

What Jesus Was, Became, and Remained

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 December 2012

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] John chapter 1, we are going to read the first 14 verses.!

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was with God, and the Word was with God.

Through Him, all things were made. Without Him, nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. There came a man who was sent from God. His name was John.

He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through Him all men might believe. He Himself was not the light. He came only as a witness to the light.

[1:06] The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world. And though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him.

He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him. Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.

Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision, or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.

We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. I know of no greater wonder than the incarnation of Jesus Christ, that the eternal God would become a human being in order to save chosen sinners from endless torments.

If you should tell me that you became a spider mite in order to save the spider mites from extinction, I would not be as awestruck as I am to learn that the eternal Son of God became a human being to save sinners from endless torments.

[2:50] I want to make clear from the beginning that there's mystery here. You know, some subjects, when you study them, there comes a point in your studies where you get it.

And the light goes on and you say, I got it, I can wrap my head around that. Like, how to divide one number into another number. Some of you children know how to do that.

You've got it down. Or some formula of geometry that was so difficult until you spent a half an hour with a teacher after school.

And now you've got it. That's not the way it is with the incarnation. In studying the incarnation, I've never felt more like a child walking into a university library or a man wading out into an ocean that is way, way, way over his head.

With the incarnation, we never get to the place where we can say, I've got it. I have wrapped my head around that truth of the incarnation. Rather, the deeper we go, the more we see that we have not yet plumbed the depths.

[4:10] There's far more to discover. So we don't demand to understand it all before we will believe it. Rather, we put off our shoes and we fall on our knees and we worship, for this is indeed holy ground.

So for the month of December, we're stepping away from our study in Isaiah in order to meditate upon the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

And somehow I don't think that Isaiah would mind at all. Do you? After all, he's the one who's been telling us to fix our eyes on Jesus. And he's the one who told us about a virgin who would give birth to a son and would call him Emmanuel, God with us.

He's the one who said, a child, to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders and he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

So with Isaiah's blessing, we turn to the study of the incarnation. Now one of the questions that was often asked by people who met Jesus, who heard him, who saw him, was, who is this?

[5:36] Who is this? Who is this who even forgives sins? They said. Who is this that even the wind and the waves obey him?

We've never seen anything like this before, that he gives orders to demons and they obey him. And they wanted to know, who is this?

Now that's the question we're pursuing this morning. We're peering with the shepherds into that rude manger, that feeding trough in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, and we're looking at a newborn baby who looks like any other Jewish baby boy and we're asking, who is he?

And in this book, God tells us. And John, the apostle, tells us. So open to John chapter 1 with me. And children, as we do, you need to know that it concerns you to know who the baby in the manger is. It concerns the oldest person here, every one of us.

[6:47] We cannot be saved without knowing and believing who this baby is. So let's get started. Now, where do we begin? Well, you say at the beginning.

But where is that? Matthew and Mark begin their gospel accounts with a record of Jesus' conception and birth.

His conception in Galilee, his birth birth in Bethlehem. But John doesn't begin his account of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem.

Rather, he begins in the beginning. kids, those words should sound familiar to you. I'll bet you've memorized those words.

They come right from the very first verse of the Bible. I want us all to say it together. Genesis 1-1. Say it with me. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

[7:54] That verse, Genesis 1-1, is not telling us about the beginning of God. It's telling us about the beginning of the universe, the heaven and the earth.

And what we're told is that at its beginning, God the creator was already there. In the beginning, God.

Doesn't prove his existence to us. It just states it. God was already here. When there was nothing else here. In the beginning, God.

He's the uncreated creator of all things without beginning. without ending the eternal God. And that's where John begins. You see how his gospel starts.

In the beginning was the word. He starts where Genesis starts. And his point in doing so is to tell us if you are to ever understand who the baby in the manger is, then you must go way back, way back, right back to the very beginning of the world and know that just as God already existed at that point, so Jesus, the word, already existed in the beginning.

