

Jesus: Fulfilment

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Date: 17 March 2012

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[0 : 0 0] Colossians 1, 15 to 23. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things are 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 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 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.

[1 : 2 8] Well, good evening to you all. And good evening to you all. Oh, lovely. Thank you.

Because it would be an exceptionally lonely place to be up here and nobody out there. Let's look at God's word here. Now, in the 1970s, Andrew Richardson, a Liverpool postal worker, declared his semi-detached flat to be the independent nation of Granbya.

After a while, however, Richardson lost interest and the department reverted back to England by default. In 1964, Leicester, I think that's how you say that name.

How do I say it? Leicester. Yes. Okay. Hemingway, the little brother of author Ernest Hemingway, built an eight-by-30-foot floating bamboo platform, seven miles off the coast of Jamaica, anchoring it to the ocean floor with a Ford engine block.

I can stand on the platform, walk around on it and salute the flag, all of which I do periodically, he told the reporters. There are no taxes here, because taxes are for people not smart enough to start their own countries.

[2 : 5 9] In time, part of his country was destroyed by fishermen in search of scrap wood, and the rest sank in a storm.

In 1969, in Australia, in Western Australia, the wheat quota board limited the amount of wheat he could grow, so Leonard George Casely took his 18,500-acre farm and seceded from Australia to form his own country.

The Principality of Hutt River, it was called. He designed his own national flag and motto, printed his own money and set up his own parliament.

Australia refused to recognise his sovereignty, so in 1977, he declared war. Nothing came of it.

What a surprise. He backed down two days later and re-established diplomatic relations. Casely claims he pays no Australian taxes, but he admits he makes payments to the Australian government as an international courtesy.

[4 : 17] You can still actually visit that place. Tourism. People go to it. Kingdoms come and kingdoms go. Even the most mighty of nations don't last forever, except for the kingdom of God that we have been talking about over the last few weeks.

In this series, we've been saying that the kingdom of God is God's people in God's place under God's rule. And today, we focus on Jesus being the fulfilment of all of what the Old Testament has been saying to us.

We read in Matthew 1, and some might wonder at the importance of reading it, but you and I both know that when we look at our own family tree, there are stories that go along with absolutely every person in that tree.

Some may be more colourful than others, but there is something important with every entry, as is with the Matthew 1. The genealogy we were looking at today in Matthew is very important for us to understand the kingdom of God.

It's important because we see Jesus' lineage was no accident. He was born to fulfil a certain plan that we have been reading and hearing about over these last weeks.

[5 : 48] It's a specific plan in a specific time, in a specific place from a specific line of people. It had to be this way because God had promised that Jesus would be born a ruler, not just an ordinary ruler, but King of kings, Lord of lords.

God planned this ruler through promise. God not only makes his promises, but he's faithful and he keeps his promises. And so we've seen over the weeks that God had a couple of specific promises that stand out above the rest.

Promises made to Abraham and promises made to David. Covenants, we call them. Now Matthew lists them in the first verse.

He lists it with Jesus is the son of David first before he says son of Abraham. Matthew does that because his purpose in writing his gospel was to show how Jesus is the Messiah, that he's the king of the Jews.

And that's what the Davidic covenant was all about. It was about establishing the throne. In Chronicles chapter 1 verse 17, 1 Chronicles chapter 17, which if you want to look up, but I will read.

[7 : 21] When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you. One of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom.

He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him as I took away from your predecessor.

I will set him over my house and my kingdom forever. His throne will be established forever. God is reaffirming his promise of the land to Israel, and he promises David an eternal throne.

By saying that Jesus is the son of David, Matthew is saying that he is the fulfilment of God's prophecy to David. Jesus is the one whose throne is established forevermore.

He is the seed of David that God would raise up and establish his kingdom. Now, Jesus was the literal fulfilment of God's promise to David, and Jesus also fulfilled the Abrahamic covenant, the promise made to Abraham.

[8 : 38] Not only did Jesus fulfill God's promise for a throne, but he also fulfilled God's promise for a seed. Remember, we have read in earlier weeks in Genesis chapter 12, God told Abraham that through his lineage, all the earth would be blessed.

