introduction

Take God’s Word and find Colossians chapter 3, and when you’ve found it, look up here to me, if you would, and let me ask you a question: What is Jesus Christ to you? You say, “Well, Jesus Christ has a place in my life.” Jesus Christ does not want a place in your life. “Well,” you say, “Jesus Christ has a big place in my life.” He doesn’t want a big place in your life. Jesus desires, deserves, and demands preeminence.

Now, does Jesus Christ have preeminence in your life? I ask myself that same question. I want you to look at this scripture with that question in mind: *“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”* (Colossians 3:1–5) And then, skip down, if you will, to verse 11: *“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.”* (Colossians 3:11)

Now I want to talk to you tonight about this: “When Christ Is All.” Verse 11 says,

“Christ is all.” Well, if Christ is all, then that leaves nothing out. It means He is everything. Now that’s a big question: Is Jesus Christ all to you? I mean, is He all, and is He in all? Well, Paul just said it another way in verse 4 when he says, *“Christ...is our life.”* (Colossians 3:4) Now Jesus doesn’t just give life; He is our life. *“For to me to live is Christ”* (Philippians 1:21) is what Paul said in another place. He is our life; He doesn’t just point to life. He said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life”* (John 14:6) in John 14, verse 6. So Christ is our life.

Now the cults don’t believe this. For example, the Jehovah’s Witnesses don’t believe this. As a matter of fact, they have twisted the Scripture to try to distort this. They go from door to door with their New World Translation. And it’s very interesting that they would quote John chapter 17, verse 3 this way in the New World Translation: *“This is eternal life, that they may receive knowledge about You, the only true God in Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.”* Does that sound good to you? Well, it sounds fairly good, but listen to it carefully: *“This is eternal life, that they may receive knowledge about You...”* Now, what does the King James Version of Scripture say? John 17, verse 3: *“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”* (John 17:3)

Now you can have knowledge about someone without knowing that person. You could have knowledge about a senator, or a president, or a king, without knowing that person. But, you see, we don’t just receive knowledge of Jesus; our life is knowing Jesus: *“This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”* It is Jesus only. He is all and in all. It is not knowledge about Jesus. It is not Jesus plus anything. It is not something after Jesus. Now you can get to know Jesus better, but you can never know anything better than Jesus. You can go deeper into Jesus, but you can never go beyond Jesus. Paul says in verse 11 that *“Christ is all, and in all.”*

Now, notice how he puts it in this passage of Scripture as we prepare for the Lord’s Supper. First of all, we have been crucified with Christ. Look in verse 3: *“For ye are dead.”* (Colossians 3:3) Did you know you’re looking at a dead man? I’ve been crucified. So have you. I died with Christ. His death had my name on it. The old Adrian died when I was buried in that liquid tomb called baptism. That was my funeral service. The chief mourner who was there was the devil; he hated to see his old buddy die. But we are dead. And not only are we dead; according to this passage of Scripture, we have also been raised. Look in verse 1: *“If ye then be risen with Christ...”* (Colossians 3:1) We are dead with Him; His death had our name on it. And we are risen with Him. And because we were crucified with Him, and have risen with Him, we live with Him. Look, if you will, in verse 4: *“When Christ, who is our life...”* (Colossians 3:4) We have the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that life is hidden in Christ. Notice verse 3 again: *“For*

ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (Colossians 3:3)

Now in order for the devil to get to me, I’m in Jesus, and Jesus is in God, and he’s got to go through God the Father and God the Son to get at Adrian. That’s where I’m hidden. He is my life. What’s he saying here? “I died with Him. I was raised with Him. I live with Him. And I’m hidden in Him.” He is our life. Friend, He is everything.

Go back to chapter 2 and look, if you will, in verse 3. And this is a wonderful, wonderful verse here, and I hope that God will write it upon your heart. The Bible says there, speaking of Jesus, *“In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”* (Colossians 2:3) Where’s that hidden? In Jesus. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Jesus, and I’m hidden in Jesus. There’s nothing worth knowing that’s outside of Jesus. There is no wisdom that this world has to offer that can compare with the only true wisdom that is in Jesus Christ. Now He is all, and in all.

Now in the verses that I read to you from chapter 3 there are three major verbs, and I want you to see them. Look in verse 1: *“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above…”*—underscore the verb *seek*. And then, look in verse 2: *“Set your affection on things above.”* (Colossians 3:1–2) Underscore the verb *set*. And then, look, if you will, in verse 5: *“Mortify therefore…”*—or “Put to death.” Your translation may say, “Put to death.” But—*“Mortify therefore your members.”* (Colossians 3:5) Underscore the verb *mortify*.

Now those are three things that will happen when Christ is all, when Christ is everything, when Christ is your life: the verbs *seek*, *set*, and *mortify*—or we can say, if you want it alliterated, slay: *seek*, *set*, and *slay*. There are certain things that are true.

Now I want us to take those verbs and look at them just a little differently as we prepare our hearts for the Lord’s Supper. What happens in my life, what is of necessity true when I can say that “Christ is my life,” and say in verse 11 that, *“Christ is all, and in all”*?

I. Jesus Captivates My Ambition

Number one: Jesus captivates my ambitions—Jesus captivates my ambitions. Verse 1—look at it again: *“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”* (Colossians 3:1) Now what you seek is what your ambition is. Your ambition is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. (Matthew 6:33) The devil doesn’t care what on earth you may seek, as long as you do not seek those things which are above.

Now I’m going to say something profound: but chapter 3 follows chapter 2. And I want you to go back to chapter 2. And he’s thinking in chapter 2 about those things which are below. He’s thinking about those things that are on the earth, and he delineated those things which are on the earth. And then he goes into chapter 3 and

says, “But if you be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.”

Now, let me show you some things that you might be prone to seek that we find in chapter 2—the things of the world; things which are not above, but things which are below.

A. Beware of the Reasonings of the World

For example, there are the reasonings of the world. Look in chapter 2, verse 8: *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world,”*—the word *rudiment* there means “the ABCs, the basic elements of the world”—*“and not after Christ.”* (Colossians 2:8) And, actually, the word here, *spoil*, it literally means “to carry you off as a captive.” When people would take a country, they would say they “spoiled” the country. That is, they would carry away the goods of that country, and they spoiled it. Now he’s saying, “Don’t let somebody carry you away as captives.”

Now the cults are good at this. The cults, they don’t want converts as much as they want captives. What they will do is kidnap true converts. They will hang around Billy Graham crusades and other places. They will come to Baptists who really are not well grounded and they will try to carry them off captive. And they do this *“through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”* And so, beware of the reasonings of this world.

B. Beware of the Rituals of the World

And then, secondly, not only the reasonings of the world, but the rituals of the world. Look in chapter 2, verses 13 through 17: *“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened”—*that is, “made alive”—*“together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”* That is, in His death on the cross, when He took our sins that were nailed to the cross with Him, and took them out of the way. And now, notice what he says in verse 16: *“Let no man therefore judge you in meat,”*—that literally means “in food”—*“or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”* (Colossians 2:13–17)

Now, what’s he talking about here? Well, he’s talking to people who’ve been in the Jewish religion. And they had this certain ritual. They had things that they had done—religious rituals. They had certain drink offerings and certain meal offerings, and they had certain days that they kept. What he’s talking about here primarily is Jewish diets and Jewish days. And there were some people who said, “Now that you’re saved, that’s

fine; but you've got to keep these days, and you've got to keep these diets." And Paul says, "Don't let anybody judge you of those things. For example, don't let anybody judge you concerning the Sabbath day."

Now, listen to me carefully. Sunday is not the Sabbath; Sunday is the Lord's Day. Saturday is the Sabbath. Sunday is not the Christian Sabbath; Sunday is the Lord's Day. It's an absolutely different kind of day. Now we have people today who want us to keep the Sabbath. If you think you're keeping the Sabbath, you'd better be careful, because you can't even start a fire on the Sabbath. And, friend, when you cranked your automobile, you started a fire in the engine: you ought to be stoned. I'm telling you, we don't keep the Sabbath in that sense. There are people who would like to judge you and put you under some ritualistic diet and some ritualistic days; but those things were taken out of the way; they were nailed to the cross. And he tells us they are but shadows of things to come. Do you see that there in that verse? They are shadows of things to come. They are not the substance; they are the shadow. And people who try to keep these rituals are chasing shadows.

Have you ever seen the ridiculous thing of a dog that chases the shadow of a bird on the ground and the bird is up there in the sky? Now that's what is going on when people are substituting rituals for reality. They are seeking things which are below, not things which are above; shadows, and not substance; the blueprint, and not the building.

C. Beware of the Religions of the World

So Paul says here, beware of the reasonings of this world; beware of the rituals of this world; and then he goes on to say, beware of the religions of this world. Notice again in chapter 2, verses 18 and 19: "*Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels...*"—and, by the way, they had a cult named Gnosticism in Colossae where they were worshipping angels—"Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." (Colossians 2:18–19) What he's saying is, "Don't go following after some angelic being or some highfalutin religious philosophy. You hold on to Jesus, which is the Head."

I've been preaching long enough to be amazed at two things: number one, that men will not believe the truth; and, number two, what men and women will believe. Satan is not against religion as long as it's the religion of this world. And you can seek the reasonings of this world—vain philosophy. You can seek the rituals of this world—days and diets. You can seek the religions of this world, and worship things other than Almighty God.

D. Beware of the Regulations of the World

And then, something else you can seek—and that's the regulations of this world. Look in chapter 2 now, verse 20: *"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,"*—the word *ordinances* means "laws"—*"(touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"*—now he's not saying that you ought not to taste or touch or handle things which God has forbidden, but what he is saying is that when you have the traditions of men, men will take the Bible and they will add to it. They will like the Pharisees bind on people burdens heavy to be borne. And then he says—*"which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship..."*—that's a very interesting phrase; underscore it—*"will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."* (Colossians 2:20–23)

Now I admit that this is hard-to-understand English; it's convoluted. But what he is saying is this: "You're not going to be any more like Jesus with a list of *do's* and *don'ts*. They're not going to make you one speck like Jesus. It may look good; it may have a show of wisdom and humility; but if you let all of the air out of it, it is will worship and not God worship. You think up certain things you're going to do, and then you do them, and you say, 'What a good boy am I!'" And Paul says, "It has no effect against the flesh. All it will do is just simply increase your pride, and it gives the wrong indication to your neighbor that Christianity is just a list of *do's* and *don'ts*." Many of us have the idea that if there are just certain things that we don't do and certain things that we do, then we're spiritual. Especially with the *don'ts*—you know, "Don't tell lies; don't tell dirty jokes, don't cheat, etc." And we try to go for about two weeks not doing the dirty dozen, you know, and we think that's going to make us spiritual.

