

Jesus is God's Final Word

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: 18 October 2015

Preacher: Tom Lawson

- [0 : 0 0] I can't remember a time in all my Christian life when this country has shown such scant respect for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Blasphemy is commonplace. The Lord's name is taken in vain so much, constantly. And he's the one we love.
- He's our best friend, but he's fair game for the insults of vulgar people. Comedians.
- Elton John dares to say that Jesus was a gay man. Just a few years ago, not that I went to see it, but I read the publicity, a show called Jerry Springer the Opera.
- It was noted for its excessive profanity and uncensored mockery of the Son of God. He's the God whom we worship.
- [1 : 1 2] He was portrayed prancing around in a nappy. Entertainers, journalists, writers, politicians, academics, and people in general offend Christians with impunity, without fear of reprisal or censure or respect for the feelings of those of us who revere the name of Christ.
- You know, the world has a sort of knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, but it's grotesquely distorted. Christians can and do protest from time to time about all this.
- They write articles and they even engage lawyers. But you know, neither legislation nor protest can change fundamental attitudes, minds, hearts.
- We cannot enforce the unforcible. However, there is a way to affect change in people, which is our desire and our goal, what we labor for.
- God has given to the world an amazing book that reveals the truth about the person of Jesus Christ to convince the world of his supreme worth.
- [2 : 4 4] And this book remains the only reliable source of information about him, the Bible. Read the Bible and you discover the unique claims that Jesus made, the unique things he did, and the unique words that he spoke.
- And as a result, as we become familiar with these things, we get to know him better. As for Christians, at some time in our lives, we became convinced in our minds through what we read of him and what we heard of him, our attitude was fundamentally changed towards the Lord Jesus.
- At one time, perhaps we might have been equally as guilty of blasphemy as others.
- But the day came when we saw Jesus in a new light. Through exposure to the powerful message of the gospel, of the Bible, our hearts were enlightened, we were convicted of our shamefully wrong attitudes, how wrong we had been, and then Jesus Christ came to be to us the most important person in the world.
- Jesus Christ is that to me now. Now the world, we need this to say to the world, they should read the Bible.
- [4 : 2 2] So we actively, zealously encourage others to do just that with the prayer that they too might see Jesus as he truly is.

As James chapter 2 and verse 1 says, we need to see him as the glorious Lord Jesus Christ. often in the past, a return to God's book has promoted revival.

Proverbs 29 verse 18 says, where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint, there is spiritual declension. 1 Samuel 3, 1, the word of the Lord was rare in those days, so people did what was right in their own eyes.

But in Josiah's day, in King Josiah's day, in 2 Chronicles 34, 15, Hilkiah the priest announced, I found the book of the law of the Lord in the temple of the Lord.

I found the book. And this proved to be a very significant discovery. It was read to the king who was profoundly affected by what he heard.

[5 : 41] Indeed, he was devastated by the pronouncements of divine judgment against the sins of Judah. And so he arranged a grand assembly for the public reading of the book.

And this experience and the leadership of the king led to revival in Judah. Attitudes were changed. Lives were changed by hearing the living, powerful word of God.

Further example, there was a man called Saul who was of Tarsus. He hated Jesus and all the vile sinners who foolishly designed to follow this upstart imposter from Nazareth.

Saul deemed them as traitors to his beloved Judaism, deserving of prison and death, but while on one of his fanatical errands to persecute Christians in Damascus, Saul himself personally met the Christ of whom the Hebrew Scriptures that he knew so well spoke.

Following the encounter on the road to Damascus, need I say it, that he was never the same again. In his mind, in his heart, he too was changed.

[7 : 09] And how? Because of the transformation that the Bible brings to the heart and the mind. Just a little insert there to say, be patient with your enemies.

There was no greater enemy of the gospel and of Christians than Saul of Tarsus. What we pray for is not to get revenge, but to win them for the Lord.

Another example, the temple guards in John chapter 7 reported to the chief priests. And the Pharisees asked them, why didn't you bring Jesus in?

Why didn't you arrest him? The chief priests and Pharisees hated Jesus too, and would have him eliminated. Why did the guards not bring him in?

The guards answered, no man. No man ever spoke like this man. Matthew 7, 28, the crowds were amazed at Jesus' teaching because he taught them as one who had authority.

[8 : 14] They were deeply impressed. Other men and women discovered Jesus' uniqueness for themselves. In fact, it has to be discovered personally.

