

Jesus is Lord

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[0 : 0 0] chapter one and so we're going to read all of chapter one this morning. Our Bible reading on a Sunday is also part of our worship together.

We value God's word. We want to come under its authority this morning. So it's not Daniel's authority or the church's and institution's authority, but we come under the authority of our King Jesus and we come under the authority of his word in the Bible. So as we read this morning, it's God's word to us. So let's read and try and follow it as well as we can as we read a long section together. And as I said in a while, Daniel will be speaking from Colossians chapter one. So Colossians one verse one, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God and Timothy, our brother to the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae, grace and peace to you from God, our father. We always thank God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints, the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you all over the world. This gospel is bearing fruit and growing just as it has been doing among you since today you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who was a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf and who also told us of your love in the spirit. For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way, bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might, so that you may have great endurance and patience and joyfully giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities. All things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior, but now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you wholly in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation, if you continue in your faith established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.

This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness, the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present present, we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me. We trust God will bless the reading of his word to us this morning.

Before Daniel comes up and speaks to us, we're going to pray together as a church. Just a few things to mention.

[5 : 02] Obviously the effects of what happened in Karagaline during the week are felt within the community, and by the man who has killed his family, his partner, and people around. So let's pray for God's will and purposes, even through things that are very difficult and very hard to be done.

We also want to remember, as I said, the grandfamilies are away on holidays at this time, that they would relax and enjoy the break and come back refreshed, starting into a new school, church, calendar year. We also want to remember Yelena, who she got away this morning.

That's brilliant. So she's on her way. She's probably in... She's in church in Manchester. She's in church in Manchester. Okay. Okay.

Yeah. So she's enjoying church in Manchester this morning and flying on to Thailand this evening. So I can certainly remember Yelena and her, the people left behind in the McLennahan household. And I said, we just want to remember Ian as well, who's at home resting. So let's pray and talk to our God together. Our Father, we thank you for your precious word to us.

[6 : 23] We thank you that it shows your wisdom in providing for us through the generations, your church, giving us a touchstone, a reference point, an authority in our lives that we can know God's word and we can read it and study it and listen to it.

And Father, it's an amazing book, but then it's about an amazing God. And we look through it and we see you. And Father, move us to worship, move us to glory in you and to see a gracious and powerful God slow to anger and abounding in love.

Father God, we want to thank you for our life together as a church and as a community in Carrigaline. We say thank you as well for Johnny and for his role in shepherding the church as pastor.

And we really ask that him and his family would enjoy this time together, that it would be a break, would be a refreshing, would be a time where they can build one another up and encourage one another through holidays and through being away.

Father, do bring them back to us safely and we thank you for them. We remember Yelena and ask that all the experiences that she's going to have on this trip will shape her in a godly way and mature her and help her to grow in her love for you.

[8 : 00] And Father, her vision of you and of the opportunities that are out there among churches and situations would be expanded, Father.

Give her a bigger view of what you're doing throughout the world and specifically in Thailand and the other countries that she will be involved with while she's there.

Father, do help her family as well to know that when we seek to follow you and serve you in whatever way, that we're in the best place possible, following you under your authority and seeking to bring glory to you.

And there's no better place to be as a believer. Father, God, we think of Ian as well and being laid low with such pain and we ask that he would rest well and be restored.

And Father, that he wouldn't be disappointed, not being able to be here this morning, but he would be encouraged where he is to know that we care for him and are praying that he gets well and that you are his all in all as he's at home now.

[9 : 22] Father God, be gracious to us this morning as we listen to your word explained and preached by Daniel. Bless his heart this morning and Father, bring us under your authority.

And as we listen, help it to sit deeply so that we have no choice as we go out, but to respond and to be changed and to live differently by what we hear.

Be gracious now, Father, we ask for the help of your Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen. Now, can everybody hear me?

I had a little bit of difficulty in Y'all recently where the sound was a little bit funny and I just want to make sure that I'm being heard okay there.