There are several figures for the Christian life. For example, the Christian life is like a building program. We call that in church language "edification." An edifice is a building. Can you imagine a contractor who's supposed to build a building and all he does is go around telling his workman, "Don't saw crooked, and don't bend nails"? He's not going to have a building that way. Or it's also called a "growing process": "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18) Can you imagine somebody telling you how to raise a newborn baby and saying, "Just don't give it arsenic"? No. A thousand *don'ts* will not make you one whit more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now Christianity is not a legal relationship; it is a love relationship. And I'm not saying there are certain things you ought not to do; but the difference is whether it is will worship or God worship. Now you can read your Bible out of will worship. Do you ever get the idea that you've got to read so many chapters a day and that's going to make

you a great Christian? Not necessarily. You know, a chapter a day keeps the devil away? No! Now you can read your Bible and not love God. I don't believe you can truly love God and not read your Bible. It's why you do it, not what you do. You've seen that bumper sticker that says, "Tithe if you love Jesus: anybody can blow their horn." Well, I like that, but I want to tell you something: You can tithe and still not love Jesus; but I'm not sure that you can truly love Jesus without obeying Him in stewardship.

Now what I'm trying to say is this: that none of these things—the reasonings of the world, the rituals of the world, and the religions of the world—none of these things can make you like Jesus. We need to understand that Christ is all and in all. And look at the verse again. Go back to chapter 3, verse 1—after chapter 2 when he talks about all of these things—and he says this: *"If ye then"*—in relation to all that he said in chapter 2—*"be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."* (Colossians 3:1) You are to seek Jesus. Jesus is the One who captivates your ambition to be like Jesus. You are to seek Him like the needle on the compass seeks the North Pole. You are to seek Him like a sunflower seeks the sun. Jesus is to be the One who has captivated your ambition.

II. Jesus Dominates My Attention

Now, number two, let's look at the second verb: Not only does Jesus captivate my ambition; but, number two, Jesus dominates my attention—Jesus dominates my attention. Look in verse 2 now—chapter 3, verse 2: *"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."* (Colossians 3:2) Well, the way to seek Him is to set your affections, and the word *affection* literally means "attention." That is, what you seek, you have to set your mind to, because the Bible says, "As a man thinketh, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7)

Now we've often heard that some people are so heavenly-minded they're no earthly good; but the direct reverse may be true. This verse is not telling us not to be heavenly-minded; it is telling us to be heavenly-minded. Jesus is to dominate my attention. I am to meditate on Him; I am to set my mind on Him. And there are many things pulling at my mind; there are many things pulling at your mind. And I'm not to say that recreation is wrong, and I'm not saying that relaxation is wrong; but I'm telling you, folks, in this day and in this age you're going to have to seek Him. Your ambitions are going to have to come to a burning focus. And then, you're going to have to set your affections, where Jesus just dominates your attention.

Now when I'm talking about setting your mind, setting your affections, I'm not talking about Oriental mystical meditation—no! That is just opening up your mind to all kinds of things. I'm surprised how many Baptists are caught up in Oriental meditation—yoga, and things like that. As a matter of fact, that's taught in colleges today and universities—

state universities. They wouldn't let us teach meditation on the Word of God. But they will teach transcendental meditation, teach people how to relax and get some mantra, some thing—"om, om, om"—to say over and over again—meditate on a dewdrop. And people think that's wonderful. They say, "Well, I'm just opening myself up." You really are—you really are! Would you go home tonight, unlock all your doors, and throw all the windows open, and go to sleep to see what might come in? Would you do that? No. "Because," you say, "well, I might make contact." That's right: you might make contact! You sure might! No. The Bible says, "Keep your mind with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Proverbs 4:23) Set your mind: *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."* (Isaiah 26:3)

III. Jesus Regulates My Actions

The first verb is *seek*. The second verb is *set*. The third verb is *slay*. Now, notice number three: Jesus is to regulate my actions. Jesus, who captivates my ambitions; Jesus, who dominates my attention; is the Jesus who is to regulate my actions.

Now when I said before that will worship is wrong, that doesn't mean that discipline is wrong. It's a different kind of discipline. Notice now in chapter 3, verse 5: *"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."* (Colossians 3:5–11)

Now if Christ is my life, then I'm to live like Christ—if He is all and in all. This verb *mortify* means "to put to death forcefully and immediately." Why would you put something to death? Well, because you hate it. You see, *"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth"*—these things are to be put to death. Did you know that as a Christian you need to learn to hate? "Oh," you say, "oh no, I don't want to be convicted of a hate crime." As a Christian, you have to learn to hate. You could not have love without hate any more than you could have high without low, or hot without cold, or in without out. If you love justice, you hate crime. If you love health, you hate disease. If you love purity, you hate pornography. If you love flowers, you hate weeds.

Did you know that God is a God who hates? May I give you some Scripture? Proverbs 6, verses 16 and following: *"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed*

innocent blood,”—by the way, that means God hates abortion—*“an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”* (Proverbs 6:16–19) That’s God’s hate parade right there. God says, “These seven things doth the Lord hate.” May I tell you that so-called “love” without corresponding hate is sheer hypocrisy? There are certain things that need to be put to death—mortified.

Psalm 119, verse 104: *“Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.”* (Psalm 119:104) Now, today, we’re supposed to put our arms around everybody and say, you know, that, “Your religion is just as good as mine.” We’re all un-American if we’re not tolerant. Well, friend, the psalmist said, *“I hate and abhor lying...”*—Psalm 119, verse 163—*“I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.”* (Psalm 119:163) Psalm 119, verse 113: *“I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.”* (Psalm 119:113)

Now we’re to hate narcotics, liquor, communism, atheism, pornography, and any sin in our own lives. It needs to be put to death. Why? Because *“Christ is all, and in all.”* What is the Christian life? It’s not Bellevue Baptist Church. It is not prayer. It is not the Bible. It is not doing good. It is Jesus Christ. Christ is our life! He is all and in all.

Conclusion

Now as we come to the Lord’s Table, we’re coming to celebrate Jesus, to love Jesus; not to learn about Jesus—yes, we need to do that—but to love Jesus; not to know about Him, but to know Him. And the sweetest fellowship you’ll ever have with anyone is at a meal. We’re not coming tonight to mourn a corpse; we’re coming tonight to have fellowship with a friend, a meal with a friend. It is not that He is dead, because He’s risen; it is not that He has risen and ascended, because He is here. And He says, *“If any man hear my voice...I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”* (Revelation 3:20) So Jesus invites us to His table. We’re going to have a fellowship meal with Jesus.

All in the Name of Jesus

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: August 20, 2000

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 3:16–17

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

COLOSSIANS 3:17

Outline

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Introduction

Would you find the book of Colossians, please, the third chapter. And if you get mixed up on those books, I've told you before, the way I remember them is General Electric Power Company—Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. That's the way it goes. So get to Colossians, if you will, the third chapter, and we're going to look at two verses.

I've been writing a book. The title of the book is *The Incredible Power of Kingdom Authority*; the subtitle: “Getting an Upper Hand on the Underworld.” And I'm very excited about that book. And as I was studying and writing this week, I was talking to myself, I guess, but considering, praying, thinking about the power, the authority, that is in the name of Jesus, because name stands for authority. And I just decided that I would share some of that with you tonight.

Colossians 3, verse 16: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* Jim, that's a great verse for a minister of music, is it not? And I know that you know that verse by heart. That's what we try to practice here. And notice verse 17 says—and that's co-joined with verse 16, obviously—*“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed,”*—and here's the phrase—*“do all in*

the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” (Colossians 3:16–17) The title of our study tonight is “All in the Name of Jesus.” Do all in the name of Jesus.

Now, why did God make you? Why did God create you? “Well,” you say, “God made us to serve Him.” Well, friend, if that’s why He made us, that was not that wise of a thing to do, because He could have made angels that would have done a much better job of service than we do—far better, more obedient. Now we are to serve Him; but that’s not our chief purpose.

Why did God make us? God created us to worship Him. Why does God want us to worship Him? Because God is love, and love is a reciprocal act, where God loves us and we love Him back. And that love is called worship. And in order to be loved, love has to have a recipient. And so God created us that He might pour His love out to us and that we might pour our love back to God. And that’s the greatest thing that we can give God—is our love. If we give God our riches, He’s no richer. If we give God our strength, He’s no stronger. If we give God our wisdom, God is no wiser. If we give God our glory, God is no more glorious. If we give God our power, God is no more powerful, because God has everything. There’s nothing that could be added to any of the attributes of God. But when we give God our worship, when we give God our love, that meets the desire in the heart of the Father.

Now here’s some wonderful news for you. There are others that may be able to give God more riches than you. There are people who may be able to give God more wisdom than you. There are people who may be able to give God more power than you are able. But nobody can love God better than you can. Is that not great? Nobody has cornered the market on worship. If you want to worship God, have at it. You can do as good a job as anybody else.

And verse 16 is speaking of worship. Now this is the kind of worship that we’ve been doing tonight: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly”*—that’s preaching—*“in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* Now that’s a church service; that’s worship. We have worship here at Bellevue Baptist Church, and I love it. But now, listen, folks. Worship does not end there; it goes on. And notice now the next *and*: *“And whatsoever ye do…”*—now there he’s made his translation between preaching of the Word—teaching, ministry of the Word, singing, and so forth. Now, watch this—*“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed,”*—what you say or how you act—*“do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”* (Colossians 3:16–17)

Now verse 16 speaks of worship, but verse 17 is still speaking of worship. That means our worship does not end when we leave these doors and go out there into the world; we take our worship with us. And when we come to church, we don’t merely

come to church to worship; we bring our worship with us to church. We bring our worship to church. Real worship—please listen to this, because if you don't, you're going to miss the point of the whole message—real worship involves all of life. Real worship involves all of life—everyday, every place, whatever we do we do in the name of Jesus—because what is worship? Worship is doing things in the name of Jesus, doing *“all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”* (Colossians 3:17) So that takes worship, and it adds worship to every area of life.

What is worship? Worship is doing everything in the name of Jesus, and giving God thanks. And why? Why would I call that worship? Well, let me ask you a question. What is worship? Would you not say that worship is glorifying God? Okay, worship is glorifying God. Then, your work ought to glorify God. Your friendships ought to glorify God. Your banking ought to glorify God. Your recreation ought to glorify God. And if those things glorify God, then those things are worship.

