

## W193\_The\_Being\_And\_Nature\_Of\_God.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the chapel of the opened book, the covering titled Christian Fundamentals, and this the last of the series devoted to the being and nature of God. It is our custom at this meeting to read a portion of Scripture around together. So those of you who are listening, if you care to join us, will you switch off for a little time and read from the Prophet Isaiah chapter 42 down to chapter 43, verse 13. I'll repeat that. Isaiah 42 and 43, down to verse 13. There's one point in that reading I think is wise to just draw attention. In verse three, it says, And he shall bring forth judgement unto truth. And you may know that in the New Testament the quotation reads, He shall bring forth judgment unto victory. It would take rather a long time to show and discuss how truth in the Old Testament becomes victory in the new. But I think we can take a short cut and say, thank God that there is this evidence that truth ultimately will prevail. Truth in the Old Testament, victory in the new and in between the old and the new. That perfect work of Christ which is here envisaged. Out this evening. We are just attempting to make what is called in modern. Language. A recap. It's a part of the teaching of Scripture that that is a useful thing to do. You remember the Apostle Paul said, for me to say the same things to you, so far as I'm concerned, is that it's not grievous, and for you it is safe.

[00:02:01] Probably interesting to know the word safe is a word that had to do with running a race. It looks very much like our word asphalt. And it has to do with getting a good grip on the path. Well, if going over the ground twice gives you a good grip in the connection with the witness of the word, it's well worth doing. And you remember halfway through the epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle stops and says, Now the things which we have spoken, this is the son. So I wanted this evening not to discuss further matters with regard to this tremendous subject of the being and nature of God, but rather to visualize something that we've sought to lift out of the Scriptures and then leave it with you. The first thing that I would ask you to consider is that we've endeavored to show that. The Scriptures are particularly concerned with the present interval dominated by time. The first words of the Bible are referring to a beginning. And in the epistle to the Corinthians Chapter 15, we get to the last syllable of recorded time when it says then cometh the end. Now it's a matter of speculation. Philosophers and others besides teachers of the Bible, as to the nature and being of God, who is outside all these limitations of time and space. But the Bible never enters into that.

[00:03:40] The Bible begins with a God who has. Condescended to enter into arrangements which have to do with time and place. What we shall know when we are face to face and are no longer learning, as it were, by a mirror enigmatically is just impossible for us to understand. The in the beginning, I've got the words extracted from John's gospel. With regard to God himself. Without any relationship to you and me. That no man hath seen God at any time. At any time. And you may remember that after quoting those words, we immediately refer to the Old Testament. And we quoted a verse which said, And they saw the God of Israel. And there's more than one passage. Moses is particularly listed out as being peculiarly marked by God. He said, I speak to the prophet with a dream or a vision, but my servant Moses, is not so whom I have spoken to face to face as a man speaketh to his friend. Well, now, these are not contradictions. No man hath seen God. The unconditioned, the absolute, the infinite God at any time. So that we have God stooping down to the limitations of creation and the demands of redemption and all the circumscribing things to do with. Appearance, visibility, tangibility, all those things that go to make up our relationship. One and another. God has stooped to that. Otherwise we should never have heard him. We should never have seen him. We should never have known him.

[00:05:33] I myself rejoiced to sum up all that I could ever hope to know of God in this life in one verse. I'll pass it on to you, but you can find others of equal value. We see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now, that may not satisfy some people. But it satisfies some simple minds as all. I am so glad I haven't got to try to encompass infinity. I haven't got to think and worry myself how a person can ever be in the Chapel of the Open book listening to these words, watching over this little meeting, hearing our prayers. And he could also be superintending what's going on in the Milky Way and wherever the universe extends, that doesn't worry me. God himself has limited this Bible. It's often spoken about to show you how primitive the Bible is. It even says in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And they said, There you are. The person who said that didn't know anything. Because I'm told that when you come to think about the size of the universe. But if an angel were sent from the throne of God to discover the earth in the universe, it would be just as comparable as pointing to a field and saying, Now I want you to find one particular grain of sand at the root of one particular blade of grass. But you see, that's not a true estimate.

