



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Matthew 22:41–46; Psalm 110:1–7

Gospel of Matthew

“The Cardinal Question of the Day of Questions”

TRANSCRIPT

Will you turn with me to Psalm 110? I want to read this Psalm before we look at the few verses that we have in Matthew for exposition this morning. Psalm 110 and verse 1 through verse 7. This Psalm is the basis of the question that our Lord asks the Pharisees in the section we shall study this morning, and that is why I want to read it for the Scripture reading. David writes,

“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

(Now to understand what is being said here, we must notice, especially, the two terms for Lord in this first verse. The first occurrence in my edition of the Old Testament the word Lord is in capital letters. That’s a reference in this case to Yahweh, the covenant keeping God. Then the second occurrence, with a capital L and a little O little R little D in my edition is a reference for another term, for the Lord, *Adonai*, which refers to the Lord as master, so you can see there are two different “lords” in this one verse.)

“The Lord said unto my Lord (David says) Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool (so David refers to conversation,

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communication that takes place between two lords.) The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou (that is Yahweh still speaking of *Adonai*) rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art on high art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the nations, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. (And in the Hebrew text, those of you that take Hebrew will discover this, soon. The word heads is really in the singular, and it may be a reference to the antichrist or the beast of the last days, who shall be the head over many countries.) He the Lord shall wound the head. (It is singular in the text over many countries.) He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

Now let's turn back to Matthew chapter 22, and I want to read verses 41 through 46.

Matthew chapter 22 verse 41 through verse 46:

“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Messiah? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in the spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither dared any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

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May the Lord bless this reading of his Word. Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we come before Thee in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for we know we do not have access to Thee from any other person than the Son. And we do praise Thee, Lord that he is not only Son of David, but Son of God. We praise Thee that he is not only David's son but David's Lord. And we rejoice today in the full understanding of just who he is and what he has done.

We thank Thee and praise Thee for the work of the Holy Spirit which has been accomplished in our hearts, giving us this information concerning the Son of God. And we pray, O Father, that our delight in the Son of God may be the same kind of delight that Thou dost have in him. We know the Scriptures tell us that in him we have the forgiveness of sins. We have the adoption as sons, and that we have been made accepted in the beloved one. And we know that he is the one in whom is Thy delight.

O God enable us to have the delight in him and in what he has done that Thou dost have. Help us Lord to think thoughts about him that are sound and scriptural and that have force in our daily life.

We ask O God Thy blessing upon this group of people who have gathered to hear the Word and may through the ministry of the Scriptures we each be built up in our faith. How wonderful it is, Lord, that Thou hast given us the Bible, the Word of God, to give us information concerning spiritual truths, to give us information concerning ourselves, that we may know ourselves as we should know ourselves in the light of Thy Word, and that we may know Thee.

So we praise Thee, Lord, and we thank Thee for the forgiveness of sins, for the adoption as sons, for the hope that we have through the Lord Jesus. We ask Thy blessing upon the sick and ill, especially, and those who are in the hospital. Lord we would bring them before Thee and pray that Thou will lay Thy hand upon them, and if it should be Thy will, for we know Thou hath the power, raise them up to health and strength. Give encouragement to the families involved, supply all of the

needs that exist. We ask that Thou wilt minister to the doctors who minister to them and give wisdom and guidance and skill.

We pray Lord for the work that Thou hast accomplished here in Believers Chapel, and we pray that the ministries of the Chapel may have Thy blessing. O God, enable us to follow Thee, truly, in the plans and purposes that Thou hast for us. Give the elders wisdom and guidance. Enable them to be subject, submissive to Thy will. We praise Thee for this past week and the blessings of the daily vacation Bible school, and we would bring before Thee the children who were there and pray that the things that were said this past week may be good seed in young hearts that may bring forth fruit to life everlasting.