Let me give you two verses, and I want you to write them down; you may want to turn to them tonight—1 Peter 4, verse 11—listen to this: *“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.”*—so as I speak tonight, I ought to be speaking as a man of God, as the oracles of God; not in my own strength, but with the ability that God gives. But now, listen—*“that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”* (1 Peter 4:11) You see, everything that Adrian does, everything that you do, ought to glorify God, *“that God in all things might be glorified.”* Now if God is being glorified in all things that I do, then all things that I do are worship, because worship is glorifying God. Are you following me?

Now you might think I'm trivializing worship. I am not trivializing worship. What I am doing is magnifying our daily life: Monday-morning religion. Somebody wrote these words: “They're praising God on Sunday, but they'll be all right on Monday. It's just a little habit they've acquired.” No, no, no! You see, we bring our worship to church. We carry our worship with us. And when we get outside the doors of this church, we're still worshipping. Let me give you another verse. Listen to this one; it is a key verse in all of the Bible—1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 31—listen to it: *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”* (1 Corinthians 10:31) Now, boy, that's going to eliminate some things, isn't it? “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

Some of you have a nicotine habit. “Well, pastor, is there a verse in the Bible that says, ‘Don't smoke cigarettes’?” Not that I can find. Somebody said, “Will smoking cigarettes send me to hell?” No, it will just make you smell like you've been there. “Can you find a verse of Scripture in the Bible that says, ‘Thou shalt not smoke a cigarette’?” No, but I'll tell you what to do. Next time you light one up, say, “Lord, to your glory—I'm

smoking this for your glory.” Can you do that?

When you’re watching a television program, should you turn it off or leave it on? You ask yourself this question: What I’m doing, is it glorifying God? You say, “Pastor, that is extreme.” You just got it. That is extreme. Listen to what he says here: *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”* (1 Corinthians 10:31) That means your dinner is to be an act of worship, and washing the dishes after dinner is to be an act of worship. Somebody told me that Mrs. Billy Graham has a sign over her kitchen sink that says, “Divine services held here three times a day”—washing dishes to the glory of God; whatever you do. Now, listen. This is not Adrian; this is Paul: *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”* Again, 1 Peter 4:11: *“that God in all things may be glorified.”* (1 Peter 4:11)

So tomorrow morning, you kids go to school—you go to school for the glory of God. When you go to work, your going to work ought to be an act of worship. Now we’re under this roof tonight, but tomorrow you go out to the cathedral of the sky, and every place that you go ought to be an act of worship. You see, what we’re talking about is taking the so-called “secular” and sanctifying it, and taking the everyday and edifying it, that God in all things is glorified. We don’t just come to church to worship, turn it on, and then turn it off.

Now this is a concept that has to get out. It has to get in our heart and in our mind. Do you know what the average Baptist concept was when I was a kid growing up in church? If you wanted to be, I mean, a super, really over-the-top Christian, here’s what you did: You were faithful every Sunday to go to church. You took the Lord’s Day and gave the Lord’s Day to Jesus. And then, you were faithful in your finances. You gave Him one-tenth of your income. And people said, “You know, God has one-seventh of my time and one-tenth of my income.” And they were saying, “It’s like a pie when you slice that pie up. And one-tenth of the financial pie belongs to God, and one-seventh of the calendar pie belongs to God.” So God gets one day a week, and God gets ten percent of our money.

Now that is a non-biblical concept. Listen to me: The whole pie belongs to Him, not one-tenth. It all belongs to Jesus, not one day; every day belongs to Jesus. We don’t do some things that are religious and other things that are not religious. God’s not going to lift out one piece of pie and judge it. God’s going to judge what you did with every penny that He’s trusted you with. God is going to judge what you’ve done with every moment that He has given you. And so when you come to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ for rewards, do you know what He’s going to look at? Not only the sermons you preached, or the songs that you sang, or the lessons that you taught in Sunday School; He’s going to look at your school grades; He’s going to look at your home life; He’s

going to look at your business life; He's going to look at your recreation; He's going to look at your hobbies; He's going to look at all of your life, because He says, "Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God."

Now doing something to the glory of God is giving God worship—because what is worship? It is glorifying God. So when you go to work tomorrow, on your job, doing whatever you do, whether it's building widgets or selling *whatchama-call-its*, whatever you do, if you do it in the name of Jesus, then that is worship, and God is receiving glory for that. Now that means that there is no ground that is not holy ground, and there is no time that is not sacred time to the child of God. Oswald Chambers said, "In all natural things we are to be spiritual, and in all spiritual things we are to be natural. Therefore, we're to be naturally supernatural and supernaturally natural." Isn't that good? In all spiritual things we're to be natural; in all natural things we're to be spiritual. Therefore, we're naturally supernatural and supernaturally natural.

Let's think a little bit about being supernaturally natural. I like people to be natural. I don't like people to act spiritual. We're not actors. You don't act spiritual; you are spiritual. Do you ever see people kind of turn it on and turn it off when they come into church? They act one way inside and another way outside.

I've seen preachers do that. I'll be sitting up there, you know, with the preacher, and he seems like a normal, natural guy. We'll be talking. "Great crowd here tonight. We're going to have a good time. What do you want to do after the service?" Just talking, having a good time. Then, all of a sudden, it's time for the service to begin: "Dearly beloved..." And, you know, he talks like he has a steeple stuck in his throat. And I wonder what happened to that guy between here and there. A transformation took place. He's now acting spiritual.

No, we don't act spiritual; we are supernaturally natural, and we are naturally supernatural. In all natural things that we do—all of our work—we do them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So that brings us to the main point: What does it mean to do everything in the name of Jesus? I want to tell you three things that it means to do everything in the name of Jesus: therefore, the everyday is edified; the secular is sanctified; and God is glorified. And that is worship—worship here, yes; but worship day by day.

I. Is It Consistent with the Personality of Jesus?

Number one, you ask yourself this question: Is this deed, is this act, is this habit—is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? That means, if I'm going to do it in the name of Jesus, could I sign Jesus' name to it? Is it consistent with the personality or the character of Jesus?

When little kids get a baseball bat, their favorite baseball player, many times, his

name is on the bat, whether it be Mark McGwire or somebody like that. If he's a great star, the people who sell the bat will get him to put his signature on the bat, or on the glove, or whatever. And if it's Michael Jordan, his name might be on the basketball. And so when these people put their name on that piece of sporting equipment, what they're saying is, "Look, I endorse this. I as a superstar say that this fits what my standard is for this particular piece of equipment." Now, frankly, I doubt that is true. I doubt that Michael Jordan plays basketball—or did play basketball—with a kind that you might buy in a toy store; but the point I'm making is this: that that is supposed to say, when that person puts his name on that, that "this is consistent with who I am."

Now when I want to know whether or not I can do something, I don't have to go through the Bible to find a chapter or verse that tells me I can do it or I can't do it. Have you ever had anybody say, "Can you show me in the Bible where it's wrong to gamble?" Sure. Or somebody will say to you, "Can you show me in the Bible where it's wrong to go an R-rated movie?" They'll ask you questions like that. Listen. *The Bible is not a rulebook; the Bible is a guidebook.* The Bible is not a book of minute laws; it's a book of great principles. And I'm so grateful that the Bible is not a book of minute laws. If the Bible were a book of minute laws, I couldn't bring mine and carry it into the pulpit, and I'd have to have a wheelbarrow to bring it in here—or maybe a truck—with all the laws that would have to be in it. No, God gives us principles, not rules. Rules are for kids—rules are for kids!

Remember when your kids were little and finally you got to the place where you thought you could go out and leave them by themselves without a babysitter? You know that time: "Should we? Should we not? Will they be all right? Well, we'll only be gone an hour or two." You remember when you were leaving them home by themselves? What did you say to them? You got them in, and you began to lay down the rules—remember that? You said to them, "Now, don't let strangers in the house." You said to them, "Now, don't play with matches." You said to them, "Don't do this, and do this; and you be in bed by such-and-such a time." You gave them a lot of rules. Why? Because they're children. Rules are for kids.

Now if you have grown children in their twenties or their thirties, you don't say to them, "Now, don't play with matches. Don't let strangers in the house." You don't say that. I hope you don't have to say that now. If they have lived with you, if they are mature enough, they have a sense of what is right and wrong. And, basically, in many things, they just sense that from you by the way that you live.

God doesn't give us a list of *do's* and *don'ts*. Those are for babies; they're for immature people. And if God were to give us a list of *do's* and *don'ts*, it wouldn't apply to us; if it applied to this century, it wouldn't apply to the first century. If it applied to the first century, it wouldn't apply to this century. You're not going to find in the Bible anything

about not driving through a school zone at a hundred miles an hour: that wouldn't apply. If you were to find a verse in the Bible that says, "Don't go to an X-rated movie," can you imagine people in Colossae saying, "What is an X-rated movie? What does that mean, 'Don't go to an X-rated movie'?" No, God gives us a principle. What is the principle? It is the name of Jesus. Could you sign Jesus' name to it? Could you say, "This is consistent with the personality of Jesus; I could sign Jesus' name to this"? If you could, then you can do it for the glory of God.

Now if God gives us little laws, minute laws, you can find loopholes in laws, but you can't find loopholes in a principle. And one of the great principles in the Bible is we do everything in the name of Jesus. And so if you're wanting to know if there's a habit, an association, an investment, anything that you do—if you want to know what is right or wrong—could you sign Jesus' name to it and give God thanks for it? Now, think about it. Could you sign Jesus' name to it and give God thanks for it? Isn't that what it says?

Look at it again—look in verse 17: "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed,*"—number one—"do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,"—number two—"giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Colossians 3:17) Anything that you couldn't sign Jesus' name to and say, "God, I thank you for it," you have no business doing it. You girls, if you have a boyfriend and a relationship with him that Jesus is not pleased with, if you can't thank God for it, if you don't believe he's God's gift, then you have no business keeping company with that young man. If it's a business investment, mister, if you cannot sign Jesus' name to it, if you cannot give God thanks for it, you have no business doing that, whatever you do.

So that's the first principle: to do all in the name of Jesus. Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? Can I imagine Jesus being involved in this thing? Can it have the smile of Jesus, the character of Jesus?

II. Does It Claim the Power of Jesus?

All right, number two—here's the second thing of doing all in the name of Jesus—number two: Does it claim the power of Jesus? Not only the personality of Jesus, but does it take the power of Jesus to get it done? You see, name stands not only for personhood, but it also stands for power and authority. Now John 14, verse 14, is a key verse here. Jesus said, "If you ask anything in my name, I will do it." (John 14:14) That means, "Anything that has my name behind it, then my power will take over." He doesn't say, "If you ask anything in my name, then I'll give you the power to do it." He says, "If you ask anything in my name, I will do it." The Jesus in you will take over.

