

## “The Extraordinary Glory of the Beloved”

Resurrection Sunday

April 12, 2020

He is Risen! (Prayer)

Friday night we reflected on the extraordinary grace of the Beloved.” On this resurrection Sunday, we turn our attention now to the extraordinary glory of the Beloved. The purpose of this message today is to help you stand in awe of the majesty, beauty, and glory of Jesus as God’s Beloved, and in so doing to say, “Indeed, Jesus is *my* beloved.” So this message is a call; a call to ***come to Jesus as your Husband-King. Come to Jesus as His bride, and being one with Christ, you will become a beloved child of God and share in the supreme, eternal joy and affection the Father lavishes on His most treasured, Beloved Son.***

The good news of the gospel is that by the death and resurrection of Jesus, we are able to escape the penalty of eternal punishment for our sin. But it is so much more than that. The death and resurrection of Christ are the means by which God reclaims the affections of our heart. It’s not just avoiding punishment. Our hearts are won back to God!

Make no mistake here, the heart of the Christian faith is that God has made a way, through the death and resurrection of His Son, to *reconcile* us to God which means that we *love God* and experience the joy of being His beloved, as the bride of Christ. In other words, becoming a child of God means finding our supreme delight in the Son, in whom the Father supremely delights. That is, when God’s beloved Son, becomes our beloved Savior, we become God’s beloved child. So *the Christian life is about experiencing God’s love in loving what God loves.* (God’s loved has changed our hearts to love what He loves)

So it would be important to ask, what does God love (and in answering that question, we are going to come to a profound discovery)? God loves...

- *Holiness* (Lev 20:26), He Himself being the most holy of all
- *Purity* (1Jn 1:5), He Himself being the most pure of all
- *Justice* (Ps 33:5; Hos 12:7), He Himself being the perfectly just One
- *Righteousness* (Ps 11:7; Pr 15:9), He Himself being the most righteous of all

- *Love* (1Jn 4:8, 16), He Himself being the most loving of all
- *Generosity* (2Cor 9:7), He Himself being the most generous of all
- *Creativity* (), He Himself being the most creative of all
- *Wisdom* (Pr 8:12, 30), He Himself being the wisest of all
- *Beauty*, He Himself being the most beautiful (glorious) of all
- *People*, whom He has made in His own image (Gen 1:27)

Do you see the pattern that’s emerging? Whatever God loves, He Himself is the epitome (the most excellent) of that thing. Now let’s take it one step further. What does God love most? What does God love supremely? God loves supremely what He tells us to love supremely. Or to say it the other way around, what God tells us to love supremely is what He loves supremely. And what does God tell us to love supremely? God Himself! “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength” (Mark 12:30). “You shall have no other gods before Me” (Ex 20:3). That is, nothing else shall supremely own the affections of your heart, but God alone.

We generally accept the idea that we should love God supremely. But when we say that God’s supreme love and joy is in Himself, that God is God-centered, or that what God cherishes most is Himself (as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), it can make some people feel uncomfortable.

There are two reasons for this. First, it sounds arrogant. Indeed, if a man loves himself supremely, it is pompous, vain, and nauseating. It’s idolatry because man is not God. There is someone greater for man to honor above Himself—His Creator. But God has no one greater to honor above Himself. He *is* the supreme One who should occupy the highest place of all affections, including His own.

The second reason we squirm when we hear of the God-centeredness of God, is because there is a very popular, errant theology today that says God’s supreme love is man. In other words, its says God is man-centered. But that is not true!

What is true is that God loves people deeply, passionately, and sacrificially, but He does not love people supremely. For God to make people the highest treasure of His affections would be idolatry, because man is a created being. It would be a reversal of roles (like man worshiping an idol of wood that he

himself has made). Mankind, even before our fallenness in sin, was not the most excellent of all that is and worthy of worship by the Creator. God is the only one worthy of worship and He Himself is the most excellent, all-glorious value of all that is. Therefore, for God to love His glory supremely is not vanity or idolatry, but righteousness.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, God is love. And love must have an object of its affections. And while we are the object of God's loving affections, we are not the highest, supreme object of His affections. The Bible says, "God is love" which means that love is an essential aspect of His eternal nature (1Jn 4:8). So there had to be a supreme object of His love before the creation of man, and that supreme object is the Godhead in which perfect love has always reciprocally existed between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Now why am I going to all of this trouble to argue that **God should occupy the highest place of all affections, including His own**? Because apart from this truth, we will not truly understand the Father's relationship with His Son, as His beloved.