That's fine. Okay. Well, good morning. As you've been told several times, I'm Daniel. Nice to see new faces and maybe I'll get the chance to talk to some people afterwards that I haven't met before, but nice to see some familiar faces that I haven't seen for a while either too.

[10 : 50] So, I'm Daniel. Clodagh is sitting down there, still smiling at me this morning, even though Sunday mornings when we're traveling from our house can be a little bit of a pressure getting two girls out and having to leave at 20 past or quarter past nine to get somewhere.

But she's gracious and she's smiling and I'm very blessed to have her. Our two girls are with us, Evie and Emily. They're in junior church at the moment. We go to actually Lee Valley Bible Church, but we live in North Cork.

And I see the rain is going to now challenge my volume as well. So, that's good. We live in North Cork. Circumstances put things that way and people ask us, well, you live in North Cork, why don't you go to church somewhere near where you live?

And I said, well, God tells me to go to church near where I live. I'll go to church near where I live. But God has put us from day one in our Christian walk in Lee Valley Bible Church.

And we came close to leaving a few years ago, but God put several people in our way through prayer and told us to stay where we are. I'm just finished myself first year with the Evangelical Movement of Wales Theological Training Course.

[12:12] So, in two weeks' time, start into second year. So, as you may be going along, and this guy from Balancholic who came to you one Sunday morning might pop into your head, I would ask that you would keep myself, Clodagh, and our two girls in prayer as much as you can as we come to your minds.

Because without prayer, we get nowhere. Prayer is the fuel, the engine that keeps us going. And we need God's power and God's preservation as we do these things.

So, I feel very privileged to have been asked to come to share God's word this morning. And I've been spending quite a bit of time over the last couple of months in Colossians, and that's why we're in Colossians.

Needless to say, I won't be preaching on the entire chapter one, because I think you'd like to get home for lunch and breakfast tomorrow. So, if we did that, it could be a little bit of a 24-hour marathon.

So, we won't do that. But I was blessed as I sat this morning. And Ralph read the verses at the very beginning, because they're right in the middle of the section that I will be concentrating a bit on this morning.

[13:29] So, let's pray together. Father God, it is such a privilege to be here for each one of us.

We come by the blood, Lord. We come because of your love for us. We come because of the perfect atoning sacrifice of your Son on the cross. Each one of us here, Lord, truly born again. Each one of us who is truly born again, united in Christ as brothers and sisters. What a wonderful privilege to be here in that standing, Lord. Help us, Lord, to clear from our mind now, whatever clutter may be there from the week, from the journey of getting here.

That our hearts may be opened and fully opened to the working of the Spirit. So that the things that we read about this morning and the things that we think about and the things that you teach us, Lord, would find rich, fertile ground.

That they would take over our heart, Lord. And that everything that comes out of us would be what you put in. Lord, I ask you for myself, Lord. That you would bring me to the end of myself again.

[14:40] And that the things that I bring this morning are truly from you, Lord. And have nothing to do with my own ego. I ask you, Lord, that hearts would pray for this message as we learn.

And that it would be truly a gift from you to us this morning. So that when we leave here, we are stronger. We are more focused on you.

That we are ready to face the world and anything that it might throw at us. And that we would be what we say we are. True Christians, Lord. In your name.

And in your name we pray this, Lord. Amen. I won't put it next to the projector.

Give somebody a heart attack. So, just so you know, I am going to be preaching from the NIV. If you don't see me, open my Bible.

[15:44] It's not that I have memorized the entire thing by heart. But I always reprint the sections I'm working on. So, I have the entire book of Colossians reprinted here.

So that I can make my notes as I'm going along. So, that's what you will actually see me reading from. Okay? I like to just say that because I wouldn't like anybody to even think for a second.

Is he making this up himself as he's going along? Because everything we do, everything we say, needs to be brought back. Always. Always. To the word of God. So, Paul wrote the letter to Colossians.