There is incredible power in the name of Jesus. When you bring your life into saying, "I want to do everything consistent with the person of Jesus, the personality of Jesus," then you can begin to add His name and receive His power. When Jesus was here in

His earthly ministry on this earth, He sent His representatives out to preach the kingdom. And here's what happened—Luke 10, beginning in verse 17: *“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name”* (Luke 10:17)—the demons, the devils. Every time you see “devils” plural, it means “demons.” There's one devil, many demons. *“Even the [demons] are subject unto us through thy name.”* There is incredible power in the name of Jesus. You see, it's the name that gives authority. We practice that every day.

Do you have a checking account? How many of you have a checking account? Let me see your hands. You have a checking account. All right now, you write a check. Let's say it's a hundred dollars. You write a check for a hundred dollars and give it to somebody. They can take that check that has your name on it, carry it down to the bank, and give it to the bank—and the bank will give that individual some of your money. Why? Because you put your name on that check. That means I have given the bank the authority to take my money and give it to this individual. See, the name stands for the person that signs the check. Your name represents you. Now, suppose the check bounces. They don't put the check in jail; they put you in jail.

You see, the check only represents you; the name represents you. When we talk about the name of Jesus, you don't disassociate the name of Jesus from Jesus. The name of Jesus represents Jesus, as much as your name on that check represents you.

And when a policeman stands up, and here's an eighteen-wheeler truck coming down the road, and he blows his whistle and holds up his hand, and that truck stops, implying—or he may even say it—“Stop in the name of the law,” now, what's he stopping that truck with? Now maybe he's 150 pounds. He's not stopping an eighteen-wheeler truck with 150 pounds of skin and bones. He is stopping that truck with authority.

And so when I live my life in the name of Jesus, it means I don't do anything that I could not sign Jesus' name to and give Him thanks for; and it means therefore when I can sign His name to it and give Him thanks for it, I can do it with the authority and the power that He gives me. And when I ask things in His name, then He lines up Himself behind me.

Now, let's look at some of the things that we can do therefore in the name of Jesus.

A. **Wives Are to Submit Themselves to Their Husbands**

Look now in verse 18: *“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.”* (Colossians 3:18) Now, how can a wife submit herself to her own husband, as it is fit in the Lord? In the name of Jesus—in the name and the authority of Jesus. This is not slavery. This is not subjugation. This is not humiliation to a wife. This is not superiority to a husband. The word *submit* is a Greek word that means “to rank underneath,” and it is a military word—like you have a general, and then you might have

a major, and then you might have a captain, and then you might have a lieutenant, and then you might have a sergeant, and then you might have a whatever, coming on down to a private. It doesn't mean that one is superior to the other; it means that one outranks the other in the chain of command—the line of authority and responsibility.

Now the private and the general are of the same worth, but they have a different rank. The Bible teaches that we're all equal in Jesus. Galatians 3, verse 28: *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."* (Galatians 3:28) *What is submission? Submission is one equal voluntarily placing him or herself under another equal, that God may therefore be glorified.* How do you do that? The only way I know is to do it in the name of Jesus. Now so wives are to submit to their husbands in the name of Jesus.

B. Husbands Are to Love Their Wives

Husbands are to love their wives in the name of Jesus. Look in verse 19: *"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."* (Colossians 3:19) And this word for "love" here doesn't speak of romantic love, although certainly you ought to do that. This is *agape* love—sacrificing and serving love. Ephesians 5:25: *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."* (Ephesians 5:25) It literally means He gave Himself up for it.

And so, how am I going to love Joyce? As Jesus loved the Church. I don't have what it takes to do anything as Jesus did it. The only way that I can do anything as Jesus did it is for Jesus to do it in me and through me, isn't that right? And remember what He said: *"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."* (John 14:14) And it is the Jesus in me that is to love Joyce. It is the Jesus in Joyce that allows her to take her place by my side in a submissive spirit.

C. Children Are to Obey Their Parents

Now, what about children? Look in verse 20: *"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."* (Colossians 3:20) Well, that's fine. You obey your parents in all things. But go right back up to verse 17: *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."* (Colossians 3:17) Put those together. How are children to obey their parents? In the name of the Lord Jesus.

Did you know we're very foolish if we don't teach our children to be Spirit-filled? I mean, if we just simply say, "You do this because a good child obeys mother, obeys father." That's just half of the equation. Teach them to obey in the name of Jesus. Teach them that obedience is an act of worship. Teach them that we obey because we can sign Jesus' name to that obedience. And then, teach them that when we can sign Jesus' name to that obedience, Jesus' power moves into that. And so the measure of this obedience is right, and the motive is to please the Lord.

Children, those of you in the choir, those of you sitting out there; teenagers, listen to

me: Clean up your room in the name of Jesus. Do your homework in the name of Jesus. I'm not being facetious. I'm being very serious and very practical. Do your homework, that Jesus will be gloried, and do it with the authority and the power that He gives.

D. **Be a Good Parent in the Name of Jesus**

Now, you parents who are wrestling with being good parents, be a parent in the name of Jesus. Look in verse 21: *"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."* (Colossians 3:21) The same word that's translated "fathers" here is translated "parents" in Hebrews 11, and applies, I believe, both to mother and father. You know, children don't always have an easy life. And he says, "Fathers, don't provoke your children to anger."

You say, "Well, they don't understand the problems that I have." That makes no difference. Their problems are big to them. Now you want God to be interested in your problems, don't you? Come over here and let me ask you a question: Are your problems big to God? No, they're not big to God. But you want God to be interested in you. And you have to be interested in your children, just as God is interested in you. If a kitten is hurt, if a toy is lost, if there's a disappointment, be interested in those children. Love them.

Fathers—I have watched fathers now. I've tried to discern what makes a good father, and I have determined that a good father, one that has children that will adore him, is a person who is incredibly strong and wonderfully gentle. Kids want dads to be strong. I don't necessarily mean that they have to bench press a certain amount. But they want their dads—you know, "This is my dad. My dad can do it. My dad understands. My dad is smart"—they want a dad they can look up to, but they don't want a dad who barks at them and who slaps at them and pushes them and shoves them around. That's terrible. Can you imagine, especially if there's a little guy, three or four—and that's when their personality is being formed—can you imagine what it is like to have a great big hulking man berate a little child like that?

All right, I want to ask you a question. Suppose in that door right now somebody walks in here who is fifteen feet tall. Have you ever seen a fifteen-foot-tall man? We'll make him twenty feet tall. This guy is twenty feet tall, and when he talks, it sounds like thunder. And he comes up to you and he begins to swat you like Godzilla, and to bark at you and to shove you and to pick you up and say, "*Goochie goochie goo.*" I mean, can you imagine what it would be like to have a twenty-foot-tall individual? Well, that's what you're like to a child. I mean, you are four times—and, Webb, you're worse than that—the size of one of these children.

You've got to be gentle with these children. And how do you do that, dads? How do you do that, moms? In the name of Jesus.

E. **Serve Honestly, Heartily, and Hopefully, in the Workplace**

And then, when you go to work tomorrow, look in verses 22 through 24: *“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh;”—*now he’s not talking about some spiritual pastor, but he’s talking about a master according to the flesh—*“not with eyeservice,”*—we would say today, “not a clock-watcher”—*“as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;”—*now, watch it—*“and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;”—*verse 22 says you’re to serve honestly; verse 23 says you’re to serve heartily; verse 24 says and you’re to serve hopefully—*“knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward…”*—folks, when you go to work tomorrow and you work for your boss this way, there’s a hidden paycheck, and you have to wait until you get to heaven to collect it—*“knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”* (Colossians 3:22–24)

When you go to work tomorrow, you’re not going to work tomorrow for the person who gives you your paycheck; you are serving Jesus. I hope you believe that. I tell you that will put more joy in your step tomorrow. If somebody barks at you, you can say, “Well, I’m suffering shame for Jesus’ sake.” If it gets tiresome, you’re saying, “Lord Jesus, I’m going to stick it out. I’m going to have patience, endurance, for your sake. I am doing this, Jesus, in your name.”

You say, “Well, what does putting caps on tubes of toothpaste have to do with the name of Jesus?” Listen to me. Whatever you do, do all in the name of Jesus Christ. And when you do, it’s going to transform all of life. Friend, this is worship, because he says, “Whether you eat or drink—whatever you do—do all to the glory of God.” And what is worship? Giving God glory. Worship is giving God glory. Yes, worship is singing songs. Yes, worship is studying the Bible. But it does not end there. We bring our worship to church. We take our worship with us—and when we go out tomorrow. And we’re to live this way until Jesus comes.

III. Does It Culminate in the Praise of Jesus?

Now, thirdly, and very quickly, here’s the third thing it means to do it in the name of Jesus. Number one: You ask yourself, is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? Can I see Jesus doing it, smiling on it, approving it? Number two: Does it require the power of Jesus to get it done? Does it claim the power of Jesus? Number three: Does it culminate in the praise of Jesus? Does it culminate in the praise of Jesus? That is, if we do it in His name; that means, for His glory.

Some years ago, some of our Jewish friends brought me a beautifully engraved certificate, and it said, “Mr. Rogers, we have planted in the land of Israel a grove of trees in your name.” I so appreciated that, and I love the Jewish people. I love the Jewish nation. I love the land of Israel. And these were planted. What they were saying is, “We’re doing this as an act of gratefulness and as a means of giving honor to you.”

Now I want to ask you a question: Tomorrow morning, and all day Monday, and Tuesday, and Wednesday, and Thursday, Friday, Saturday, before you get to church—will your life bring honor to Jesus Christ? You see, the reputation of Jesus Christ is at stake in your life. The only Jesus this world knows is the Jesus in you.

Did you know the only thing you know about me, you know through my body? You say, “No, I know something about you through your books.” My body wrote those books. You say, “Well, I know something about you through your words.” My body speaks those words. You say, “Well, I know something about you by your attitude.” The only way you can tell anything about my attitude is the way I look, or what I say, or what I do. The only way you know anything about Adrian Rogers is his body has somehow let you know something about the man inside, right? Did you know the only way this world knows anything about Jesus is through His body? We’re His body. There’s no other way this world can know anything about Jesus Christ except through His body. We are here to minister Jesus Christ. We are His body. The Christian is the visible part of the invisible Christ, and Christ is the invisible part of the visible Christian. And, therefore, the reputation of Jesus Christ—the reputation of Jesus Christ—is wrapped up in us, the way we live.

