

The Character of Christ pt 1

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Preacher: Pastor Wolski

[0 : 00] It's a great song. It's a favorite of mine. It's a favorite of my wife's.

A favorite of mine. But I think it might be her favorite. It was her grandmother's favorite. It's probably why it's her favorite. But it's deep. I think it's deep. A lot of those hymns got some depth to them. I appreciate that of those songs we sing. And that's the end of that verse. Just flash the thought through my heart. That the days, the moments, they're fleeting.

And yesterday is gone. You're never going to be able to do anything for Jesus Christ yesterday. And today is pretty much gone. You're not going to be able to do much more for Christ today. Man, the days are fleeting, church. And pretty soon we're going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give account of ourselves one by one.

[0 : 59] And I hope we're prepared. These songs, they trigger those thoughts. Praise the Lord for that. So tonight we're going to start a series. This is going to be my first message in a series that has no ending.

Literally. It's just going to reserve the right to be completely random with it if and when this series continues because there is no format to it. What I'm calling this series is Rabbit Trails.

And there's a, you guys, some of you know Pastor Rick DeMichael in Idaho in Treasure Valley Baptist Church. And a long time ago I heard him do something that just kind of stuck with me. He called it Shorts.

And that is, for those of you, you study, you read your Bible, sometimes you're looking for a sermon or a message, a thought hits you and you just scribble it down and it may never amount to anything. Sometimes those thoughts and those scriptures turn into full-fledged sermons. But sometimes they're nothing. And what he did was he just realized, I've got all these little thoughts that I'm never going to use, so I'm just going to do a couple of them in one night, like on a Wednesday night, and he called it Shorts.

[2 : 03] And it was kind of a neat thought. And that stuck with me, but I'm not trying to emulate that by any means. But what I've got going on in my mind here is there's times when you're preaching and you're going through some material that you come across something that's just, to go into it just is not going to help the sermon that you're on.

It's going to take you too far down a rabbit trail. And so I thought, but sometimes it's just worth going back and revisiting that rabbit trail and actually spending some time on it. And so that's what I want to do tonight.

Recently, I've been preaching along this theme behind me of growing together. And the last two sermons was growing in knowing, and then last Sunday was growing in showing.

And we came across some verses. We don't need to turn to them to start here, but I trust you'll remember them. In Ephesians 2, verse 20, the Apostle Paul said, But ye have not so learned Christ. And he references some things that the Gentiles do in their manner of life.

And he says, you didn't learn that from Jesus Christ. And then he went on to talk about the new man. In Matthew 11, verse 29, Jesus Christ said, Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. And he said he's meek and he's lowly.

[3 : 10] And in both of these passages that refer to what you have or have not learned from the Lord Jesus Christ and from walking with him, we find a description of his actions and of his attitude.

Or maybe we'll just say his character. And we're challenged to emulate his character and to develop character that matches the Lord Jesus Christ. We're told to put off the old man.

And in Romans 13, we're told to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. And so I want to take a study tonight on the character of Christ. And we're not going to get a whole, we're not going to finish this. It's easily two weeks of material, easily.

And it's worthy, though. It's something that I just passed by on Sundays saying that what you learn from Christ is his humility in his character. You learned his obedience to the Father. And you learn how to submit. You learn how to suffer by walking with Jesus Christ, things like that. But tonight I want to take a little more thorough outlook on this.

[4 : 09] And the first place you can turn is Mark chapter 1. And we'll get there in a moment. Mark chapter 1, if you want to find a place to get started. The character of Jesus Christ.

Now, as we've been studying in Sunday school and Matthew, what I'm not going to do is say this is the teachings of Jesus Christ that we're going to follow because not everything that Jesus Christ taught is something that we're to follow because it's not aimed at us in some cases.

But the character of the man is something that we can. We're to be followers of Christ. And so let's consider the kind of man that he was. If you were to spend time with him, as Paul said, if so be that ye have heard and have been taught by him.

If you were to spend time with Jesus Christ, and I don't mean like the disciples spent time with him, but I mean if you were to have a fellowship with Lord Jesus Christ and walk with him, what are some things that you would notice?