I'm sure a lot of people are familiar with it, but just a little bit of background. Why did he write the letter? Why did Paul write this letter at this time? He was imprisoned in Rome. And Ephraim came

to visit him.

And Epaphras had been the one who had brought the gospel to the church. And was instrumental in preaching the gospel and teaching the gospel. And this church grew up at Colossae. So, why was Paul writing?

[16:53] Well, Epaphras came to him and it was very obvious that he was concerned with some of the things that were happening in the church. The truth had been taken. And the truth was being altered.

Now, I could spend quite a bit of time talking on that. But I just want to emphasize that one of the main reasons that Paul was writing this letter to the Colossians at all in the first place, was to deal with truth under attack. The fact that the truth of who Jesus was, the truth of the gospel, the truth of the message that brings us all together, was being changed and altered.

And they were bringing something in. Now, from Judaism, they were bringing in rituals, holy days, special feasts and fasting. From their pagan culture, they were bringing pagan things in. And there's a lovely word that sums it all up, syncretism. Lovely sounding word. But basically, they were bringing things from their old life and bringing them into their Christianity.

[17:49] And they were altering the picture, the true picture of who Jesus was. Now, in the book, Paul doesn't take these errors one by one and say, this is what you're doing.

Correct it. He begins by focusing entirely on the truth. And as he works his way through the letter, he focuses on the truth of who Jesus is, what true worship is, what true spirituality is, and what the true Christian life is.

Truth. He keeps giving them truth. Before I go any further, I want to talk about truth a little bit this morning. Because we actually live in an age where truth is a problem.

Hands up if you know the term post-modern era. Do you know that you are living in what has been called the post-modern era?

Hands up. Okay. Some people do. That's good. You're going to be busy later explaining to everybody else. But I'm going to talk a little bit about it again to put the picture in.

[19:01] Because whether we realize it or not, the way you think, the way you reason, the way you approach everything in your life, the way it's taught to you in school, the way media gives you information, is all built on the philosophy of the post-modern era.

Now, if you want to go back to the 17th century, 400 years ago, you're going to get a brief, very brief lesson on philosophy. Any philosophers here can take me out to the woodshed after and beat me up for maybe any slight errors I make.

But what I'm going to tell you is a very, very snapshot picture. 17th century, 400 years ago or so, René Descartes, Cogito ergo sum, I think, therefore I am, called by modern philosophers, the father of philosophy, by many modern philosophers.

It was the age of reason. It was an age where reason was paramount, where the philosophy was. Truth could be reasoned out and that, therefore, by reason, you could come to a solid affirmation of the truth.

Now, René Descartes, and modern philosophers don't like this one, believed in God. And he believed that his philosophy and his reason and his ability to think and perceive were actually given to him, by not just by a God, but by a loving, caring, benevolent God.

[20:35] So that's where we were. There were other people involved around that time, but we're moving on. As you come up into the 18th century, things start to change, but you come into the age of enlightenment, where this solidity of truth begins to be challenged, where the position of the church is challenged, where the position of the state is challenged, where truth starts to come under general attack.

Not just the truth of the scriptures, but general truth starts to come under attack, where there is this idea that people start thinking, well, you know, that may not necessarily be so, and reason starts to take a lesser position, and they start thinking about things like, well, we can build a perfect society. And if we just educate people enough and give people enough information, they're essentially good, and over time, they will build a perfect society.

I'm going to use a Dr. Phil quote. I wonder now if we could ask them, how's that working for you? I mean, can anybody tell me where there's a perfect society built since the 18th century anywhere? No. No. It started to build on the falsehood. So it took a truth, a scriptural truth. There's none good but God, and it changed it to everybody's essentially good, and if we can just give them enough

information, everything's going to be fine.

[22 : 07] So then we move on from that, and we're starting to head into the 19th century, late 19th century, early 20th century, the modern period. And the modern period came along, and it said, age of reason, goodbye.

It took whatever lingering certainty there was from the age of enlightenment, and it shredded it. It said, no church, no God, no scripture, nothing.