Some of you kids, you’re saying, “Well, I want my teacher to become a Christian.” All right, what about the way you do your homework and your schoolwork? Is that consistent with being a Christian? Some of you say, “My mom and dad, they’re not saved. I’ve been witnessing to Mom and Dad. They just won’t listen to me.” You know, they might listen to you if you cleaned up your room every now and then and did some other things. What I’m trying to say is, do what you do so that Jesus Christ will be glorified.

A lot of us have a little fish on our car—a bumper sticker, or whatever. Hey, if you’re not going to drive right, take the bumper sticker off—take the bumper sticker off. I see some people that have a little plastic saint on the dashboard, and I’ve often thought, “Man, you need to take that thing off the dashboard and put him behind the steering wheel. That’s where the saint belongs.” Listen. Every day, every way, every thought, every deed, ought to be giving praise to Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Now, that’s what it means to do everything in the name of Jesus: where it’s consistent with His personality, demanding His power, and resulting in His praise and in His glory. And when we do that, then we’re going to be worshipping seven days a week, in every place, giving God glory and thanks. And so, don’t stop coming to church on Sunday, but bring your worship when you walk in these doors this coming Sunday.

Monday Morning Religion

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: February 18, 1996

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 3:16–24

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

COLOSSIANS 3:17

Outline

Introduction

I. Is What I am Doing Consistent with the Personality of Jesus Christ?

II. Does It Claim the Power of Jesus Christ

III. Does It Culminate in the Praise of Jesus

Conclusion

Introduction

Be finding the book of Colossians—and if you get Colossians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians all mixed up, the thing that helps me is General Electric Power Company: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. Find the book of Colossians, and find the third chapter; and when you’ve found it, look up here—Colossians chapter 3.

The curse of the twentieth century is Sunday morning religion. Now there’s nothing wrong with Sunday morning religion, but the problem is that so many people have only a Sunday morning religion. Somebody wrote these words: “They’re praising God on Sunday, but they’ll be all right on Monday: it’s just a little habit they’ve acquired.” Well then, we come to church then to worship God on Sunday—and well we ought. But, folks, we ought not simply come to worship; we ought to bring our worship to church. And when we leave this building, we ought to take our worship with us, because, you see, the Bible teaches that when we’re right with God, every day is a holy day, every act is to be a sacred deed, and everything we do we’re to do to the glory of God.

Now, look in verse 16—would you, please—Colossians chapter 3 and verse 16: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* (Colossians 3:16) Now that’s what we call a worship service! That’s a wonderful, wonderful definition of a worship service. Read it again: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord.”*

And how wonderful that is! Oh, how God wants us to worship Him!

Why does God want us to worship Him? Why does God want us to do this? Does our worship enrich God? I mean, if you give God your money, God is no richer. If you give God your strength, God is no stronger. If you give God your knowledge, God doesn't learn anything. God is God; but yet God wants us to love Him and worship Him, because He is love. And love wants to give, and love wants to receive. And God wants us to worship Him, not primarily for what worship does for us, or what worship does for Him, but for what worship does for us, because we become like what we worship. If you worship idols, you become like idols. The man molds the idol, and then the idol molds the man. If we worship the Lord Jesus, we become like the Lord Jesus.

But now, here's the wonderful thing about worship: Somebody this morning can give more money than you can. Somebody can sing better than you. Somebody can understand the Word of God better than you. And some can teach the Word of God better than you. But no one can worship better than you. Think about it. No one can worship better than you. You can have all of God you want. And it's not your duty to persuade God to bless you, but to permit Him to do so. And the simplest child here can worship God with a full heart, a pure heart, and therefore please God, and be blessed. So, verse 16 speaks of worship. It's a wonderful, wonderful command: letting the Word of God dwell in us richly, teaching, admonishing one another, singing and praising God in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. (Colossians 3:16)

I love the worship service. I've already been blessed this morning by the worship service. But worship will not end when we leave this building. Worship extends to all of life. Look, if you will now, in verse 17. Look at it: "*And...*"—notice that's a conjunction; it ties together verses 16 and 17—"*And whatsoever ye do...*"—now this is going beyond the worship service—"*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed...*"—now, watch this. It's highlighted in my Bible; it ought to be in your Bible—"*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*" (Colossians 3:17) Real worship extends to all of life—every deed, everyday!

What is worship? Worship is doing everything in the name of Jesus, and giving God thanks for it. Let me say that again: Worship is doing everything in the name of Jesus, and giving God thanks for it—according to verse 17. "Well, pastor, why is that?" Well, what is worship? Isn't worship glorifying God? Well then, if you do everything in the name of Jesus, and give God thanks for it, wouldn't that glorify God? Put these verses in your margin—1 Peter chapter 4 and verse 11: "*That God in all things may be glorified.*" (1 Peter 4:11) That is, in everything you do, God is to be glorified. Or here's a great verse; put this one down—1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 31: "*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*" (1 Corinthians 10:31) Eating your lunch today ought to be for the glory of God—anything that you do! And

after lunch today, if you get to do the dishes, doing dishes ought to be for the glory of God. One homemaker had this sign up over her kitchen sink: “Divine services held here three times a day”—doing dishes! That’s what the verse says: “Whether you eat, or whether you drink, or whatsoever you do, do it all to the glory of God.”

Now when we do this, here’s what happens: The so-called “secular” is sanctified; the everyday is edified; and God is glorified—the secular is sanctified; the everyday is edified; and God is glorified. “Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” Now we’ll walk out of this beautiful, spacious place of worship, and we’ll walk out underneath God’s canopy, the skies. We’ll go out into the cathedral of the skies, and we’ll take the worship that we have in our hearts right here, and we will carry it with us.

Do you know the mistake that so many of us make? We want to divide life up like a pie. We’ll have just certain slices. We say, “Well, I’m a good Christian; and so I’ll take all of my money, and I’ll divide it up like a pie. And I’ll take one-tenth of my money, and I’ll give it to God. I’ll take a one-tenth slice and say, ‘That belongs to God: take that out, and give it to God.’” And then, we boast—we say, “Oh, I gave a tenth of my money to God.” And then, we’ll take our time pie and we’ll say, “Well, not only will I give one-tenth of my money; I’ll give one-seventh of my time. I’ll give God one day out of seven. I’ll go to church, and Sunday will be a holy day.” And so we give God one-seventh of the time pie. I’ve got news for you, friend: When God comes to judge your life, He’s going to judge the whole pie—the whole pie! It all belongs to God: every slice; not just simply when you come here and put your offering in the plate; not simply when you come here and admonish one another, and sing in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

He goes on to say in the next verse, in verse 17, whatever we do, all of it is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus: “*Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*” (Colossians 3:17) No ground that is not holy; no time that is not sacred. In all natural things you can be spiritual, and in all spiritual things you’ll be natural. So therefore you’re naturally supernatural and supernaturally natural. That is, you don’t turn it on, and you don’t turn it off. You don’t simply come to church to worship God; you bring your worship to God.

Have you ever heard a person who even changes his voice when he comes into church? I sit with preachers sometimes, you know, and before the service we’ll be carrying on a conversation and he seems like a normal guy. And then he stands up to speak, and he sounds like he’s got a steeple stuck in his throat. Well, what happened from here to here? We act religious. No, friend, a man of God is the same on the platform, in the motel room, and at home at dinnertime. We are to live for Jesus Christ every way. We don’t turn it on, and we don’t turn it off.

You know, I hear some people pray—and I don’t like to mock prayers—but

sometimes they get so gooeey, and they say, “Lord, we come into thy presence.” I say, “Well, where have you been? I mean, you live in God’s presence.” That’s what he’s saying. He is saying, friend, that there needs to be something called Monday morning religion. *And if people would begin to live on Monday what is preached on Sunday, people would begin to believe what is preached on Sunday around the world*, isn’t that right?

Now, listen. He says, “*Whatsoever ye do...*”—in verse 17—“*...do all in the name of Jesus.*” (Colossians 3:17) So that poses the question: What does it mean to do all in the name of Jesus? Three things. What does it mean to do everything in the name of Jesus? That’s the key—look at it in verse 17: “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of Jesus.*” So if you want to know what you’re going to be doing Monday in the name of Jesus—or when you leave this building, in the name of Jesus—ask these three questions.

I. Is What I Am Doing Consistent with the Personality of Jesus Christ?

Number one: Is what I am doing consistent with the personality of Jesus Christ? Is what I am doing, whatever it is, consistent with the personality of Jesus Christ? Because the name of Jesus equates with the personality of Jesus. You see, the name and the character are inextricably interwoven.

A little boy goes down to the sporting goods store to get himself a baseball bat. Now he picks a particular baseball bat out because his favorite baseball hero has his name inscribed on that bat. Now the baseball hero presumably has put his name on the bat because he says, “This bat is consistent with the way I play baseball. This bat is a good bat. This is a bat that I approve. This is a bat that I can put my name on, because it is consistent with my character, my personality, my ability as a baseball player. If you get this bat, you’ll know that I put my name on this bat. So this bat is a good bat. Because this bat represents my character, my personality, I put my name on it.” Now methinks he put his name on it to get some money; but I’m just saying, theoretically, he put his name on that bat to say, “This bat is consistent with the standards that I hold,” isn’t that right? “I endorse it. I put my name on it.”

Question: Is what you’re thinking about doing something that Jesus Christ could put His name on? Could Jesus Christ put His stamp on it? Could Jesus Christ say, “Yes, I’ll sign off on that; yes, I’ll put my name on that; yes, that is consistent with my personality; yes, that is consistent with my character; yes, that is consistent with who I am and what I am; yes, I will sign off on that”? You have no right to do anything—I said *anything*—that Jesus Christ can’t sign His name to. You say, “Oh, good night, pastor!” That’s right. You have no right to do anything—even brush your teeth—that Jesus Christ cannot sign

off on, and say, “What you’re doing is consistent with my character.”

Now, listen to it, folks: “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all—in the name of Jesus Christ.*” (Colossians 3:17) Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? People are always asking me, “Is it right to do this? Can I do that? Is this wrong?” And they want me to give them some rules. Folks, the Bible is not primarily a rulebook; it is not a book of minute law. It’s a book of great principles. Now if the Bible were a book of minute laws, you’d have to have a freight train to haul it around in. I mean, you think of how many little details there are in life everyday. And besides that, if it were a book of minute laws, what applies today would not apply to the first century when Paul wrote this, or vice versa. Paul wrote about eating meat sacrificed to idols. We don’t have that problem. But can you imagine Paul writing in the Bible, “Thou shalt not go to an X-rated movie”? People in the first century would say, “What’s an X-rated movie? I don’t know what that is.” You see, it wouldn’t apply. If the Bible were a book of minute laws, it wouldn’t apply. And I’ll tell you something else: You can find loopholes in laws; but you can’t find loopholes in the character of Jesus Christ.

