

W345_Colossians_5.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book. We are considering the epistle to the Colossians and this is number five of this present series. We have been looking at the first half of Chapter one. We first of all, considered the prayer that the Apostle has recorded here to guide us. And then we came to the Thanksgiving not only to ask, but to give thanks. And I remind you of the threefold emphasis on the word hath. Verse 12, We give thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet. Who hath delivered us and hath translated us. Not that we hope he will, but we are glad that he has. So if you belong to this blessed company, friends, you are already so far as God's side is concerned, made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. You are already delivered from the authority of darkness. You are already translated into the kingdom of his dear son. The practical experience of it may lag behind, but the reality is there for this is not according to your attainments, but according to his purpose and grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Well, now we come to another section and it's the most important one. It deals with things that are beyond our reach. Some of the things we shall have to believe because they're written. Because it's not possible to explain. There are things in this life which would not be understood if somebody came to explain them to you and to me.

[00:01:49] We might have a scientist who is very, very advanced in, say, making bombs to blow people to smithereens. Well, he might tell us things and he might use terms. We should have to say, well, you know all about it. But what it all means, I don't quite know. So if we are dealing with infinity, with eternity, with the invisible God, with the things that are outside our Ken, they are written to guide us, but not always to explain to us. Because it may be impossible with our present limitations to have the explanation given to us. But what we ought not to miss is this that in the verses that are before us, there are two creations the one preceding, but leading to the other. I don't know whether I mentioned to you in another meeting sometime I may have done that. A remark apparently made by Mr. Micawber in Dickens. We don't often give Dickens a chance in our meetings and Mr. Micawber, I don't think we want to follow him very far. But Mr. Wiseacre said to Mr. Micawber, Let's begin at the beginning. And Mr. Micawber said, Nonsense, let's begin at the end. And, you know, there's a lot of truth in that. That's where God begins. You realize that? You see, you get the book of the revelation.

[00:03:07] No more death. No more sin. No more curse. The tree of Life Once more available. What do you say before I start reading the Book of Genesis and find it's all gone and lost? I read in the other book it's going to be restored. God had that in mind at the beginning. The end was already there in his mind. So now we've got an early creation of which we form a part only leading on to a new creation, which by the mercy of God, we also form a part. So I propose we now read a few verses to see the passage, which is to be opened up to us. Colossians one, verse 14. In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature? For by him were all things created that are in heaven, that are in earth visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things and by him all things consist. That's a first statement. That's about the creation which is already in existence. Now then. And he is the head of the body, the church, the firstborn from the dead. You notice he's the first born in connection with creation. He's the firstborn from the dead. That in all things, he might have the preeminence.

[00:04:35] Verse 17. And he is before all things. So in both creations. It's true. He's the firstborn. And in both creations he has the preeminence. For it pleased the father that in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of his cross by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in heaven or things in things in earth, or things in heaven. Well, we shan't get through that in any sense of fullness, but there it is before us. And some features now wait to be opened up. You notice it begins with redemption through his blood. And the section ends with reconciliation by the blood of his cross. It begins and ends it, surrounded and encompassed by redeeming love. Well, now the next is this. That Christ is set before us as the image of the invisible God. That's a gracious condescension because you have to do with an invisible God who inhabited eternity, who is neither here nor there, there, there or anywhere else in bodily form. That as far as the mind can stretch beyond the Milky Way, he's there, and yet he's with us and with all our brethren at the ends of the earth. It's utterly impossible for the human mind to encompass it. How could you pray for someone like that? So Christ is the mediator. The one blessed thing that he does is to mediate between us, the limited, the finite and God, the unlimited, the absolute and the infinite.

[00:06:20] So his great title is The Image of the Invisible God. Now that occurs in three great passages, and although you may know them straight off before we read them, we must record them and we must ask you to consider them together. Will you turn to John's Gospel? The first Chapter. The characteristic difference of the opening of John's gospel is that it says in the beginning. The other gospels. They say the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, or they give you the beginning of the gospel and the work of Christ on Earth. But this goes right back to before time in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. The same as in the beginning with God, All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. Then at the end of this section, verse 18, No man hath seen God at any time. And yet you can remember passages in the Old Testament where it says they saw the God of Israel. But it's still true. No man hath seen God at any time. The God of Israel, we discover, is the one who ultimately walked the earth and was recognized by Doubting Thomas when he fell at his feet and said, My Lord and my God. He is the image of the invisible God.