**Jesus, the Beloved of the Father** (Matt 3:17; 17:5; Isa 42:1; cf. Mt 12:18)

Warning: what we are about to embark upon here, is a glimmer of the stunning, all-glorious, beauty and perfection of God's supreme joy!

As we have already seen, God loves many things. God's loving affection is broad, deep, and infinite. And of all that God loves, the highest mountain of His affections and joy, is the beauty and glory of His own divine perfections as the triune Godhead, among whom is perfect, eternal, uninterrupted love. Yet even here we must not stop (at the Mt Everest of God's affections). We must go to the pinnacle, the highest point, of that mountain, and what is its peak? The climactic point of the Father's supreme love and joy is the exuberance and delight He has in His Son—His Beloved!<sup>2</sup>

There is no earthly illustration that is adequate here, but let me try. I have never been a grandparent, but I know how you grandparents are. Your life is full, your joys in life are many, and your years of experience are many. Yet

when that little toddling grandchild comes into the room, suddenly you have no peripheral vision! All your joy, exuberance, delight, pleasure, satisfaction, and love is heaped on this little bundle of sweetness! And the intensity of that desire times a million, is but a faint whisper of the Father's shout of joy over His Son, His beloved! (because grandparent love on steroids, could never adequately illustrate the infinite exuberance of love and joy the Father has for the Son.)

Where do I see this in Scripture? I see it in Isaiah 42:1 (which Mt 12:18 confirms is a reference to Jesus). There the Father says of the Son, "Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen, *My beloved in whom My soul delights!*"

Why? Why is Jesus the pinnacle of the Father's exuberant, joyful, love? Because when the Father looks at the Son He beholds His **own** most-excellent, all-glorious, perfections in the face of His Son. In Jesus, the Father sees all the beauty of His own divine perfections and all the perfections of His divine beauty!

Where do we see this in Scripture?

- Col 1:15 – "He is the **image** of the invisible God"
- Col 1:19 – "It was the Father's good pleasure, for all the **fullness** to dwell in Him." What fullness? Col 2:9—"In Him all the fulness of deity dwells in bodily form."
- Heb 1:3 – "He is the **radiance** of God's glory, and the **exact imprint** of His nature."
- Phil 2:6 – "He existed in the **form** of God" having "**equality** with God."
- John 1:14; 3:16 – He is the "only **begotten**" Son—deity.<sup>3</sup>

So when we use the word *beloved* to speak of the Father's relationship to the Son, we must load that word *beloved* with all the infinite exuberance of joy and love the Father has for the Son who is His Image, fullness, radiance, exact imprint, form, His equal and only begotten.

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<sup>1</sup> See Isaiah 48:9-11

<sup>2</sup> The implications of this, when it comes to the gospel, are absolutely astounding.

<sup>3</sup> One only begets after his own kind. Dog begets dog, man begets man, God begets deity. This does not mean that Jesus came into existence at a point in time (He has always eternally

existed) but rather clarifies the true nature of the Son, sharing in His Father's eternal, infinite, holy nature.

These are the overtones we are to hear when the Father's booming voice of thunder sings over His Son at His baptism: *"This is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased!"* (Mt. 3:17).

This is the same melody that the Father sings over His Son at the transfiguration, when He pulled back the veil of flesh to reveal the blinding brilliance of the Son's glory: *"This is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him* (Mt 17:5)!

Yet we have not listened to Him! And for that very reason, the Father sent His beloved to us as the unspeakable, costly sacrifice for our sin. Thus, Jesus the Beloved becomes the Beloved, crucified.

### **Jesus the Beloved, Crucified** (Phil 2:5-11)

Good Friday commemorates that Jesus, the Beloved, was crucified! The very thought of this should make us stand aghast! The Father's Son, the pinnacle of His eternal, infinite joy, crucified at the hands of little wicked men. Not only this, His brutal death was orchestrated and overseen by the Father Himself—what shocking sacrifice! What shocking love and generous mercy toward undeserving sinners! We should stand aghast.