O God, work in these children, bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, give the sense of responsibility under God to the parents and give them faithfulness in their ministry to the one whom Thou hast committed to them. Now may Thy blessing be upon us in this meeting.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] The subject for today in the last of the messages from Matthew chapter 22 is, “The Cardinal Question of the Day of Questions.” Tuesday of the last week of our Lord upon the earth has been called the Day of Questions. And so the Day of Questions draws to a close. The well-prepared enemies of the Lord had sought to entangle them in his talk. They had sought to gain an advantage over him. They had sought to discredit him as a teacher and ultimately they had thought that by this they could put him away for good.

Never were the tables more effectively overturned. The straight forwardness of the Lord Jesus put their duplicity to shame. The skill that he used in turning their spears against their own breasts manifested his dignity as a person. Their questions which were designed to show his shortcomings only showed their shortcomings.

I have often thought of this in connection with my wife's interest in art and my lack of understanding of art. I have mentioned to you before that when we were in Europe a couple of times, she was always extremely interested in going into the art galleries, because she has painted for

a number of years and result was that I have been exposed to a number of outstanding paintings that the giants of art have painted down through the centuries.

I did not go into the the Louvre to see *The Mona Lisa*. I heard of an American who double-parked his car outside and rushed in and said, “Where is the Mona Lisa? I’m double parked outside.” He wanted to take a good look at it.

I’ve often wondered what that quizzical look on the Mona Lisa’s face really means, something like, what’s the fuss all about, but I’m sure if I were to stare at it for hours would get nothing out of it that others get and I’m supposed to get.

I was taken into the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and sat down before *The Night Watch*, one of Rembrandt’s famous paintings and looked at it for a long time and wondered why it was such a masterpiece. And I did go into the Sistine Chapel and look at the unusual work that Michelangelo had done, and the only thing that I could really think about afterwards was what a pain in the neck [laughter] to have to look that way for a long time.

I’m sure it’s great, but you see my comments do not pass judgment on those great artists, my comments only show my shortcomings. The things that I say about art reveal my weaknesses, that I do not know anything about art. So the Lord Jesus when the questions were asked him, they were questions that were intended to show him up but they only revealed the inadequacies, the weaknesses, the failures—ultimately the sin and rebellion—of those who were asking them.

The Sadducees as a result of the questions, were silenced. The multitude was astonished. They marveled at his answers, but they did not repent, rather turned and left in unbelief. The Pharisees gained a little bit of encouragement. They thought that since he had silenced the Sadducees, that they might be able to stump him, and so they came forward with the last of the questions that had to do with the nature of moral theology. And it was no contest. The Lord Jesus won that contest just as easily as he had won the others, and from that time on no one dared asked him questions any longer. They had finally learned their lesson.

All of this of course is designed to present our Lord Jesus in the true light. Do you remember the Passover lamb? Do you remember the ritual of the Passover lamb? Do you remember that the Word of God said in Exodus chapter 12 that when Israel observed the Passover, that on the tenth day of the month of [Nissan], the month in which the Passover festival was to be observed year after year, on the tenth day of that month the lamb that would be sacrificed for the families should be selected.

Now it was specifically stated that the lamb should be without spot and blemish, and so they were select to select the lamb on the tenth day of the month, but they were not to kill the lamb until the fourteenth day of the month. And from the tenth day of the month to the fourteenth day of the month was a time of testing. So they observed the lamb every day to be sure that it was a lamb without spot and blemish.

Now our Lord’s ministry was a ministry of approximately thirty-three years or so, but his public ministry was a ministry of approximately three years. We can think of the three years of our Lord’s public ministry like those days from the tenth to the fourteenth day of the month [Nissan]. It was a time for testing. It was a time for for the ascertainment, truly, of the fact that the Lamb of God was a Lamb of God without spot and without blemish. And in all of the trials and all of the testings that our Lord underwent, he demonstrated finally and completely without question that he was truly a lamb without spot and blemish, and therefore could be sacrificed as a Passover lamb for sinners.