It didn't happen through Isaac or Jacob. It didn't happen through Judah, David or Solomon. The blessing happened through Jesus.

Galatians chapter 3 says, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. For it is written, cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.

He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Not only did God plan for a ruler through promise, he planned for a ruler through people. Look at the list we read earlier. As I look at the list in Matthew 1, the first thing I notice is that it isn't a list that I would have chosen.

[9 : 56] If I was to choose a lineage for the Son of God, God in the flesh, I would have chosen better people than these ones, if I knew them.

Abraham was a liar. Isaac learned from his dad and was a liar as well. Jacob was a cheat and a swindler.

While Joseph was resisting temptation and living a blessed and holy life in Egypt, Judah was spending time with his daughter-in-law, Tamar, who was disguised as a prostitute and he got her pregnant, so their son was illegitimate.

Do you see a pattern sort of happening here? Of course not all of them were bad. Boaz was honourable, although he did marry a Moabite woman that was forbidden for him to marry.

Some of the kings were good. David was a man after God's own heart, but he was a murderer and he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, who, by the way, is also in Jesus' lineage.

[11 : 08] No, what this list shows is God's goodness and God's mercy. Aren't you glad that God does not choose the best and the brightest?

He chooses to work through the weak things of this world that he might be shown to be strong. In God's plan for a ruler through people, he used the royal line of David to give Jesus legal claim to the throne.

So we have God's rule in Jesus. Well, what about God's place? Last week, Steve preached about the prophet Ezekiel and the promise from God.

All of what he knew about God was attached to the promised land, Israel, Jerusalem and the temple. The temple was the centre of God's activity with his people.

The temple was God's dwelling place. And yet it was no more. It was destroyed. But without the land, Jerusalem and a temple, what is left?

[12 : 25] Steve had asked, has God abandoned his people? Has his promises to Abraham and David failed?

What does it now mean to be the people of God? Well, we've already seen that God has fulfilled his promise through Abraham and David. And now in the New Testament, we can see that the new temple has already come into existence for it is none other than Jesus Christ himself.

John describes it in John 1, 14. The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. That literal translation is, he tabernacled among us.

In other words, John saw Jesus as resembling the tabernacle in the wilderness. We don't need a temple anymore because Jesus himself is dwelling with us.

Jesus is God dwelling with us. We continue to see that God's place is directly linked to Jesus in the words of the kingdom.

[13 : 38] Look at Matthew chapter 3, the first couple of verses, where John is talking about Jesus. In those days, John the Baptist came, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, repent for the kingdom of heaven is near.

Mark 1, verses 14 and 15 say, after John was put into prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.

The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news. Mark 11, as part of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, we hear the people shout, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David. And in Colossians 1, 13, we read, 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.

The kingdom we see in scripture is also referred to as a mustard seed, a fine pearl. Steve mentioned before, a treasure hidden in a field, a net of fish.

[14 : 53] All of them are directly connected to Jesus. For it is Jesus who is the treasure. And without the treasure, we are lost for all eternity.

Hence, we have, as our statement for this church, that we want to treasure Jesus. Without Jesus, we have nothing. What these verses show is that Jesus is the head of the new race.

All who are united with him are members of that race. That is, whoever is in Christ is a new creation and Christ is the head.

So we have a people of God, those who are in Christ. And we have one who is under God's rule, that is Jesus Christ. So how is Jesus the ruler?

Let's read Colossians, that first part of the Colossians reading again. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

[16 : 01] 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 himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

The gospel is saying, he, sorry, he is the one who brings salvation to humankind. Everything is in Jesus.

He holds it all together. It is in God's fullness in him, he then brings peace. Following on in verse 21, once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour, 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.

[17 : 33] 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 have heard that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

The gospel is saying that what man cannot do for salvation, this God has done on our behalf in the person of Jesus Christ.

We know from history that man has failed time and time and time again to present a life to God that is perfect and acceptable. And here, we see Jesus do this for us.