[00:07:52] So it says here, no man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared him, He hath made him visible. He hath given him an exposition. He is the image of the invisible God. That's the office of the word. If we had a meeting and we all sat down, you looking at me and I looking at you and we went home after an hour, we say, Well, it was a time of rest, certainly, except we began to think what funny faces we got. But you wouldn't get very much out of it. But if I have any thoughts in my mind that are worth expressing and I speak them in words. Oh, now we had a meeting. Well, God has spoken through this one, and he is the word. Not only this, the word that we listen to with our ears, but the word we can see with our eyes and the word we can have as our example, the word that tells us all that it's possible for us to know in this limited life what God is and what he is like. So I turn to the other passage. Hebrews chapter one that we read just now. Those who are listening to this tape recording, they didn't read Hebrews one with us. So for the moment, will you notice again the insistence upon the place of the Son of God occupies in this scheme? God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets that Old Testament hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son.

[00:09:23] That's New Testament. There's the contrast. Now, who is this son? He is appointed him to be heir of all things. For this is paradise. To see with Colossians. By

whom? Also he made the worlds or adjust in the ages. Who? Being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person. And upholding all things by the word of his power when he had by himself, purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Look at it. There's redemption. There's the work accomplished. There's the seat at the right hand. And yet. He made all things and further on in the same chapter. And Thou Lord in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth. And the heavens are the works of thy hands. That one. So that we have redemption. Reconciliation. The blood of his cross. The creation of heaven and earth. All attributed to one person. It's almost unbelievable, isn't it? But if you haven't met Christ, you've got one of your own manufacture. Possibly. But you haven't got the Christ that John wrote about or that Paul wrote about, or that the epistle to the Hebrews. He explained to those to whom he wrote.

[00:10:32] So we come to this Colossians one again and noticing a little bit further. We are apt to misunderstand the reference to the firstborn. We immediately think prototokos. The word is we immediately think of the time when he was born like we speak of a child coming into the world. But supposing we transfer our thoughts from verse 15 to verse 18. He is the head of the body of the church who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead. Now, would anybody say that Christ had no existence until he was raised from the dead? Well, you contradicted yourself, haven't you? He couldn't be even raised from the dead if he wasn't in existence before. So the first born doesn't mean he wasn't living before her. This is a title of dignity. Right back in eternity. We have no idea. But there was a time when he became the first born of every creature. And it doesn't say because he was the first one to be created, but because he created all the rest. So the first Born is a title of dignity, not merely coming into the world like a baby. We must remember that. So I'll give you a few passages from the Old Testament, and each one of these is in the Septuagint version, the word prototokos the exactly the same word that we have here. Two Samuel 1943, The second Samuel 1943. And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, We have ten parts in the king.

[00:12:23] We have also more right in David than ye. Now, you wouldn't think that was the word prototokos, would you? We have a firstborns claim. We have more right than you have nothing to do with where you were born or what day your birthday was. You see, I'm only giving you these quickly. Exodus Chapter 422. You will remember that Moses was sent to the Pharaoh in Egypt to demand the release of God's nation. The

special nation Israel that had been captive. Verse 22. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord. Israel is my son, even my firstborn. Well, if you say does that mean to say they were the first nation on earth? Well, the very Bible contradicts you. You have in Genesis 1070 nations given by name before ever there was an Israelite on the earth. So it doesn't mean the first nation that existed, but the first nation in dignity. They are my first born. All the rest are secondary. And then one other passage. I won't give you more than the plenty more. Um. Psalm 8927. Psalm 8927. Also, I will make him my firstborn higher than the kings of the earth. Dignity. Again, you see, they're nothing whatever to do with what we call birth, pure and simple. Now, in the rabbinical writings, they sometimes speak of God as the firstborn of the world, and they themselves never had the idea that God, the God of Israel was born.