Finally, in the silence of his triumph over the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Herodians, the Lord Jesus—the badgered one—turns on his accusers and asks them a counter question. This shattering counter question, I said, has left them dumbfounded. They had objected to the title “son of David.” Remember when he came into the city, and the children were shouting “Hosanna to the son of David,” they were very much displeased. They asked him by what authority he did the things that he was doing and who gave him this authority. They were very angry over the fact that he seemed to appropriate to himself this title of son of David, for they knew that was a messianic title.

Now this counter question is designed to show them that when people call him son of David, they don't call him too much, they give him too little honor and glory. If he is called only son of David, he is son of David, but he is more than simply son of David.

Now that's the purpose of his question. It is to bring them to face the fact that the Messiah, the son of David, is more than son of David. He is also Son of God David's Lord.

Now I think it would be helpful for us if we just briefly, for about five minutes or so, take a look at Psalm 110 because that is the basis of our Lord's question. So if you will you may turn back to Psalm 110 again and I want to make just a few comments concerning this Psalm. Psalm 110 is the Psalm of the messianic priest-king. It is the inspiration for the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the writing of his great epistle. It is my own personal opinion that uh the writing of the Epistle to the Hebrews in its human situation, in its human origin, arose out of the meditation of that author upon Psalm 110 and specifically verse 4. Because in the central doctrinal section of the Epistle to the Hebrews all that he does is really to argue that the Lord Jesus is the priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

There is a simple three-fold division in Psalm 110. Incidentally, this Psalm is cited in the New Testament more than any other Psalm, and for that reason, it must have seemed very important to the Lord and to the apostles. It opens with a divine oracle of sovereignty. Jehovah said unto my *Adonai*, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Now there are several important truths that are mentioned here, and the first is that the king, who is David's Lord, is to have a session at the right hand of the father. Evidently, he is divine, because David calls him my Lord. Now David would not call someone who was not truly divine his Lord. But he says here, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, so evidently David regarded this person as divine. And to support that, you will notice that this oracle that came from Yahweh which David cites, this oracle is addressed to this second person who is David's Lord, and David's Lord is told, to sit at the right hand of Yahweh.

Now to sit at the right hand in oriental thought referred to reception into the dignity and sovereignty and dominion of the one on the throne, so that the person who was invited to sit at the right hand of the king was one who was received into the dignity of that throne itself. So you can see from the fact that David calls him my Lord, and he is told at the right hand of God in heaven, that this person who is David’s Lord is a divine person. And that is further confirmed by the fact that in the 4th verse Yahweh says, concerning this person who is to sit at his right hand, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek a living eternal priest.

So the session that is referred to here is the session of the eternal Son at the right hand of the Father. Incidentally, he says, until I make thine enemies thy footstool, and that introduces some interesting thought. I only say this by way of inference because it’s not stated explicitly, but evidently, if the Messiah, if the son of David or if David’s Lord, to use the language here, if David’s Lord, is a person who has enemies, then evidently he has had some contact with these men who are called enemies. And I would assume that it would be fair to infer that he must have visited their realm because he’s a divine person. And if they have come to know him and come to hate him there must have been some contact, and so since they cannot visit him in heaven he must have visited them.

And furthermore, since this oracle is addressed to him when he is not sitting at the right hand of the throne of Yahweh in heaven, he must not have been there at the time the oracle was given, so we may assume the oracle was expressed when he was in the presence of his enemies. Sit thou at my right hand. In other words, come up and begin your session at my right hand. So we have here then a reference to the incarnation of David’s Lord in Old Testament language—not spelled out in detail; we learn that from the New Testament.

Then he speaks about the king’s return to the earth to reign in the second verse. The LORD Yahweh shall send the rod of thy strength—that is, *Adonaï’s* strength—out of Zion. Yahweh is speaking, “Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” So after sitting at the right hand of the throne of the majesty on high, he shall come to rule in the midst of his enemies. So Yahweh’s man, David’s Lord, is given universal dominion.