There was Nicodemus and Zacchaeus. There was the woman of Samaria. There was Mary Magdalene. They witnessed what he said and what he did, and they responded.

What people thought and said about him was important to him. Is what he did and said important to you?

Matthew 16, 13, Jesus is interested in what you think about him, and this is the proof. Who do people say the Son of Man is, he asked his disciples.

Who do people say the Son of Man is? No one was ever asked a more important question than that. Peter's answer pleased the Lord.

[9 : 14] You are the Christ, the Son of the living God, he replied. Blessed are you, Simon, for this has not been revealed to you by human flesh and blood, but divinely by my Father.

Well now, Jesus, what is he to you this morning? I recall a hymn we used to sing. We haven't sung it for a long time. I'm always quoting hymns we haven't sung for a long time because I'm so old.

You know, I remember the old hymns. More about Jesus would I know. More of his saving fullness, see. More of his love who died for me.

Spirit of God, my teacher be, showing the things of Christ to me. More, more about Jesus. You know that one, don't you? I hope so. Or if those who now blaspheme and mock him only knew more about him, they wouldn't do it.

That they might know the real Jesus who is the heart and the soul of the Christian faith. The glorious Lord Jesus Christ. Well, that's my introduction to let you know where we're going.

[10 : 27] I won't keep you too long, of course, but all 66 books of the Bible speak either directly or indirectly about the Lord Jesus.

He said, the scriptures are they which speak about me. And we've got to bear that in mind all the time. But a rich concentration of teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ is found in the book of Hebrews where we do learn more and more about him in very, very clear ways.

If there's one book in the Bible I can quote more often from, it's the book of Hebrews because I learned to love it so much. So I ask you, my brother and sister, grow to love the epistle to the Hebrews.

It's packed with information about him in every chapter and Hebrews explains clearly who he is and what he has done. Gradually unfolding the eternal significance of his person and his work.

Hebrews 12, 2 says to us, fix your eyes on Jesus. Fix your eyes upon him. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners.

[11 : 38] Look to Jesus. Look to Jesus. That's what the writer's saying. Hebrews, of course, was written to Jewish Christians as the title suggests, who were in danger of giving up on Christianity and going back to the religion of Old Testament Judaism which they were meant to leave behind having served its purpose.

by Christ's appearance in the world. The old system has been superseded by something much, much better. And so, when the book of Hebrews was written, there was a second generation of Hebrew Christians who needed to see the full extent of Christ's adequacy and not be discouraged by the persecution that the first generation had seen so much of.

Pain and imprisonment and martyrdom because of their faithfulness to Christ. The writer would show how Jesus is much better than angels.

He's much better than Moses. He's much better than Joshua, than the priests. He was the mediator of a new covenant. The faith of Hebrew believers must be securely anchored in Christ alone.

I preach Christ as the Savior, the friend, the prophet, the priest, the king, the teacher, and the Lord of all according to the book of Hebrews' teaching.

[13 : 24] For some years, I listened to, it was on this morning, ten to nine, I think it is, points of view.

Some of you may, when I'm used to getting a shave or something, I switch the radio on and sometimes it's worth hearing more than the service before it, but there we go. A few years ago, Clive James, you remember Clive James?

Poor Saul, he's a nice man. He's a nice man, but he's terminally ill. In fact, I am assuming he's still alive, but he's terminally ill. And he gave a talk one Sunday morning on points.

We used to do it regularly. And it was a seasonal talk, and it was near Christmas, and he gave this talk which would encourage any Christian listening.

He was not disrespectful, there was no mockery, there was no sarcasm, there was no irreverence in his tone. He said complimentary things about the Lord Jesus Christ which we'd appreciate, acknowledging him as a good example and a good teacher who'd influenced the world positively, someone to be greatly admired, not like some other leaders as he suggested.

[14 : 42] but I waited to hear that essential, life-changing confession of acceptance who Jesus really claimed to be.

In Ezekiel's words that you read in the prophecy of Ezekiel so often, then they will know I am the Lord. This is God's purpose for you and me and the goal to be achieved by the preacher.

The purpose of God in the New Testament is the same, to accept and confess Jesus Christ as Lord. It's essential if a person is to be a biblical Christian.

Romans 10.9 confirms that, the gospel summarized, this is the message concerning the faith that we proclaim. if you declare with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.

Philippians 3, Paul, who was once Saul of Tarsus, said, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

[16 : 03] the one he once hated he now loves and gave his life for. Now, Clive James stopped short of recognizing Jesus as God incarnate.