What are some things that you'd pick up if you spent time with Jesus Christ? What are some things that you would learn of him? In what ways would we need to be transformed in order to put on the Lord Jesus Christ?

[5 : 26] So look here at Mark chapter 1 and notice verses 23 and 24. The Bible says, Notice the Holy One of God.

The devils that he encountered, this isn't the only case, the devils that he encountered and cast out, in some cases, had a conversation with him.

They identified him as the Son of God. In this case, they identified him as the Holy One of God. The first thing I want us to consider is that he was holy.

The character of Jesus Christ, he was holy. Before he was ever born, Gabriel, the angel, said to Mary, he said, That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

He was holy before he ever came forth out of the womb of Mary. The devils knew it when they met him that he's the Holy One. His disciples knew it. The men that walked with him and talked with him and learned of him firsthand and had experience with him, I mean, as real as it gets.

[6 : 46] The men that walked and talked with him, they knew that he was holy. The apostle Peter, take a look at Luke chapter 5. And look at this case here with Peter.

Before we get to there, in 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 22, Peter looks back at the Lord Jesus Christ and he makes this encompassing statement. He says, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

Not one time have I ever heard him say something deceitful or wrong against another person. In his speech, he was holy. Peter knew that. Peter stood up in Acts chapter 3 and verse 14 and he accused the Jews of murdering their Messiah.

And he said this, He denied the Holy One and just. Peter knew that Jesus Christ was a holy man. Look here at Luke chapter 5. This is when they had been out all night on the lake of Gennesaret in verse 1 and Jesus shows up and he tells them to let down their nets for the drought and they're like, Master, we've told all night, we're not catching anything, but nevertheless, at your word, we'll do it. And as you know, in verse 6, when they had done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes and their net break and they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships so that they began to sink.

[8 : 07] When Simon Peter saw it, look at verse 8, he fell down at Jesus' knees saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. You know what Peter felt there?

He sensed the holiness. This person in front of me, you know what I am, you know what you are, we are not the same, I am a sinful man, depart, you know, I can't stand to be so close.

It was the holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ on display. It was his deity being displayed here with the miracle and all the fishes and so forth, but the realization that Peter had was this guy, this is an ordinary man.

Beyond that, he is God Almighty, and I'm standing in the presence of God. That is the reaction. I think that's just a straight up honest reaction of a man realizing he's in the presence of holiness.

And he falls down, it says in verse number 8, he fell down at Jesus' knees. Now keep your place, well, you don't need to keep your place, we'll bounce around, but come back to Exodus chapter 20,

a little cross reference here, a similar kind of thought.

[9 : 12] This is as far as to expound upon what Peter's saying and feeling in that moment. Exodus chapter 20. And this is the giving of the Ten Commandments.

And what's going on in this time and as Moses is delivering this, this is some scary stuff for the rest of the people. In verse number 18, And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings and the noise of the trumpet and the mountains smoking.

And when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die. They got a touch, a glimpse of the power, but it's the holiness of Almighty God.

And they wanted no parts of it. They realized, we got to stay away, we got to step back. Look at Isaiah chapter 6. And understand also through Isaiah and his vision, the very feelings that Peter no doubt had in that moment.

Isaiah 6. We could look at Ezekiel. We could look at Daniel. We'll see it over and over. Just look into Revelation 1 and see people just dropping on their faces in the presence of God.

[10 : 26] In Isaiah chapter 6. And I don't think it's just getting around the power of God that is pure, magnificent energy and glory is being displayed.

I think it's his holiness. Without his holiness, he doesn't have the glory. I think it's at the root of it all. I guarantee you, I don't know if I should say that, but I have this feeling inside that when we meet the Lord and we're in our new bodies that we're going to experience and understand what holiness feels like.

I think it's more, I think it's a clean, clean, clear, no burden, no thought, no nothing, just godliness. I can't even say more than that, but I anticipate it.