[00:14:10] But He was the firstborn. That is to say, he was given that place of dignity. And when Jacob gave Joseph the coat of many colors, he gave him the firstborn position. Although the firstborn was long before him, he gave him that dignity. And so we have this emphasis here. So Christ is like Joseph, given the coat of many colors, the firstborn of every creature, not merely the firstborn of all creation, but the firstborn of every creature. He is the first. And then you come to the church. What is he called in verse 18. He's the beginning. Isn't that the same idea? You can have no church without Christ. Can you? He's a foundation. He's the top stone. He's the middle. He's the beginning. And then do you know that Christ is spoken of in the Book of the Revelation, Chapter three, verse 14, as the beginning of the creation of God. When we read Genesis one, we think of time, don't we? In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And when we plowed right through every book of the Bible and get to the book of the Revelation, we discover that Christ is in view. When it says the beginning, for he is the beginning of the creation of God. He's the first and the last, the Alpha Omega.

[00:15:27] Oh, what a place he feels. Friends, this is a gospel to us. This is what Christ should be to us. The beginning and the end. The first, the last. The Alpha, the Omega Foundation and Stone and all the other figures you can crowd in. That's our savior. He say, aren't you enthusiastic about him? I wish I were more so. And I wish you were so. We cannot be too taken up with the Son of God. But he feels God's universe with His glory and his grace. And he is the only test we have so far as the things of eternal to make them intelligible to us. Now we come back again to Colossians Chapter one. Will

you notice a few more features? It says he is before all things. And by him all things consist. The word consist means to hold together. It's expressed otherwise in Hebrews, but it says upholding all things by the word of his power. I don't know which is more wonderful to bring a world into existence and then to keep it going without fault. Will you come to think of what is taking place at every moment of time? All the chemical affinities and activities, all the things to do with growth, whether it be animal, vegetable or mineral, and then to leave this little world and go out into the starry universe. And they're all keeping time like clockwork so that, you know, when this one's coming into a certain place.

[00:17:02] He upholds all things by the word of his power. Keeps it going. And by him all things consist. I have said before that if you have a human figure, Christ is holding the whole creation in his hand. And if you were to lift his little finger just a fraction like that, you have nuclear fission and away goes the power that's inside an atom and blows half a continent to pieces. And then I've also said that the very seat on which you're sitting, if the Son of God were not holding it like that, it would go give enough explosion to blow you through the roof and to smithereens, you see. Don't worry. He won't let his finger lift it. Not yet. But the moment he does, dissolution takes place. Are they? What? Oh, says the Apostle Peter. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that it's all going to pass away with fervent heat and be dissolved. Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. And then somebody says, How are we going to get through it? Don't ask me. Except they might have said in the days of Noah, how are we going to get through the flood? God says, You build an ark. I'll see to it. And so he will build another ark. I don't mean a physical one. He has perfect power to protect his people.

[00:18:19] And if you want to see one example, you'll see three men walking in a fire, even with their hats on. Somebody was rather joking at that. They'd even got their hats on and no smell of burning on their raiment. Just a little bit in advance to tell you all is well if you belong to him. Well, there is another feature. You notice that it says that creation is by him and for him and through him. And you will find that the reconciliation is by him and through him and for him. As you study the scriptures that deal with this, the wonderful thing, and then both heaven and earth, things in heaven and earth are included back again in verse 16, for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth. You see in the earlier reference in John, all things were made by

him and it leaves it like that. This is more explicit. For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in Earth. And then when reconciliation is put into practice, the end of verse 20 by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say whether they be things in Earth or things in him brings it perfectly back balance. Well, then somebody says, Well, then it looks as though every single thing that's ever been will be reconciled.

[00:19:44] Some have taken that line. They even say that Satan himself and the fallen angels are all going to be reconciled. But you see this very selfsame epistle which says all. Says in chapter two, verse 15, and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it. Let no man beguile you. So in the same chapter it says a little bit earlier, verse ten, and ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. So you see, there may be some principalities and powers which are in favor and there are some principalities and powers that are fallen. And Hebrews chapter one says Chapter two says he took not upon him the nature of angels, but he took upon him the seed of Abraham. And unless the angels have a kinsman redeemer, the scripture gives no sense that they come under that. We are only expressing what is written. We have no feelings about it. If it could be proved that all that ever fell will all be redeemed and saved, well, we should be happy about it. But that's not the criterion. We are trying to discover what God has said and leave him to work his purposes according to his own will. Well, now, that's one aspect. Now, before we go any further into this, there's a practical side. And sometimes we say the practical side doesn't matter so much.

