

Series Title: “*John’s Gospel of Jesus: God in Flesh*”

Today’s Title:

“*Serving with Eternity’s Values in View*”

Scripture Reading: John 2:1-11

Text: John 2:1-5

Introduction: (Illustration from John Piper’s “Letter to a friend concerning the so-called ‘lordship salvation.’”, pp.1, 10-11)

- A gospel minister in writing to Piper regarding his understanding of, and disagreement with lordship salvation said:
“Near the age of fifteen I accepted Christ as my Savior. As I look back on my life, I can see He had powerful influence during my late teen years and early twenties. In my late twenties I began to be aware of the concept of Christ as Lord. As I investigated that concept and struggled with it, I realized that for Christ to be Lord, I had to submit everything to Him. In my early thirties I did just that. The concept of ‘lordship salvation’ that you support would mean that had I died at age twenty-two, that is, before Christ was Lord, I would not have gone to Heaven.”

- John Piper replied:

“Paul’s answer is that we have faith in the Lord. This does not turn salvation into salvation by works. It simply means we have to know whom it is we are trusting....

“The answer to the question, What is faith? is the most basic one in this whole controversy. It is not a simple mental assent to facts – not lordship facts and not Savior facts. It is a heartfelt coming to Christ and resting in him for what he is and what he offers. It is an act of the heart that no longer hates the light but comes to the light, because a new set of spiritual taste buds have been created and Christ now tastes satisfying to the soul. This notion of faith is taken mainly from the Gospel of

John where, Jesus says, "I am the Bread of Life; he who comes to

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Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

"This view of faith implies that faith itself will inevitably wean a person away from sin because faith is resting in what Jesus has to offer, namely, the pathway of life. Obedience is not something artificially added to saving faith later after a second discovery in the Christian walk. It is what faith does because faith is the soul's cleaving to Jesus for the forgiveness and guidance and hope it needs to be happy. If you don't do what the doctor says, you don't trust him.

"So lordship salvation is not – emphatically not – anything other than salvation by faith (true faith) in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Premise: *When Jesus Christ is Lord, everything changes*

Outline:

I. From Home to the Market Place

II. From Parent to Obedient Servant

III. From Obedient Child to Focused Redeemer

I. FROM HOME TO THE MARKET PLACE

vv.1-2 [Jesus entered public ministry]

A. From birth to adulthood, Jesus learned obedience

c/w Hebrews 5:7-8

c/w Luke 2:41-52

B. From beginning of ministry to end, Jesus persisted

- The wedding at Cana took place the 3rd day after Jesus had gained 2 more disciples
- So the total number of disciples that Jesus called were Andrew, Peter, James, John, Philip and Nathaniel (also known as Bartholomew)
- On the first 2 days after Jesus' baptism, they walked to Cana in Galilee, arriving on the 3rd day.

- Apparently there were several villages named “Cana,” even in the province of Galilee

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- Since Mary, the mother of Jesus, who lived in Nazareth was present, it seems most likely that Cana was very near to Nazareth. There was a Cana of Galilee which was approximately 9 miles to the north.

- Matthew Henry

“The evangelist keeps a journal of occurrences, for no day passed without something extraordinary done or said. Our Master filled up his time better than his servants do, and never lay down at night complaining, as the Roman emperor did, that he had lost a day.”

C. From instruction to festival, Jesus mentored His own

v.2 *“Jesus also was invited to the wedding with His disciples”*

- from *The Biblical Illustrator*, p.149

“Religion enlarges the pleasures of social life. Christ’s presence did not interfere with the ordinary proceedings. There was no look on His face that chilled the company. He made no protest against the glad music of the nuptial chant. No one expressed the wish that Jesus had stayed at home. The wedding feast would have been a wretched failure had He stayed away. And religion is misunderstood if it is supposed to lessen the happiness of life. A good deal of worldly pleasure is feverish, delirium which religion condemns, but it rules out no innocent pleasure. It commands men to rejoice always. What untold miseries it has swept away. There is more happiness in the Christian cottage than there was in Caesar’s Palace.... Christ did not feel out of place here, although a careless observer might think it better for Him to be in the Temple teaching. He was here because of His perfect sympathy to do good. Social life furnishes the Christian with his great opportunities. Faithfulness in religious exercise not the whole of duty. The Christian in society is the foremost preacher. He is there to bear witness to the sympathy of religion with everything that is

wholesome, and to protest against everything that is pernicious.”