In addition, the king has subjects. Now you would not be a king if you didn't have subjects. And his subjects are described by their moral relationship to him or spiritual relationship to him. Thy people—that is, *Adonai*, David's Lord's people—shall be willing in the day of his power—that is, when he carries out his ministry of coming to the earth to set up his kingdom—he will be accompanied by great hosts of his saints who are willingly servants of him.

Now what a beautiful thing that is, because, you see, the Bible teaches us that men are not willing. The Bible says that men are not normally willing. As a matter of fact the Bible says that in the heart of every one of us there is enmity against God. There is no willingness to serve him naturally. There is not that seeketh after God no not one. So if the king's subjects shall be willing then we must infer that there is a work of grace that is to be done in their hearts. Thy people shall be willing, and if they are willing, it's because God has made them willing.

You know we can tell who are the children of God by their willingness. If they have responded, and have become willing, and have received the Lord Jesus as Savior, that expresses itself in their willingness, expresses itself in their response to him and the reception of life, and that issues in a distinct definitive change of life. So we can tell who are the children of God by the fact that they are willing.

Now you have given me the privilege of preaching to you many times. And I warn you over and over of hellfire. I bid you flee from it. I tell you of Jesus Christ. I seek to have you come to him to receive everlasting life, but nevertheless, as I look out over this audience, there are some of you who have not yet given any indication that you have really come to him.

So what we can conclude from this? Well we must conclude that either the day of God's power has not yet come for you—it's not yet the time that the Holy Spirit works in your heart—or else you're not one of God's people. His people shall be willing. That's the inevitable manifestation of response to the Word of God. So if there is no response of willingness, we must conclude either you don't belong to him, you're not one of his people or that time hasn't come yet. I pray that it's the

latter. God’s people are willing to submit themselves to sovereign grace. God’s people respond to the exhortation to hang simply upon the cross and blood of the Lord Jesus for their eternal salvation.

Now if that has taken place, if God has so wrought in your heart that you know that you are trusting only in the blood and cross of the Lord Jesus, then rejoice, you’re one of the people of God. That’s unnatural. Men don’t do that naturally. If you do, if you have that joy deep down within your heart, and you know that you love him and that you’re relying only upon him, that’s the evidence that you do belong. Rejoice in it. That’s one of the signs that God gives us as assurance to aid us in our Christian life.

But if not, remember, God’s people are willing in the day of his power. Well he speaks about—I don’t want to preach Psalm 110, I was looking at it for just an illustration or two of what is going to take place in Matthew 22—but in verse 4 there is a divine oath of priesthood which Yahweh gives forth concerning *Adonai*, or David’s Lord: Jehovah has sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. So while David, in prophetic vision, is gazing on the warrior king who’s to rule in the midst of his enemies, there comes a second oracle to his attention in which this warrior king is set forth as a priest king that is he is a mediatorial king.

He is not only king to rule on the earth, to establish his kingdom, but he is the one person through whom we have relationship to God. He’s the Mediator. He’s the one Mediator between God and men, the only person by whom we may have a relationship to the Father in heaven.

And then in the verses that follow, he, as he did in the first oracle, he spells out the details of how this priest-king shall come to his inheritance. He speaks about the defeat of the enemies of the Lord, the Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He’s King of kings and Lord of lords, and so he strikes through kings in the day of his wrath. So in brief but powerful strokes David, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, pictures the defeat of Gentile world power. And though the beast the mighty beast of the last days will raise itself against the lamb, it is the lamb that overcomes the beast.

He speaks of their doom. He says He shall judge among the nations, he shall fill the places with dead bodies. What we have in the Bible is a laughing and judging God. The kind of laugh that’s a terrifying laugh. It’s the laugh of judgment and vengeance that is referred to here. This greater-than Moshe Dayan, hero of the Six Days War, this greater-than David, the great king of the Old Testament, destroys the beast. He shall wound the head over many countries. And then the Psalm concludes with a colorful detail of the pursuit of the Messiah after his enemies which is designed to express the fact that he does not give up until he has accomplished his purpose of defeating all of the enemies of God at his second advent.

