

Christ 01 ~ Keswick Conference 1970

by Harold Wildish

Harold Wildish's sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing Christ as the source of victorious living and eternal hope for believers and non-believers alike.

Duration: 42:53

Scripture: Matthew 27:46, Luke 23:34, Revelation 1:9-15

Topics: "Keswick"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher describes a vision of Jesus Christ as seen by the apostle John in the book of Revelation. The preacher emphasizes the power and majesty of Jesus, describing his voice as loud and his countenance shining like the sun. Jesus is depicted as adapting himself to every race, culture, and willing heart, continuing his work of redemption in the world. The preacher encourages Christians to live with an attitude of looking unto Jesus, trusting in him and allowing him to guide and transform their lives.

Transcript

I'm back here at this love spot, and, um, as I face this week of ministry amongst you, with exercised heart, I thought to say, the Lord's Day, just have two Bible talks about your lovely Lord Himself. All He can be to us, and all He will be to us, if He comes back so soon. And then, Monday through Friday, feel exercised to take you to the times of Elijah and Elisha.

These men who were of like passions with ourselves, just like us, facing the battle of life, and they learned to know God and the secrets of victory. You know, the word Kedzik means a great deal to me, and I'm quite, they say, well, I love Kedzik, but when you ask them what Kedzik means to them, they think of the grounds, and the lovely meetings, and the sweet fellowships, and somehow they haven't quite gripped this fact that the word Kedzik, which is just a little town in Cumberland in England, has become a name known round the world for a message. I don't like the term the Kedzik message, because the Kedzik message is just a Bible message, that's all.

It's not the slightest difference, but it's an emphasis of messages which are desperately needed in our churches and assemblies today. I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but do you know from January the 1st to December the 31st there are lots of Christians, and in their churches, their assemblies, they never hear the message that Kedzik tries to put to the front and bring to the minds, and hearts, and consciences of God's people. Just come from Barbados in the West Indies, we launched the first Kedzik in that little island of 250,000 people, and only three weeks ago I was facing audiences of around 350 every morning for the

Bible reading, and then about eight or nine hundred people, and let me tell you very few white faces amongst them in the evenings for the evening meetings, and their appreciation of the Kedzik message was terrific.

Again and again they came up and they would say, oh dear why didn't we hear this years ago? Why didn't we hear the possibilities of victorious Christian living when we were younger? And these Kedzik weeks, and these Kedzik conventions, and these wonderful precious times of teaching that bear the name Kedzik, all one in Christ Jesus, and perhaps the key to the whole teaching, Christ is all, and all is in Christ. And so I want to start this morning just talking to you about your Lord, and then we move into the secrets that he has provided. They're his secrets for us morning and evening, right through the week if you are free to come.

Now have you got your New Testament there please? Just open it at Revelation chapter 1 verse 9, and it's an old man who's speaking to us. Beloved John, the time when he was a fisherman full of elastic, full of muscle, knew how to throw the nets, and draw the nets, and catch the fish. But he with his brother, and possibly cousin, heard the call and they followed the Lord Jesus out into that new life of discipleship.

One by one he has seen his fellow disciples spinning out. John possibly heard of Peter's death years ago. James, how he was killed by Herod, his head was chopped off.

He's even heard how the beloved apostles of the Gentiles has laid down his life in Rome, and yet he's still a dear old man. Tell me that there's a story that when John was carried into the church at Ephesus, they had to carry him in on his couch, and they brought the couch in and put it down in the congregation, the assembly, and as he came in he would whisper, love is of God, love one another, and he would just repeat the words of love. Dear old John, why those naughty people should have got this old man, possibly in his 90s.

Now you think of the comfortable bed you sleep on tonight, you think of the lovely food you eat three times a day, and you picture him snatched away from Asia Minor to the little rocky isle of Katmos, and he's a captive, he's a prisoner. Cold, oh it can be cold in the winter there. Hot, oh it can be roasting in the summer there.

