

We See Jesus

by James Blaine Chapman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing Jesus as the perfect Redeemer who has come to save us from sin and its effects, and who offers us eternal life and salvation through faith in Him.

Topics: "Christ Redeemer", "Faith And Grace"

Description

James Blaine Chapman preaches about the significance of seeing Jesus in various aspects: as the Redeemer who took up where Adam left off to work out the destiny for mankind, as the Interceding Jesus who ever lives to make intercession for us, and as the Indwelling Christ who comes to abide in our hearts. The sermon emphasizes the blessings and salvation that Christ offers to meet our deepest needs and desires, urging listeners to look to Him in faith for mercy, power, and grace in all aspects of life.

Transcript

Sir, we would see Jesus (John 12:21).

We see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour (Hebrews 2:8, 9).

The Scriptures draw analogy between Adam and Christ; calling one the first Adam and the other the last Adam (I Corinthians 15:45). The one, the earthly Adam, was the head and beginning of the old creation; the other, the Lord from glory, was and is the head of the new creation, the redeemed on earth and in heaven.

The Scriptures do not exactly say so, but I think they intimate that man was never intended to live forever upon earth. He was placed on probation in the garden of Eden, and had he served out that probation faithfully, he might have been translated to heaven. But he failed in that first probation, and, but for the intervention of Christ, would never have had further opportunity to reach the original goal set before him. But Jesus took up where Adam left off and set in to work out the destiny for man that was originally designed. We are not, therefore, headed back to an earthly Eden; we are headed on to the heavenly paradise which Adam would have reached, had he been faithful in time of trial.

In taking up the human cause, Jesus Christ became heir to all that Adam had or would have finally possessed in righteousness. The redemptive scheme of Christ therefore includes both man and man's environment -- this world and the world to come. Even this earth is redeemed through Christ, and when

that redemption is put into full effect, we shall have a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. That new earth will be free from the mar of sin's effects. In it there will be no thorns or briars or other curses. There will be no earthquakes or violent winds. The poles shall be melted up, the sea shall vanish, and the torrid regions shall become pleasant climes. Beasts of prey shall feed on grass and herbs, and nothing that hurts or destroys or maketh afraid shall be found in all God's holy mountain.

In that blessed day yet to come Satan will be bound and imprisoned in the bottomless pit. Temptation shall pass. Trial shall be no more. The nations will study war no longer. Wickedness shall be banished. Sickness and death shall pass away. And the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; and neighbor shall not say unto neighbor, "Knowest thou the Lord?" for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest. Hail that blessed day! Such a state and such a day are set before the people of God as a "blessed hope."

We do not see these wonderful conditions yet. Rather our eyes must look upon a world cursed by sin and its effects. The world, the earth itself, seems to travail in pain and uneasiness. The seasons are fanciful, the temperature of the earth is fickle, the curse of weeds and thistles is upon our fields. Swamps and deserts and the wild wastes of the sea cover much the larger portion of our earth's surface. Poisonous reptiles and flesh eating animals encroach upon one another and upon the safety of man. Everywhere are the intimations of an afflicted creation.

The worst spectacle of all is the world of mankind. War and destruction eat out the hearts of the nations. Sin and vice bring their curse upon homes, and upon the bodies, minds and hearts of men. The wicked spread themselves like the green bay tree, and make the bad popular by making it all but universal. The innocent suffer. Widows and orphans are prey to covetous and lecherous men. Moral and spiritual confusion are on every side.

There is not, strictly speaking, a vital Christian nation, state, city or town of any consequence upon the earth. There are not many families every member of which is wholly devoted to Christ. There are relatively few hearts in which the scepter of Jesus is unopposed. "We see not yet all things put under him." Nay, far from this, we see the whole world lying in the lap of the wicked one. The sight is nauseating and discouraging.

The author of the Book of Hebrews would not have us stand long to gaze upon the gruesome spectacle of a sinning and sinful world. Rather, he would have us turn from the unfinished work of redemption to gaze upon a perfect Redeemer. Let us see Jesus.

Each of the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, gives us a true earthly picture of Jesus Christ from the point from which he looks at Him. Matthew sees Him as the Messiah and King of the Jews. Mark paints Him as the Mighty World Worker and Hope of the Gentile World. Luke describes Him as the Son of Man and Saviour of all. John depicts Him as the eternal Son of God and Deliverer of "whosoever will." We are exceedingly fortunate in having these living photographs of Christ, for it is impossible to see Him fully from any one angle of approach.

It is not possible to present Jesus under one type or illustration. If we go to the ancient temple, we find that Jesus is the temple itself, the priest, the altar, the gift upon the altar, the slain lamb, the scapegoat, the ark of the covenant, the tables of commandments, the pot of hidden manna and the almond rod that budded and brought forth fruit.

In metaphorical language, Jesus is the lamb for sacrifice, the dove for gentleness, the lily for purity, the rose for beauty, bread for strength, water for refreshing, medicine for healing, lion for strength, and Friend to cure all loneliness.