His Christmas meditation made no mention of the most wonderful and significant of his titles, Jesus' titles, Emmanuel in Christ, God is with us.

I was walking along George Street at the time of the festival. You know, it was a nice day and the chairs were outside and Clive James was sitting there.

I was with my wife. I was wanting to go over to him and said, Clive, how much I appreciated that talk. But you know, he's more than just a man.

He's more, and oh, maybe I should have done, but when your wife's with you, you think twice about these things. He, it was tempting and I only pray that he might come to know him whom to know is life eternal.

[17 : 17] Hebrews 1. This is the chapter that exalts him far above all. some sort of have a nodding respect for Jesus, but acknowledging him as the son of God is a step too far.

That he is God in human flesh, they deny. I'm with C.S. Lewis who said, you can't do that.

You can't damn the Lord with faint praise. It isn't logical. How can Jesus be a good, wise, admirable, miracle-performing teacher of perfect ethics and pile compliment after compliment upon him if he happens to be delusional, deranged, a deceiving megalomaniac because that's all he is if he claimed to be God and he isn't.

Either he is or he isn't. He's misled and lied to millions of people throughout the generations. The Bible says that when we do come to see that Jesus is Lord and God, the Father is pleased and he assures that there's a change in our hearts and we become Christians.

The only testimony the Father accepts about his son not just to say nice things about him. The only testimony he accepts is when you say in your heart he's Lord to the glory of God the Father.

[19 : 08] seeing the scars on Jesus' hands Thomas knew who he was and what he claimed to be and what did he do?

He got down on his knees and he said my Lord and my God. Well Hebrews chapter 1 brings this out in glorious fullness.

Two verses from later on in the book Hebrews 7:26 and 8:1 refers to the main point of the book. The main point of what we are saying is this, the writer tells us, we do have a high priest who truly meets our need, who is holy, blameless, pure, sinless, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven, and he serves in a heavenly sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord and not by mere human beings.

Now there's no one else in history to whom those words refer to, can refer to, but the Lord Jesus Christ. So what I'm saying this morning is Jesus is God's final word to the world.

The opening words of the chapter, God has spoken to the world in different ways and at different times through different mediators. Information about God was given to the nation of Israel and to faithful individuals such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, David, Daniel, Jonah, Elijah, Elisha, and the truth was steadily disclosed in this way to the world piece by piece.

[21 : 04] Revelation was gradual and progressive. God never spoke all of the truth to any individual at any one time. But the time came when peace fell, peace messages about himself ceased and God gave his full word of revelation, the full word, the total story, in written and spoken form, the living word, the written word in all its fullness is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He's the complete word, the complete message. In the beginning was the word, the word was with God, the word was God. That's Jesus. the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory.

Folks, I want to say to you in the light of these days and they're sad days in many ways because the church throughout the world is plagued by a heresy.

I want to tell you folks that the Bible is a completed book. It's sealed nothing is to be added to it by men or angels.

We look for no further new revelation, verbal or written. All the essential things God said to the Old Testament saints we have available to us, plus what was revealed through the prophets and the apostles and through the words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself in New Testament times.

[22 : 51] Their inspired words were written down in God's book we find all the information the Bible says we need for life and godliness. It's not my favorite version of the Bible but there's a Bible I used to read to the boys when they were children.

It's called the Living Bible. I love the title because we've heard already from Daniel that the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword.

Folks, you don't need more than the Bible. If anyone comes along and tells you that they've had new revelations, oh, treat it with skepticism. Get your heart and soul into the word of God.

Jesus is the final word. Nothing is to be added to it. Hebrews 1-2 In these last days God has spoken to us in his Son.

This is my beloved Son. Listen to him. God's supreme means of communication is the person of Christ.

[24 : 15] In Christ is found all God wants us to know about himself. Like the two on the Emmaus road, Jesus began at all the scriptures and expounded unto them the things concerning himself.

He didn't give new words. He explained what the old word meant, but he himself, of course, was the word. In Christ is found all God wants us to know about himself.

He fulfills the terms of the new covenant. This is eternal life, to know Jesus Christ, to know God and Jesus Christ, his only Son.

And an accurate knowledge of Christ, for you and for me, is a better understanding of the scriptures. No one has seen God at any time, says John, but the only begotten of the Father, has expounded him, exegete him.

