

The Holy Spirit...Unites us to the exalted Lord Jesus

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Date: 12 April 2020

Preacher: James Ross

[0 : 00] Good evening and welcome back to our Easter Sunday evening service.

I want to, having been there at the cross on Good Friday, seeing the extent of Jesus' humiliation, then this morning we thought about the resurrection, his victory over sin and death and the good news of that for us.

I want us to go further still and to consider together our risen and exalted Lord Jesus and to think about how the Holy Spirit connects us to him as we continue our Holy Spirit series.

So I'm going to begin a reading from Revelation chapter 5, looking at verses 6 and 11. Then I saw a lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.

He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. There is who is seated on the throne. It's our lamb, Jesus, the lamb who was slain for us and for our salvation.

[1 : 18] And here is the song of those who are around the throne. In a loud voice they sang, worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise.

So we want to join in their voice as it were. We want to give praise and glory and find strength and hope and encouragement from remembering Jesus, who is seated on the throne of heaven.

And our opening hymn will help us to do that. We're going to sing together, Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery. Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery In the dawning of the King He the theme of heaven's praises Robed in frail humanity In our longing, in our darkness Now the light of life has come Look to Christ who condescended Took on flesh to ransom us

Come behold the wondrous mystery He the perfect Son of man In his living, in his suffering Never trace nor stain of sin See the true and better Adam Come to save the hell-bound man Christ the great and sure fulfillment Of the law, in him we stand Come behold the wondrous mystery

Christ the Lord upon the tree In the stead of ruined sinners Ames the lamb in victory See the price of our redemption See the Father's plan unfold Bringing many sons to glory Grace unmeasured love untold Come behold the wondrous mystery Slain by death, the God of life But no grave could ever restrain him

[5 : 04] Praise the Lord, he is alive What a foretaste of deliverance How unwavering our hope Christ in power resurrected As we will be when he comes Now let's come to God in prayer Lord our Father, we praise you Once again for the gift of Jesus We thank you that he is The eternal Son of God And yet in love for us

And in response to our sin And our need You established before the world Was ever made That Jesus would come To become one of us To live with us To walk a path of suffering A path of humble obedience A path of loving service That would take him to the cross Where he would give himself As the ransom price So that we might be set free From slavery to sin So that we might belong to you Lord we thank you For the truth of the resurrection And we thank you For the hope of new life That we find by faith in Jesus And we thank you too That right now Jesus is ruling and reigning That he is receiving all the glory And praise of the angels And the saints in heaven And we thank you that Although churches are not able To meet together All around the world

Your people are coming together To praise Jesus As Lord and Saviour Lord we do ask For us as a church That you would sustain our hope In the Lord Jesus That we would have faith Despite the fear and uncertainty That's all around us As we walk in the valley Of the shadow of death Of the shadow of death Together We thank you that Jesus Is that shepherd Who has gone there before us Who has gone beyond it for us And who now walks with us Through our pain and suffering Whatever that looks like Lord we pray in particular For any who are struggling With loneliness Those who are perhaps struggling With mental health issues We ask for those who are facing Economic uncertainty

That you would give them peace And that they would come to you And that you would provide We pray for those who feel Far from family And that causes A measure of pain Lord we ask that you would Draw near Lord for many of us As we miss the The simple But wonderful privilege Of being able to gather For public worship We ask That you would sustain Our faith As we have to meet Virtually That this would be a time Of you dealing With us Helping us to Deal with our sin Helping us to Understand and appreciate More of the gospel That you would cause us To place our hope In no one and nothing else Other than In Jesus Our Lord and Saviour And faith in him And we pray that as we Read our Bibles As we Think about