Isaiah chapter 6. And look at verse number, we'll start in verse 1. In the year the king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Above it stood the seraphims. Each one had six wings. With 20 he covered his face. With 20 he covered his feet. With 20 he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

[11 : 33] The whole earth is full of his glory. And the post of the door moved at the voice of him that cried. And the house was filled with smoke. And look at the reaction of a man when he's around such a creature of the holiness of God.

He says, Then said I, woe is me. Just like Peter, I'm a sinful man. For I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips. And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts.

That's a real reaction to experiencing or having a vision of the holiness of God. Now, the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, he was holy.

He was a man. He was in a man's body. But he was holy. He was pure. The devils knew it. The disciples knew it. John, one of his disciples, in 1 John 3 verse 5, he said, In him is no sin.

Judas Iscariot, he betrayed the Lord Jesus Christ and he came back saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And the priest, you know what?

[12 : 36] They didn't argue with him. They didn't say, Oh, he's guilty of blasphemy. No, they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. We don't care if you sinned. That's on you, buddy.

What is that to us? You see, you try to deal with that sin. I think they knew he was holy. They knew he was righteous and sinless. Everybody knew it.

The disciples knew it. The devils knew it. But really, everybody knew it. Think of this. The Lord Jesus Christ made this statement in John chapter 8. He said, Which of you convinces me of sin? Now, does a guilty man talk like that? You know what a guilty man does? He tries to change the subject. Or he just kind of shuts his mouth and backs off and hopes it just blows over.

But an innocent man says, Show me. Prove it to me. I know I'm righteous. I know I've not done any wrong. The Lord Jesus Christ, I wouldn't ever ask the question.

[13 : 39] It wouldn't take much, probably, for anybody to find something's fault with me. But that reminds me of somebody else. The governor at his crucifixion, Pilate.

Three times he declared, I find in him no fault at all. Pilate's wife that night also said to him, Have nothing to do with that just man. In the same evening, there was a thief hanging on a cross, just a cross from the Lord Jesus Christ, and he said this, This man hath done nothing amiss.

Later, a bit later, he passed away and gave up the ghost and the centurion, the Roman centurion, stood and said, Certainly, this was a righteous man. Everybody knew it. Everybody knew that the Lord Jesus Christ was holy. Now, my question is then, if you were to spend time with him, you would know it. You would know he's holy. And the challenge that we're challenged with is to take on Christ's character, put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I understand, I'm not going to start preaching the holiness gospel and declaring that I've never sinned since I've been saved and if I did, I'd lose it and some Pentecostal nonsense.

[14:53] But there's a, there's a scripture, 1 Peter. He takes it out of the Old Testament and he puts it in the New and he says, For it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.

God calls us to clean up our lives. The Lord Jesus Christ died to pay for our sins not so we could continue in them. God forbid, the Apostle Paul said. Wouldn't be a bad idea to pick up that character trait of our Savior.

And I think if you spend time with him and if you get into the yoke with him and you learn of him, you're going to start to be like him. You're going to start to see your sin. You're going to start to say, Oh, wretched man that I am.

As the Apostle Paul said in Romans 7. The Lord Jesus Christ was holy. Look at John chapter 15 now. I want to show you the second thing. John 15. You spending any time with the Lord Jesus Christ?

Or are you just spending time with the world and learning of them? And learning and learning and learning and staring at the screen and learning and learning and learning of them?

[16:08] Or are you spending any time in this Bible? something that's holy. Is there anything else you can put your hands on that's holy? Is there anything else?

There's only one way to get it. It's the Holy Bible. Thank God for it. We're in John 15. Secondly, let me say this. It's pretty plain. Verse 13.

He was loving. He really was. More than we'd ever probably want to be ourselves. Verse 13.

Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Now, Christ just goes straight in this verse to the ultimate display. I mean, there are certainly maybe lesser displays of love in and throughout life.

But he just goes straight to the ultimate which he knows he's going to fulfill and display his own self. He was loving. An example of some lesser degrees or at least relationship-wise in John 11.