The Bible is not a book of minute laws; it is a book of great principles—and one of the greatest is the name of Jesus. Can I sign Jesus’ name to this thing? What I’m about to do, is it consistent with the character of Jesus Christ? Can I imagine Jesus watching this film? Would I go dressed this way if Jesus were my companion? Some girls go outside in things they ought not to come downstairs in—one of these “gownless evening straps.” Young lady, would you dress that way if Jesus Christ were your companion? Would Jesus sign off on that? Would Jesus Christ put His name on that business contract? Would Jesus Christ accompany you on that vacation? Would Jesus Christ subscribe to that magazine? Would He? You say, “That’s pretty narrow.” Indeed—indeed it is. Whatever you do, do all in the name of Jesus, giving God thanks for it. Now if you can smoke that cigarette and say, “I’m doing this in your name; thank you for this lung cancer, Lord,” do it. Whatever you do, do it in the name of Jesus. It’s not a book of minute laws; it’s a book of great principles. Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus Christ?

On one of these train platforms where they had a commuter train a little boy out there had shoelaces and apples and fountain pens and little notions he was selling. He had his little basket; all his little things there, selling to the commuters there going back and forth. And one man rushing to catch the commuter train knocked the little guy over, and his stuff went sprawling all over that platform. And all the commuters were coming by and stepping on the stuff and everything. He was trying to gather it up. His change was running across there. The man never even stopped to say, “I’m sorry”—just knocked him aside and got on the train.

One man saw what happened. He put his briefcase down; he got down on his knees

with the little fellow, and started gathering it all up. Finally, they got it all together. He said, “Son, I’m so sorry that man was rude to you.” And he said, “Son, here’s some money to make up for it. I’m so sorry this happened to you.” The little boy looked at him as the man picked up his briefcase and started off. He said, “Mister, are you Jesus Christ?” He said, “No, son, I’m not; but I’m a follower of His, and I’m doing what I think He would do if He were here.” That’s what it is—I mean, just acting like Jesus, just living like Jesus. Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus Christ? Begin to live like that on Monday.

II. Does What I Am Doing Claim the Power of Jesus Christ?

Now here’s the second question you ask yourself if you do it all in the name of Jesus: Does it claim the power of Jesus Christ? Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? Does it claim the power of Jesus? Because name stands not only for personality, but it stands for power and authority.

Remember what Jesus said in John chapter 14, verse 14? *“If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.”* (John 14:14) When we bring His name into it, He begins to do it. He doesn’t say, “If you ask in my name, then I’ll help you to do it.” He does help us to do it; but the way He helps us to do it is by doing it in us and through us. And so He literally says, “I will do it.” You see, His name has His authority behind it.

Your name has your authority behind it. Every time you sign a check, you put your name on the check. Do you know what you’re doing? You’re putting your authority on that check. You’re saying to the person who has that little piece of paper that’s got your name on it, he can take that little piece of paper to the bank, and the banker will give him some of your money, because you put your name on there, isn’t that right? You put your name on there; you put your authority on there. When the bank teller sees it, the bank teller says, “Yes, I have the authority to give you some money, because that man’s name is on that little piece of paper.” A pretty powerful thing—if you can just sign your name on a little piece of paper, and the bank begins to hand out some of your money—because your name stands for authority. Now if the check bounces, they don’t put the piece of paper in jail; they put you in jail, because, you see, the name represents you. And the name of Jesus represents the Lord Jesus. And when you bring Jesus’ name into something, you bring Jesus Christ into it.

Now verse 17 says, *“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”* (Colossians 3:17) Now that’s a very important principle, because the name of Jesus is the authority of Jesus. Put this verse in your margin—Luke 10, verses 17 to 19. Jesus sent out seventy people to represent Him there in the early days of His ministry, and the Bible says, beginning in verse 17, *“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto*

us through thy name”—“even the devils”—the demons—“are subject unto us through thy name.” “And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Luke 10:17–19)

Now in that verse, you don't see it, but it's two different words that are used for “power” in the Greek language. One is *dunamis*, and the other is *exousia*. And what Jesus is saying is, “I give you *exousia* over all the *dunamis* of the enemy.” What's the difference? *Exousia* means “authority.” He says, “I'm giving you authority over all the power of the enemy.” The King James translates it, “*I give...you power...over all the power of the enemy.*” But there's a slight difference, because the power that Jesus gives us is the power of authority, and when we have the power of authority, we don't need the power of strength or might.

Now here's a 185-pound policeman. He stands in the middle of the street. He's got on his uniform; he has his badge. There's an eighteen-wheeler truck, a semi, coming; and that policeman blows his whistle, holds up his hand, tells the truck to stop: the truck stops. What does the policeman stop the truck with? Power? Not really. Authority. I mean, a 185-pound man can't stop an eighteen-wheeler truck if the truck driver decides he doesn't want to stop. But when the man says, “Stop,” what he is saying, whether he says it out loud or not, is what? “Stop in the name of the law”—“in the name of the law.”

Now, what does that mean: “in the name of the law”? That means “in the authority of the law.” Isn't that what it means? “In the authority of the law,” because behind me is the precinct. Behind the precinct is the entire police force. Behind the police force is the state militia. Behind the state militia, if needed, is the National Guard—all in one man with a badge, who says, “Stop in the name of the law.”

Now Jesus said, “I give you authority over all the power of the enemy.” Who is stronger: you or Satan? Satan is. Who has more authority? You do. He's the eighteen-wheeler, but you're the cop. Jesus said, “I give you authority over all the power of the enemy.”

Now whatever you do, do all in the name of Jesus. Does it portray the personality of Jesus? Does it claim the power of Jesus Christ? Now that means, everything you do, you're to do in the authority of Jesus. You're to rear your children in the authority of Jesus Christ, in the name of Christ. You are to do your homework, if you're a child, in the name, in the authority, of Jesus Christ. You say, “Wait a minute, pastor. That's pushing religion a little far, isn't it?” No, it's not. That's exactly what he's saying. He's saying, “Whatever you do, do all in the name of Jesus Christ.” Is it consistent with the personality of Christ? Does it claim the power of Christ?

Now may I get personal a little bit? Thank you. All right, let's just flesh this out a little bit. Look in verse 18. Every married woman, listen to verse 18: “*Wives, submit*

yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." (Colossians 3:18) Wives, submit to your husbands in the power of the name of Jesus Christ. Wives, submit to your husband in the power of the name of Jesus Christ. Now this is not slavery; this is not subjugation; this is not demeaning. *Do you know what submission is? It is one equal voluntarily placing himself under the authority of another equal, that God may therefore be glorified.* Now, husbands, men and women are equal in the sight of God. The Bible tells us in Galatians 3, verse 28, "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither is there bond nor free, neither male nor female: for you're all one in Jesus Christ." (Galatians 3:28) Men and women are equal; but how in this day of militant feminism is a godly wife going to submit to her husband? You want me to tell you how? In the name of Jesus—in the name of Jesus; in the power of that name.

Now, let's go on down and look at verse 19. Husbands are to love in the name of Jesus. Look in verse 19: *"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."* (Colossians 3:19) If the love of the wife is to be submissive love, the love of the husband is to be sacrificial love and serving love. It is *agape* love. The word that is used for love here is *agape*, and that means "to sacrifice." The Bible says in Ephesians 5, verse 25, that husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. (Ephesians 5:25) So this verse says you're not to be *the bitter half*, you're to be a loving person, serving your wife.

Now, how can I do anything as Jesus did it? Only in the power of His name. The only way I can love Joyce is, by what? Is to do it in the name of Jesus. And that doesn't mean to say, "Joyce, I love you in the name of Jesus." It means, "Lord, with your authority, your power in my life, I'll love you as I want to love you."

Now, look again in verse 20. Children are to obey in the name of Jesus: *"Children, obey your parents in all things..."*—there's our word again—*"in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."* (Colossians 3:20) The measure of your obedience, young person, is in all things. The motive of your obedience is to please the Lord. This is pleasing to the Lord. A disobedient child is not worshipping God if he doesn't have Monday morning religion. Clean up your room in the name of Jesus. Do your homework in the name of Jesus. That's what he's saying: "Whatever you do."

Wives, submit in the name of Jesus. Husbands, love in the name of Jesus. Children, obey in the name of Jesus. Parents, raise your children in the name of Jesus. Look in verse 21: *"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."* (Colossians 3:21) And the word *fathers*, that's translated; in Hebrew, it says *parents*. It's speaking primarily not to the father, but it includes the mother. And the Bible says we're not to provoke them. Children, little children, need your tender love. Boy, I wish we had more parents who raised their kids in the name of Jesus, in the authority of Jesus, the power that Jesus gives.

Poor little children! So many children are abused and broken today. I got out a yardstick when I was preparing this sermon, went in the closet, got it out, and I put it up to me. A three-foot yardstick came right about here. I'm six feet tall. And I tried to imagine my size compared to the size of a child again. Can you imagine what would happen to you, mister, if you walked out of here and a twelve-foot man met you—I mean, a twelve-footer—and he had a big voice for telling you to do things? Good night! Can you imagine how little children feel? I mean, we're so big and so powerful.

And the father—I have watched a lot of dads. I'll tell you one thing I have found out about dads: Every dad whose kid loves the daddy is a tender daddy—a tender daddy. You have strength. They want their dad to be strong; they want to brag about how strong their dad is. But when their daddy is with them, he doesn't need to be strong for them; he needs to be tender, to love those children. Don't provoke those children. Be tender. Learn the technique of tenderness. How are you going to do that? In the name of Jesus.

Listen. Employees, serve in the name of Jesus. When you go to work tomorrow morning, are you going in the name of Jesus? Look in verse 22: *"Servants, obey in all things your masters..."*—notice how many times he says *all*. Whatever you do, do *all* in the name of Jesus—*"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;"*—here it is again—*"and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not as unto men."* (Colossians 3:22–23) How do you work tomorrow morning in the office? Honestly—verse 22. Heartily—verse 23. Do it heartily, with enthusiasm, as unto the Lord. You ought to work for your boss as if he were Jesus Christ. You say, "That two-legged devil?" That's right. As if he were Jesus Christ.