[00:21:14] I've met people who become so enthused over Ephesians one, two and three that when they get to chapter four, they don't want to bother about that. It's, Oh, that's only practice. That's like a person plowing and planting and waiting and then says, Oh, that's only fruit. We don't gather that. See, this is the fruit that now the husband is seeking and should find. So we've got a perfect balance in this epistle, and we get the image and the creation and these things coming out again in a practical section. I'll read what it says in verse 16 again. For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in Earth visible and invisible. Now it says in Colossians three. Um. Verse ten, and you have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. So this begins to have a bearing upon us. He is a new creation. We are putting on the new man, and this is created after the image of Christ and no

longer after the image of poor fallen Adam. And then it refers to the company of which we form a part. Members of this body where there is neither Greek nor Jew circumcision, nor Uncircumcision barbarian Scythian bond nor free. But Christ is all and in all so in creation he has the preeminence and in the new creation, Christ is all and in all.

[00:22:54] You have the word create, as you see in both places, not merely an evolution or a reformation. And we have an emphasis upon the image. So I think that we ought to keep that in mind, although we can't deal with it as a subject at the moment. Now let's come back to Colossians one once more and look at a few more features. When we speak about the creation, we immediately think of things, don't we? Themes created. That's right. Trees, flowers, Edibles. Well, we're going to stop when we start thinking of the subdivisions of visible creation. But it doesn't say a word about them here. Do you notice it doesn't say merely creating sun, moon, stars, fish, fowl and everything like that. It says visible and invisible, and it doesn't detail the visible. It leaves those out. It says all the visible. You will understand. You can throw that in the whole visible creation around you. You can you know that he made that. But I want you to know he's done more than that. Something more so he says, whether they be Thrones. Or dominions or principalities or powers. Now, these may be created before the present visible universe came into existence. For all we know, there is a passage in the Book of Job that says that when God laid the foundations of the earth, all the sons of God shouted for joy. Well, they must have been there before then, mustn't they? If they shouted for joy when they saw the foundation of the earth put in, it's obvious they were there before her.

[00:24:42] So here we have a prospect of creation and the work of our Savior's hand. Not only did he create heaven and earth. But thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. But didn't you see this is written for our guidance. If you go back to Ephesians one, you remember that we have the the prospect according to Ephesians one. We see that Christ in verse 20 is set at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. He's far above it. Well, Colossians says that we have been made meat to be partakers of any of the inheritance of the saints in the light in connection with that far above all position. So isn't it wonderful to know that he who died upon the cross. Now he is a bit that we can't explain. He who died upon the cross created the very tree upon which he was crucified, created the very

men who drove the nails. Almost inexplicable. But it must be accepted otherwise. There's so much in this book that we'd have to set aside and that would be fatal. Well now. Not only does it say that in all in all things, he might have the preeminence, but it pleased the father that in him should all the fullness dwell.

[00:26:20] Now this is a theme of itself. I come back again to John the first chapter because there we have an early reference to the fullness and perhaps a simpler one than we get in this epistle. It will lead us on. Let's just take another point of John one. It says verse 14, and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Full. Notice that very few full of grace and truth. Then it stops for a moment and speaks about John the Baptist. And then he picks it up again in verse 16. And of his fullness have all we received and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses. But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Now we have got grace and truth twice over you see in verse 14, full of grace and truth. In verse 17, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Now, what's this all about? What does it mean? When it says in verse 16 and of his fulness have all we received and grace for grace. What could that mean? But if you read commentaries, you'll read all sorts of expressions, one below, rolling in, following another one, Grace upon grace all. It's overwhelming the grace of God.