[17:12] It says when Lazarus was sick, the sister said, he whom thou lovest is sick. Knowing that Jesus Christ had a good relationship with Lazarus. Even the apostle John that we're reading, he was called the beloved disciple or the disciple whom Jesus loved.

There was a relationship there. But all the way to the ultimate, the ultimate display of love is giving his life as he did. look back at John 13.

I want to just give you three quick verses here kind of showing three categories if I could of who he loved and gave his love for, his life for. Verse 1, John 13 verse 1.

It says, Now before the feast of the Passover when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which are in the world, he loved them unto the end.

Who was that? Those were his disciples that he administered to. And he loved them unto the end. That is the ultimate display of his love laying his life down. And my question there is can he give any more?

[18:18] Is there anything more that one could give in this world and life for someone else than their very life? There's nothing else. And the Lord Jesus Christ loved his own all the way to the end.

Now come to Ephesians chapter 2. It wasn't just those hand-picked disciples that had traveled with him and been with him through thick and thin.

But there's someone else that Christ displayed that same love for. And it's a body. It's a group. And I was never there with him. I didn't heed his call at the shore of Galilee. And I didn't walk with him.

I didn't receive powers to lay hands on anybody and heal anybody. I've never taken part in the ministry of Christ to this end that his own did.

[19:20] But he gave himself for another group here. Look at chapter 5 of Ephesians verse number 2. And walk in love Paul said as Christ also hath loved us the church and hath given himself

for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor.

Christ loved us the church. We could have went back into John 10 and saw him speaking of those which would believe on him through the ministry of the disciples. He loved us too when he was dying when he gave himself.

He gave himself for us not just for them. Look at chapter 5 and verse 25. Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and did what?

Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends he gave himself for it for the church. Now there's one more verse here and that is Galatians chapter 2 So he loved his own unto the end and he gave his life for his friends he loved the church and gave himself for it but look at Galatians 2 and verse 20 I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ liveth in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and did what?

Gave himself for me not just them and not just the church but this one's personal me he loved me not just God so loved the world not just commended his love toward us and not while we were yet sinners but this one's me I see me in that verse it's a big M-E and I know who that is and I'm thankful that Christ loved me and gave himself for me he was loving he was holy he was loving now let's look at number 3 he was compassionate come back to Mark chapter 1 if you spend time with the Lord Jesus Christ he's going to change you and he'll teach you how to love and he'll teach you how to show compassion which by the way compassion is something that is shown it's an outward it's like zeal it's outward it's displayed compassion is caring

[22 : 01] Mark chapter 1 compassion is concerning yourself with the issues and the problems and the needs of others and what compassion does is it moves you to an action look at verses 40 and 41 Mark chapter 1 verse 40 if thou wilt thou canst make me clean and Jesus moved with compassion because this man's a leper this man is diseased he has no hope no physician can take care of him he's on his way to die a sickening painful death cast away from his family or any friends or any acquaintances he's going to be a loser and die miserably and Christ this man came up to him if you could if you could you could totally fix this right here and right now Christ looked at that and had compassion on him moved with compassion put forth his hand and touched him and saith unto him I will he didn't ask him to do anything

I will you can just hear it in his voice I will be thou clean moved with compassion look at chapter 5 here's a man this maniac that is filled with the devil the legion and Christ cast the devil out of him and in verse number 19 he wanted to stick around with Christ and go with him where he went and Christ wouldn't allow him to 519 how be it Jesus suffered him not but saith unto him go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee and hath had compassion on thee you know what Jesus Christ did he came over to that side of the country and fixed this man's problem and then left the people remember we were studying this in Sunday school they prayed him that he depart from them and off he went got back in the ship and took off but you know what he had compassion on this man he was moved to do something and I want you to look at chapter 8 I want you to be seeing here he didn't just notice a problem he fixed the problem he didn't just say oh or bless his heart or that's just a shame he didn't just display an attitude no he fixed it that's having compassion and being moved with compassion it's action look at Mark chapter 8 and verse number 1 in those days the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat Jesus called his disciples unto him and saith unto them I have compassion on the multitude because they have now been with me three days and have nothing to eat and if I send them away fasting to their own house they will faint by the way for a diverse of them came from far you know what he cared about these people and their health and their well-being they're hungry and I care about them they've come they're sitting to hear me I'm not the master that they need to be bowing down to he's not taking up an offering what can I get from you he's looking at them with compassion these people have a problem they have a need and in this passage he fixed it he fixed it really well feeding thousands of them now let's turn let's get a little application here look at 1 John chapter 3 about compassion 1 John chapter 3 this is a character of Christ a man that was holy a man that was loving so much so that he gave his very life a man that was filled with compassion and moved by his compassion to act and to fix people's problems and once he started doing that do you think they were thankful and just let him alone no they just brought everybody to him you read in places where