Where Jesus is now And what he is doing For his people That it would give us hope To have a vision Of the glory of Jesus That you would sustain us In our hope Now and in this coming week Now we pray in Jesus name Amen So what we are going to do Is we are going to read A short passage A wonderful passage From the beginning of The letter to the Hebrews So we are going to be in Hebrews chapter 1 And we are going to look At the first four verses So we are continuing To think about the Holy Spirit In a believer's life And here we are thinking About how The Holy Spirit Unites us To our Exalted Christ So let's see how The letter to the Hebrews Begins In the past God spoke to our forefathers Through the prophets Through the prophets At many times And in various ways But in these last days He has spoken to us By his Son Whom he appointed

[10:07] Aire of all things And through whom He made the universe The Son Is the radiance Of God's glory And the exact representation Of his being Sustaining all things By his powerful word After he had provided Purification for sins He sat down At the right hand Of the majesty and high So he became As much superior To the angels As the name He has inherited Is superior To theirs You and I And we're very aware Of this We need to feel Connected Don't we We're very fortunate Living in the age Of technology That on one hand We've never been More connected You know Anywhere in the world People can Speak to one another Can Tune in To services And websites All over the world But at the same time We know that we are Very much disconnected Virtual Is replacing

The real For this season For so many Of our relationships And how we Interact with one another And I wonder how You are Finding it There are obviously Some advantages But then there are Some real challenges And there's nothing Quite like Meeting someone Face to face There's nothing Quite like Personal contact Is there We need to feel Connected And then you take That truth To our journeys Of faith And discipleship We need someone To walk with us To encourage us To pick us up When we fall And one of the many Ways in which We feel the loss Of real church Versus digital church Is we don't have That sort of Immediate Face to face Contact with Brothers and sisters Who can speak The truth to us Who can Smile, shake a hand Give us a hug Just keep us going But what we do have Is we have The Emmanuel promise We have the promise Of God

With us And that's what I want us to think about That the Holy Spirit Is a gift From the Father And the Son Sent to us Here to connect us To Christ And particularly To connect us To the risen Christ And to recognise That it's this Exalted Jesus Who walks With you and I On our journeys Of faith Now why is that Such good news?

Well I hope As we spend a few minutes In this letter To the Hebrews It will help us To answer that Because it's going To show us Who is Jesus It's going to teach us Where is Jesus now?

And it's going to Answer the question What is Jesus Doing now? And in all of this We will find hope For our faith You and I Need to remember That we have The friend In the highest places The one who Opens the door Of heaven For us And to us So let's ask Our first question Who is Jesus?

[13:18] When you read The New Testament Letters You discover They all have Their different ways Of beginning Their different ways Of introducing Their themes Well Hebrews Begins With a bang And really Big ideas Giving us An incredible Portrait Of Jesus In just a few Short verses So we are Introduced First of all To Jesus As the final And supreme Revelation From God God spoke To our forefathers In different ways And so God Spoke To the prophets And to those Who wrote The Old Testament That was revelation Then But now The climax Of revelation Is God sending His own son Jesus So when Jesus Comes And he doesn't Speak like The other prophets Saying thus Says the Lord He's saying Truly truly I say to you Jesus speaks To us As the word Of God As the revelation

Of God The greatest The supreme The final revelation That we need And then in verse 2 We're also told That Jesus has been Appointed heir Of all things What are they all That the author Is talking about He's talking about Things in heaven Things on the earth And things under the earth So we can say All means all And the wonderful thing For us is To remember Jesus is our head Adam had been our head But by faith Jesus becomes our head And what Jesus Comes to do As the second Adam Is he recovers And restores All that Adam Lost for us Jesus becomes One of us To secure for us Every spiritual Blessing And ultimately To know that We will enjoy Life forever With God Just as we enjoy It now Life with him Now we also see That Jesus Is the maker Of the universe Notice it's

Through whom God through Jesus Made the universe So he's distinct From the father Through whom But he's not less Than the father And what we discover Is Jesus As God's powerful word Is also God's agent Of creation So all that we See Is created By Jesus And we're not Finished there Verse 3 We're told The sun Is the radiance Of God's glory So this week We have been Enjoying Some wonderful weather So let's think About the sunshine And sunbeams So we know And we're told From an early age That you cannot Look directly At the sun It's too bright It would damage Our retinas But we have I'm sure Whatever possible Been seeing And enjoying Its light And its heat It does Us good Doesn't it Well here And in the bible We're told That the majesty The glory