Don't be mistaken. The Father committed no evil in the death of Jesus. But He used the evil hearts and actions of wicked men to accomplish His glorious, holy purpose of providing redemption for little sinful people.<sup>4</sup>

As for Jesus, He embraced this death-mission willingly. He said, "No one takes [my life] from Me. I lay it down on my own initiative...This commandment I received from My Father" (John 10:18). So wicked men crucified Jesus, only because Jesus willingly allowed them to as a fulfillment of the Father's will. (Father's will, Jesus' willingness, man's wickedness) [Bibles]

Philippians 2:5-8 expresses the extent of humility that was required for Jesus to do this. Keep in mind that the extent to which a person humbles

himself is determined not only by the degree to which he lowers himself, but also the heights from which he descended. For example, its one thing for me to humble myself and pick up someone else's garbage, but its quite another thing for the president of the United States to do that.

Listen to the heights from which Christ descended and the depths to which He humbled Himself from Phil 2:5-8.

***"...Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross"***  
(Philippians 2:5-8).

Notice how Jesus descends down the ladder of humility. Jesus begins from a position of divine glory...

- ***The form of God*** (6a), meaning the essence of Jesus nature and the essence of the Father's nature are one in the same.
- ***Equality with God*** (6b), sharing with the Father all the divine rights and privileges of deity.
- ***Emptied Himself*** (7), setting aside the independent use of His divine rights and privileges by subjecting Himself to the Father ("I do nothing on my own initiative"<sup>5</sup>)
- ***Bond-Servant*** (7), that is, He takes on the very nature of a servant to do His Father's will with absolute obedience.
- ***Made in the likeness of men*** (7). This is the incarnation. He took upon Himself the limitations and frailties of human flesh (without diminishing the infinite nature of His deity)—born as a helpless baby to a poor family.
- ***Appearance as a man*** (8). He took on the appearance of an ordinary man, even though He was much more than that. It is humbling to be viewed as something less than you are (by others less than you are).
- ***Obedience*** (8). Jesus submitted Himself, not only to the Father, but lived under the authority of earthly parents and civil authority.

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<sup>4</sup> There were at least two sets of wills at work in the events of the cross. The will of wicked men (and Satan) doing exactly what they wanted to do—killing Jesus. Yet the will of God was also working out His righteous, holy purposes of bringing about redemption for mankind

through the death of Jesus; God using/orchestrating the wicked schemes and actions of sinful men to work out His glorious Christ-exalting, God-glorifying plan of salvation.

<sup>5</sup> John 5:30; 8:28; 8:42; 12:49; 14:10

- **Death** (8). Death is the ultimate humiliation that all human beings are subjected to, but how much more for Him who has lived eternally.
- **Death on a cross** (8). Some men die honorably (*reputation*). Crucifixion was the humiliating death of sentenced criminals. How much more humiliating for One who had never committed a single sin!

Now it would be natural to think that such unspeakable humility and condescension would diminish Jesus' glory, but in fact it enhances His glory. We need to take all that we have just seen of Jesus humility and load it into the next word in the text: "*therefore...*" (vs. 9).

This single word (or phrase: "for this reason") bears all the weight of 6-8. "Therefore" (for this reason, because of the unspeakable humility and condescension of Jesus), "God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him *the name* which is *above every name* so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is *Lord*, to the glory of the Father."

What is this name? Lord (vs. 11), the name in Greek, that translates the personal name for God in Hebrew—Yahweh, the Sovereign Ruler!<sup>6</sup> The Father has entrusted Jesus with the rule of the cosmos so that one day every knee will bow to Him; those in heaven (angels and saints), those on earth (believers and unbelievers), and those under the earth (demons and lost humanity in hell).<sup>7</sup>

This is how impressed the Father was with the humble, obedient, loyalty of His Son Who went to the furthest extent to do His will.<sup>8</sup> He exalted Him to the highest place, which means that He must have the highest place as Lord in your life in order for you to have right standing before God. And this is precisely why the resurrection of Christ is of such weighty significance for every person. Because Jesus the Beloved, has risen to reign.

<sup>6</sup> ESV Study Bible notes

<sup>7</sup> MacArthur Study Bible notes

### Jesus the Beloved, Risen to Reign (Romans 1:3-4)

We learn from Romans 1 that the resurrection of Jesus was the moment in time when the man Jesus began His official exalted reign as Lord of every person.