[00:07:15] Immensity of space is not the only criterion. It may be that God has limited himself on purpose because creation makes demands and most certainly redemption makes demands. Have we not expressed it in a hymn? What it is. It brought my savior from above. That may be a tremendous piece of philosophy that we teach our children. That's exactly what's happened. It brought my savior from above. He stooped. He who was rich became poor. He who was in the glory knew not where to lay his head. And if we see that demonstrated in one phase, we may believe that it is symptomatic of the whole. So we have no never seen God. The only God we know in the Bible is the God of creation and redemption. And of course, you have got sense enough to know that if God created the heavens and the earth, there must have been, shall I say, a time when there was no heaven and earth. And you can say, Well, where was God then? Don't ask me. But that's your problem, you see. We necessarily, the moment we think begin to live it ourselves. And God says, I stoop down and use human language and one day I'll walk with human feet and they shall see my glory in the face of my only begotten son. Well, then we get to the other end of the story. The end when this kingdom shall be delivered up to the Father. Not that the father may be all in all.

[00:08:49] Or that the son may be all in all. But that God may be all in all. And in between those two, the beginning and the end is the work of creation plus the work of redemption. And then again, I draw your attention to a passage in one Timothy, where we have the stress upon the invisibility one. Timothy Chapter six. Verse 15 and 16. He's speaking about the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is in verse 14. There is no possible doubt about the person that's in view who suffered under Pontius Pilate in verse 13. Now it says, which in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only potentate, the king of kings and Lord of Lords. And I'm sure nobody who was listening to me needs me to prove from the Scriptures that there's only one person who is called King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ and is His title when he appears or when he comes. So we are still on the safe ground. This is dealing with Christ. All right. Who only hath immortality. You see, it would not be necessary for us to say that God, the unconditioned, invisible God hath immortality. Why say that about Him? Why not say hundreds of other things that he hasn't got? But if you have stooped to death and you've risen again to die no more. You are the one that's picked out from all creation who only hath immortality, and that's of Christ.

[00:10:26] Have you thought of it? Friends? There's only one immortal person in the wide universe of God at the moment. That's our savior. Those who've never been subject to death. There's no need to say they're immortal. No need to. But this one was for our sakes. Who only hath immortality dwelling in light which no man can approach unto whom no man hath seen, nor can see. What you say. We have. People have seen Christ. Oh, yes. But don't you forget. He stooped to become visible. He had a glory before the world wars that was never visible to man. And so once more you see we are facing the fact that great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh. As I shall be touching upon this. I'll do it now because they've got a run over these features in this one Epistle one Timothy We've got the whole thing, as it were, brought before us in the first chapter one. Timothy we have in verse 17, the apostle stops and speaks like a doxology, verse 17. Now unto the King, Eternal immortal, invisible, the only wise God be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. That's in chapter one. In chapter six is the passage we've just looked at. Here again, we have the King. This time he's the king of kings. He only hath immortality and no man hath seen. That's invisible again, isn't it? So he says so at the first chapter.

[00:12:03] And it says so at the last chapter. And in the middle of the last verse of chapter three. It says, and without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up in glory. There's the mystery of godliness that God, who is intrinsically himself, invisible, stooped. To become a man and be seen of angels and seen of Galileans and seen of apostles. As the Apostle Paul says, I have seen the Lord Jesus. What that means to say that we put on one side all speculation about the nature and being. Of God outside the realm and range of Scripture. We are speaking about God only as the one who has already created heaven and earth and who has now pledged himself and ultimately fulfilled that pledge by redeeming those who. Had been subject to bondage. What we shall know, what we shall see, and what we shall understand about the being a nature of God. When that day dawns is beyond our speculation and will be just harmful to ventilate it. Now you will notice I have put across the top the age times in this second epistle to Timothy. We've got that expression the age times, so I'll justify that in verse. Second Timothy, chapter one, verse nine. Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began is literally before the age times.