- Charles H. Spurgeon, *2,200 Quotations*, pp.114-115

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“Why should Christians be such a happy people? It is good for our God; it gives him honor among men when we are glad. It is good for us; it makes us strong. “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” It is good for the ungodly; when they see Christians glad, they long to be believers themselves. It is good for our fellow Christians; it comforts them and tends to cheer them....I thought I could have leaped from earth to heaven at one spring when I first saw my sins drowned in the Redeemer’s blood....It is an unfortunate thing for the Christian to become melancholy. It there is any man in the world that has a right to have a bright, clear face and a flashing eye, it is the man whose sins are forgiven him, who is saved with God’s salvation.”

II. FROM PARENT TO OBEDIENT SERVANT

[Mary’s statement to Jesus, then to the servants]

A. Priority of authority changes with Jesus as Lord

v.3 *“When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, ‘They have no wine.’”*

c/w Matthew 12:46-50

v.4 *“And Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what does this have to do with me?’”*

- from *The Best of Tozer: Book Two*, pp.121-122

Pseudo faith always arranges a way out to serve in case God fails it. Real faith knows only one way and gladly allows itself to be stripped of any second way or makeshift substitutes. For true faith, it is either God or total collapse. And not since Adam first stood up on the earth has God failed a single man or woman who trusted Him.

The man of pseudo faith will fight for his verbal creed but refuse flatly to allow himself to get into a predicament where his future must depend upon that creed being true. He always provides himself with secondary ways of escape so he will have a way out if the roof caves in.

What we need very badly these days is a company of Christians who are prepared to trust God as completely now as they know they must do at the last day. For each of us the time is surely coming when we shall have nothing but God. Health and wealth and friends

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and hiding places will all be swept away and we shall have only God. To the man of pseudo faith that is a terrifying thought, but to real faith it is one of the most comforting thoughts the heart can entertain.

It would be a tragedy indeed to come to the place where we have no other but God and find that we had not really been trusting God during the days of our earthly sojourn. It would be better to invite God now to remove every false trust, to disengage our hearts from all secret hiding places and to bring us out into the open where we can discover for ourselves whether or not we actually trust Him. That is a harsh cure for our troubles, but it is a sure one. Gentler cures may be too weak to do the work. And time is running out on us."

B. Following Christ's authority sets the pace for others

v.5 *"His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever He tells you.'"*

(Illustration from Green #656)

The great missionary David Brainerd, who spent his brief life (died before 30) ministering to American Indians, wrote in his journal these words: *"I never got away from Jesus and him crucified. When my people were gripped by this great evangelical doctrine of Christ and him crucified, I had no need to give them instructions about morality. I found that one followed as the sure and inevitable fruit of the other."*

He also said this in another place: *"I find my Indians begin to put on the garments of holiness and their common life begins to be sanctified even in small matters when they are possessed by the doctrine of Christ and him crucified."*

What Brainerd was saying was this: when a Christian realizes who Christ is and what Christ has done for him so graciously, as we have been seeing, it tends to have a dramatic effect on this life, not only in salvation but in holiness.__

III. FROM OBEDIENT CHILD TO FOCUSED REDEEMER

v.4 “My hour has not yet come.”

A. Jesus always worked on his Father’s schedule

- Richard C.H. Lenski

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“Jesus’ hour is the one appointed for him by the Father; it may be the hour for this or for that in his Messianic work. When it comes, he acts, and not until it comes. So Jesus never hurries, not lets others hurry him, he waits for his hour and then meets it. He is never uneasy or full of fear, for nothing can harm him until his hour comes; and when it comes, he gives his life into death.”