It started to say the thing that we hear so often today. It started to say, we can define truth for ourselves. And that exploded after World War I and the modern period.

We know that whole theory of thought exploded. And we come up to the day, and we live in a postmodern era that has grown out of that, and the catch cry of it is, what's true for me is not necessarily true for you.

I can define truth for me, you can define truth for you. You could sum up the postmodern era in maybe a simple phrase of, anything goes.

[23 : 16] Now, it's important for us to realize that, because when we come to looking at things, we so often fall into the trap of going, well, you know, that's true for you.

But that's not necessarily true for me. We'll just have to agree to disagree. Rot. Especially when we come to the Word of God, it is rot.

Truth is absolutely definable in everything. We have lost this grip on truth. Everything is definable.

The postmodern era, just because it's talked about and taught, and there's lectures, doesn't mean it's right. I'm sorry. I'm going to pick on you.

What color is this phone? Sorry? Out loud. You say it's black. It's white. What color is it?

[24 : 16] Sorry? It's black and silver. No, it's all white. I know that seems like a slightly preposterous example, but the simple fact of the matter is, if he says one thing and I say another, we can't both be right.

We cannot agree to disagree on this. I can talk about the weather. Okay? I had a conversation with somebody three or four days ago. He said, oh, the weather's terrible.

I said, what are you talking about? The weather's lovely. I said, no, no, it's terrible. I said, no, no, no, it's lovely. But the sun's not shining. I said, I don't like it when the sun shines all the time. It's too hot. I don't like it. It's an opinion. They have an opinion. I have an opinion. But what's true about the weather is quantifiable. I can go out. I can measure the wind speed.

I can measure the humidity. I can measure the temperature. I can measure the height of the cloud cover. I can measure air pressure. What's true about it is absolutely quantifiable. And that is what is at the heart of Scripture.

[25 : 16] What's true about it. It's absolutely quantifiable. And that is what Paul is doing. And that's what we have to remember. Every time we come to it, the truth of who God is, the truth of who Jesus is.

John 14, 6 says, Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. That truth is being challenged everywhere we go in our lives today.

It is coming into churches. It is being taught by people who are respected and who have a following.

There's a book out at the moment. And guess what? Don't worry about it. Nobody's going to hell.

That book is actually out at the moment. Some of you probably know who it is. I'm not going to tell you. And I'm not going to tell you the name of the book because I don't even, anyone getting the slightest temptation to go looking for it.

But the person who has published this book has a huge following. A so-called Christian. Now, may God forgive me if I'm wrong, but he is teaching people that nobody is going to hell.

[26 : 20] That's the truth that we're talking about. Now, he says he has the truth. But if that's his truth, he's making himself out to be a liar. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the light.

Paul is telling them that. He's telling them who they are in Jesus. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17. If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation.

The old is gone. The new has come. That's one of the truths he's trying to get across to them. The old is gone. The new has come. And he's saying to them, you're in Christ. That's who you're in.

That's your identity. These old things of your own life, stop bringing them in. And then he moves on through the book. And he deals about the truth of what it means to be truly Christian.

And if you go to Colossians chapter 3 and you read the first four verses, it gives you a picture of that. Since then, you have been raised with Christ.

[27 : 23] Set your heart on things above. Set your mind on heavenly things. Where you are seated. Where Christ is seated. The truth of who you are as a Christian. And in telling the Colossians these things, he's telling us.

And one of the biggest problems we have in truth across the church, across the world, is this picture of who Jesus really is. We have to have an accurate picture of who Jesus really is.

The world is full. Full of images of who Jesus is. You can get cartoon images. You can go to galleries and get wonderful paintings.

You can turn on your television and you get the most ridiculous portrayals of the character of Jesus. And we can get comfortable and start thinking, well, that's the world, you know.

They've got it wrong. But we can get it wrong. We so often, we build a picture for ourselves of who Jesus is.