The dazzling glory Of God the father Is impossible For us to look on We can maybe Think of God's words To Moses Where he said To Moses You cannot see My face And live Seeing the majesty Of God Is impossible Until It shines In Christ So John Calvin Said So now we can see The glorious beauty Of God In Jesus Jesus who is The light of the world So that God is truly seen And known in him And that idea Continues in verse 3 Jesus is the exact Representation Of God's being Jesus is the stamp Jesus is a true Image of God To see Christ Is to see The father's True character So when we read The gospels And we see Jesus in his love In his love In his patience For the disciples In his love For those who are Broken and hurting In his love For a sinful world

When we hear His wisdom When we see His mercy And grace Extending a touch To the leper Welcoming Those who are Rejected by others When we see His power Over Sickness And Over Storms And over Death Itself When we see His holy Hatred Of sin When we see Him acting To save us We are truly Seeing The character And the saving Work of God Jesus said I do what the Father Shows me to do I say What the Father Says We are still Going Jesus We are also Told Is sustaining All things By his Powerful word Just imagine That for a moment The powerful word Of Jesus Sustains Everything In the known Universe And in the Unknown universe

[18 : 23] So that if Jesus took His eyes Off the ball For even a Second Our universe Would collapse Now there is A wonderful Picture of the Power of Jesus Right there Sustaining The whole Universe With a word And then we're Told what Jesus Has done Verse 3 still He provided Purification For sins He has On the cross Removed Sin He has Washed His people Clean From sin In his Perfect Sacrifice On the cross What we Are unable To do By ourselves To be Righteous To be In a Place Where we Can be Accepted And welcomed By God Jesus Provides By grace And mercy In shedding His own Blood For us So we Have this Amazing Portrait Here And our

Point Is that By faith The Holy Spirit Unites us To this Jesus It's so Important To have A clear Idea Of the Identity Of Jesus To understand His person And his Work For the Sake of Our faith This This Jesus Is the Lord Who is With you And for You This is Your friend On the Journey of Faith Today In all The struggles That come With coronavirus Don't lose Sight Of the One who Walks With you The one Who is For you Truth is All of The Christian Life From beginning To end Rests On The power And the Love And the Grace Of Jesus And being United to Him By faith We look To our Risen And exalted Jesus To hold

Us fast And as we Said last Week The Holy Spirit Who wants Us to See the Glory of Jesus Wants to Keep reminding Us to Keep raising Our eyes Higher To see The glory Of Jesus The next Question we Want to Think about Is where Is Jesus Now And we Need to go To the end Of verse Three To see That Where we're Told that After he Provided Purification For sins He sat Down At the Right hand Of the Majesty In heaven Where is Jesus Now he Has now Been Received Into the Glory of Heaven He is Sitting With the Father On the Throne Of the Universe This is The Climax Of Jesus Glory Being Revealed Here he Is High And Exalted Receiving All the Praise And glory Of heaven As we Heard In Revelation The Bible Gives us Insight

Into the Journey As it Were Of Jesus The Eternal Son Of God Philippians 2 Great Place To go Jesus Jesus Humbled Himself By Becoming One Of Us He Humbled Himself Still Further By Going To Death On A Cross But Then Jesus Is Raised And Then Literally He Is Hyper Exalted So He Has The Name Above Every Name Every Knee Will Bow And Every Tongue Will Confess That Jesus Is Lord And So We Need To Get This I Think There Can Be For Us The Danger Of What We Can Call A Frozen In Time Jesus Maybe For Some Of Us Maybe If We Associate Jesus With The Story Of Christmas We Can Think Of Jesus The Baby In The Manger Or Maybe For Us We Tend To Always Think In Our Minds Of Our Humble Suffering Saviour And