[9:15] In the beginning was the word. That's John's name here for Jesus. He did not begin in Bethlehem. He did not begin in Galilee. Nazareth.

He did not begin at creation. Rather, in the beginning when everything else had its beginning, he already was. There never was a time when the word was not.

He's always been. So as you look into the manger, don't be fooled by appearances. You see a newborn baby, but he's a real old baby, isn't he?

In fact, he's the only baby that was ever older than his birth mother.

Are you having trouble understanding that? I told you there's mystery here. And the very first thing that John wants us to know about this Jesus is that he is eternal.

[10:21] He is eternal. And then the second thing he wants us to know is that he's the creator. He was not only there in the beginning of the universe, he was its creator.

That's his point. We're told it twice in verse 3. In case we didn't get it the first time, we're told again the second time. The first time in the positive, the second time in the negative.

Through him all things were made. That's pretty plain, isn't it? Through Jesus. This word, this eternal word. Through him, all things were made. But just in case you didn't understand that, he tells it to us again.

Without him, nothing was made that has been made. So he's the one who thought up, who designed, and then created everything that exists.

The tiny atom, the whole Milky Way galaxy. the ant, the hippo, the human body, the human body, the unseen human soul, heaven, hell, all things made by him.

[11:37] Recently, we visited the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, the largest home in the United States built by George Vanderbilt. And for several hours, we toured the 250 rooms of that mansion.

And then we were set free to roam the grounds and the gardens. And we went into a greenhouse. And there, they had all sorts of plants, exquisite plants from all over the world.

And there was the Venus flytrap. An exquisite flower. Sending out a message to all the flies in the area. Come and eat.

Come and eat. Come and get a piece of me. And the flies come into the flower. And the trap snaps. And the flower eats the fly.

And I sensed at once that we had just left a museum to man's honor. the mansion. And we had stepped into a museum to God's honor.

[12:47] The creation. But not just God's honor. A museum to the honor of Jesus.

Because without him, no Venus flytrap was made that has been made. There's not a plant or flower below but makes Jesus' glories known.

He's the maker. He's the one who thought of it. He's the one who designed it. He's the one who created it. The uncreated creator. The unmade maker.

John says, you must know that that's who is the one born of Mary. The third thing he wants us to know. And not necessarily in the order that he gives it to us.

But thirdly, we need to know he is God. He is God. The end of verse 1. And the word was God.

[13:48] Not a second God. There is only one God. And Jesus is God. That means Jesus is the God we meet in the Old Testament.

Jesus is Elohim. The only God that exists to whom no one can compare. Jesus is God. He's the great I am.

The uncreated, self-sufficient, independent one. The eternally existent God who was and is and is to come. The one who shall be what he is forever.

Who needs nothing. He's the great I am. Jesus is. He said so himself when he was on the earth before Abraham was.

I am ego e me the reference to God. He is the Lord that you meet in the Old Testament.

[14:53] All caps. Capital L O R D that we really don't know how to pronounce. Jehovah Yahweh. This holy one of Israel.

The God that we meet on the pages of the Old Testament who made promises to Abraham who appeared to Moses in a burning bush. Who split open the Red Sea so his people could go through on dry land and then fed them for 40 years in the wilderness.

The God who drove out the nations and planted his people in the promised land. the God who stirred up the Assyrians and Babylonians to come and to chasten and chastise his own people who had fallen into idolatry and turned their backs on God.

The God who nevertheless promised to gather from them a remnant and to gather with them an innumerable host of Gentiles from all the nations to be saved by him.

This is who the baby is. He is Jehovah Jesus. The very most basic Christian confession in the New Testament is Jesus is Lord.

[16:13] If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, that's the basic confession of any Christian. Anyone who's truly ready to meet God and is a believer confesses Jesus is Lord.

Now that New Testament Greek word Lord is the word that they use to translate the Old Testament word capital L-O-R-D Yahweh Jehovah.