Now we turn back to the New Testament and take a look at our Lord’s question, and I think against the background of this we shall see the wisdom of our Lord appealing to Psalm 110. It does not take a whole lot of information to realize that our Lord appealed to the 110th Psalm as a Davidic Psalm, and I mention this only because many contemporary students have doubted that Psalm 110 is a Davidic Psalm, that David really wrote it. But it’s evident our Lord thought that he did write it.

Furthermore, it is evident that our Lord interpreted that as a messianic Psalm; that is, it truly did have to do with the Messiah. And incidentally it’s also evident that since they believed that the Messiah was the son of David, they must have believed that the Lord Jesus was the son of David, because they could have squashed his messianic claims by, if they knew he was not a son of David they could simply say, you’re not qualified to be the Messiah, you’re not of the Davidic line. But they were never able to do that. Never do we read of any attempt to deny his Davidic descent from King David. So they evidently believed that he was truly the son of David in that ethnic sense.

Well you know, when when you’re talking to people about the Lord Jesus Christ in your own daily witnessing, you will notice that the fish who have not yet been caught have a way of dodging the questions. Have you ever noticed that about them? I think that’s why the Lord Jesus said that when we seek to win men for him we are fishing, catching fishes for him.

Now fish are very difficult to catch. I know from experience. And people are very much like fish. They don’t want to be caught. They don’t want to be caught by the Lord. What a wonderful

thing it is to catch fish, but what a more what what more wonderful thing is there than to be caught? But we don't naturally want to be caught, so if you seek to talk to someone about the Lord Jesus, the minute the conversation tends that way, all sorts of smokescreens are thrown up.

Human beings are like the cuttlefish. The cuttlefish is a fish that when its in danger, it ejects a thick, black, inky fluid in the water so that you can't find it. And so all kinds of secondary questions are asked. If the conversation tends toward the things of the Lord Jesus, then questions like are you a Baptist or a Presbyterian? Where is your church building located? How to you baptize: by immersion or by sprinkling? And various other kinds of questions, because men don't like to be caught, so they throw up these smokescreens.

Now they have already tried the Lord Jesus on the questions of the relationship of church and state, the resurrection, the moral theology question, and now the Lord Jesus goes right to the heart of the matter, because in the final analysis the one question that is the fundamental question from which we should never be swerved is, what think ye of the Messiah? Whose son is he?

So when you're talking some someone and you're trying to lead them to faith in the Lord Jesus and they say, what church do you go to? Don't pay any attention to that. Just say, that doesn't matter, what think ye of Christ. Or if they say, are you Arminian or Calvinists? Now I know it's a great temptation [laughter] but just don't pay any attention to it. Don't pay any attention to it. Keep on the point. And the fundamental point, even more fundamental that are you an Arminian or a Calvinist is, what think ye of Christ, whose son is he? I love the way the Lord Jesus does that. He comes right to the fundamental question. That is the question of all the questions.

Now the other questions are important. There are many questions that are important. The relationship of church and state is important, the question of the bodily resurrection is important, and certainly this question concerning moral theology is important. We have many questions today that are very important. There are questions of, for example, evolution. Capital punishment. Charismatic movements. Moral law in connection with homosexuality. Women. Divorce. Demons.

Ethics. The inerrancy of the Bible as over the infallibility of the Bible. These are all important questions, but they are not the fundamental question.

The fundamental question is, what think ye of Christ, whose son is he? So don't be surprised at the delaying tactics, but don't fall for them. Our Lord Jesus did not. One of the things that I like about one of the most recent books written, *The Myth of the Incarnate God* is that the seven British theologians who have authored this particular book have made a fundamental error. If you want to disturb Christians, don't disturb them by questions about our Lord Jesus Christ, because that's the fundamental question. We welcome any kind of question about that. In fact that's our ground; that's the ground on which we want to fight, because we fully believe that our Lord Jesus is the divine son, and we believe that the Word of God teaches it, teaches it plainly and clearly, and we believe that there's no such thing as any Christianity at all which does not honor our Lord Jesus as the divine son.