A loving and gentle rebuke was issued to Philip when he said, Lord, show us the Father and we'll be satisfied. That would be enough for us, thank you. Jesus answered, Philip, don't you know me?

[25 : 33] even after all the time I've been among you? Anyone who has seen me has seen God the Father.

How can you say, show us the Father? If you really know me, you will know my Father also. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.

Friends, I've got a lot more to say, but I'm just watching the time. Let me tell you what I might have said. He's God's final word, that's one thing.

Then there are other things. In this chapter, he's the appointed heir of all things. All things were created for his possession and for his pleasure.

Psalms 2 says, and we'll be talking about that this evening, he will be given the nations for his inheritance. He is heir of all things.

[26 : 35] That word in the Greek, *panter*, means the lot, the totality, everything that is everything. It's the world, life, everything.

It's his. He's the firstborn of all creation. That doesn't mean he was created. Firstborn is a title of superiority and position and leadership.

He is heir of all things. And then, a third thing, it was through him that God created the universe. The second part of verse 2.

He's the agent of creation. Through him all things were made. Without him, nothing was made that was made. For in him all things were created in heaven and on earth that are visible and invisible.

All things have been created by him and for him. That makes him more than a man, folks. That makes him more than a good teacher and a brilliant philanthropist.

[27 : 37] Of him we can say, from him and through him and to him are all things. He's the sustainer of all things. Colossians says he's before all things and in him all things hold together.

They cohere actively. Moment by moment he maintains the cosmos, the universe. Were he to relax that control for a second, all things would implode.

He has never taken his hands off the controls for a split second. He still controls the universe. Now is he that important to you? Fourthly, he's the radiance of God's glory, the fullness of the Godhead.

He's the exact representation of God's being. In Christ you're not seeing something less than God. God Almighty says of him, Colossians 1, 19, God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Christ.

And all means all. The Bible insists that no man can see God and live. And that worried a lot of Old Testament folks.

[28 : 56] Yet thousands of people saw Jesus and they live because Jesus is God made intentionally visible. In God, in Christ, God became tangible.

And oh, God says, this is my beloved son, listen to him. And I love the title, the friend of sinners.

I just love that. The name that brings me the deepest comfort addressing sinners. He said, come unto me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I, the Lord of the universe, will give you rest.

He welcomes sinners and eats with them. What a wonderful choice of words. the Father dwells in unapproachable light, the King eternal, immortal, invisible.

But we can come to God the Father through Jesus the Son. Too many, sadly, fall short to call Jesus Lord.

[30 : 05] You might not hate him this morning, but is he your Lord? Does he dictate your morals? Does he dictate what you do with your money, what you do with your time, what you do with your career?

He's to be Lord of all and as the saying goes, if he's not Lord of all, he's not Lord at all. But one final thing that says in this chapter, tenderly, wonderfully, he alone provided forgiveness of sins.

He alone is the solution for sin. He provided purification for our sins and then sat down at the right hand of the majesty in heaven.

Hundreds of thousands of bulls, lambs, goats, pigeons, turtle, doves, were slaughtered as sacrifices for sin and for guilt in the Old Testament dispensation.

But it was never enough. The total number of creatures slain is beyond computation. And had there been ten times more creatures slain and birds sacrificed and animals killed, it would still have not been enough because Hebrews 10 and 4 says, it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

[31 : 39] All those sacrifices together were insufficient. Sins were covered only temporarily for a time. On the day of atonement, the sins of the people were covered for one more year.

One special lamb alone with a capital L could achieve the actual taking away of sins, not covered.

John clearly identified that lamb, the only effective, acceptable, sacrificial lamb. He saw Jesus coming towards him and said to the people, behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

one hymn writer caught this truth. Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain could give the guilty conscience peace or wash away its stain, but Christ the heavenly lamb takes all our sins away, a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they before the throne of God above.

I have a strong, a perfect plea. My brother, my sister, isn't it good news if we confess our sins? He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[33 : 14] That's good news, isn't it? He takes every sin and the goodness of God in that truth leads us to repentance.

So, rejoice this morning. 1 John 3, 5, Christ appeared so that he might take away our sins because in him there was no sin.

Hallelujah for such a Savior. I hope he's everyone's Savior this morning. If he's not, well, now, you might not have the opportunity after this morning.

You might never feel the way you're feeling now. Trust him. Call on him. And whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved and forever praise his name.

Let's pray and then we'll sing. Let's sing.