**"Concerning His Son, who was born a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 1:3-4).**

This verse begins by emphasizing the humanity of Jesus (a son of David in the flesh). The man Jesus has always also been the Son of God, but He was declared to be so among humanity through His resurrection. The word "*declared*" translates the Greek word *horizo* from which we get our word horizon. It means to mark off by boundaries (the horizon is a boundary marker, a line of distinction between sky and land).

The idea here is that the *man* Jesus, when He rose from the dead, was distinguished, set apart, over every other person and exalted as Lord over them. This is like an election where God is the only one who gets to vote. Jesus is your king whether you like Him or not. You may feel like the implications of His reign have not yet reached you, but you cannot escape them.

As we saw in Philippians 2, "at the name of Jesus" (His earthly name—the man Jesus), every knee will bow...and every tongue confess that He is Lord (Yahweh, the Sovereign Ruler). Jesus the beloved, has risen to reign in the glory of His Father.

### Jesus the Beloved, Reigning in Glory (Daniel 7: Rev 1:12-18)

Daniel sees a remarkable vision of the Father handing over the rulership of His Kingdom to One who is called the Son of Man. Note how Daniel describes Him:

**"I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow, and the hair of His head like**

<sup>8</sup> The Father considered Jesus' condescension and suffering glorious because through it He demonstrated the uttermost loyalty and obedience to the Father's will.

pure wool. His throne *was* ablaze with flames... I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and *men of every* language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed" (Dan 7:9, 13-14).

The blazing white Ancient of Days, gives the rulership of the Kingdom to one who is called the Son of Man. Throughout the gospels, Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man 81 times.<sup>9</sup> Then when we get to Revelation 1, the apostle John sees a vision of "one like a Son of Man" whose countenance (glory) matches that of the Ancient of Days.

"I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades"  
(Rev 1:13-18).

Friends, Jesus the Beloved has risen and is reigning in the glory of His Father, the Ancient of Days, the Almighty.

Now, you may look around you and wonder why things look the way they do in this world if Jesus is reigning? Second Peter 3 gives us the answer. There are many, millions, in our world that are living in rebellion against Jesus, and it is by the mercy of the Lord that Jesus has not yet enforced His absolute rule over every person so that many will come to repentance and be saved (2 Peter 3:9, 15). Yet that day is coming, and it will hasten upon us quickly. Therefore, we must prepare and share; prepare our own souls in

holiness and share the gospel of salvation with urgency because Jesus will return to rule.

### Jesus the Beloved, Returning to Rule (Rev 19:11-16)

In Revelation 19, the apostle John again sees a vision of Christ, this time returning to establish His absolute rule, bringing His enemies to their final demise and establishing His kingdom of peace.

"And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev 19:11-16)

Then John goes on to describe how...

- the beast and the false prophet will be thrown into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone (Rev 19:20)
- Satan will be bound for a thousand years (Rev 20:2) and after being released for a short time to deceive the nations, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire, tormented day and night forever (Rev 20:10).
- Next, death and hades will be thrown into the lake of fire along with ***anyone whose name is not written in the Lamb's book of life*** (Rev 20:14-15).
- **Then** those who have been washed by the blood of the Lamb, those whose names *are* written in the Lamb's book of life, will be ushered into the new heavens and the new earth to enjoy the eternal favor and blessing of the Father as the bride of Christ, as God's dearly

<sup>9</sup> "Son of Man" is the title Jesus most often used for Himself (81 x's in the Gospels) and implies deity (Dan 7:13). [MacArthur Study Bible notes, p. 1963]

beloved children. And there Christ will be the center of our joy and the center of the Father's glory (Rev 21-22).

This is why we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ! He is the pinnacle of all divine joy as the Father's Beloved, come in the flesh, crucified, risen, reigning in glory and returning to rule!

And where you stand in eternity is determined by where you stand in relationship to Jesus. If you remain in sin and indifferent to Jesus, you will be cast into the lake of fire as His fallen foe. But if you repent of your sin and embrace Jesus as your beloved Savior and Lord, when you come to Jesus as your Husband-King, the Father will lavish on you His highest, most exuberant joy and favor reserved for His beloved Son. ***Come to Jesus as your Husband-King. Come under His loving rule. Come to Jesus as His bride, and being one with Christ, you will become a beloved child of God and share in the supreme, eternal joy and affection the Father lavishes on His most treasured, Beloved Son.*** That, is heaven!

Benediction: "May the Lord bless you and cause you to walk in the grace and joy of being in Christ as God's dearly beloved."