These seven British theologians are making the fundamental error that Arias made in the 4th century of seeking to question the place of Jesus Christ in Christianity, and when you do that you are bound to lose. These seven men, incidentally, are six Anglicans and one Presbyterian. They don't come from the ranks of what someone has called, “the churchly equivalent of the Red Brigades.” They are men with high standing academically. One of them, for example, is a professor of divinity at the University of Oxford, and the others hold similarly high positions.

They claim that the deity of the Lord Jesus, while one of the most cherished Christian beliefs, is something that has got to be criticized and interpreted afresh in our modern world, and it should be abandoned just like we should abandon unnatural baggage. They have made, I think, three fundamental errors.

Most modern theologians do this. The moment they start out attacking Christianity, they often gallop right over into some amateurish, shallow, bad-tempered, glibly impertinent politics. And you discover that really the interests are not so much spiritual as political.

They also tend to want to draw us into a movement in which we honor one God, but this one God, is as some one reviewer has put it, internationally divisible. That is, there is one God, but in

India they may worship as the Hindus worship, or they may worship Buddha, or they may worship Taoism—they may follow that particular system—but the point is that all of these various systems are really systems by which we reach the one God. Almost inevitably they tend to fall into that.

And finally they often seek to win over unbelievers by making Christianity much easier, they think, to believe. But that’s the one thing that fails. So I welcome that kind of thing, and I am sure that we shall see that while this book shall be, in my opinion, extremely popular—because it’s very popular for a person to write a cheap paperback who is a churchman attacking the fundamental doctrines of the church people—like to read that kind of thing it will be popular but then it will fade away, because you cannot attack our Lord Jesus Christ and get away with it.

Now his question I say is a fundamental question, and I want you to notice first of all it’s a question concerning his mission. What think ye of Messiah? Now what does that mean, Messiah? Well it means, simply, that he is the one who God is anointing to carry out a certain mission. What is that mission? Why it is a mission to come from the Trinity and to carry out a work of redemption upon the earth. It is to perform a heavenly errand which is ultimately to be for the salvation of men’s souls. So when he says, what say what think ye of Christ, he is talking about the work of our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is asking them, do you really see any need for such an errand? Do you recognize your lost condition? Do you recognize that it is necessary that someone come from the right hand of God, or from the Trinity to carry out a work of redemption that men may be saved. Is that errand necessary?

But not only that. He says, whose son is he? So it’s a question not only about the Savior and his work, but it’s a question about the person of this Savior. Are you prepared to accept the fact that he is not only the one who is David’s son, but also David’s Lord? Are you prepared to accept the fact that he had a mission to perform from the Father, but at the same time, he is a divine Messiah?

Now the Pharisees’ answer is correct so far as it goes. They say unto him, the son of David. That was right. Now having gotten them to admit that, he was the son of David, he seeks to show

from their own Scriptures that to call him son of David or to call the Messiah the son of David, I should say, to call the Messiah the son of David is not to say everything about the Messiah. So he asks them, in his second question, how then doth David in the spirit call him, Lord, saying the Lord said unto my lord sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? He seeks to show them that the Messiah is not only a human son of David, but also David's Lord, and thus a divine Messiah.

Now the reason that he wanted to do this is because they had questions about whether there was such a teaching in the Old Testament of a divine Messiah. So he will show them by this that to call the Messiah the son of David is not enough. You must call him also David's Lord or Son of God.

Now they weren't able to answer this, because it was obvious that his understanding of the Old Testament was plain and clear and to the point. So I want to sum this up by saying, his answer is simply that David, the Messiah, is David's son and he is David's Lord. And since the Lord Jesus is that Messiah, we must give him his full deity rejecting all Unitarian blasphemies. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the son of David and the Son of God.