Kindly treated, I don't think so, not very kindly treated. Story goes that from the churches on the mainland, the seven churches, they had clubbed together to send some comfort, and some food, and some clothing, and things that he would need. And the seven men had crossed the waters to this rocky island, and they'd come to him, and ministered to him, and they're going back, back to their churches, and the risen Christ meets John, and gives him this amazing revelation, unfolding of Jesus Christ and his future.

And John is used of God to write seven letters, and he puts the letters, seven distinct, separate letters, to Ephesus, right through to Laodicea, in the hands of these chosen elders. They could easily be the angels of the churches, and they are going to carry back the letter, the individual letter, to the seven churches, and also the amazing revelation of the future. The wonderful risen Christ, and his taking of the book, and breaking the seals, and administering the judgments of God, and coming back into world politics.

And John gives us, in this opening chapter, something which is very precious. He gives us a picture, a photograph, and as far as I know, it's the only photograph in full picture of our risen Lord. Do you want to know what your Lord looks like? Oh, I've been so disappointed with artists' pictures.

I've never seen Jesus, you know. I love him, but I've never seen him, and I just long for the day when faith will give way to sight, and I shall see him. But, here is given a picture of the risen Lord, and John describes him from the top of his head, right down to his feet.

Well, now let's read. Revelation 1 verse 9. I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice of a trumpet saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

Now, there are two opinions about this Lord's day, and you will find loved, honored Bible teachers telling you that the beloved apostle was in the spirit, and he was led away into the coming Lord's day, the day of the Lord, and he saw the things that would happen in the day of the Lord. That seems very reasonable, but it's rather remarkable that the word Lord, here, is used very rarely in Scripture. It's rarely the lordly day.

It's used for the Lord's supper, strangely enough. In Corinthians, the lordly supper, there's thousands of supper tables and millions of suppers going on in the world, but this is the lordly supper. There are many days, oh yes, but there is a day set apart which is the lordly day, and I'm rather inclined to believe that John was actually speaking of the the Lord's day.

The old week had gone round, and he had come to the, what we call Sunday morning, the resurrection day, the first day of the week, the day when, never forget it, a way back in old Ephesus, in his beloved church, the disciples gathered together to continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching, and in the fellowship of the breaking of the bread and of prayers. And the dear old man must have missed this, the thronging Christians, the joy of worship with many others, the joy of keeping the Lord's supper, of listening to the word of God being unfolded. He's lonely, and I was in the spirit, he says, that Sunday morning, that Lord's day, when I woke up, as I was under the gracious control of the spirit, all of a sudden I heard a voice, and he said it was behind me.

Now, this is interesting. You know, when you hear a voice behind you, if you're looking in this direction, and you hear a voice behind you, you swing, you turn to see who it is, because there was never a voice without a person behind the voice. And I've got the picture, somehow, that that Lord's day, that John was looking in a certain direction, and all of a sudden he heard the voice, and he swung round, to see who it was speaking to him, and he turned from this position to this position.

He was looking this way, and now he's looking this way. I turned to see the voice. I wonder if it could be possible that on that Lord's day morning, John woke up, and he thought to himself, well, another day in this old rocky island, another day away from the Christians at Ephesus, but it's the Lord's day, and why shouldn't I do what they're doing? I know they're following the Lord's command, this do in remembrance of me, and I'm pretty sure that they will be turning their minds backwards, drawn we to Calvary, and they will remember all it cost him to redeem us by his blood.

I'll do the same, and so, that Lord's day morning, he's thinking back. No one could think back quite like John. He'd been with the Lord Jesus those three years, and then he was the one who went the deepest into the shadows of Gethsemane.

He was the one who looked at the dying Lord on the cross, and took the responsibility of caring for the virgin mother of our Lord. Yes, he was there in the upper room. He moved out into the great ministry of the apostles, and as he looks back over the long years, he's thinking of how the word became a human being,

and how he was manifested.

That which was from the beginning has come down amongst us, and we've seen him, we've handled him, we've looked into his face, he says, and he's looking back when all of a sudden the voice comes, and he turns from looking back to look forward. A backward look we, drawn to Calvary, musing as we sing, forward haste we to his coming. Lord and King, there should always be the forward look.