It is the name that is above every name and it's given to Jesus. No less than 130 times the Apostle Paul refers to Jesus as Lord.

Jesus is Jehovah. No Jehovah's witness acknowledges that because they deny the deity of Jesus.

But every tongue will one day confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

[17:26] He is Yahweh. He not only bears and fulfills every name of God, he also has all the attributes of God.

There is no attribute of deity that does not belong to him. He's infinite, eternal, unchangeable. He's almighty. He's all-knowing. He's everywhere present.

He's all-wise. He's sovereign. He's righteous. He's holy. He's wrath. He's grace. He's love. He's mercy. He's faithfulness. And just as there are no attributes of deity that are not his, so there are no prerogatives and privileges and activities of God that are not his.

God saves. Jesus saves. God forgives sins. Jesus forgives sins. God creates. Jesus creates. God is worthy of worship. Jesus is worthy of your worship and mine. So the one in the manger is God. That's the third thing that we need to understand.

[18:35] And one more thing before we go on. John says he is with God. He's with God. And again, he tells it to us twice, doesn't he? Verse one, in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God.

And again in verse two, he was with God in the beginning. Now screw your thinking cap on tight here. Jesus is God and he is with God.

That means we have God with God. Right? Yet we're not talking about two gods, are we?

We're talking about one God. There only is one God. One Elohim. One I Am. One Yahweh. He is God.

But he is not all that there is to God. He is not the totality of God. And here is an early window into the doctrine of the Trinity.

[19:47] Jesus is God, but he's not the totality of God. And what does the rest of the Bible unfold and unpack? is that in fact there are three persons in the Godhead and the word Jesus is God, but there is also God the Father and God the Spirit.

Not three gods, one God, but three persons in the one God. It's not saying that these are just three names that are given to the one and the same person or else you couldn't have one with the other. You can only have one with the other if they're different. And that's precisely what John is saying.

The word was God and yet the word was with God.

He was in face to face communion and fellowship with God. A relationship with an equal is what we find between the word who is God and yet he was with God.

Now we're pursuing the answer to the question who is he? Who is this Jesus in the manger? John's already told us so much about him in these opening three verses.

[21:03] His eternal existence, his creation of everything, his deity, his full deity, he's God, and then his fellowship with the other persons of the Godhead.

That's a lot. and there's much mystery here in what the word was. But the mystery just falls off the charts in terms of depths when we come to see what the word became.

We've seen what the word was. Now we're going to see what the word became. And we go down to verse 14 and we're told the word became flesh.

The word became flesh. That is the shortest definition of the incarnation that I know. The word became flesh. And made his dwelling among us.

So here John is talking about the historical entrance of this ever existent God who has always been. his historical entrance into our world on a specific date.

[22:21] Just as kids you have a birth date there. Jesus has a birth date. We don't know when it was. We celebrate Christmas on December 25th. We don't know. It's highly unlikely that we guessed the right date.

The point is he had a date. This is a historical entrance of the eternal God into history in a place a specific place over in Palestine in our world.

But you must know that verse 14 is saying much more than the fact that God visited our planet. He did that. But he did it in such a way that staggers the mind.

He became flesh. Flesh is the word for human nature. He became human. Sometimes flesh and blood.

Sometimes just flesh. But the reference here is he became man. Human. Now here's something new. Here's something mysterious and wonderful.

[23:28] A mysterious and wonderful change in God. And before you throw me out as a heretic, please hear me out.

you say, I thought the Bible says, I, the Lord, do not change. It does. Malachi 3.6. I thought that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

He is. Hebrews 13.8. But don't squeeze those verses out of their intended meaning. Don't try to make those verses say what they're not saying.

because if I understand anything about the doctrine of the incarnation, it tells me that there was a tremendous change.

When the second person of the Godhead became what he never had been before for all eternity, man.

[24:34] He'd never been man, but he became man. He was made man. He became flesh, the enfleshment of God.

man. And so this word whom he's just described as the eternally existent creator God became one of us, as much man as we are man.