[00:27:50] But that's not the meaning. If you look at the original, you find the word translated for is the word anti anti one over against the other like that. It's a figure of a balance. So what does that mean? Of his fulness have all been received and one sort of grace over against another sort of grace, for he is the answer. The law was given by Moses. That was one sort of grace. It was the grace of type and shadow, the Passover, the Tabernacle Service, the Day of Atonement. They were all gracious gifts of God as pictures. But he says, we've done with the pictures we've passed from Moses and his types and shadows. But grace and truth came by. Jesus Christ. Now there's a figure of speech there, not grace and truth. Two things, but true grace. Do you know how John uses the word true? He says that the people of Israel had manna in the wilderness, but he said, I am the true bread. He doesn't say that was false. He says that was a type, and I'm the reality. He says I am the true vine. He doesn't say all those vines growing the grapes out there didn't exist. But he says they only typify another aspect of me and you. True, not merely in contrast to a lie, but true in contrast to a type and a shadow. So if you come back to Colossians two for a moment.

[00:29:17] Arising out of the fact. That we are filled to the full in him. Our must read verse eight. Because of what comes out of it. Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit. There is another figure of the same kind. What is vain? Deceit? By itself. Oh, no, you can't. But it's a vain, deceitful philosophy. You see, it's put around the other way. Not philosophy. One thing and vain deceit. That's the second thing. But a vain, deceitful philosophy. But when it's put out of its order, it emphasises it. It's saying and it's a vain and a deceitful philosophy like that, you see. After the tradition of men. After the rudiments of the world and not after Christ. For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. What a. What a statement. Perhaps we'll never fathom it in this life, but it's for us. This is not merely emphasising the deity of Christ. This is for us. But it goes on to say. For in Him. For ye are complete and the word is filled to the full. Carrying on the same word full. Ye are filled to the full in him, which is the head of all principality and power. Now he comes a little bit further down. Verse 15. And having spoiled principalities and powers. You see, these principalities and powers are going to have some influence over us if we're not careful in the wrong way.

[00:30:51] He made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of an holyday or of the new moon or of the Sabbath days. Now, these were all the types in the shadows of the Old Testament economy. The Lord was given by Moses. But he says All you're done. Why were they untrue? No, they've accomplished their purpose, which are the shadow of things to come. But the body is of Christ. And then he picks it up again in verse 20. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why? As though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances. So we have this tremendous insistence the supremacy of Christ, both in the creation of the universe and the new creation of which the church is the center and the symbol. So he's the firstborn of every creature. He's the firstborn from the dead. And he has preeminence that it pleased the father that in him should all the fullness dwell. This subject is bounded by two expressions to do with his great sacrificial work. Verse 14. In whom? We have redemption. Verse 20 and having made peace through the blood of his cross by him to reconcile two aspects of the finished work of Christ, it's not possible in about ten minutes or ten weeks, perhaps, to do justice to two aspects of the finished work of Christ.

[00:32:31] But I can give you what may be a pointer as to the difference between redemption and atonement. If you will look at the Gospel according to Luke. The ninth chapter, you will find a reference there to the Transfiguration. And it says in verse 30 and behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Now that word decease is the key word for the actual word is the word exodus. They spoke about his exodus and Moses knew what the exodus meant for. He led the children of Israel out through the Red Sea, and Elijah had a miniature one when he took his mantle and they went over dry shod. And now the law of Moses and the Prophet Elijah and looking at one another and saying, and he's going to make the true exodus in Jerusalem, not merely his decease, but his exodus, the leading out. So when you come to Exodus, the book itself, God says, I will take you out. I will read you out. I will bring you out. But then sometimes that's as far as a person gets. You might get a gospel preacher leading a person out from his sin. But he says now Moses led the children of Israel through the Red Sea and lined them up on the other side of the bank and said, Well, now you must forage for yourselves.

[00:34:13] I'm going to leave you. Oh, no, God said, I'm going to take you in. Not only will I lead you out, but I'll take you in. Now, that's the work of atonement. After the Passover was over and finished, then the tabernacle was put up, and there you have your priests and your washings and your sacrifices. That day you were brought out should be brought into the presence of a reconciled creator, you see. So now we want the other word. We want not only the word exodus to lead out, but we want the word exodus to lead in. But is there such a word? Oh, yes, Hebrews. And that's just the epistle you ought to turn to. Hebrews doesn't speak about the redemption of a sinner. Not the initial salvation. He assumes you're one of the Holy Brethren partakers of the heavenly calling and says, Why don't you live in harmony with it? So in Hebrews, the 10th chapter. Following the ninth chapter, which is very much dealing with the typical character of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. We have in chapter ten these words, verse 19, having therefore brethren boldness to enter into. Now, strictly speaking, that is boldness of the exodus. Boldness of the exodus. The opposite of the exodus. We are led out. We are led in.