[28 : 31] We get an idea in our own heads of who Jesus is. And we build things around that. Instead of looking at who he really is, and building our lives on that.

Jesus talked in the Gospels about the man, the wise man builds his house on the rock. When we come to Christ, we're to build our house on the rock.

Do we remember, do we realize how easy it is to actually build that house on the rock? And then through carelessness, lack of application, lack of prayer, lack of a willingness to submit to Jesus, to start chipping away at that foundation until our house capsizes, turns over, crumbles in on top of us. You know, I'm into photography. Photography, I love taking photographs of landscapes. I love taking photographs of newborn babies, actually.

Just the picture of that perfect little baby right there with all this hope and everything. I just love it. But we live in Photoshop world, where with the click of a mouse, everything can be changed.

[29 : 41] Somebody's trying to sell me a piece of sulfur at the moment. Portrait professional. And with two clicks of a mouse, I can take any picture of anybody, and I can remove every blemish from their skin with one click.

And then I can straighten their nose, make their eyes symmetrical, tighten their jaw, lift their chin with another click. So you take a picture of a person, and suddenly you have maybe a Brad Pitt lookalike two clicks later.

The picture's not real. The picture's not real. You get family members maybe coming in going, Hey, who's the movie star up on your wall? And you go, Oh, that's me.

We can Photoshop Jesus. We can take who Jesus really is and put him into our software, into our mind, into our heart.

And we can do our own personal mouse clicking and change him from who he really is. We have to ensure that the picture we build is not a self-deluding false image.

[30 : 56] Now, I didn't start with scripture this morning because we read those verses straight away, and we read the whole chapter. But I want to give you a quote before I do come and remind us of what the verses say of who Jesus is.

This is from A.W. Tozer. It's a reasonably long quote. John Owen, the old Puritan, warned people in his day, You have an imaginary Christ, and if you are satisfied with an imaginary Christ, you must be satisfied with an imaginary salvation.

There is only one Christ, and the truly saved man has an attachment to Christ that is intellectual in that he knows who Christ is theologically.

For you know there is the romantic Christ of the female novelist, and there is the sentimental Christ of the half-converted cowboy, and there is the philosophical Christ of the academic egghead, and there is the cozy Christ of the effeminate poet, and there is the muscular Christ of the all-American halfback.

But there is only one true Christ, and God has said that he is his son. We are under constant temptation these days to substitute another Christ for the Christ of the New Testament.

[32 : 25] We have to be sure that the picture we have of Christ is the absolute and accurate picture. If you will turn in chapter 1, and we will read back down through those verses of this picture we have of who Jesus is, and who we are in him, and what he has done for us.

From verse 13, we are going to read down to verse 20. Just to recap, to refresh what we have already read this morning. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness, and brought us into the kingdom of the Son Helos, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities, all things were created by him and for him.

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness, all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

[34 : 06] What a picture. What an image. It needs no correction. It needs nothing else added to it.

We don't need to do anything to it. It shows us who Jesus is. Jesus is entirely God, the fullness of God dwelling in him. He is the creator there at the beginning.

In the beginning was the word. He is there from the beginning, before time, before the concept of what people spend so much time arguing about, big bang or not.

Jesus is, was, is today, and will be forever. Redeemer, master, Lord of all. Look at it. Overall creation. Everything by him and for him.

He is the head. He has the supremacy. He is the firstborn over all creation. Everything is beneath him.

[35 : 03] Everything is at his feet. And God made that so. And whether the world recognizes it or not, and whether we lose sight of it, he is Lord over all. Thrones are powers.

Rulers are authorities. Gaddafi in Libya. North Korea. Ireland.

The royal family in the UK. David Cameron. They are the rulers in this world today. They are there by the permission of the sovereign God.

Whether we can grasp that or not, and whether the world likes it or not, he is Lord over everything. Whether the world bows its knee in adoration to Jesus or not, Jesus is still Lord over all.