He became like us in every way, and we'll look more at that next week when we're seeing his humanity. We're looking more now at his deity, but we can't appreciate the fact of his deity unless we see it together with the fact that he became a man.

This God became flesh, man. And so he who designed the womb inhabited the womb.

And he who created dependent human beings became one. High mystery indeed. Now we need to be careful here.

[25:44] we're on holy ground whenever we talk about God and his things, but so much more when we speak about the nature of God. And rationalistic man who makes his own mind the measure of all things has tried to remove the mystery from the incarnation.

And in doing so, they have hatched a host of heresies, either denying the deity of Christ, his Godhead, or denying the manhood of Christ, his humanity, or trying to blend the two of them together, thereby denying the two natures of Christ, or saying that he's half God and half man. In one way or another, when you get rid of the mystery of the incarnation, you end up with a Jesus who is less than fully God, or less than fully man.

And that's a fatal denial of the Jesus of the Bible. The only Jesus that saves is both God and man. Now, this is something we must emphasize. In becoming man, the word did not cease to be what he always was, God. Kids, sometimes things are one thing and when they change into something else, they become something else, they're no longer the other thing.

[27:16] So the caterpillar is a wormy looking thing, isn't it? And it goes through a process and it becomes a moth. And when it's a moth, it is no longer a caterpillar.

That is not what happened in the incarnation. That Jesus was God, but then he became man, no longer God.

That's not anywhere even hinted at by John or taught anywhere in the scriptures. He was always God and when he became man, he continued to be God.

Only now he was also something that he had never been before and that's man. It was not subtraction in the incarnation, but addition.

Not becoming less, but becoming more. In addition to being God, the word also took upon himself and became human.

[28:30] So now at one and the same time he is both God and man. The God man. Two natures in the one person. Not blended and mixed into one nature.

No, two natures in one person. Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Hard to understand? High mystery in the incarnation.

And it's a serious error to think that when God became man, he ceased to be God. that when Christ, the word became man, he was no longer God. That the Jesus we meet on the pages of the gospel was not God, but merely man.

The first 33 years on this earth, he was nothing more than a man, though a perfect man. No, that's an error. Sometimes Philippians 2 has been pressed into service to teach this.

You want to hold your place here in John, but you want to turn over to Philippians 2, and we'll be looking at this passage in our further studies, God willing. But sometimes men have used this verse to teach the idea that when the word became flesh, he was only a man, he was no longer God.

[29:58] It's called the kenosis theory, and it's an error. though Jesus Christ was God in his preexistent state, yet at the incarnation, he emptied himself of his deity, his godness.

And so here in Philippians 2, Paul is speaking of Jesus Christ, you see that at the end of verse 5, who, verse 6, being in very nature God.

Now there's again a passage that just tells us Jesus Christ in very nature was God. That's who he is. Furthermore, it tells us he did not consider equality with God something to be grasped.

He did not consider equality with God to be robbery, as if he was taking something that was not rightfully his. No, he was God, he was equal with God, that was not robbery for him to claim equality with God.

That's who he was, full deity, equal with God, with all the rights and privileges of God. But he made himself nothing, verse 7 says. Some translations, he emptied himself, taking the very nature of a

servant being made in human likeness.

[31 : 15] And some would teach that, here we have it, he emptied himself of his deity, of his godness, when he came to earth. That in the incarnation, he laid aside his deity and came and became a man.

And for those 33 years, he's a man. That's all. But the Bible is clear that he remained fully God after he became man. If the one hanging on the cross is not God, we don't have a savior for our sins.

The one who walked on the water was God. The one who fed the 5,000 was God. the one who sat in the well beside Sychar outside of Samaria was God.

The one who slept in the boat was God. That's how the New Testament portrays him. And salvation is of the Lord. And he is our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, our great God and Savior.

There is no Savior that is not God. And so Thomas can say of this one who was God and now became man. Thomas can bow and say, my Lord and my God.