When a man goes down to the employment agency to look for workers, he ought to say, "And, by the way, if you have any Christians, send them over. I don't understand these Christians. They get to work on time. They don't complain. They work hard. They serve. They go the extra mile. They're sacrificial. They're honest. I can trust them with anything. Well, man, you'd think they think I'm God. I don't know what they have; but, boy, they're different from anybody else." Are you different from those around you on the job? You are if you have Monday morning religion. I mean, again, can you imagine the influence this would mean? Whatever you do, he says, in your secular employment, do it as unto the Lord. (Colossians 3:17)

You say, "Well, I'm not getting paid enough for that." You're getting paid far more than you realize. Notice verse 24: *"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."* (Colossians 3:24) You can't give a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple and lose your reward. Don't look at that paycheck; look at that hidden paycheck. You're doing it as unto Jesus. Question:

Wouldn't this city be a different place if everybody left church this morning to go live this way on Monday morning? I mean, if wives lived this way, if husbands lived this way, if children lived this way—wouldn't it be wonderful if employers and employees lived this way?

III. Does What I Am Doing Culminate in the Praise of Jesus?

Now, what does it mean to do everything in the name of Jesus? Well, ask this question: Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? Number two: Does it claim the power of Jesus? Number three—and here it is, finally, quickly: Does it culminate in the praise of Jesus?

Now, again, to do something in His name means for His praise. Over in Israel somewhere there's a grove of trees that have been planted. Do you know what the name of that grove of trees is? It is the Adrian Rogers grove of trees, because some of my Jewish friends know the great love that I have for the nation Israel, and they said, "Pastor Rogers, we're going to plant a grove of trees in Israel in your name." Now, what does that mean: in my name? That means "for your honor," and I'm grateful for the honor—"for your honor."

Now when you do everything in the name of Jesus, it must be for His honor, for His praise, for His glory. That's what it means to do it in the name of Jesus. Now, let me ask you a question: Does Jesus get glorified by what you do? Jesus can be glorified by the way you take your vacation. Jesus can be glorified by the way you keep your yard. Jesus can be glorified by the way you dress. Jesus can be glorified by the way you smile. Everything you do ought to glorify the Lord Jesus.

Again, kids, you go off to school and you're praying for your lost professor or your lost teacher, praying, "O God, bring my teacher to Jesus Christ." Well, what about your homework? Are you doing your homework in such a way that by the way you do your homework it brings glory to Jesus Christ so your teacher will have that testimony? Wives, are you praying for your husbands to be saved? Are you living in such a way that Jesus gets praised by the way you live? Some of you kids are praying for your lost parents. Do you know one of the best ways that you can witness to your lost parents? Clean up your bedroom. One woman went in there to clean up her son's bedroom, and the vacuum cleaner threw up. When you get saved down here at home, and you go back and say, "Mom and Dad, you need to be saved," they need to see a difference in your life. Don't you think so? Not just simply you coming down here to Bible study on Sunday, but going back on Monday and living a radically different life.

Conclusion

Now, look at verse 17 again: *"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of*

the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” (Colossians 3:17) What is worship on Monday morning? It’s doing everything in the name of Jesus, and giving God thanks for it. Is it consistent with the personality of Jesus? Does it claim and depend upon the power of Jesus? Does it culminate in the praise of Jesus? If it does, you’ve done it in the name of Jesus, and He is glorified. And then, when you go to work tomorrow in your office, or whatever you’re doing, you’re glorifying Him; and therefore, you’re worshipping Him. And your worship doesn’t just simply end here on Sunday morning with admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and whatever you do. However, you’re carrying that worship out on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday; and then, come Sunday, you bring your worship to church.

Now, folks, when we do that, the secular is sanctified; the everyday is edified; God is glorified. Every day is a holy day. Every place is a sacred place. And whatever you do in word or deed, Paul said, do all for the glory of God. Isn’t that neat? Praise God!

The Tragedy of Sunday Morning Worship

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: November 30, 1986

Main Scripture Text: Colossians 3:16–25

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.”
COLOSSIANS 3:23

Outline

Introduction

I. Test One: Is it Consistent with the Character of Christ?

II. Test Two: Can It Be Done in the Authority of Christ?

III. Test Three: Will What I Do Result in Glory to Jesus?

Conclusion

Introduction

All right, turn, please, if you would, with me tonight to Colossians chapter 3. And I want to begin reading for devotion tonight Colossians 3, beginning in verse 16. And it speaks of worship—and that’s what we’ve been doing tonight: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ, but he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.”* (Colossians 3:16–25)

I want to talk to you about the tragedy of Sunday morning religion. Now this passage of Scripture that I’ve just read to you talks about praising the Lord, and it talks about our communal—our common—praise in verse 16, where it says, *“Let the word of Christ*

dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Colossians 3:16) Now that’s what we have done as we have worshipped the Lord here on Sunday. But the real proof of our worship is not primarily here tonight on Sunday, but it is tomorrow morning. I want you to notice the bridge that verse 17 makes here: “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed...”—now Paul’s been talking about our words up here in verse 16. And now he begins to talk about our deeds in verse 17—“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” (Colossians 3:17)

Again, I want to say that the curse of twentieth-century Christianity is Sunday morning religion. Somebody wrote these words: “They’re praising God on Sunday; they’ll be all right on Monday: it’s just a little habit they’ve acquired.” And people don’t expect us to be any different, really, on Monday morning. The real proof of what I preach, and the real proof of what we’ve sung tonight, will show up tomorrow morning when you go to work, when you go to school, when you do your housework, or during whatever you do: that’s the test of what we believe. You see, this thing of worship doesn’t stop when we leave church. As I said last Sunday, which I want to continue to say this Sunday, *we don’t come to church to worship; we’re to bring our worship with us when we come to church. We don’t stop worship when we leave church; we’re to take our worship with us when we leave church.*

Now, let me give you a definition of worship. It’s found here in verse 17: “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*” Here’s a definition of worship: Worship is doing everything in the name of Jesus, and giving God thanks for it. That’s worship. Worship is doing everything in the name of Jesus, and giving God thanks for it.

So let’s look at this list here. Verse 18: Wives, tomorrow morning, when you submit to your husband, you’ll be worshipping the Lord. Thank God that you can submit to him. Husbands, tomorrow, when you love your wives—they are not the bitter half, but the better half—you will be worshipping God. Give God thanks for that. Children, tomorrow morning, when you obey your parents in all things, and give God thanks for it, you will be worshipping the Lord. Fathers—verse 21—when you deal with your children with such understanding and tenderness that you encourage them rather than discourage them, you’ll be worshipping the Lord. Employees, when you go to your job tomorrow, and you work for your boss as if he were Jesus Christ—not being a clock-watcher—then you will be worshipping the Lord. And give God thanks for it. (Colossians 3:18–22)

Notice again in verse 23: “*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.*” (Colossians 3:23) Now, why do I say that this is worship? Because worship is the glorification of God. Now, let me give you another verse here that points

out the same thing—1 Peter 4, verse 11: *“That God in all things may be glorified.”* (1 Peter 4:11) In all things, God is to be glorified. Don’t get the idea that we’ve just met here tonight to glorify God, and that tomorrow morning you’re going to go out and do something else. Everything that you do is done to glorify God. And, again, let me give you another verse—1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 31: *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”* (1 Corinthians 10:31) Ladies and gentlemen, I have no right to do anything that doesn’t glorify God. Do you agree with that? Nod your head: “Everything I do is to glorify God.”

Now, what is worship? It’s glorifying God. Therefore, when you go to work tomorrow and pick up your tools, you’re worshipping. When you go to the office and sit behind your typewriter, you’re worshipping. When you’re doing dishes, you’re worshipping. You say, “Now, give me that again.” All right, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God, right? Whether you eat or drink. All right, when you sit down to a meal tonight, after the service, or when you go out and get something to eat, you’re worshipping. You say, “That makes worship bigger than I thought it was.” I hope it does. I hope that you see that whatever you do in word or deed is worship. Worship is not just what we say; it is what we do. We are to do all to the glory of God.

I heard of a woman that had this sign put over her kitchen sink: “Divine services held here three times a day.” While she washed dishes, she was praising the Lord. Well, you kids, this will be hard to swallow: When you go to school tomorrow, you’re going to be worshipping the Lord, if you understand about what the Bible is talking. You see, folks, in the New Testament there’s a very wonderful principle, and here’s what it is: Not one day out of seven is a holy day, but all seven are holy days. And life for us cannot be divided into the secular and the sacred. It could be so for other people, but not for us. There’s no area of your life that your faith ought not to reach.

People say, “Well, I don’t believe in mixing politics and religion.” Brother, I do. Somebody says, “I don’t believe in mixing business and religion.” I do. I believe in putting our faith in everything we do. And, dear friend, if you cannot do something for the glory of God, then you have no business doing it. I don’t care what it is. And if you do something, it should be done for the glory of God.

Now as a Christian, I’m talking to you about what you are to do on Monday morning. The secular becomes sanctified. The everyday becomes edified. And therefore God becomes glorified. To me, *as a Christian, there is no ground that is not holy ground and no time that is not sacred time.* One of the greatest pieces of advice that I’ve ever heard—and I don’t know who first said it, but God has certainly taught this in the Bible, though somebody’s made a proverb out of it—is this: “In all natural things we’re to be spiritual. And in all spiritual things we are to be natural.”

Now, you think about that: “In all natural things we’re to be spiritual.” When you go

out tomorrow to pump gasoline, or you go out tomorrow to type a letter, those are natural things, but be spiritual. Bring God into it. Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, and give God thanks for it.

But then, in spiritual things, be natural. Have you ever seen a person who kind of gets religious when they come to church? That bothers me; it makes me itch a little bit when people get religious. I mean, they're normal people out in the hallway, but all of a sudden they come in and they begin to speak like they've swallowed a steeple. And they get this stained-glass appearance on their eyeballs; all of a sudden they just turn it on. And while they're in church, they're very religious. And then they go outside and they turn it off again.

Sometimes, I'll be in a service with a brother preacher—I'll be sitting there with a guy who's going to preach or make announcements or something. We'll be sitting up there doing what preachers ought not to do sometimes: talking in the song service or something. We'll be kind of having a good time, and he'll seem like such a wonderful guy. And then all of a sudden, he stands up and says, "Dearly beloved." I wonder what happened to the guy from when he was there till he got up here. There's something that happens: he begins to act spiritual. Hey, folks, that turns people off. Did you know that? Listen. I like a guy who's the same in a motel room as he is in a pulpit; I mean, he's just an ordinary guy. In all natural things be spiritual. And in all spiritual things be natural. Be yourself.

A Christian is naturally supernatural and supernaturally natural. And every place is holy ground, and every day is spiritual. Oh, if we could only get our people to see that! If we could only get them to understand that we don't just come to church to worship; we bring our worship with us! We don't leave our worship at church; we take our worship with us. Again, look at verse 17: "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*" (Colossians 3:17) Wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants, employees: whatever you do now, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Let me just wrap this all up by telling you what it means to do something in the name of the Lord Jesus. Now that's the key right here in verse 17: "*Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*" Anything that I do tomorrow, I have to ask it to pass three tests, and all of these have to deal with the name of the Lord Jesus. And if it will not pass these three tests, then I cannot do it. I have no business doing it. It is wrong for me.