The blessings which Christ gives are also depicted in the language of our deep and wide needs. His salvation is bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, rest to the weary, refuge to the fearful, cure to the sick, life to the dying, liberty to the oppressed, freedom to the imprisoned, friendship to the lonely, peace to the distressed, beauty to those whose lot is ashes, oil of joy to those who mourn, garments of praise to the bereaved, shepherd and sheepfold to those who are lost and straying, riches to the poor, wisdom to the ignorant, goodly pearls to the seeking merchant, victory to the soldier, prize to the racer, harvest to the farmer, vintage season to the husbandman, jubilee to the slave, release to the mortgagee, eagle's wings to the traveler, feast to the returning prodigal, election to the politician, message to the preacher, vision to the prophet, incense to the priest, kingdom to the imperialist, justice to the lawyer, pardon to the criminal, adoption to the stranger, song to the poet, harmony to the musician, reason to the logician, feeling to the empirical, perfection to the critic, rescue to the harassed, balm to the wounded, glory to the ambitious, promotion to the humble, reward to the faithful, pilot to the mariner, harbor to the seafaring, rock in the desert to the traveler, well-watered garden to the lover of nature, honey in the rock to the apiarist, oil to the prospector, gold and precious stones to the miner, old corn to the provident, wine to the heavy-hearted, marriage to the lover and home to the wanderer. To anyone and everyone, Christ's salvation is just what is needed and what is desired.

Coming now to the general mountain tops of Scripture from which we may see Jesus, we mention:

1. The pre-incarnate Christ who was with the Father before the world was. This may not mean much to some, but to those of us who worship Christ as God, it means everything. He is the Word which was with God and was God (John 1). His pedigree goes back to eternity. When His opposers mentioned His youth, saying, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" He replied, "Before Abraham was, I am." The meaning clearly is that while there was a time when Abraham was not, the everlasting Christ, on the divine side, had no birthday.

2. The eternities of the past seem forbidding even to the imagination until we see Jesus in their midst. After that these abysses of duration hold no terrors for us. If Jesus was there, the times of the past are friendly to those who love Him. And what's more, seeing He is the Christ of the ages, we have no fear for the future. He is the same yesterday and today and forever. Let us join in with all earth and heaven to worship the King of the ages. Let us "crown Him Lord of all."

a) Let us now look at Jesus as Emmanuel -- God with us. We see Him "made flesh" by the union of His divine nature with our human nature in one complete, indivisible personality. This is the mystery of the ages. We do not think of attempting explanation. It is enough for us to glory in the fact. God did not stand off at a distance, like the priest or the Levite, and look upon us in our helplessness. Nay, He came to us, like the good Samaritan -- came down where we were, and became one of us that we might rise up to where He is and enjoy His fellowship forever.

b) No mere human Christ can meet the deep needs of the human soul. He must be a human Christ to enable us to approach Him; He must be a divine Christ to be able to lift us up when we do approach Him. Only the God-man can fulfill our need. Let us look at Jesus as the Babe of Bethlehem, the boy of twelve in the temple, the mature Man being baptized of John, the Spirit-anointed Preacher from Nazareth, the

miracle Worker in Capernaum, the spotless Example for all the ages -- let us look at Him today and be assured. We have in Him what we need and desire.

3. Then we look at Jesus dying that we may live. In the passage from which our Hebrew text is taken He is described as "tasting death for every man." This is an allusion to a day of execution in some Greek city. The Jews stoned their criminals. The Romans crucified theirs. But the Greeks poisoned theirs with hemlock. When the day came for executing the death penalty upon the condemned, the prisoners were lined up with their backs to the wall in order according to the heinousness of their crimes -- the meanest man at the head, and the others on down the line to the one least deserving of punishment. The executioner came with a vessel in which there was a measured amount of poison, enough to cause the death of every man in the line. The cup was presented to the mean man at the head of the line. He was expected to drink off his share and pass the cup on to those beneath him. Each in his turn received his draught, and in time all succumbed to the effects of the poison.

One day that "chief of sinners" at the head of the line held fast to the cup and drank it to its bitter dregs.. He then passed the empty cup on down the line. The law did not permit a refilling of the cup, so those in the line were accounted to have died in the man at the head who drank their portion; and by suing for immunity on this basis, they were permitted to go free.

What is this we see today? It is the whole human family ranged before the wall with Jesus standing at the head as though He were the worst of all. To Him the cup of death is handed. In anguish He cries, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away except I drink it, thy will be done." Then He drinks the full contents of that cup, and passes the empty vessel to those on down the line. Many along that line, having seen the deed, cry out in hope and faith, "He died for me! He died for me!" And immediately there comes into the hearts of those who make this claim an assurance that enables them to shout, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" Yes, indeed, Jesus tasted death for every man. Shall we not all accept the immunity that His sacrifice affords? For my part, I do accept it. I do proclaim, "He died for me! He died for me!" And by faith in His death I find life and peace.