[00:13:51] It's an uncouth expression in a way, but what can we do with it? Before the ages? Before the times of the ages began. This plan was made. So that again is outside. You see, the plan was made. Then we get the creation, then we get the redemption. Then we get the resurrection. Then we get the glory, then cometh the end. So what have been between? So underneath that lift out the words that I used of Christ. Everybody in the epistle to the Hebrews. Jesus Christ. The same yesterday and today. And the word forever is unto the age. We've got to be watchful about the words that are translated forever because some of them are very limited. You can find many a passage where the thing is said to be forever that only lasted a lifetime. This particular word is unto the age. The age that the Bible was speaking about that was yet to come. Sometimes it's called the age of the ages, like we speak of the Pharisee, of the Pharisees, the summing of it all. It's all leading to that. So covering the age. The God of time, the one who limits himself to hours and days and months and years. The God who limits himself to places like Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

[00:15:15] That's the God with whom we are acquainted first. As the writer of the epistle of John says, that eternal life, which was with the father, has been manifested to us, which our eyes have looked upon, which our hands have handled of the Word of life. That's the one we're dealing with, not with infinity, not with a God who needs philosophers to argue about it, but simple folk who can say like the job. I know. What do you know, Joe? When he says, I've learned a lot of things, I don't know. But I do know this and I stick to this. And he did. I know that my redeemer live it. Well, then we come to the. Other lines of this are missing action, which I'll get through it all this evening. We find the emphasis is in Hebrews 110 that the one who laid the foundations of the earth. And whose fingers or hands framed the heavens. Is this one we are speaking about? I just remind you of that. You want to be watchful of man made creeds because the man made Creed insists that we believe in God, the Father Almighty maker of heaven and earth. But that's challengeable. You cannot find a New Testament scripture that says the Father created heaven and earth. But you will find that the one in Hebrews chapter one, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, he immediately is recognized as being the one in verse ten. And our Lord in the beginning hath laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands.

[00:17:04] They shall perish, but thou remain. So here we are in within the limits of time. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He was there at the beginning. He laid the foundations of the earth. He was there. He'll be there at the end. But we've got another point there. You remember in Proverbs, the eighth chapter there is that rather remarkable chapter which deals with the beginning and introduces wisdom. Well, the word logos in the New Testament, which is translated word, means much more than a mere sound. It always means that which is an intelligible sound. In other words, it's wisdom being uttered. Lagos. Here we have some. The two make up a whole. Now we have in Proverbs the eighth chapter these words, verse 22, The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old. I was set up from Everlasting from the beginning or ever the Earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth. When there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled. Before the hills was I brought forth. He goes on at some length like that, and then he says, verse 30. Then I was by him as one brought up with him. I was daily, his delight, rejoicing always before him. And then another rejoicing is introduced, rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth.

[00:18:35] And my delights. I was daily his delight, but my delights were with the sons of men. It's a poetic piece of writing. You would have to go careful as you built doctrine upon it. But it's written for our learning. So right there, before the earth was there was this one daily, his delight. And then he says, Ah, my delights were with the sons of men. Oh, let's thank God that his delights were with the sons of men. Oh, let's thank God that he did stoop and come to this world to live and die. That we might live. And then we get the other end. I've just got the words in Hebrews. I've got this side. He laid the foundations of the earth, and verse 12 says, As a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed. They shall be laid aside. But thou art the same. Thy years do not fail. Creation will pass. It says so. But not this one. He abides. And our salvation depends upon the fact that he abides. As the writer in Hebrews put it. The testimony of these men that were so valuable. Was Jesus Christ the same yesterday, Today and forever. Therefore, we need not bother what man shall do or say unto us. For he hath said I will never leave thee. Neither will I forsake thee. I think we've got to the words where we have the word God manifest. Now in the Old Testament, God is manifest in the New Testament.

[00:20:08] It is God manifest in the flesh. In the Old Testament, it is God manifest in law and in parable, in prophecy and in. Both cases old and New Testament manifest in creation. I think I'll give you just the reference to that in ROMANS The first chapter. Romans The first chapter says that even an unevangelized heathen has some responsibility so that the scripture can say they're inexcusable. You notice the passage we read in Isaiah, there's many like it, that God would not give his glory to graven images. And it says here in Romans one verse 20. Whole verse 19 because that which may be known of God. Notice that it doesn't say everything of God can be manifested by studying botany or zoology or astronomy. It doesn't say that, but it says some things can be known of God because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto Him. So God intends that creation shall speak. We don't go to creation to find out the way of salvation. But we are very foolish if we ignore ignore the testimony of the heavens above us and the earth beneath us, for it's teeming with evidence that God is and God is the Creator. So it says for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