B. Jesus always worked with great joy

- Old hymn from the Presbyterian Hymnal, #9 of the Supplement

*One there is, above all others,
Well deserves the name of Friend:
His love beyond a brother’s,
Costly, free, and knows no end.*

*Which of all our friends, to save us,
Could or would have shed his blood?
But this Savior died, to have us
Reconciled in him to God.*

*When he lived on earth, abased,
Friend of Sinners was his name;
Now, above all glory raised,
He rejoices in the same.*

*O for grace our hearts to soften!
Teach us, Lord, at length to love;
We, alas,! forget too often
What a Friend we have above.*

C. Jesus always worked to bring highest glory to God

c/w John 5:19-24

- Poem by Frederick William Faber, *Majesty Divine!*

*Full of glory, full of wonders,
Majesty Divine!
Mid Thine everlasting thunders*

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*How Thy lightnings shine!
Shoreless Ocean! who shall sound Thee?
Thine own eternity is round Thee,
Majesty Divine!*

*Timeless, spaceless, single, lonely,
Yet sublimely Three,
Thou art grandly, always, only
God in Unity!
Lone in grandeur, lone in glory,
Who shall tell Thy wondrous story,
Awful Trinity?*

*Speechlessly, without beginning,
Sun that never rose!
Vast, adorable, and winning,
Day that hath no close!
Bliss from Thine own glory tasting,
Everliving, everlasting,
Life that never grows!*

*Thine own Self for ever filling
With self-kindled flame,
In Thyself Thou art distilling
Uncions without name!
Without worshipping of creatures
Without veiling of Thy features,
God always the same!*

*In Thy praise of Self untiring
Thy perfections shine;
Self-sufficient, self-admiring, -*

*Such life must be Thine; -
Glorifying Self, yet blameless
With a sanctity all shameless
It is so divine!*

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*'Mid Thine uncreated morning,
Like a trembling star
I behold creation's dawning
Glimmering from afar;
Nothing giving, nothing taking,
Nothing changing, nothing breaking,
Waiting at time's bar!*

*I with life and love diurnal
See myself in Thee,
All embalmed in love eternal,
Floating in Thy sea:
'Mid Thine uncreated whiteness
I behold Thy glory's brightness
Feed itself on me.*

*Splendours upon splendours beaming
Change and intertwine;
Glories over glories streaming
All translucent shine!
Blessings, praises adorations
Greet Thee from the trembling nations
Majesty Divine!*

Conclusion: (Illustrations from Green #1290 and #1164)

Some years ago in L.A. a man was walking down the street with a sign on his shoulders. The front of it said, "I'm a slave for Christ." The back of it read, "Whose slave are you?"

That is a good question, because all of us are slaves to one or the other of 2 masters – sin or righteousness. We have no other

choices. By the very nature of our humanity, we are made to serve and to be controlled by forces beyond our power.

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The movie *The Hanging Tree* was set in a western gold-mining camp in the late 1800s. Gary Cooper played the role of doctor for the camp. One day, a young boy was seen robbing gold from the camp. He was shot from a distance but managed to hobble into hiding. All hands in the camp spread out to see who would be the first to kill him for this offense. The doctor found the hurt, frightened youth. He took him into his cabin, nursed him, and removed the bullet. After the boy regained consciousness, he inquired what the doctor would do with him now. The doctor held the slug in the boy's face and said, "You will be my servant for as long as I want you to be, maybe forever, because that is how long you would be dead if this slug had remained in you."

That is the length of condemnation for the slug of sin if it remains in us. The Great Physician has already performed the surgery to remove the slug. The painless operation of trust in him is the only requirement. It is our privilege to be servants of the One who healed us forever, for without his healing, we also would be dead forever.

Premise: *When Jesus Christ is Lord, everything changes*