I think I just read it today in one of the gospels that he was going into their towns and villages and that when word came that he was coming they just brought all their sick and lame out to the streets

to have him heal them he just touched touched and he was happy to do it 1 John chapter 3 and we'll look at verse number 13 hereby perceive we the love of God because what well he laid down his life for us that's what the Jesus Christ by the way that's a good verse to show you the deity of Jesus Christ because the love of God is he Christ laid down God laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren now that's how Christ was loving how we ought to show it as well but now I'll come to verse 17 but whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him how dwelleth the love of God in him my little children let us not love in word neither in tongue but in deed action and in truth he's not asking you to say

I love you those are words he's not asking him to say oh I hope it works out brother those are words I'll pray for you that can be an action but the words I'll pray for you just words praying is an action you can pray you can be moved with compassion but notice in the context there's some that'll pray and there's some that'll do something about it and in verse 17 whoso hath this world's good so if somebody is blessed by God with what the brother has need of he's to have compassion not say oh but to take care of the need to take care of the need maybe I don't know I haven't met this man but it's just it's already on my heart to try to be a blessing to the missionaries that come by next week Lord willing and I hope we can be and I hope if you are one that has this world's good and God's blessed you with it and he lays it on your heart to see a brother that could use it and be a blessing to him

[28 : 11] I hope you're prepared to do that I hope you'll have compassion on not just somebody who you perceive as could use it or whatever but somebody who God lays on your heart to love them in deed and in truth and then he says in verse 19 hereby we know that we are of the truth amen you know why it's acting it's loving through action that's the Lord Jesus Christ he was compassionate I'll probably just stop with that one because we're going to go into a fourth one and then a fifth and so this will take a little longer maybe than I thought but I love the thinking here of this character of Christ I hope you don't mind this is just a rabbit trail from Sunday and it's thinking about the more you draw knowing Christ and knowing him through a relationship with him then some things ought to start showing and some changes start being made if you're learning of him and walking with him and learning who he is and how he speaks and talks and acts and what he expects you to be in your life he's holy he's loving he's compassionate next week we'll see that he was courageous and bold and there's so much more that we'll study as well and even before we finish this there'll be a little twist on the end that is not commonly taught or brought forth about the character of the Lord Jesus Christ you see a picture of him what is the picture?

some sissy some soft soft man or shepherd with a lamb in his arm or bringing the little children you see that very often and that's truly a side of him but I'm going to show you there's a side of him that's pretty firm and pretty stern and even well I'll save it for the next time we do this Lord willing because it's a little bit hard just to say it so alright let's close in prayer and then we'll be dismissed here Lord we love you we're so thankful that you first loved us and gave yourself God thank you for the word of God and the life and testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ proving proving to us who you are and your character and the testimony that's written of you the scripture declaring your sinlessness declaring your holiness to us and Lord even in these examples of your compassion and God how you laid your life down for us thank you for that and Father I'm so glad that I'm not worried about where I'm going when I die

I'm not even not even thinking about it as far as that goes I'm so confident and so at ease and rest in Christ Jesus and what he accomplished for me on the cross and Father I pray that we'd have that peace in our hearts and may we on our way seek to display the character of the Lord Jesus Christ help us God each one to put off the old man and to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision to fulfill the flesh and lust thereof we pray these things in Jesus name amen amen to invite you to read please andnh