There is a beautiful quotation by Watson which I want to recite for you now. I thought that this was so beautiful and so succinct. I think I've read it once before to you but I'll read it again. “No one,” Watson said, “has yet discovered the word Jesus ought to have said. None suggested the better word he might have said. No action of his has shocked our moral sense. None has fallen short of the ideal. He is full of surprises, but they are all the surprises of perfection. You are never amazed one day by his greatness, the next by his littleness. You're quite amazed that he is incomparably better than you could have expected. He is tender without being weak. Strong without being coarse. Lowly without being servile. He has conviction without intolerance; enthusiasm without fanaticism; holiness without Phariseism; passion without prejudice. This man alone never made a false step, never struck a jarring note.”

There was a great preacher who lived in Baltimore by the name of Fuller. He was a very interesting, a very popular, very evangelical speaker. He was zealous for Christian unity, and one morning in his church he was preaching on the necessity and duty of magnifying the things over which we agree and minimizing the things over which we differ as Christians, and in order to show the absurdity of Christian divisions over the minor matters, he represented those who belonged to various Christian bodies and were unduly jealous of their denominational distinctives as being in heaven, and when they get to heaven looking around for Christians of like faith in order that they might have good fellowship in heaven.

And so he pictured the Baptists when got to heaven as asking all that they came in contact with, do you believe in immersion, or do you believe in sprinkling? And if they believed in sprinkling, then they sat them aside and sought out those who believed in immersion, so they could have good fellowship in heaven. And the Presbyterians went around heaven asking for people who believed in elder rule, and also in law and order and the other distinctives that Presbyterians have manifested down through the years. The Episcopalians went about looking for people who believed in apostolic succession in the way in which they did.

And that's the way the sermon went, and when he finished his sermon, at the close of his sermon, a Unitarian friend came up to him and said, “Dr. Fuller I'm surprised at your lack of love. You really didn't represent any Unitarians at all as being in heaven.” And Dr. Fuller said, “Well now if you'll do me a favor, I'll answer your question. If you'll come back tonight, I'll tell you what I think about your question.”

And so that night the man came back and in the midst of his sermon he said that he wanted to give the audience a glimpse of the feeling of Unitarians when they got to heaven. He said, now let us imagine that there is a Unitarian who is on the Island of Patmos with the Apostle John, and let us imagine that he is enabled by the Holy Spirit to enter into an understanding, into a perception of the great visions that the Apostle John had in the book of Revelation. Let's just imagine that he's by the side of John, and that he's able to see the things that John sees, and also let's imagine that he's free to

reflect on what he sees. He said that Unitarian on the Isle of Patmos, as John unfolded or had unfolded to him the vision of the one sitting on the throne with the book, the little book in his right hand, the Unitarian noticed that as he looked at this great heavenly vision of the one sitting on the throne and the little book that, no one was found worthy to open the book.

Finally the Lamb of God came forward and took the book and prevailed and was able to open it, and then he said, all of heaven seemed to break forth in praise and thanksgiving. There were the elders in the twenty-four, the twenty-four elders, and the four living creatures, and they broke forth in praise of the Lamb saying, Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to open it's seal for Thou wast slain and hath redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made them unto our God a kingdom of priests and we shall reign on the earth. They said worthy is the Lamb.

And then he said that suddenly when they finished then the voice of many angels chimed in saying, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and blessing, and then when they finished all of creation broke forth in praise saying blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

And the Unitarian, Dr. Fuller said, you know there are no Unitarians in this company in heaven, and he continued with John. In the 7th chapter, when John gave was given the vision of the great multitude which came from every tribe kindred tongue and nation he heard them all shouting salvation to our God who sitteth on upon the throne and unto the Lamb. In the 19th chapter, he saw the vision of our Lord returning upon the great white horse, and on his vesture and on his thigh, he had a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

And on into, finally, the final vision of the new heavens and the new earth, and he noticed in the final vision the new heavens and the new earth that there was no temple in heaven, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And there was no light there either, for the glory of God did enlighten it and the Lamb is the lamp of it.

And finally he said he saw that, or he heard them say, there shall be no more curse of the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him. And he spoke out, or though out, visibly, he said, why it's evident that there is nobody in heaven that does not worship the Lamb jointly with the one who sits on the throne. It's evident that everybody in heaven worships the Lamb as they worship the Father, and I, a Unitarian, cannot stay in heaven unless I join this crowd of people who worship the Lamb just like they worship the Father.