I. Test One: Is it Consistent with the Character of Christ?

Number one: Is this thing that I'm about to do consistent with the character of Christ? Now the word *name* means "character" in the Bible. The name of God and the character of God are inseparably linked. The name of Jesus has a meaning to it: it speaks of the

character of Jesus. It literally means “Jehovah saves.” And so I’m to do something in the name of “Jehovah saves.”

Now that’s very interesting to me, because, you see, tomorrow there will be a lot of things that I can’t find anything in the Bible about which has been written. I can’t find anything in the Bible, for example, that says, “Thou shalt not drive through a school zone at 110 miles an hour.” It’s just not in here. I can’t find anything here in the Bible that says, “Thou shalt not smoke pot.” I don’t find anything in the Bible that says not to go to an X-rated movie. And I don’t even find anything in the Bible that says I should not match for cokes, or look at dirty pictures, as such. I can find some principles, but I cannot find those things spelled out.

Now, learn this about the Bible: Christianity is not a rulebook religion; the Bible is not primarily a list of do’s and don’ts. The Bible is not a book of minute laws; the Bible is a book of great principles. Now the younger that a child is, the more do’s and don’ts you have to give that child. Remember when your children just got old enough to stay home by themselves, and you and mama went off and left them, but you wondered if you really should? Remember that being kind of a gray area? Remember when you walked out the door what you kept on saying? “Don’t do this.” You know: “Don’t play with matches. Don’t let strangers into the house. Don’t go off. Don’t...” And, you know, you kept saying, “Don’t do this; do this; and don’t do this,” because you were just not certain that they were mature enough, so you kept giving them rules. But as they get older and older, you find out that the more mature they have become, the less rules you have to give them. And if they are mature children, if they are good children, and if they have been observing you, then there are just certain things that they do and that they don’t do, because they know you and they know your character. And whether or not it had ever come up before, they would say, “You know, Daddy, I just don’t think you’d want me to do that. That wouldn’t be consistent with your character.”

Now, you see, the word *name* stands for character. And all I have to do in anything tomorrow is just ask myself, “Does this fit with the character of Jesus?” *The Bible’s not a rulebook—and I’m glad it’s not. If it were a rulebook, you’d have to have a boxcar to transport it.* And, you know, you can find loopholes in rules. Give a guy a lawyer and enough time, and he’ll find a loophole in almost any law or rule. But you can’t find a loophole in the character of Jesus Christ. And so you can just say, “I’ll do this in the name of Jesus.” To do something in the name of Jesus means that Jesus would approve of it.

Who is it, Ted Williams, that puts his name—or used to do so—on the baseball bats for Sears? Is it Ted Williams? All right, you see ol’ Ted Williams’ name on that bat, so what does that mean? Ted Williams thinks that it’s a good bat. He’s put his name on it. He approves of it. You see, *name* stands for character; it stands for approval. Now what

this literally means is that when you do everything in the name of Jesus, don't do anything to which Jesus couldn't sign His name. Don't do anything to which Jesus could not respond, "This is consistent with my character, something of which I approve." That's a good test, isn't it? Everything that we do tomorrow, "Lord, could you sign your name to it?" All right, so I must ask myself tomorrow morning when my Monday morning religion is what I'm about to do, what I'm endeavoring to do is this: "Is it consistent with the character of Jesus? Could Jesus sign his name of approval to this?"

II. Test Two: Can It Be Done in the Authority of Christ?

All right, the second question I must ask is not only, can it be done with the approval of Christ?; not only, is it consistent with the character of Christ?; but, secondly, can this thing be done in the authority of Christ? Because not only does *name* stand for character; *name* also stands for authority. When a person puts his name on something, he's actually putting his authority behind it.

For example, if some stranger were to walk into a store around here in Memphis, Tennessee, and say, "I want to buy fifty pizzas for Bellevue Baptist Church," well, the person if he's behind the counter would say, "Now, who are you?" "Well, I'm so and so." "Do you have a purchase order?" "Yes. Here's a purchase order." It is signed by Phil Weatherwax, or Phil Newberry, or something like that—their name is on there. And their name says to the person who is behind the counter or whatever that there is an authorization to buy these pizzas.

When I put my name on a check and give that check to you, that means that the teller in the bank is authorized to take some of my money and give it to the bearer of that check, because my name is on that check, and that name stands for me. It has my authority behind it. Now if I write a bad check, they don't put the check in jail; they put me in jail.

Okay, because my name on that check stands for me, it stands for my authority. So tomorrow, not only am I to do those things that fit in with the character of Jesus Christ; but tomorrow, when I go out to live, I am to do all that is consistent with His character and with His authority. Now I try to model my life after Jesus—that is, the character of Jesus—for that's what name stands for. But that's not enough. I need power. I need authority. Listen. Tomorrow morning, you are to live your life in the authority of Jesus Christ. Now, you wives, submit to your husbands in the authority of Jesus. You husbands, love your wives with the authority of Jesus. You children, obey your parents in the authority of Jesus. You employees, when you go to work, do that in the authority of Jesus. School kids, when you do your homework, do your homework in the authority of Jesus.

Jesus said in John chapter 14, verse 14, "*If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will*

do it.” (John 14:14) You see, when you bring His name into it, then He does it. God never expected you to do anything for Him, but He wants you to do something through Him. You bring His name into it; you do it in the name of Jesus. Now you might not be consciously saying, “In the name of Jesus”; but before you leave your room tomorrow morning, you are saying, “Lord, I’m going to live my life in you, and you’re going to live your life through me. And if I do something in your name, that means that your power, your authority, is in my life.”

Every one of us is to live tomorrow authoritatively. We’re to say, “It’s not I who lives, but Christ who lives in me, because I take the name of Jesus, the authority of Jesus, and whatever I do, if I do it in the name of Jesus, that Jesus’ power and that Jesus’ authority is in me. And I keep yielding more and more to him.” Ian Thomas has a way of saying it: “I just vacate, and He occupies; and I vacate, and He occupies; and I vacate, and He occupies; and the first thing you know, my life is just one great big vacation, because He has come into me and He has begun to live His life through me.” Now, tomorrow, don’t do anything that Jesus couldn’t sign His name to. And, tomorrow, don’t attempt anything in your own strength, but do it in the name of Jesus—in the authority of Jesus.

III. Test Three: Will What I Do Result in Glory to Jesus?

Now, the third thing I want to say before we have our Lord’s Supper—I want to ask this third question: Will what I do result in glory to Jesus? Because that’s the third thing that “in the name” means. “In the name” means “for that person’s praise” or “for that person’s glory.”

Let me illustrate what I’m talking about. A while back, our Jewish community here wrote me a letter and they said to me, “Adrian Rogers, we respect you and love you, and we want you to know that we have planted a grove of trees in the land of Israel in your name”—“in your name.” So somewhere—I’ve never seen that grove of trees—but somewhere, if they’re still living—I hope the things didn’t die—but somewhere over there in the Holy Land is a grove of trees.

Now when they said, “We did that in your name,” what did they mean? They meant, “We did that for your honor”—“for your honor.” In this place, they weren’t saying, “We’re doing it to be consistent with your character,” or “We’re doing it with your authority,” but they were saying, “We are doing it for your honor.” And that’s the third thing it means to do something in Jesus’ name. Now, remember we’re to do everything we do in the name of Jesus. And so here’s the third test that I can put to anything that I can do—or should do: Will it bring glory to Jesus? Can I do it in His name so that it will bring Him glory? Now if it brings Him glory, then I can do it. If it doesn’t bring Him glory, then I can’t do it.

Now, again, I want to remind you we're not just talking about church work. Look, if you will, in verses 22 and following: *"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."* (Colossians 3:22–23)

Now, suppose you have a job. Suppose you work in an automobile shop and you straighten bent fenders. Now the Bible says in verse 23, *"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord."* Now you ought to straighten fenders to give Jesus glory; and if you can't straighten fenders to give Jesus glory, then you ought not to straighten fenders. If you cannot be a lawyer or a dentist to give Jesus glory—or a physician, or a businessman—then you ought not to do it. The Bible says that everything you do, you are to do in the name of Jesus. Nothing is excluded out of that—nothing! That is, everything that I am to do, I am to do with His approval, with His authority, and for His acclaim. Do you understand that: with His approval, in His authority, and for His acclaim? It is to bring glory to Him—everything I do!

So therefore, if you have a secular—a so-called *secular*—job, how should you serve your employer? Well, look again, if you will, in verse 24 of this same chapter here. It's so clear: *"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."* (Colossians 3:24) Now that's interesting. When you work at a secular job—what the world calls a secular job—Paul says that you're serving Jesus. How many businessmen have there been who have said, "Boy I'd just like to quit this job and serve the Lord"? Friend, you've got a skewed idea of what Christianity is.

You are serving the Lord on your job if you do it in the name of Jesus. And God puts you right there, and that job that you have is to be your temple of devotion and your lampstand of witness; and all that you do, you are to do as to the Lord. So verse 22 says that you are to work honestly. Look at verse 22: *"not with eyeservice, as menpleasers."* (Colossians 3:22) That means that you're not to be a clock-watcher, just getting by; you are to serve the Lord heartily. In verse 23: *"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily."* (Colossians 3:23) That is, it's a sin for you not to do your best. The reputation of Jesus is at stake.

Let me say to you something about you kids and your homework. I wish somebody had told me this when I was in school. You ought to do your homework for Jesus; not for the teacher, and not even for Mom or Dad. You've been witnessing to your teacher. You say, "Well, my teacher just doesn't know God. I've been witnessing to my teacher." Well, I'm going to tell you that you're going to do a poor job witnessing to your teacher if you're not a good student.

Some of you kids have unsaved parents and you're praying for your parents to be saved. Well, why should your parents believe in your Christianity if you can't even keep

your room clean? Or is that too much conviction? Some of you kids, if you took a vacuum cleaner in your room, then it would throw up. And yet you're praying for Mom and Dad to be saved. Now this is really practical, because what we do, we're to do for the glory of God. It is a sin for a Christian to do less than his best. When we go out to work tomorrow, whether we're moms, dads, kids, or employees, we're to do it honestly, and we're to do it heartily, as to the Lord.

Conclusion

What is worship? We've had praise worship here tonight, but I want to tell you what else worship is: Worship is doing everything in the name of Jesus, and giving God thanks for it.