[00:21:46] And then it goes on to show you what they did in their foolishness. So there we've got God manifest in the works of his hands and in the New Testament, God manifest in the flesh in the person of Christ. So that you remember he spoke to those with whom he had been living and witnessing and said, Have I been so long time with you? Hasn't it dawned upon you that he that hath seen me hath seen the Father, for I and my father are one. And if you don't believe that, you get it set out in detail. I in them and thou in me that they may be one in us. Think of the pronouns there. And that's all to do with the nature and being of God and this manifest in the flesh. So we've got three words that carry the story on. He's the God of creation. He's the God of redemption. He's the God of ultimate restoration. And as I say, that's where we cease what will take place and be after that. God alone knows, and he hasn't revealed it. And then we have 2 or 3 words that are worth considering in Colossians chapter 116. He is said to be the image of the invisible God. So he does two things. It tells you that God in himself is invisible, but it also tells you that it is condescension to us. Here, this one is the image of his invisible God, and that is one of the reasons why all image worship is to be resolutely set aside because it's a usurpation of the distinctive prerogative of Christ.

[00:23:33] He alone is the image of the invisible God, and you will see that God is recognizing that people have got minds like you and like me. We cannot shut our eyes and think of nothing. You cannot shut your eyes and think of God who's nowhere. He doesn't ask you. He wants you to remember that Christ is the image of the invisible God, that you see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And He's the image into which you will be conformed one day so that there will be that bringing together of the image of the invisible God and you, in your little measure too, in the image of your redeemer, are all being anticipated. Of course, in the beginning when God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness a figure of him that was to come. And then we have Typekit. You remember? Oh, there's the form of God. Philippians two. And that is often misunderstood. It's looked upon as being an external shape. Well, not a form nor shape have the idea necessarily of feet and inches. As I've asked the question, if the form of God meant a visible shape. What is the form of a servant? Of course, hear the same argument and the same word.

[00:24:58] But you say, what? A serpent hasn't got any particular form. I need a servant in the ordinary way is just an ordinary human being. But you don't ask for their measurements. What is the form of a servant? Must he always be 6ft or 5 foot? Six or. Don't you see? It's the word status. And I fall back on Shakespeare because Shakespeare's language is the language of the authorized version. King Lear had distributed his kingdom among his daughters. And then, because they turned out to be a bad lot, he said, I will resume the shape that you think that I have cast off forever. What shape are you going to take? Huh? He may not become a king again. He won't have the same hands and feet and face, but that status would be different. He'd given it up. He said I'll take it back. And this word form is best understood by the chemical use of it. We call it formula. The form here is not an external shape. It's the necessary state in which that particular compound exists, like the formula of water is H<sub>2</sub>O. Not a shape. So he was the form he was in the status of God. And then for our sakes, he didn't grasp it and hold it. He became the form of a servant and stooped so low that he stooped to the death of the cross and is going to be elevated so high that we found that it was quoted of him.

[00:26:28] What is quoted in Isaiah's chapter we read God said He will not give his glory to another. He knows no one else. And to me, saith the Lord that God says, every knee shall bow, Paul says that's going to be fulfilled when every knee bells in the name of

Jesus. Now, were there dreadful contradictions or we have got to harmonize those passages. I think we come to the titles. We've looked at those in passing. Elohim. Immediately presents us with a problem. As I said, I think in the earlier studies that if Moses could have possibly have avoided it, I believe he would have avoided using the word Elohim. You say, why? Well, he was leading a people who had been slaves in Egypt for 100 years or more surrounded by idolatry. And he was going now to stem that idolatry and present to them the fact that the Lord their God was one. Yet the very first verse he writes in Genesis, he has to put down Elohim, which is plural for God. It is translated in the plural gods many a time. He couldn't help himself because he was dealing with fat. So God is outside the limitations of grammar. Even this is outside the limitations of space and time and ordinary human logic. You say, How is the outside of the realm of logic? Surely gods are unreasonable. No, but I've put this over to you before. I'll repeat it. This is a summary and a recap, isn't it? Here's a bit of logic.