[00:35:43] We are redeemed out from the bondage. We are led in to the position of accepted in the beloved, in God's holy presence. We'll read it. Having therefore brethren

boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. And having an high priest over the House of God let us draw near. He's exalting them that if they been made nigh. Why do they not draw near? And so we find that we have on either side of this tremendous passage in Colossians redemption, the forgiveness of sins in verse 14 and reconciliation both by the same offering the blood of his cross. Sometimes or in one particular passage. This word reconcile is translated atonement. And it's a valuable passage. And I think we've got time just to turn to that. The closing part of Romans five, verse 11. From that passage onwards, we get a new aspect of things brought before us. Romans five, verse 11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Well, strictly speaking, we do not receive the atonement. The atonement is an offering made to God on our behalf. But why was he put there? Well, we must not judge the authorized version by our modern use of language.

[00:37:18] Because this is what 400 years old And words change. Words drop out. I've never yet met anybody who uses the verb to act one have you to at one anybody for they used to use the word to at one we now say to at home to at one, and you'll find four references in Shakespeare. One character says, I go to make atonement between his brother and the Duke of Gloucester. But there was no sacrifice to be offered. And an old writer says, What atonement is there between light and darkness? What is there at one between them? Is he? So instead of saying this is a fault, this is a good thing, because in the very same chapter, verse ten, we got the word reconcile. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more being reconciled. We shall be saved by his life. So the authorized version knew all about the word reconciliation, and they put the word in. But once they altered it. To this word, and that links it with the atonement in the Old Testament, which is the basis of reconciliation. So we've gained rather than lost by having this one word slipped in. We have been made one because he made an atonement in the Old Testament sense, and we've been made one in the New Testament sense, which is better expressed by the word reconciliation. Do you see our English language gathers from all quarters and it's all put into a melting pot and there's English comes out to see and reconciliation comes through the Latin.

[00:38:52] But Atonement comes through the section. And so you've got two ways of saying the same thing. And sometimes it's valuable to be able to balance the two. Well, now we've had before us, as we already, I think, agree, a majestic passage. I've touched upon features. I'm not able to deal with it in detail because it's too much for me. I can only tell you that it's here. Draw your attention to it. Draw attention to a few features and then my thinking and we begin to realize, Oh, what a savior to think that it's true that he who made heaven and earth should one day stoop to become a man and not only stoop to become a man. The Philippians divided into two parts. He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God was found in fashion as a man. And if he been found in fashion as the most wonderful man that had ever been seen, it would have been a condescension. Great, wouldn't it? But then it says, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Even the death of the cross. The savior endured a death which Paul would never know. Paul was a Roman citizen and a Roman citizen could not be crucified.

[00:40:06] But his savior, who was infinitely greater than any Roman citizen, went infinitely lower. No wonder this man, when his eyes were opened to see the Son of God. He put him as he did right in the middle. This morning we were looking at the unity of the spirit and we reached the middle member. The one that stands alone. The one Lord. And on either side there are the three branches. They all depend upon him. He doesn't depend upon them. The one body and the one spirit. And the one hope of your calling. One side and the one faith and the one baptism. And one God and Father of all on the other side. And He the one Lord in the center. So whether it's Ephesians four or whether it's Colossians one or whether it's Colossians three, we come again and again to the one conclusion that in heaven and earth, in the visible creation in the church, Christ is all and in all. And until that day comes when that Son of God voluntarily lays at the feet of the Father a perfected universe, then for the first time, it will be written that God may be all in all. So we are an anticipation where Christ is all in all now of the great creation that is yet to come. When God shall be all in all. Then what a mercy to think we have a place in it. And what a wonder that he should have chosen us for that place where Christ sits at the right hand of God.