It's Absolutely True And We Need The Reality That Jesus Has Left The Throne Of Heaven To Come And Be One Of Us And To Suffer And Die And Then Rise For Us But We Also Need To Remember That He Is Risen And Exalted In Glory That He Is Head Ruling And Reigning For Us So To Follow On From This Morning Is My Thinking About Jesus Right Now How do I need To Grow In My Understanding To Have Security In Our Faith To Have Confidence In Our Salvation We Need To Catch A Vision Of Jesus Seated At The Father's Right Hand Because We Need To Understand What Jesus Is Doing There As He Sits On The Throne Of Heaven So That's The Last Thing To Think About What Is Jesus

[23 : 25] Doing Now And We're Going To Bring Together Two Different Ideas About Jesus That We Find In The Book Of Hebrews First Of All Jesus Is Sitting As King Of The Universe And King Over His Church To Read On In Chapter One In Verse Eight God Says About His Son Your Throne O God Will Last Forever And Ever And Righteousness Will Be The Scepter Of Your Kingdom A Prophecy From The Book Of Psalms And Then In Verse Thirteen From Psalm 110 Showing Jesus Far Superior To The Angels To Which Of The Angels Did God Ever Say Sit At My Right Hand Until I Make Your Enemies A Footstool For Your Feet Of Course The Answer Is None But The Father Has Given That Position And That Glory To Jesus So Today A Jesus Jesus

Is Sitting When Jesus Is Sitting H Marianne And he is on the throne protecting and preserving his church.

And when you think about what we just learned about Jesus, it's good to remember no one and nothing is stronger than Christ and his rule. No opposition, no isolation, no illness, no virus is stronger.

In Jesus, there is hope and there is security that will not fail. John Calvin speaking about this truth says this, The kingdom of Christ is not earthly, but spiritual, so that we can patiently live at present under toil, hunger, cold, contempt, disgrace and other annoyances.

And let's include COVID-19 and all the suffering and frustration and struggle that's with that.

[25 : 40] And we can do that. We can patiently live at present in that reality, contented that our king will never abandon us and will supply what we need until the war is over and we enjoy the victory.

Our hope rests in our risen Jesus, now ruling and reigning as king. He will not leave us and he has that all sufficient power that he gives to us to sustain our faith.

And the Holy Spirit in us keeps us united to Christ and keeps us looking to Christ by faith so that we do not lose heart.

It's a real encouragement for us, isn't it, to think that the one who sits on the throne of the universe is the good shepherd. That he sits there, the one who loves his sheep, the one who feeds his sheep, the one who protects his sheep, the one who laid down his life for the sheep.

With all of his power and glory, he is sitting there to protect and to preserve his church, you and me, if we are Christians.

[26 : 59] Our times are in his hands and that's a really safe and comforting reality when we know who Jesus is. All things work for your eternal good that come from your loving king.

Nothing will separate you from the love of God that's in Christ Jesus who gave himself to purchase you for God and now holds on to you with that powerful loving grip of grace.

And the work of the Holy Spirit is always to help us to see the glory of Jesus, to unite us, to know that we are united to this Jesus. To see the glory of the risen and exalted Jesus so that you and I would trust him and trust him more.

So Jesus is sitting as the king who rules, but he's also sitting as the high priest to intercede for us.

I want to read just one verse, one other verse, Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 25. Therefore, he, that is Jesus, is able to save completely those who come to God through him because he always lives to intercede for them.

[28 : 22] When our boys were smaller, one of my favourite kids' Bible books to read, I can't remember what it was called, but it had various. On each sort of double page, there were scenes from the life of Jesus.

Jesus had just done something miraculous. And the question as you turned each page is, what's Jesus doing now? You know, feeding the 5,000, calming a storm, whatever he was doing.

