

# Christ Alone

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 09 November 2023

Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

- [ 0 : 00 ] We begin our prayer meeting singing to God's praise from Psalm 69. Psalm 69 and we read from the middle of verse 6.
- O Lord the God of Israel, let none who search to me conceitly be at any time, confound it for my sake. For I have borne reproach for thee, my face is hid with shame.
- To brethren strange, to mothers sons, an alien I became. Because the seal did eat me up, which to thine house I bear, and the reproaches cast at thee upon me fallen are.
- My tears and fasts to afflict my soul were turned to my shame when sackcloth I did wear. To them a proverb I became.
- The men that in the gate do sit against me evil spake. They also that while drunkards were of me their son did make.
- [ 1 : 11 ] But in an acceptable time, my prayer, Lord, is to thee. In truth of thy salvation, Lord, and mercy great, hear me.
- And sing these six stanzas from the middle of verse 6. Psalm 69. O Lord the God of Israel, let none who search to make. O Lord the God of Israel, let none who search to make.
- And see thee by any time.
- On the devil I say. For I have boring, gross, for thee.
- My visit with shame. To bring us rich, good mother, sons.
- [ 2 : 42 ] I need you. I need you. I need you. Because thou shielded, ignit me up.
- Which to thine house I bid. And the reproaches cast at thee upon my fallen night.
- My tears and bustle that laid my soul were torn to my shame.
- When such a light did, where to them a pro where I became.
- The men that did not give to sin.
- [ 4 : 17 ] Before this rap will progress. What he ran away tos. What do you like to become? Because thee don't work. How do you like to save?
- The■■■■ of Israel, pare, for them are torn to my sins for those r■■r to three years. What do you have or corners for me?
- But now we were drawn to mine to them. But in unacceptable time, my prayer, O Lord, is free.
- In the truth of thy salvation, O Lord, and mercy, great dear thee.
- The epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 12. Hebrews, chapter 12. We can read the whole chapter.
- [ 6 : 00 ] God dealeth with you as with sons.
- For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?

For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

[ 8 : 00 ] Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God.

Lest any root of bitterness bringing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one marshal of meat sold his birthright.

For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected. For he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more.

[ 9 : 23 ] For they could not endure that which was commanded. And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.

And so terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. But ye are come unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escape not who refused him that speak on earth, much more shall not we escape.

If we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

[ 10 : 55 ] Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

For our God is a consuming fire. Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing to this reading of his word.

Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing to us, Truth springs from earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven high.

Yea, what is good the Lord shall give, our land shall yield increase. Justice who set us in his steps shall go before his face.

Let us sing these verses, Psalm 85, from verse 6 to the end, That in thee may thy people joy, wilt thou not us revive. That in thee may thy people enjoy, wilt thou not us revive.

[ 12 : 36 ] God just revive. Show us thy mercy, Lord, to us.

To thy salvation give. I'll hear what God the Lord will seek.

To his hope he'll seek peace. Unto his sins, but let them not return to foolishness.

To them that the earth surely near, This is salvation, That glory in our land may have part of the vision.

Truth met with mercy, righteousness, Truth met with mercy, righteousness, And peace is mutually.

[ 14 : 27 ] Might wicked, but JEREMY. Truths bring from earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven high. Truth met with mercy, righteousness, Truth met with mercy, righteousness, Want whom heads bow and from heaven high.

If what is good the Lord shall die. If what is good the Lord shall give, our land shall yield increase.

Shall we turn again to the passage that we read together, and just refer to a couple of verses there.

Hebrews chapter 12, Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight on the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Particularly the words, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

[ 16 : 32 ] We have looked in recent prayer meetings, as a Bible study, what is identified as the five solas of the scripture.

Some call it the five solas of the Reformation, some the five solas of redemption, or the biblical doctrine of redemption.

that is that we are justified by faith in Christ alone, by grace alone, by Christ alone, by scripture alone, by the, or with glory to God alone.

faith, faith, faith is at the heart of what we do. But it doesn't matter, suppose when you try and work out these things that alone are necessary, they are never alone in the way that they are united together for the purpose of redemption.