[00:28:07] That which has never existed cannot be now. And if finally, to that phrase, you won't find any fault with it. If a thing's never existed, it can't be existing now, can it? Can it? All right, then. What about God? Yeah, Dad, aren't you? Because if you say he never existed. What? He can't exist now then. And if you say, Well, he did exist. Well, when did God start being. You don't know what to say, do you? Wouldn't it be best to leave it alone? See, so I say, in Genesis one, we have a Hebrew word in the plural Elohim, followed by a singular verb. So two rules at once are broken. Grammar is no good because you can't limit God to the grammatical necessities that we have to limit ourselves. And so we've just got these words. Then you get the word Jehovah, which is a combination, a made up word from different parts of the verb to become. Don't slip into the mistake of saying parts of the verb to be. There is no verb to be in the written scriptures. The Hebrew could speak the word to be, but he doesn't write it. He just ignores it and leaves a gap. So when you're reading your Bible, you'll see that sometimes I'll give you an illustration straight away. The first chapter of the of the genesis, the best to get it concrete, although most of you know it.

[00:29:38] Sometimes when I'm speaking to very clever people who know all about creation or they don't believe in creation at all, they set the whole thing aside and set aside the Book of Genesis, and nobody believes such stuff today. I said, But you're not a very scientific person. Y y A true scientific person takes notes of all the details first before he starts and you haven't even bothered. But what haven't I seen? He says,

Well, I don't know what you've seen, but how you read. I don't know. But my Bible has gone to the trouble of spelling. The word was in ordinary time and then in italic, type in the same verse. And you mean to say the printer did that because he didn't know what to do with himself? Well, it's a vast undertaking to go through a Bible like this size and watch how you spell the verb to be, whether you put it in ordinary type or whether you put it in italics. Now when it's in italics. The verb to be is assumed, but when it's printed, it's the verb to become. Should we read verse two of Genesis with that in mind? In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth became without form and void. And darkness was upon the face of the deep. There's the two. And so we get in Genesis two, the same word and then became. A living soul. It wasn't until this moment he became so, well, that is the name Jehovah.

[00:31:11] And that has to do with becoming and that has to do with time. There's no becoming in eternity. You know, the philosophic use of the word becoming. There's nothing static. The philosopher said you can't step into the same river twice. Who is our kind, offsetting the tense moments. There may be somebody here who has done it, but you're not in the same water that's gone, left you behind. You see, it's all moving. Everything. So our savior differentiates between the two words when he was challenged with regard to his deity. In John the eighth chapter, he said before Abraham came into being. I am. Okay. See, that's not glamour again. You get a bad mark. If that was a boy writing that at school, he'd ever say before Abraham came into being, I was not. So Christ, he's not limited to the necessities of human speech, he says, before Abraham came into existence. I am. What are you going to do with the person who says that? And then think of what he can add to the words. I am. I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. And above all things, standing in a cemetery with a tomb beside him, he says, I am the resurrection and the life before even he calls Lazarus out. They are wonderful claims, aren't they? He simply taking the word I am of the Old Testament and filling it in.

[00:32:38] Have you ever had a blank check given to you? Well, I hadn't as far as I remember, but I've often seen one, and I'm not going to do this indiscriminately. But Mr. Morton, he has come to my rescue for so many years that I'm like the the man in the Scriptures. I know nothing that I possess except the food that I do eat, you know, because he adds up, takes away. He thinks about a first number he thought of and sends it to the income tax man. And when I get the whole thing, I don't know more than

a man in the moon what it's about. All this yards of stuff, they've added it up and taken it away and take so much percent off and put it on there. I simply said, Mr. Morton, a blank check. Exactly. You what? I signed. It feels good. I've signed it, you see. Well, God's done that to you and to me. In the Old Testament, he says I am. What too vast is it in the New Testament? He breaks it up and says, I am now put that down. You want this? I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the resurrection of the lights. He keeps on filling in the word I am until you realize that Christ is all and in all. Well, then we get to the great emphasis where I put it in the middle in letters of red.