Last page question, what is Jesus doing now? And the answer, wonderful answer for children to hear, for us to hear, Jesus is praying for you.

Jesus ever lives to intercede for his people. So the big theme in Hebrews chapters 4 to 10, Jesus is our great high priest.

So we don't have time to go into that, but Jesus is presented as our Melchizedek. You might remember Melchizedek from the Abraham story.

[29 : 20] He is, Jesus is our priest king, who is now sitting in glory. He has finished his work of offering sacrifices. So he came into our world to be our high priest, who would be perfectly pure and sinless, who would offer a perfect sacrifice, offer his own sinless life in our place, bearing our sin, taking on himself God's just anger against our sin, against the sin of his people.

He washes us clean of sin. He removes that guilt and he reconciles his people to God. So we can be at peace with God through the work of Jesus, our high priest.

So now that work is complete. So Jesus is sitting on the throne as priest king, having completed that work. But now what is he doing? He's representing us to the Father.

He's praying for us. Jesus is praying for you. And he's praying for you right now. When this verse says Jesus is able to save completely, it means Jesus is able to save forever.

Why? Because he is permanently representing us before his Father. How does he do that? Well, Jesus in heaven is still bearing the scars of sacrifice.

[30 : 48] And that becomes the basis for his pleading. Jesus is saying to his Father, welcome them because of my perfect sacrifice.

Welcome them into your love and your grace, to your fellowship, to your family, because of what I did for them on the cross. I wonder if you've ever had the frustration or disappointment of being denied access somewhere.

And maybe you forgot a ticket. You forgot a passport. Well, you didn't have the right credentials, so you got so far, but then you came to a closed door and you had no right to go through.

Jesus, your high priest, makes sure you always have access to God's presence.

You always have access to God's grace. Jesus opens the door so that we can boldly and confidently come to our Father and to know that he will welcome us.

[31 : 54] The Holy Spirit unites us to the risen Christ, and that's so important. We can be confident to approach God. You and I can pray in the name of Jesus, knowing that those prayers will be accepted and perfected and presented to our Father.

He will hear and he will answer in his perfect way. So we can pray as Jesus prays for us. We can be confident of God's love today.

When we see who is on the throne, the Father who established Jesus as the high priest, Jesus the high priest who has finished his sacrificial work and now is always living to plead our case, to uphold us, to give us that strength and help that we need.

So today, this Easter Sunday, we can rest. Despite all that's going on, despite the fear that we face, despite the dark cloud that we are under, we can have joy.

Because by faith, we are united to the risen and the exalted Jesus. Now let's close singing one of those psalms that reminds us of Jesus as King.

[33 : 18] Psalm 2, verses 1 to 7, and then verse 12. Why do the heathen nations rage?

Why do the peoples glut in vain? Earth's kings combine in enmity.

Her rulers join against God's reign. They take their stand against the Lord Let us break off their chains from us With their restraints let us be done The one enthroned in heaven laughs The Lord on high derides them all Then he rebukes them in his wrath

His rage and terror on them fall The Lord has made it known to them My chosen king I have installed On Zion, my own holy hill He is the one whom I have called The king then solemnly declares I will proclaim the Lord's decree Today your father I've become

You are my son He said to me Pay homage to the royal son Lest you in wrath our side are thrust For swiftly can his anger blaze Blessed are all who in him trust And let's close in prayer Lord God as we look ahead to a new week We thank you that in the journey of life And the journey of faith For us as Christians We do not walk alone

[37 : 02] Even when we are alone Even when we feel alone We thank you that you are for us For us as our king Ruling, protecting, preserving You are for us as our high priest Praying for us Pleading our case On the basis of your perfect sacrifice So that we can know Our salvation is sure And certain Knowing that in Christ We will one day be with Christ That we too will live with glorified Resurrected bodies And we will see him And we will enjoy him forever Lord sustain our hope And our joy In knowing and belonging to Jesus Amen Take care

And we will see you again Soon Amen This means How do we know Rules Till