And for that reason, you cannot elevate one over against another. We're tonight considering the third of these, which is redemption or salvation by Christ alone.

[ 18 : 27 ] now you would imagine that that is something that should come first because of who Christ is. And there's no greater than Christ in the fulfillment of redemption.

And that is perfectly true. But if you try and think of Christ, he has the central place in the order we have here.

But all of these are connected. We are, for example, justified by faith. And that means that not only are our sins pardoned, but God accepts us as righteous in his sight as those who possess the righteousness of Christ.

That righteousness of Christ is imputed to us who believe in him, who have faith in him. And as those who possess faith in Christ, then that righteousness is surely ours.

we receive it by faith, and yet that faith is itself something that God gives to us.

[ 20 : 00 ] It is exercised by virtue of the grace of God. It is not something that we cultivate ourselves, it's not something that we are able to nurture and develop within us.

It is entirely of God's doing. And when it comes to justification, we are reminded by the divines from the scripture that it is an act of God.

It is something that God is responsible for. But our faith in Christ is essential to us.

And our faith is focused upon the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is focused on Christ again when we think of these four five solas.

The scripture is described as alone the means by which we come to our knowledge of Christ.

[ 21 : 19 ] We don't inherit it, we don't discover it in any other place except in the word of God, which is his word.

And because our faith is Christ focused and it is directed to Christ, the scripture is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

The source of all the information necessary for our salvation that concerns Christ is derived from God's word.

God may choose to influence us through others it is the word of God the scriptures of the Old and New Testament that is God's way of revealing to us who he is and who Christ is and as he reveals Christ to us he reveals himself to us.

If you remind yourself of the words of the Lord Jesus not only is the apostle here telling of his own faith and remember the preceding chapter is the chapter that is most exceptionally referencing the activity of faith in the life of the believer and how it testifies to the living nature of that relationship that they have with God but the writer says that we look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith our faith is nonexistent were it not for the Christ of God initiating that by means of his Holy Spirit and if we want to come back to the centrality of Christ to the believer I'm sure we all believe that anyway but it is always important to remind yourself and to focus upon the reasons why it's not good enough for you to say

[ 23 : 38 ] I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ because that's the example I was shown well that's a good example and it's good to have that example in your experience but it is not enough for you to live your life as a life of faith based on that you need to understand how your faith is exercised where that faith that you exercise came from how it is strengthened how it is encouraged how it is meant to grow and again remind yourself of this the word of God teaches us that we have sinned and come short of God's glory we need to remind ourselves of that to be persuaded of it and because of the fact of our sinnerhood or sinnership that means that we are separated by our sin from

God and there is no way of access provided for us but by way of Jesus Christ Jesus himself states he that is of God hears God's word and when he says that his particular thinking is that the word is the means by which he is introduced to them and his work is brought to their attention and his interest in them is highlighted and all that comes with it we shall see again when we look at the scripture alone as being necessary for redemption that God's word is all important in the way that it reveals Christ to us in all his offices in all his role in all the fulfillment of his role as the alone saviour of sinners he is the main point of the bible as somebody put it you look through the scripture the whole burning issue that concerns the reader is where am

I going to satisfy my soul where am I going to gain access to God in order to be able to glorify my God how am I going to live out my life here in this world without the threat of everlasting destruction continuing upon my head and the bible constantly from beginning to end directs you to the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ Christ he says of himself no man can come to the father no one can come to the father but by me it is our greatest predicament that we are sinners in need of salvation and Christ is the one who describes himself as the way the truth and the life and that then surely means that we need to hear about him alone so that nothing distracts us nothing misdirects us nothing makes us think that we can put someone or something alongside him we cannot access

God by any other means that's all something you believe but it's something that you need to be comfortable in believing something that you need to be perfectly aware of and laying hold of it because this world in which we live will tell you and insist upon it that there are many other things that are necessary for your life in this world there are many other things that are of greater import to you than your knowledge of Christ or your relationship with Christ don't you believe it you remember that most marvelous passage in Luke's gospel and Luke alone records it and he describes to us how Jesus came in tow with two downcast individuals who had experienced the sorrow and the sadness of seeing the one that they believed in themselves was going to save