Our Lord is written, our glorious Lord is soon coming to manifest himself. He turns from the backward look to the forward look. The voice says, I am Alpha and Omega.

What a funny title for our Lord. You know, the Lord Jesus loved to use the great I am's in his gospel, the gospel of his deity. They come ringing out one after another, I am the bread, and a hungry world is around him, and he can satisfy.

I am the light of the world, and in all the darkness he's shining, so those great seven I am's ring out in the gospel of John. But here he says, I am the alphabet, I am the Alpha and Omega, the A and Z of the alphabet, I am the alphabet. It's so startling, it's so amazing to use a term like that, that we should pause a minute and ask why.

Well, let me ask you a question. Can you exhaust the alphabet yet? You go to the National Library and see the millions and millions of books that they've collected there, and see the great wings of the library. Science, geography, history, theology, so on, so on, so on, so on.

And you look round and you say, my word, what a lot of books have been written, and the making of books, there is no end. But how many letters did they use? Twenty-six, that's all. Just think of it, Shakespeare only used twenty-six letters for all his writings.

Winston Churchill, in all his laborious writings about the great wars, only used twenty-six, that's all. You can't find any more there in that great big library in the English language. I am the alphabet.

And if our Lord doesn't come, and the world goes on, the makings of books will never end. They'll be poured out, and they're just taking twenty-six letters and reshuffling them, and producing book after book after book. And the alphabet is inexhaustible.

And so is Jesus. I am the alphabet, inexhaustible. That one who stepped out of eternity past, and moved into time for a little season, amazingly has regained, not regained, I'm sorry, he has retained his manhood.

And there's a living, glorified man who bears the marks of Calvary, the head of a new race on the throne. And he's going to bring many sons to glory. And if you're a believer, you belong to him.

You're his, bought by his blood. And if you're not, you ought to be a believer. Oh, let me say to you, if you're not a Christian, and by that word I don't mean a church member, and by that word I don't mean trying to do the best you can, if you are not a real Christian, a man who belongs to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, face it, face it, you are in desperate need this month.

I believe there's loving hearts around you, praying for you. I believe there are people saying, oh Lord, don't let them miss this one thing. But you say, I'm just as good as them.

Of course you are, possibly better than they are. But you see, they've acknowledged that they're just poor, guilty sinners, and cast themselves on the grace of God, and you haven't. And that makes the difference.

No good talking about being better than the Christians around you. Possibly you are ever so much better. But do you realize that we live in a guilty world, and God has condemned us all? We are sinners by nature, and whether we are awake or asleep 24 hours a day in a sinful state before God, we are without hope, without spiritual life, in a lost condition, and we need Jesus Christ to come and bring newness of life.

I come that ye might have life, that ye might have it more abundantly. And that Savior can step over the threshold of a heart and life, and he can whisper pardon and peace, and he can possess your life and empower your life. And this is being a real Christian.

Oh, that lovely Savior is inexhaustible. Inexhaustible. But you know, if I get a little boy, and I take a little boy into the library, and I say, now Sonny, tell me, how old are you? Three and a half, sir.

Oh, getting a big boy now. Now look, this is the National Library, and here are all these books, and in your lifetime I hope you'll read a great number of these books. I really hope you will.

Now look, this is all history, and this is adventure, and these are novels, and I begin to describe it, and the little fellow is looking so vacantly around him. And I say, Mr. Minister, do you know your ABC? No. Now look at the dear little chap's face, and I realize that he cannot begin to explore all those books, can't begin to touch the very fringe of those books until he learns the difference between A and C, or between B and D. And so this inexhaustible alphabet is indispensable, absolutely indispensable.

I am the alphabet, says Jesus. You cannot begin to know the things of God without me. You know, this makes me alarmed at times, and yet on the other times I really enjoy a great big chuckle.