But for us, we are meant to know it. We are supposed to willingly submit to Jesus. The Colossians, they supplanted something else for Jesus.

[36 : 12] They started bringing in their own things. They brought in their own form of worship. They brought in their own form of observing their Christian life. In a way, they made their own fig leaves to cover their unrighteousness and forgot that their unrighteousness had already been dealt with.

If Christ is our head, then our life should reflect that. Jesus says in John chapter 8, verses 31 and 32, if you hold to my teachings, you are truly my disciples, and I am the truth, and I will set you free.

In the verses we have looked at this morning, verse 13, it says, For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

If that is true, as Paul was saying to the Colossians, he is saying to us, if that is true, everything we are in Jesus. Everything we do should reflect that.

Our entire attitude to Jesus should reflect that. Our entire attitude to our lives should reflect that. We have gone from the kingdom of darkness.

[37 : 26] We have gone from that kingdom, and we have gone into the kingdom of light. If Jesus is truly our Savior, if he is our Lord, we sang it this morning, that our God reigns.

Jesus is our God. If that is true, how are we living it out? Do we truly recognize that we have gone from that kingdom of darkness, and that we have entered into the kingdom of light, and that things of our old life have nothing to do with our new life?

Can you picture a supporter of Manchester City a Man City supporter putting on a Man United jersey and then going to a Man City game and sitting in the middle of all the Man City supporters wearing his Man United jersey?

It's a completely alien concept. Or what about if somebody who transfers from, and I'm sorry I'm harping on the soccer one, this is the way it came to me, Real Madrid to Barcelona.

So this player has gone from Real Madrid, he's gone to Barcelona, and when he gets to Barcelona, the coach says, no, no, this is the way we did it in Real Madrid. You're in Barcelona. Well, spiritually, we're gone from one camp to another camp, and we should not still have anything to do with the ways of the old camp.

[39 : 03] The things of that old camp are alien to Christ. They have nothing to do with Christ. If they're alien to Christ, they have to be alien to us.

And one of the things of that old camp is that we did not recognize Jesus as Lord. We couldn't possibly have recognized Jesus as Lord.

And if we are in the new camp, not the stadium, our new camp spirituality, our walk with Christ, we're going to sing about it in a minute.

We have to recognize that we're recipients of a love that is so amazing, so divine, that it demands our life, our soul, our all.

Another hymn says, wounded for me, wounded for me, there on the cross, he was wounded for me. Gone are my transgressions, and now I am free.

[40 : 03] All because Jesus was wounded for me. The love of the Father expressed through the perfect sacrifice of his Son.

How do we know that God loves us? I see this taught to young kids all the time. We know that he loves us. When we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 6 tells us that if the old man is gone, and the new man is here, and we are to be no longer slaves to that old life, we are slaves to righteousness.

A slave has no right to hold anything back from his master. Jesus is our Lord. Whether we recognize it or not, he is.

And every aspect of our life has to be lived according to that. We need to focus on the real and accurate picture of who Jesus is.

[41 : 01] And everything we do must come under that picture. Now so often I see this little image on screens, the outline of a person.

And there's a little space here, and the image moves in and something symbolizing maybe the cross or a light moves in and they say, you've come into Christ and Christ has come into you and Christ is in you and Christ is in us.

Yes, Christ is in us. But as a Christian, I think there's another little part that we need to remember. That then that person has around them, if you want to picture, a huge circle.

because they are in Christ. And if you can picture that Christ is that circle, what are you going to bring into that circle? What are you going to bring in?

Because sometimes we can fall into the trap of picturing, I have Christ in here. And we bring things in a little bit close that we shouldn't. Things that are alien to Christ, we bring them in. Paul says in Romans chapter 7, I want to do, when I want to do good, evil is there with me, struggling.

[42 : 10] It's still in my members. We have to be conscious of that struggle and the things that are around us and the things we are bringing close to us. If they're alien to Christ, they should be alien to us.