[32 : 32] He hadn't given up his Godness. He hadn't become less than God. In becoming man, he remained God. So he has two natures.

And we'll look more at that next time. But John makes this very clear that in the incarnation, Jesus did not cease to be God. Look at verse 14 of John 1. The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

We have seen his glory. What glory, John? Well, the glory of the one and only, the only begotten, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

This is the glory of the eternal word who was with God and who had eternal glory with God. God, we have seen his glory.

In Christ, the glory of God became visible. And John says, we saw it. We saw the glory that is God's alone in this one who lived with us.

[33 : 37] Though in the flesh, he's still God and we saw his godness. For the sun is the radiance of God's glory. Hebrews 1. 3. They saw his godness in his marvelous works.

His miracles proclaimed that he is God. Indeed, he turned the water and the wine. In the next chapter, John tells us about it. John 2. Verse 11.

At the end of that miracle, he thus revealed his glory and his disciples put their faith in him. John says this divine glory of Jesus was especially displayed in his grace and truth.

This Jesus is full of grace and truth. When you study the gospels, you see somebody that is full of grace, full of truth. Indeed, the glory of God is the glory of his grace and the glory of his truth.

And we saw it in Jesus, John says. I saw it in his words, words of grace, offering forgiveness of sins, offering eternal life to people who deserve to go to hell.

[34 : 51] Full of grace, full of truth. He said, I and the Father are one. He said, before Abraham was, I am.

And in those words of truth, they saw the glory of God. This is not just an ordinary man. this one is God. We saw it, John says.

We saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus. But this is the next point we need to get. In this glory that was Christ as God was largely veiled in his humanity.

Now, we think of a bridal veil. And maybe they're a lot skimpier now than they used to be, but it used to be the bridal veil that would cover the bride's face.

You couldn't see her. The nervous bridegroom stood at the front and he looked at her coming. He couldn't see her face, yet he knew she was in there.

[36 : 01] She's there, but he couldn't see it. The veil hides the face of the one beneath it.

Remember, Moses veiled his face.

He went and met with God in the tent of meeting and the glory of God so filled him that it radiated from his face in a light, an outward light. The brilliance of God was somehow manifested in his face. And so when he spoke to the Israelites, he veiled that glory. And so when we talk about Jesus of Nazareth was God in the flesh, with all the glory that is God's, we also have to realize that that glory was veiled.

And the veil that hit him was his very humanity. It was such an ordinary humanity. It was such a real humanity. It was so much like your humanity and my humanity that they missed the fact that he was something more than man.

They couldn't see that as well as being man like us, he is God, not like us. It was veiled beneath his humanity.

[37:13] And that helps us to see a bit what Paul was referring to when he says that he emptied himself. Or he became of no reputation.

He became nothing. That glory that was his in heaven where everyone saw him and knew who he was and worshipped him. He gave up that privilege.

The glory is still his, but he gave up the enjoyment of it and he came to earth with a veil where people would not give him the glory that he deserved.

A man of no reputation, a nobody, when he was really the greatest somebody. But men saw no glory of God in him. Think how that glory was veiled at his entrance into the world.

How silently he comes, how unnoticed by the world, conceived and born of a humble Hebrew maiden, supposedly the son of a poor carpenter.

[38:18] He's born in a cattle stall. You see, the glory of God was there and yet it was veiled and hidden in obscurity.

only a few lowly shepherds witnessed his birth, growing up in obscurity, hidden from the public eye in Nazareth until at age 30 he began his public ministry and even then his glory was largely concealed.

It was largely veiled. People didn't know who this Jesus was. They asked, who is he? Jesus asked, who do the people say I am? Oh, you're some prophet, you're this, you're that. Oh, he's Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

You know, you know Joseph, yeah, yeah, he made a plow for me once. Jesus is his son. He's carpenter turned preacher. He's a good man.

He's a good teacher. Nothing more. They saw no glory in him. And some saw him as a demon possessed man, a raving idiot, a false messiah.