I was sitting by the side of a professor, a Canadian professor, in a plane a few months ago to go out to dear old PBI, Prairie Bible Institute, and believe me, he said he was very interested in philosophy. And when I gave him the philosophy of Solomon, the wisest man in the world, as Solomon found life in Ecclesiastes, this man was so interested, he said, he said, you know, he said, that fellow's right, that fellow's right. I said, you think so? And I went on, mind you, I hadn't revealed where this book was.

He said, tell me, he said, where was this book published, this book you call Ecclesiastes? He said, give me the name of the publisher, I want to get it. Well, eventually I told him it was in the heart of his Bible, right in the middle, one of the books of wisdom. And this dear fellow, such a lovely man, married a home of his own, teaching in the great big university up there in Alberta, hadn't the clue to the knowledge of God, because he didn't know Jesus, as he said.

You can't begin to touch the things of God, except argue about them and often against them. Be a very clever stick that's revealing your utter ignorance as you do it. You can't begin to know the things of God till you know Jesus as your saviour.

You've got to come, just like a little child, with all your guilt and sin and shame, and say, gentle Jesus. Look upon this poor child of Adam, this poor, selfish, sin-stained, hell-bound soul. You can't touch the things of God till you come and learn to know Jesus like that.

And so, the alphabet is inexhaustible, but it's indispensable. But I love to think that it's so adaptable. Oh, it's so wonderful.

You know, you can go into the courthouse and you can see a stern judge, and I'm picturing a Jamaican court now. You can see him, the wid, looking across at a prisoner, and he says, well, I've got to bring in my

verdict. And he takes all the witnesses that he's heard, and he's taken the final findings of the jury, and he says that man is guilty, and he will go out and hang by his neck till he's dead, dead, dead.

And the judge is using, in his sentence, just 26 letters, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, T, U, X, Y, Z. And I leave the court, and I go out, and I see under the trees a precious young couple, and they're walking hand in hand in the moonlight, and bless their dear young hearts, they're saying sweet nothings, oh stop, sweet everythings to each other. And I'm not going to be an eavesdropper, I'm not going to over listen, but believe me, they're just using the same 26 letters that the judge used as they poured out their heart's affection one to another. Isn't it adaptable? And isn't Jesus adaptable? He is.

He can go into your wife's house and capture a hawk. He can go into the most neo-negro hut in victory land and capture a hawk. And he'll sit down with both of them, doing it today in the Congo forest, in the high Guinea mountains, and the Amazon jungles.

From every tribe, and kindred, and tongue, and people, amidst all the scenes of war, and strife, and shame, and selfishness of our old world, Jesus goes on with his work, adapting himself to every race, adapting himself to every culture, adapting himself to every person, and every kind of willing heart that will look into his faith and trust. And so John turns, says he, verse 11, to see him, and he saw him. Alpha, omega, first, last, and he's told to write.

And he writes and sends his letters to the seven churches. But now, verse 12, I turn to see the voice that spake with me, and being turned, seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands, one like unto the Son of Man. Now, this is interesting.

We all know how the Gospels teach how the Son of God became the Son of Man, that he might lift the fallen sons of men, and make them eternally the sons of God. That's the great plan of redemption. Our world has been invaded by deity.

God has come amongst us, Emmanuel. Why? To a lost race is going to produce a new race, and in the man Christ Jesus is going to bring many sons to glory. Oh, I can hear the triumph of the Christ.

Father, I am the children that thou hast given me. Soon we are going to see the fruitage of Calvary. Soon we are going to see what grace has done, lifting from a dying world men and women who will eternally be companions of Jesus Christ.

Oh, I repeat an old saying, but I must rub it in. God is so charmed with his darling Son in manhood, that he's planned to fill up heaven with millions more like him. That's the future of every blood-bought child of God, to be conformed to the image of God's Son, in his likeness, to share his affection and life and future forever.

This is our hope. Just think of it. I know where I'm going to be in a thousand years' time.

Do you do? Yes. With Christ reigning over the world, and watching him restore the kingdoms to hand back to the powers, I know where I'm going to be in a million years' time. A million days co-heirs with Christ in his eternal glories, as the ages pass.