4. When Jesus went back to heaven He did not forget us. Let us see Him now as the Interceding Jesus. In Hebrews 7:25 it is said, "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." As a person Jesus is one, but He is two in natures, and three in offices. In offices He is Prophet, Priest and King. As a "prophet like unto Moses," He was and is the world's peerless Teacher; for He brought to us the full revelation of God. As a "king like unto David" He is destined to reign "from the rivers to the ends of the earth" in the kingdom days yet ahead. As a "priest after the order of Melchizedek," "He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

The writer of the Hebrews approached the priesthood of Jesus in such a true Jewish manner that we have a right to expect that he will say that Jesus was a priest like Aaron, but suddenly he veers from the beaten track, because a priest like Aaron shows too many limitations. Aaron had sins of his own for which atonement had to be made; Jesus is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and exalted above the heavens." Aaron was mortal and must leave his post at times for rest and food, and must in the end die and leave his post to another. Jesus, however, "was dead, but is alive forever more." The writer must find another for example. He fell upon that strange man who came to meet Abraham the day Abraham returned from the slaughter of the kings. Here, as though stepping out of eternity, Melchizedek appeared already established as a priest of the Most High God. After the brief meeting with Abraham, Melchizedek passed from the stage and is heard from no more. Thus, historically, this priest was without predecessor or successor, and he becomes a fitting type of Jesus who did not receive His priesthood from anyone, and

did not pass it on to any other. "He is a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

One of the ancient prophets describes Christ as sitting at the right hand of God holding ever up before the Father His own hands upon the palms of which are engraved the names of those for whom He intercedes (Isaiah 49:16). The word is engraved, not written or painted. The names are cut into the tissues of the hands that they may not be erased. He never forgets. A mother may forget her infant child, but God will not forget us. There may be those who have no mother to weep and no father to pray; but even they have a Christ to intercede.

Because all the merits of His offering are transferred to the account of others, seeing He has no sins of His own for which to atone; and seeing He never ceases to plead, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Let us come to God through our interceding Saviour today. Let us have faith that our coming shall be welcomed, because we come in His name and through the merits of His blood.

5. Now we approach Jesus from the mountain top of our own hearts. And we look upon the indwelling Christ. "Both he that sanctifieth and those who are sanctified are all of one for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, In the midst of the church will I sing praises unto thee." In the Old Testament times, proximity to God was measured in terms of approach. God was to go before, He was to stand on the right hand and on the left, he was to be a faithful rearguard. He was to cover with His feathers and support with His everlasting arms. In the New Testament, proximity is replaced with enduement or infusion. Under this New Covenant it is "Christ in you the hope of glory."

The dispensational blessing is the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and of this Jesus said, "He is with you and shall be in you." The glory of the New Testament blessings is in the fact that Christ comes in as Lord of the temple -- the heart -- and that He comes in to abide.

No longer. does God seek a tent of skins or a temple of stone in which to dwell. He stands at the door of every heart and knocks for admittance. If any will hear His voice and open the door, He will come in to abide. O let Him in today. Let Him in in the fullness of His power and glory. Give Him every room in your heart. Make no reservations whatsoever. Crown Him Lord of all in your will and affections. He waits today to save and to sanctify. He longs for a place with you that can be all His own.

6. Finally we come to look upon the presenting Christ: "Behold, I and the children that God has given me." Since Jesus is the same forever, we may follow Him on to the day when He stands again at the head of a group, but not as He stood at the head of that other group of the guilty and condemned. This time He stands at the head of the line of the redeemed. Once these stood with their backs to the wall. Now they stand with their faces to the throne. Once they were culprits before God. Now they have been pardoned, sanctified and glorified. Jesus holds today a cup of joy, instead of the cup of death from which He drank before. Upon the throne is the infinite Father. About the throne are the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders. After these are the tall archangels, then the singing angels, cherubim and seraphim, and all about are the lived household messengers of God. Before these all Jesus stands with His redeemed. The Redeemer is glorified in His redeemed. Having saved them from all sin, and having kept them from falling, He now presents them before the presence of the Father's glory with exceeding joy. To all assembled holy intelligences He calls, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me." The group here presented are from all nations, kindred tongues and tribes. They were a motley crowd when first they saw the Lord, but they looked at Him and were lightened and transformed. Their night turned to

day in the light of His face. Their hearts of stone were melted and made new in the furnace of His love. They stand here bloodwashed and happy forever. Among their joys none is greater than the joy of being pleasing to their Lord. And although this is heaven, they ask nothing more than to be permitted to look on His face forevermore.

Now we know that seeing Jesus means to look to Him in faith. And now, as in the days when Israel was in the wilderness, "there's life for a look." In those days those who were bitten by poisonous serpents were restored by looking at the brazen likeness of the serpent that had bitten them. We today are recovered by looking to Christ. Peter, you know, was able to walk on the waters of the Sea of Galilee so long as he kept his eyes on Jesus. We are exhorted to run the Christian race, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

Whosoever you are, my friend, look to Jesus. Look to Him in faith for pardoning mercy. Look to Him for sanctifying power. Look to him for keeping grace. Look to Him in life and in death. Look to Him, dying sinner -- "there's life for a look." Look to Him trembling Christian, look to Him for victory now and evermore. We do not as yet see all things put under Him, but we see Jesus. Thank God for the beatific and soul-transforming vision. We see Jesus!

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