[39:30] despised and rejected and condemned. He dies on a Roman cross in apparent helplessness. They did not know that the Lord of glory had visited them.

It was veiled. But it was there no less. And John says, we saw it. We saw it. And this is what he voluntarily emptied himself of all the privileges and prerogatives that were his in heaven to be known as God, to be worshipped as God, to be treated as God, to be honored as God.

Yes, he emptied himself of that, but not his godness. He still is God, though it's veiled to most and only revealed to some.

God. I tried to think of an illustration of this, and pardon my illustration, I was trying to think of some celebrity, some important person that's well known in America.

It's hard to come up with such good things these days, isn't it? But I thought of Tim Tebow, maybe not anymore, maybe two years ago we could go back and think of Tim Tebow, or maybe today.

[40:49] Known all over the United States, seen on television, in the news, everyone's talking about him. Perhaps everywhere he went he was treated with special notice and dignity.

The perks of a VIP were given to him, people waiting on him hand and foot, moving him to the front of the line, happy to have a picture with him, have a word, a conversation with him.

And then Tim Tebow travels to a remote town in Siberia, and he walks into the local cafe. And he's made to wait for a table to become available.

He's got to stand there with all the others. And when it's available, it's no special table, it's dusty and dirty. His order is placed at the bottom of all the other orders taken.

The coffee's cold, the service is slow, no special treatment at all. Why not? They don't know who he is.

[41:57] They don't know his status, his stats, his importance back here at all. Now, he is no less Tim Tebow, is he? It's the same Tim Tebow there in Siberia that was in Florida, in Denver, and is now in New York.

Same stats? Well, they're getting worse, but more stats, but you can't take away all of his honors that he has. It's the same man, the same status, and yet they don't know him.

All his accomplishments are no less true, but they don't know him. Now, that's something of what John is saying about Jesus, the word. the one who always was, who created everything, who was God, who was God with God in the beginning, the one worthy of everyone's worship, honor, and praise.

He visited our remote planet. Verse 10 of John 1. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

And that's why the next verse says his own did not receive him. Why not? Because they did not recognize him for who he was.

[43:26] Why not? Why didn't they recognize him? Because the word, verse 14 tells us, became flesh.

And when this awesome, eternal creator, God with God, word became flesh, his glory was veiled in his humanity, his flesh.

Children, you see pictures of Jesus sometimes with halos around them. Hogwash. God there was no halo around the Son of God.

We'll get into this more next week. He looked like any other baby. That's just the artist's way of saying, this baby is God. He shines with the brilliance of God's majesty and splendor.

It's in this person right here. And so most missed his glory, not recognizing him. They rejected him. But John says, we have seen his glory.

[44:38] And you remember Peter and James and John were privileged to see the divine glory of Jesus in a special way on the Mount of Transfiguration because there on the mountain, the veil was pulled back just for a moment so Peter, James, and John could see the true majesty of Jesus Christ, that he is God.

And when the veil was pulled back, what did they see? This is how they explained it. His face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as light itself.

And Peter later looks back on that event and says, we were eyewitnesses of the majesty, the splendor, the glory of Jesus when we were with him on the sacred mount.

And John looks back and writes, we have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only come from the father. No, you can't look at the sun directly without going blind.

You need something to veil its brightness. So with the glory of God shining out from Jesus Christ, who is God. And when men in their present state see such a manifestation of the true glory of God shining in all of its brilliance, they go down on their faces like dead men.

[46:04] We're presently not capable of seeing and appreciating the full glory of God in Jesus Christ. But as Jesus came to the end of his earthly mission, he says to his father in John 17 in his prayer, Father, I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

And now Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. that's the glory that he laid aside for these 33 years.

The glory I had with you before the world began where all in heaven, if it was just the father and the spirit appreciated the glory of God in the son and gave him honor.

And then when men were created and the spirits of just men went to heaven and angels who remained holy, they saw him for who he was and they gave him glory. Father, now glorify me with that glory I had before the world began.