This great universe that he made and sustains and owns is going to be peopled by a race that is a new creation race. Men and women lifted from Adam's fallen race, lifted from sin and shame, and set amongst princes for eternity. This is your Lord.

Now, look at the picture, and we'll just close with this lovely rundown of the picture. Verse 13, he was clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle. I want you to catch this look.

I was looking on that Lord's day, he says. Backward look we, drawn to Calvary. I heard the voice.

I turned to see. Forward, look we to thy coming, Lord and King. He's turned from the backward glimpse to the forward glimpse.

Backward he saw Jesus, just in the one garment left upon his body, being led to the cross. And there they strip him naked, and gamble away this one-piece garment. And there nailed to the cross is the Son of God, covered with blood and spittled and crowned with thorns, with the cry of the world, away with him! We will not have this man to reign over you.

And the only answer came, Father forgive them, they don't know what they're doing. And as he looked back and saw his Lord stooping so low, stripped naked on the cross, his very garments gambled away, he says, I turned and I saw him clad, clad in a gown down to his foot. And I saw that golden girdle binding this great robe to his heart, that great loving heart of Jesus, that loves and will ever love for the uttermost.

And immediately your mind goes to the high priest of Israel, and you can see him moving around in the sanctuary with his gray white robe, or with his royal robes. But somehow this is our great high priest, this is our living Lord, loving to the uttermost, caring for you. You say, he cared for me when I was a little boy, full of elastic.

He cared for me when I was a lassie, growing away up in that hometown. Ah, the shadows are lengthening, the hair has gone gray, the even tide is coming, and he cares just as much. He'll watch over us, each one, until he presents us forthwith before the throne with exceeding joy.

This is your risen Lord. Now he describes him and he says, his head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire. What a picture! As he looked back, he saw that head so full of bruises, so full of pain and woe.

As he looked back to the cross, he saw that hair hanging around that head, all matted with sweat and blood. And he saw those eyes, those eyes that were bloodshot with weeping, as he hung there to win your redemption and mine. And tell him, please, the same head of a risen Savior.

He said, his head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow. He seems to be the ancient of days that Daniel saw in his prophecy, the Eternal One. And his eyes as a flame of fire, all seeing eyes.

Oh, the wonder of your Lord! Then he goes on with his description. He says, his feet were like undefined brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. His feet, his voice.

Oh, John, you are something about those feet. You know, John knew that those feet were weary and tired, and psyched as well as busy disciples went out to get the meat and the bread. There were times when he had seen John, seen his loved Lord stretched out in the boat, fast asleep, with his head upon a pillow in Peter's boat.

Yes, I suppose, as he gazes back to the cross, he sees those feet pinned to that cross. No bone was broken, but the great pin racked through to pin those feet to that cross. It would seem, his feet, his voice,

he had heard that voice crying out from the cross, Eli, Eli, lama, sebek, banai.

He'd listened to it all. Now he's looking forward. He sees those loved feet that can tramp the hills of glory, untired, never exhausted.

He hears the voice, that loved voice, as the sound of many waters. You can hear the drip of a tap at night. You can hear the gurgle of the little stream at night.

You can hear the rolling of the great rollers coming in on the beaches. You can hear the big cataract, diagara, coming down, crash into the chasm. Water makes different noises, the sound of water, but no one can speak like him, speaking still, and we shall hear that loved voice for eternity.

His sheep know his voice. You know when he's talking to you. Then he goes on with his description.

He says, in his right hand, verse 16, are seven stars, sharp to edge its swords. Goes out of his mouth, his countenance shining as the sun in his strength. Isn't that lovely? Holding the stars, the elders, the messengers, the angels, whoever you like to think they are.

I'm going to be greedy enough to believe that any servant of God can be claimed to be held by the hand of the Risen Christ. Sunday school teacher, a bible teacher, a busy mother praying for those grandchildren, pastor over there, held in his hand. We can rest there in our own strength.