So Dr. Fuller said, “The Unitarian, when he came finally to this conviction he went over and got himself a harp and he took one of the palm limbs that the others were carrying about, and he starting moving out in the midst of the crowd crying out, worthy is the Lamb, worthy is the Lamb, worthy is the Lamb unto whom we ascribe salvation and honor and glory and blessing.”

And Dr. Fuller finished the sermon, and the Unitarian at the conclusion walked down the aisle to him, and he said, “Dr. Fuller, Jesus Christ has conquered. Let me bow here in the front of this auditorium and with Thomas acknowledge that Jesus Christ is my Lord and my God.”

The facts are, my dear friends, there are no individuals in heaven who do not believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. [taps on podium] There are no individuals in heaven who do not worship the Lamb as they worship the Father. There are no individuals in heaven who do not ascribe to the Lord Jesus Christ the full glory of a full and complete deity.

And if you have any fundamental question in your own heart and life about the person of our Lord and his right to be called the Son of God, very God of very God, you have not yet come to a true faith in the Son of God. These were a lot of questions on the day of questions, but I want you to know that this is the fundamental question of life. Don't let all those cuttlefishes of unbelievers swerve you from this question. What think ye of the Messiah, whose son is He? And I want you to notice that your destiny depends upon your thoughts about him. What think ye of Christ?

Now I know that there are lot of people who come to church and say the last thing that I want to do in church is to think. After all, that's what we pay priests for, is to think about spiritual things for us. And unfortunately that seems to pervade forms of Protestantism, too. The minister,

the preacher, the person who preaches Sunday after Sunday is supposed to do our spiritual thinking for us. Not so. You are responsible to think for yourself. What think ye of Christ? If you're wrong in your thoughts about him you're wrong. “You cannot be right in the rest unless you think rightly of him,” a stanza of a hymn has put it.

One commentator has said, “I never knew a man to think little of the Savior, but what he thought little of sin, there was never a man who thought little of the Mediator but what he has very strange ideas of the Godhead. And so I say to you this morning what think ye of Christ? What are your thoughts concerning him? Is He son of David and Son of God?”

I want you to notice to the Lord Jesus like any good preacher attempted to make application. What think ye—you and I? What think ye of Christ? If you have narrow thoughts of him, your understanding of Christianity is narrow. If you think for a moment that the Lord Jesus is only a shadow, then you'll have no substantial concept of spiritual things. If you think the Lord Jesus is just a myth, then your truth, your understanding of truth, will be that of personal fancy. If you think the Lord Jesus is just a name, you'll have nominal acquaintance and possession of Christianity. If you think the Lord Jesus is only a teacher, then you will not appreciate the blood that he shed on the cross at Calvary. If you think that he is only an example, then you will not have a concept of a Savior who delivers from our sins, our guilt, our condemnation.

He is the beloved of God, and we never fully come to know him in truth until we've come to think of him as our one beloved one. And so I urge you this morning, I appeal to you to think right thoughts about him. What thinkest thou of the Messiah? May God help you to say, he is all my salvation, he's all my hope, he's all my trust for all of eternity. If you're here this morning and you have never believed in him, we invite you to come to him and rest upon him alone for your eternal salvation. May we stand for the benediction?

[Prayer] Father we give Thee thanksgiving and praise for the Lord Jesus, and we confess O God our inability to extol him as he should be extolled. Who can exalt the Son of God as he should be exalted? But Thou knowest our hearts. We honor him as the Son of God, we extol his name as

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very God of very God, King of kings and Lord of lords, all our desire all our salvation. And O
Father, if there are some here who are not yet willing, O God, make them willing to respond to him.

Deliver us from any trust in ourselves our good works, our church, our baptism, whatever
experience it may be bring us to trust wholly upon him.

May grace mercy and peace go with us.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.