The full outshining of his majesty and worth, the unveiled splendor of his holiness. Godness. It's what he looked forward to.

[47:22] It's what he emptied himself of. Not his Godness, but the privilege of having others recognize his Godness. And so Jesus allowed his Godness to be eclipsed.

You know what a solar eclipse is when the sun is blocked out from our vision. Here we are on the earth and there is the sun. And when it all comes into alignment and the moon is just between us and the sun in a perfect alignment and full moon, when all of this is lined up, we can't see the sun. It's a full eclipse.

I want to ask you something. Is the sun any less bright? Is the sun still the sun? Yes. If we were on the sun, would it still be hot and bright? Yes. It's no different than a day before when it was over here. It just looks different to us on the earth because it has been eclipsed by the moon. And in some ways that may help us. Here is the eternal word of God and in becoming flesh, his flesh acts like the moon and eclipses the glory so that most men missed him. They didn't have a clue that they slew the king of glory. The Bible tells us. Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity. We sing at Christmas.

So there's the wonder of the incarnation, part of the wonder that he who is God became man for us and remains God and man forever.

And all to save us from our sins. Now, you don't have to understand it all, but you do have to believe it. This Jesus stood on the earth and said in John 8, you are from below.

[49:30] I am from above. You are of this world. I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins if you do not believe that I am who I claim to be. You would indeed die in your sins.

You must believe that he is the great I am, the one he claimed to be, God, creator, eternal.

You see, it's not enough to believe in Jesus. You must believe in the Jesus revealed in scripture.

This is the only savior for sinners is this Jesus, not some Jesus in a man's mind.

That's a mere man. Well, there is salvation in no one else than this God man, Jesus Christ. And it's the great work of the devil to spiritually blind men to the glory of God in Christ.

The devil is very busy keeping blindfolds over the minds of men so that they cannot see what? Paul says so that they cannot see the glory of God in the face of Christ.

[50:42] Christ, the very thing that we're talking about, the fact that Jesus is God, God's glory shines out in Jesus. But men do not see it. The devil is blinding them.

You know what he uses to blind them? He uses their sins. And while they love their sins, they don't love a divine savior who's God over them. You know what he uses?

He uses the world. He uses other sinners acting like he is nobody and going on in their sins. And when you see the cumulative effect of one sinner after another sinner after another sinner acting as if Jesus is nobody, the world itself convinces other sinners.

There is no glory in this Jesus. There is nothing in him that a man or a woman should leave their sins and come and bow and worship him. The glory is being hidden.

Men are being blinded. But a great unveiling is coming. The glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[51:46] He's coming in his Father's glory. He's coming in the same glory that God the Father has and all of his angels with him. He's coming to judge the living and the dead.

He's coming to gather his own unto himself to be with him and to see his glory. For, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, that they may see my glory, the glory I had with you before the world was created.

And that glory will thrill those waiting for him. And that glory will consume those who are not under the blood. He is the greatest reality before whom you live every day.

Jesus Christ, eternal God and Savior. And it's the sheer glory of his grace that any of us even believe this stuff.

Why do you believe and others don't? Who makes you to differ from another? What do you have that you've not received? Where did you get that faith to believe?

[52:55] Those eyes to see. So we have one place to go, and that's at the feet of Jesus. And worship him. Who is he in yonder stall?

At whose feet the shepherds fall. Tis the Lord, oh wondrous story. Tis the Lord, the King of glory. At his feet we humbly fall.

Crown him, crown him, Lord of all. Let's thank you, Father, for a passage in John that reveals to us more of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Thank you that you've opened many of our eyes to see something of that glory. And that we are headed to the full revelation that will last for all eternity. Please open others' eyes to see.

To acknowledge and confess that Jesus is Lord of all. And to lay down and surrender their own life to this Lord. We ask it for his eternal praise and for the eternal salvation of those who are yet lost.

[53:58] We pray through Jesus Christ. Amen.