And in submitting to the true picture of Christ, the true picture of who He is in everything we do in our lives, what do we bring close to us? What do we bring close to us?

What do we allow come into that kingdom? Because in Christ, this is the kingdom. Picture it, if you will, this room. What will we allow come into this room that will be alien to Christ?

What do we allow come into our homes that will be alien to Christ? What do we allow come into our workplace as we interact with the rest of the world that will be alien to Christ?

To submit to Jesus, we have to be careful about what we're bringing in. we have a wonderful gift for He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and He has brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves.

[43 : 13] God has done that for us. We didn't do it ourselves. We are not so clever and intelligent that we work this all out. 2 Corinthians tells us that these things are spiritually discerned.

Those who do not have the Spirit cannot understand them. their foolishness to them. God gave us the ability to understand who He is, who will not understand who His Son is and we have to really acknowledge in that that Jesus is Lord.

He is head over all. And it needs to be clear in everything we do. As Paul goes through this book, he focuses on heavenly pursuits.

Keeping our minds and our hearts focused on heavenly pursuits. Submitting to Jesus is not a partial thing. It is a wholehearted life thing.

It should not feel like a burden. You know, I can't even remember how long now. I wake up in the morning and there is a song in my heart, a song of praise.

[44 : 26] I asked for this song this morning because this is one I've been singing in the mornings for weeks. Sometimes it's a different song. But it's a song of praise. A song of praise to the Father.

A song of praise to Jesus for the joy that I have. And it doesn't stop in my heart. It comes out of my lips. Because of what Jesus has done for us.

Being a Christian has cost. But wanting to submit to Jesus should not be a burden. It should be the joy of our life to look to do that every day.

And it should reflect in our lives how we spend our time. Are we grudging with our time for the Lord? How we spend our money.

How we spend our money shows where we have Jesus. Do we really have Jesus up where he belongs? Do we really have an accurate picture if we are not spending our money in light of that?

[45 : 35] What we put first in our lives tells us what we put first in our hearts. We are servants. The word that's used so often in the Greek is *doulos*.

It means bond servant or slave. A bond servant belongs. A slave belongs. And what servant says to the master I can't do that now.

I'm busy doing something else. What slave says to his master I won't do your bidding now it doesn't suit me or I just couldn't be bothered. If Jesus is really our Lord and Master then we have to strive to make even our every thought captive to him and our every action subject to his will and the will of the Father.

We serve the master to do his will not ours but to serve the master properly we have to build on the rock of an accurate picture in our minds and in our hearts of who Jesus is.

Test everything that comes to you. Question everything. There's no Christianity that says leave your brain at the door.

[47 : 04] Question everything I've said to you this morning when you go home. How much time do you spend every day with Jesus finding out who he really is? the servant and the slave's time is not their own it's the time of the masters and we need to spend it with them but the best thing of the master we serve his father calls us child and the Lord Jesus calls us brother or sister.

The spirit itself testifies with our spirit that we are called children of God. we're going to call in the music group to come up now in a second and we're going to sing when I survey the wondrous cross.

Everything we have the peace we have with God comes because of the shed blood of Christ. What right have we to hold anything back from him who's given us everything?

He is the image of the invisible God and we should never forget it that those who know Jesus know God. He's the firstborn over all creation for by him all things were created things in heaven and things on earth visible and invisible whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities all things were created by him and for him.

He is before all things and in him all things hold together and he is the head of the body the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead so that in everything he might have supremacy.

[48 : 45] He is the head of the church. Let's pray that not just here but every church doesn't say that in some token kind of regard but that our churches really are built on the premise that Jesus is the Lord that he is the head and that he does have supremacy.

I'd like us to stand with the group and to sing this and to think about what the cross means to us and that this love that has been poured out of us does demand everything of us.

and that's for the to whom that do. So I'm here to only and I'll hear thens in the cheeks there because what heardNow does it talk about different exactly and to say because going a little bit dramatic and it just does it have to be available and haven't it the ■ and it will never happen and you know sure