We do nothing, but he can hold us in his hand. He held them, says John, the stars, the angels of the churches, we are told they are in his hand. We must rest there.

Yes, his mouth speaks in judgment, sharp to edge sword, his countenance above the brightness of the sun shining. John, what did you do? I fell at his feet of death. In the upper room, I sat next to him around the table.

In the upper room, I leant my head back upon that great loving heart. I heard it beating. I heard his whisper.

He moved me from leaning on his breast and he rose and he took a towel and girded himself and took our dirty feet and washed them and he said, you will understand someday what I'm doing for you because I want you to do it for us. John is looking back, but now he's looking forward and he says, as I looked forward, I could only fall at his feet of death. A hand was put upon me, a pierced hand, and he said, fear not.

Perfect love casts out all fear. The only fear we should have is the fear to grieve him or hurt him or fail him. Fear not.

I am the first. I was back there long before the foundations of the world were made. I am the last.

When time is wound up and the kingdoms are handed back to the father and time changes to eternity and eternal ages roll, I'll be there. You see, Christ Jesus is all, and all is in Christ, and this is your Savior, Lord. This is the one that you came to, trembling, and said, thank you, Lord Jesus, for dying for me, taking my place upon the cross, bearing my condemnation, and winning my salvation.

And he loves to be trusted. That first look into his face should have begun an attitude of looking, and we should live looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. And frankly, the only evidence I can

give to you tonight that I, as a boy of school, happy-go-lucky little fellow, put my trust in Jesus Christ that Sunday night at the age of twelve and a half to thirteen, the only evidence I can give you now is that I'm still looking.

The first look started an attitude of looking, and we live looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Now, Christians, listen. I close.

This is your lovely Lord. This is the one who is tremendously interested in every detail of your life. This is the one at tremendous cost to us, planned that you should be a strong, beautiful, victorious Christian, seven days a week, in a scrubby, old, dirty world.

Is he big enough for the job? Of course he is. And if we will only yield to his claims, and if we will only, with a real, living faith, say, Lord, you must accomplish your purposes right here in the kingdom of my own soul, in my own life, there'll be no regrets. No regrets.

Just the glory of it, Lord. Now, beginning to taste that moment-by-moment life of Christ, which, when faith gives way to sight, you'll meet no stranger, Lord. You'll meet one that you've learned to know and love in this book.

You've learned to know and love in the experiences of everyday life. Did he cause your home by falling asleep? Don't get too anxious about falling asleep, dear Christian. I've never seen a person really troubled about falling asleep.

Have you? For the Christian, it's just falling asleep to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, which is far better. But, tonight, we'll speak of that living and purifying hope that so near is coming back for its own. It could be tonight, it could be next week, it could be next month, it could be this year in the seventies.

But, there will come from outer space the Son of God, with the marks of Calvary, to gather the fruitage of Calvary, to bring salvation to our old world. And, this should be a purifying, challenging, living hope in our hearts. Now, will you bow in prayer for a moment? It's the Lord's Day, the Resurrection Day, the first day of the week, the day when Christians gather together for worship, for remembrance, for prayer, for exhortation, for teaching.

It's a quiet, restful day that's been set apart cruelly as a Sabbath in American life, even though it's so abused on every hand. Here we are on the Lord's Day. Are we in the Spirit? Can we hear a voice? Can we turn to look into its face, catch a fresh picture of our glorious Lord? I wonder as he puts out his hand toward us, and lays it on us, all fear will be taken away, and we'll just put out our hand and take his, and say, Lord, lead me into the great future.

We're about to separate, Lord, and as we bow together in thy presence, we ask, if there's one here who has never from a true heart said to the Savior, thank you, Lord Jesus, for going to the cross for me, there may be born that thank you prayer in their hearts, and a real surrender to thy claims. Oh, the wonder of it that we could go out into this day knowing him whom to know is life eternal, for each one of us who trusted him, may we look afresh into his face and ever live looking unto Jesus the author and finisher. I dismiss us with divine blessings.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our Father, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit abide with us all now and ever. Amen.

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