[00:33:55] The one mediator. Now, the Apostle Paul, if you notice in one Timothy again, chapter two. He says this verse five, for there is one God and one mediator between God and men. And the revised version stresses this. And this is right himself, man. Not merely the man, Christ Jesus, but himself. Man. Christ Jesus. There's a great need. To have a balance in our teaching. And nearly all creeds are wrong because they've been wrought out in a battle. And when you're having a battle, you overstress something to beat your neighbor. And that's what happens when nearly all creeds. If we're not careful, we can. So we emphasize in the deity of Christ that we lose his manhood. And if we do, we have no redeemer. God in heaven couldn't be a redeemer. As man had seen by man came the resurrection and a body was prepared. And in that body, salvation was wrought out. So here we have the other side. The one mediator, the man who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in its own peculiar seasons. Whereunto. I am ordained a preacher. So you cannot be following in the footsteps of the apostle Paul unless you resolutely proclaim continuously that there is no possibility of any man getting back to God as God who bypasses Christ, the one mediator. And I've got some passages there. We've had them all before. Job cried out in his distress. All that.

[00:35:37] There were days, man between us to lay his hand upon us both. Who was there in heaven and earth? Who could fully represent the invisible God and fully represent poor, frail man who. There's only one, isn't there? Who is given the title in the Scriptures as God. And in the next few verses the word was made flesh. Who is said to be the one who laid the foundations of the earth in one chapter and in the very next chapter says seeing the children are partakers of flesh and blood. He himself took part of the same. That's the one we need a mediator between God and men. How did you get other references? The true God. The only God. The only wise God, the only

potentate. Now, you might say, well, the true God. But you look at the first epistle of John. And see whether he doesn't need a bit of careful pondering before you jump to conclusions. The last chapter of the first epistle of John, verse 20 and we know that the Son of God is come. And that's given us an understanding that we may know him. That is true. And we are in him. That is true even in his son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God. And eternal life. Now, John has a great tendency to use this particular word, translated this You remember in the first in the first chapter of John's gospel. He says in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God.

[00:37:25] And he doesn't say all things were made by him. He stops, he says the same. See, the same was in the beginning with God. Or there was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same. He uses that the same. Well, that's the word here. Let's put it back. We we know him. That is true. We are in him. That is true. Even in his son, Jesus Christ. The same is the true God and eternal life. Well, now there is no doubt that Christ is the eternal life. If you don't believe the other side of it, look at the first chapter that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled. This is the visible, isn't it, the tangible, the one who is here of the word of life, for the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. So Christ is called that eternal life. And in the same epistle he says, This is the true God and eternal life. But if you let the man speak for himself, you have to say, Well, that's what he's trying to tell us. And, you know, he's used to the word true is not merely in opposition to the false, but it's in opposition to the type and the shadow.

[00:38:51] All other types and shadows of God fade in the presence of this one. He alone manifests God as no other being on earth ever could possibly true. He's the true God. And then in John's gospel, the same writer said, And this is life eternal with this object. That's the translation of the word hither, not merely that this is life eternal. With this object that you may know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. So you've got to watch these things because they speak a little bit more than perhaps we give them credit for. Is anyone sitting listening to me saying, you know, very difficult for me to understand, but friend, we're all in the same predicament because none of us are this present moment are in personal possession of everlasting life. And our reasoning faculties and our minds have all been distorted and alienated from the life of

God so that we cannot think squarely. That's the teaching. We're all of a muddled mix, but life eternal is given us so that in that day we're going to see clearly, we're going to understand more perfectly. We're going to comprehend that which is beyond us now. This is life eternal with the object that then when you have that life eternal and can practice it, you will understand, as you cannot understand. Now, as the Apostle said, he thought of it as a child, but when he became a man, he put away childish things.

[00:40:23] Now, now we see by means of a mirror enigmatically, but then face to face. Now we know partially, but then fully. Completely and perfectly. Well, that brings us nearer to the end of our study. The time and this chart. I'd like to just take the stage further. We have stressed in the New Testament the titles Father, Son and Spirit. And you know, they are brought together in some contexts. That's almost unavoidable. But what you should we should keep them together. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. We know those words, don't we? But you would be shocked if someone were to say this the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Apostle Peter and the Communion of the Holy Spirit. You can't do that. You can't do that. That's not one of these quizzes. When you get a word introduced that's out of its place. You see Christ, the son, the Father, the spirit. But then you go to the Old Testament and you get other groupings. You get Elohim, God and you get Jehovah and you get El Shaddai, the three great outstanding titles in the Old Testament. So you see, if there had never been creed makers. If they never had arguments and squabbles in the early days, they would never have been invented. The word Trinity.