He's the one who is perfect and acceptable on our behalf. It is Jesus who has perfectly lived out the holy law of God and its penalty was perfectly paid for us in Jesus.

It is the living and the dying of Christ for us that is the basis of our acceptance with God. It is Jesus Christ who rules.

[18 : 42] But did you pick up that small word if in the verses in Colossians? It is Christ who will present us without blemish and free from accusation to almighty God if.

If what? If you continue in your faith established and firm not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.

Well, what does that look like? It is a life trusting a sovereign God. Looking at our core values here at church it's a life of Christ centred Bible saturation.

Why do we keep harping on about this Christ centred Bible saturation? Because it is there that your life will be changed.

It is there that we are challenged to live a life of servanthood. It is in Christ centred Bible saturation that we live a life that is seeking God's wisdom and God's discernment.

[20 : 03] It's where the result is that we are challenged to live a life seeking for God to change us to be more like Jesus. To live a life of Christ centred Bible saturation means a life of humble authenticity.

We don't live differently with different people. We are authentic people of God in every moment of every day. It is a life where the needs of others are far more important to us than our own needs.

It's a life where we're seeking to know God in a closer and more personal way every day of our lives.

That we are never ever satisfied with just head knowledge life. It's a life of contentment in Jesus and Jesus alone.

It's a life that we do not get if we don't get our own way in family or at our uni or our workplace or with our friends or we don't get our own way in our ministry or we don't get our own way in this church.

[21 : 34] That we can humbly seek to do what is best for other people. That we are content because we know Jesus.

I would actually challenge you to consider what is it that you and God are working on at this moment in time. What part of your character are you working on with God?

Because if you are not working on anything at all, I can actually say to you, you might be stalling in your Christian faith. We need to be Christ centred, Bible saturated Christians and doing that, God is going to be knocking off the rough edges of us.

And so there needs to always be something that you are working with. You and God trying to work through and are you asking the Lord to help you to be more prayerful?

Are you asking the Lord to deal with your anger? Are you asking the Lord to help you to be more sensitive to another person's needs? What is it that you and God are working on at this moment in time?

[22 : 53] That's a question my mentor would be asking me each time she sees me. What is it that you and God are working on? And that's a question we should be able to ask each other at any time.

What is it that you and God are working on at this moment for you to build godly character or for God to be building godly character? Next week we look at Jesus and the great fulfilment of Jesus and where Jesus takes us.

And as Jesus changes our life through the Holy Spirit we actually have the great hope of glory, the great hope of heaven. But don't be tricked into thinking it's all about what Jesus has done in us.

It's about what God has done for us in Jesus. That is the gospel. And we get the blessing of being changed to be Christ-like as we go along.

Earlier on Steve actually mentioned movies and he mentions that he sees the end and speaks it forth. And Nat is the one who still cries even though she knows the end.

[24 : 13] But in actual fact for me I actually can see movies over and over and over again and I forget what the ending is. My son Jason who's not here but Jason says I get the best value out of hiring movies than any person because I can look at it fresh all the time and it's new.

I never sort of, oh that's a surprise. I can do it with books also. Vander will tell me, I'm not sure, halfway through the book I think I've read it.

And he'll say yes you have. You know sort of. But that's a problem if you do that with Jesus. You see because I can forget the goodness and the greatness of Jesus.

You might be somebody who sits in Steve's camp or Nat's camp or in my camp which is another one altogether. But don't be complacent with Jesus.

Yes Jesus is the answer. We all know that from Sunday school and from scripture. Jesus is the answer and you sort of nearly there most of the time. But don't be complacent with Jesus.

[25 : 33] Jesus needs to be changing our lives. I know that most of us have heard this message over and over again or one similar. But you need to ask how does this message consistently challenge the way I think and live out life.

None of us in this building absolutely none of us have finished the race that we are in. So no one is sitting on the side.

We are all in a race together. I want you to continue to run the race and to run it faithfully with Jesus. I want you to know that the kingdom of God is here now but is also your goal later.

that way we can be God's people in God's place under God's rule. thanks for saying that I can see you as people in with as people in