Israel and he walks in tandem with them and he presses them on this point what was it that was leaving them so downcast what was it that they needed to understand that they clearly were not understanding and he meets with them and he talks with them and he does what he expounds the scripture to them concerning himself and he didn't do that out of pride he didn't do that because he wanted to elevate himself in their eyes above all men simply in order to do that if anything he wanted them to understand the place that Christ had to have in their thinking and in their theology and in the relationship that he was central remember

[ 29 : 35 ] Jesus again said search the scripture for in them you think you have eternal life and then he says and they are they that testify of me he's not embarrassed about claiming the centrality that belongs to him the importance that is because the truth concerning Christ is that he is at the heart of the believer's life and he has that place as the believers all in all when he speaks he's being honest when he speaks he's being genuinely exposing their minds to a truth that they need to be comfortable with that he is who he says he is and he ought to be what he says he is to them and they shouldn't be embarrassed about that well let me say to you before you words that theologians have put together in the

Westminster Confession of Faith it pleased God in his eternal purpose to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus his only begotten son to be the mediator between God and man the prophet priest and king the head and saviour of his church the heir of all things and judge of the world and to whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed and to be by him in time redeemed called justified sanctified and glorified what a sentence what a statement all of these elements that speak to you and to me about who Christ is you can look at the whole and you marvel at what the whole says to you and you dissect it you break it up into its constituent parts and you say to you where do I begin what is it that is most important about this

Christ and clearly he is important and clearly what he has come into the world to do is important God sees fit to identify him he establishes him he places him in a very unique position it pleased God we are told in his eternal purposes to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus you know sometimes we are so preoccupied with the doctrine of election and the role that God has in saving sinners and doing that in eternity and doing that so that no one that is saved can believe themselves to have this wonderful experience of salvation by way of Christ except by God's hand and except by an act of God that took place in eternity but there's something even more wonderful than that is there not according to the divines it was

God's eternal purpose to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus the second person his only begotten son and to put him into this role to choose him for this purpose to place him where the people of God would seek him out and their eyes gravitate towards him and their heart be drawn out by him and the love that is demanded by his actions and his activity be realized there are several things that are highlighted by the divine there and any one of them merits your attention his divinity his his role his second person has and that is fulfilled and that is fulfilled by him and him alone there is no other person that God appointed to be the savior of his elect people there is no other child of God that became man and so was and continues to be

God and man there is no other who possesses all the divine attributes and yet who was content to keep them in abeyance as he fulfilled his role as the God man here in this world any one of these elements is worthy of a study in its own right I was looking at various comments by theologians and I think when we were in college part of our study was involved in Christology and Christology as the word suggests focuses on the passion of Christ and his role and in soteriology and the work of salvation and so on Christ is at the heart of all of these things Professor Finlison who is known to you as a systematic theologian discusses the passion of

[ 37 : 19 ] Christ and you say to yourself well that's an admirable discussion and he begins his discussion he says Christ has two natures he's possessed of two natures he's God and man and the question that we often approach such a study is probably elementary and yet it is a question that is often asked where do we begin our study of the God man do we consider his manhood first and foremost or do we consider his godhood and that invitation in itself is a challenge to our thinking what's more important to you the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is God or the fact that he is man or that they're equally important

I would suggest that they are equally important one person two distinct natures one Christ one saviour but then again where do we go where are we invited to grow look at the passage before us it's looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith where do you go to find that word tell you its meaning you go to the cross surely you go to the suffering saviour you go to the one who is the sun bader you go to the one who is through the old testament liturgy described as the scapegoat perhaps you want to go to what's more relevant and it's amazing what people would say is relevant and less important in today's Christian or even sub-Christian culture they dismiss the work of Christ as having been done and so be it but now we live our lives as Christians because of what he has done or said which of course is dangerous thinking but the