[00:42:03] Don't forget, is an invented word just to try to symbolize and sum up a line of teaching, because there's just as much the emphasis upon titles in the Old Testament that God has assumed to speak to us as in the new. And do remember this, that there's a tremendous amount to be laid upon the inability to understand the meaning of the word person in the Scriptures. To us, a person is an individual. But you do know enough Latin, I suppose, to know that Per and Son joined together means to make a sound through something. And it was the title of A Masque, An Actor's Masque. And to this very day, an actor personifies a character. And God has spoken through the mask. Are Jehovah and Elohim and El Shaddai and Father and Son and Spirit. But God himself has never been seen. As he is because it is utterly impossible. These are the assumptions of the Almighty limiting himself to these characters for our salvation. And

one day we may be able to comprehend him in a sense we cannot reach now. Now I've got two texts at the bottom, and with those I would close because they sum up what I hope is to be the consequence of our study and my own personal attitude. Old Testament says happy is that people whose God is the Lord. And you may remember the other study we gave was to show you that cannot possibly be two Lords.

[00:43:48] The Bible says there's one Lord, and you've got to make this choice. Either you have one Lord in the Old Testament and another one Lord in the New Testament, which is horrible to contemplate. Or if it says there's only one Lord in the Old Testament and he's the one Lord of the New Testament, then Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament. There's no possibility of avoiding it. Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. And Thomas, who has spoken about the Doubting Thomas. We're glad he did. But ultimately is went into that presence, the risen Christ, and saw him there. He fell at his feet and he said, My Lord and my God and our savior accepted it and said, Thomas, you have believed because you have seen me. Blessed are they who though they have not seen me nevertheless believe. Is that true of you friends? Have you got that blessing resting upon you? You've never seen him like Thomas did. But can you, out of a true heart, say, my Lord and my God, if you say no conscientiously, I can't do it. Well, good. Don't say it if you don't believe it. But it ought to send you home to your knees and say, Why can't I do it? What's wrong with me? Is there something I haven't done or seen that prevents me from taking that attitude to its full? Because you see, if you can't do it, you've got to explain how it is that Jesus Christ, who had no right to the title, never rebuked that man for giving him that which belongs to God only.

[00:45:27] You're in an awful fix if you don't take the attitude. And if you cannot, then I say wait upon God. Search and see. And may you. As I know, one friend in this meeting is not here tonight, so I won't embarrass him. For a long time. He had great difficulty in believing that it was possible for anyone to give these titles to Christ. And he didn't tell me. I'm glad he didn't. But he whispered to somebody else. He whispered to somebody else. He said, I now can take the attitude of Thomas. All friends, if only my friends that I meet and those whom I never shall meet in this life can take the attitude of Thomas. What rejoicing there will be not only in my heart and in theirs, but in the presence of the angels of the living God. Now I just anticipate our next subject. I don't think there's any option because it will help us to see that all that we do or all the teaching we give is just relationship. Have you understood that all truth is relative? You cannot teach a truth if

you barely say a word. I mean, supposing I say the word chapel or nobody gets up and calls me a name or. No, you don't know what I mean, do you? I must link the word chapel with something else.

[00:46:53] And I may spend all my days talking about God. And when I've done, I've not done enough. God is only a concern of ours when he's related to ourselves. Naturally, we're not here. Just academic speculation about the possibility is there of God. We are here because God has made himself known to us as a redeemer, a savior, a father and a friend. Yes. So our next subject must be most surely what is man? Oh, yes, I know all about him. Do your friends? Well, some of us have got some puzzles about ourselves. And by the time we find it difficult to know. When you say me, do you mean anybody? Or do you mean the spirit or do you mean me soul? We might finally got Trinitarian problems with regard to ourselves. That may make us a little bit more modest when we speak about the problems that are to do with God Himself. So the next time we meet together in this series, we will not be dealing with these tremendous passages, dealing with the nature and being of God, but will seek from the Scriptures because we can't seek them in our own hearts that mislead us. We will seek from the scriptures the nature and being of man. And I daresay there be some bothers over that. But as long as we are seeking for the grace of God to understand His Word, I'm sure He will set his seal and all will be well.