Christian can't separate himself from what Christ has done and what Christ has done involves also him rising from the dead and the power that he executes as the risen saviour that assures you and assures me that because we are in him by faith as he has risen so too must we rise Paul emphasizes the teaching he says to the Corinthian church if Christ is not risen then is our preaching in vain then is your faith also in vain the risen Christ must be preached and if he is preached then we are assured that what it tells us is an encouragement to our eternal hope he has risen and because he has risen we too will rise with him one one thing

I found of interest was that some theologians even before they begin to study the passion of Jesus Christ and we've only just scraped the surface there we haven't delved into any depth of any of the things that we've said some theologians where do they go they go to the covenant they go to the covenant and the foundation that has to be laid before we can even begin to speak of Christ where we see God taking the initiative in salvation and at the heart of all that God was doing to save sinners Christ is found we already indicated that in the quotation from the Westminster Confession he is his people's representative and he is his people's surety as a representative he took his people's place as a surety he took his people's debt and he paid it and the writer to the Hebrews he tells us there that we're looking unto

Jesus the author and finisher of our faith you go to the end of the book he talks there about Jesus the mediator of the new covenant to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of April so the writer to the Hebrews understands too well that Christ alone is the one to whom we must come that Christ alone is the one upon whom our faith must be fixed that Christ alone is the one upon our hope for time and eternity should rest this was the will of God for him that he would come and be a surety for his people that he would come and be the one who would bear our sins and it's probably a favourite text that I refer to often

[ 42 : 59 ] I don't mind doing it when we go to Psalm 40 and the importance that is laid upon the fact that Christ is a willing sacrifice to do the will of God was his delight he didn't do it as someone who didn't understand what was being done he wasn't a sacrifice ignorant of what was in store for him he knew better than any other could what was expected of him and yet he was a willing sacrifice he took our sins upon himself and in doing the will of his heavenly father we understand his death secured the salvation of all the father gave to him it's amazing what you glean from the study of scripture simple statements that are designed to help us appreciate something of the nature of the doctrine of redemption we would perhaps be inclined to have stages or have tiers and we would insist that

Christ belongs at the top of the tier and that the rest are subservient to it but without the scripture how would you know about Christ without the scripture how would the holy spirit direct you to Christ without the knowledge that we have how would our faith function how would our faith gravitate towards them and an uninformed faith is no faith people use the word faith and it's as if they are resting upon a cloud nothing at all underneath their faith is not a faith without information you have it on good information as given to you by God's word so the emphasis what I'm making is this that while we may think that all of these things may on the surface appear to have an order that falls naturally into place the divines in this one word that they apply to all of these things alone scripture alone

Christ alone grace alone faith alone and the glory of God alone that clearly they're meant to come together but the emphasis of the word alone is that the place that they have in the function of God's purposes is such that we can't do without any one of them and I hope that's what we understand from these few thoughts let us pray Lord oh God we give thanks for the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the one by whom salvation is possible and your word teaches us that and by the spirit that he has given to us we are able to exercise our faith in him and put our trust in his finished works and when we do that we we do it because your word encourages us to exercise that faith which we would not have for your grace so help us to appreciate the marvel of your provision that nothing can better it or improve upon it or make it as something that goes alongside something else that is unique and we give thanks that as you our

God is a God who is a God over all at your word and the way of salvation is similar to you in that sense here our prayers pardon our many sins they are many but we give thanks for the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses us from all sin God is in Jesus name Amen our closing psalm is in Gaelic from Psalm 45 Psalm 45 and verses 2 and 3 bottom as priz means and not the veil.

It is the■■ who sh Extreme ■■■■■■ to treat the■ ■■ and silverware of doctors Java and teats for my younger generation of hair to crash the Range who've been parable.

[ 49 : 21 ] Of the children, with love and men, with love andimmen, with love and inferences for women.■■■ strictly with■■ couple of fundamental parks David yesterday This is

Thank you.

Thank you.

And a grace, mercy and peace of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

addressed and obeyed with you all never and always. Amen.