

Series: Ancient Faith

The Eternal Son

Sermon by Lead Pastor Paul Joslin

John 1:1-5, Philippians 2:9-11, Colossians 1:15-20, Revelation 1:12-18

Waterstone Community Church, Littleton, Colorado

Sunday morning, May 11, 2025

All right, so I have a confession for you as we get started today. A few weeks ago, my family lost something very, very important to the peace of our household. We misplaced the TV remote, and we could not find it anywhere, and if you have young kids at home, you know the scale of this situation, because if there is no TV remote, then that means there is no Bluey on Saturday morning cartoons. If there's no Bluey on Saturday morning, then it is going to be chaos, and there is no rest for weary parents that just need a break for a little bit while you are getting breakfast on a Saturday morning. So, we did what any family would do, and we turned the house completely over. We looked under couch cushions, because that is the obvious place. We were looking in the fridge because why not? We have two young kids, who knows? It could have ended up there, right? We were looking in clothes. We were looking in the washing machine, under the couch. We just could not find it anywhere. We spent hours looking for this thing, and so I did what any reasonable person would do. I went to Best Buy, and I bought a universal remote, because that was the only solution. We had to have it. It was NBA playoff season too. I needed to watch the playoffs, so it was a little bit for me, also for the kids, but have you ever lost something?

Have you ever lost something that feels really important or really, really integral to your life? Maybe it is more important than a TV remote. I will give you that. Maybe, has anyone here ever lost a license, like you have lost your driver's license? Okay, a few of you. Some of you are liars. There are probably more of you here who have lost that. We lose our keys all the time or misplace phones. Last night I mentioned that I do not know why, but sometimes we misplace our cars. We just forget where we parked. Has anyone ever done that? Yeah, See, now you guys are being more honest. Yeah, a lot of you. Last night there were way too many people murmuring about losing their cars, so we just stopped and prayed for them for a minute. Like, that is a big deal. You should not do that. So yeah, there are all sorts of things that we lose, all sorts of things that we misplace and we try to find.

As we started this series on the Nicene Creed, one of the things that we got, one of the premises of this series, one of the things we started by talking about is this idea that sometimes it can feel like we have misplaced something in Christianity. When we look at Christianity in the cultural moment we find ourselves in, it feels like something has been lost. Something has been misplaced. We are trying to get it back. We are not always sure what it is, but it feels like things are just off kilter a little bit. One of the things about the Nicene Creed, one of the things the Creed does for us, is help us anchor in the cultural moment we find ourselves in, so that as we feel like things are lost or missing, and we are not quite sure what to do with certain things, we can look back at the people who have gone before us and say, Okay, this was the path they followed. These were the things that held them secure when things felt a little bit crazy, but I want to take us to a level deeper today, because I do not think it is just that we have misplaced something in Christianity.

I think that when we really look at the situation, what I would argue is that I think in many ways we have misplaced Jesus, and I do not mean that He is missing and a missing person that we can't find. What I mean is that we have a misunderstanding of who He really is. There is so much cultural baggage that comes into this idea of who Jesus is. In fact, that was really the question behind the Nicene Creed. What brought all of these different bishops and faith leaders together was not a question of like, does God exist, or is the Bible true, and can it be trusted? What brought them together in the three hundreds was the question, "Who is Jesus really? Who is Jesus, really?" and if you ask people in our culture to answer this question, you might get all sorts of different answers. I even was listening to a podcast this week where two people were talking about, "Oh, I love Jesus. I love his teachings. I am not a Christian, but I love all of the ways that He looks at morality," which is interesting, because some of the things Jesus says about morality or who He is, some of his teachings went and flew in the face of some of the other things they were saying. "I do not really think He is God, but He was a great teacher." Some of you have probably heard that argument before.

Some of us, we just think Jesus is like a political figure, someone that waves a banner for a certain political party, or we might look at Jesus, and we might have this belief that is really all about your dreams and helping everything in your life turn out the way that you want it to. I mean, there are all sorts of different ways that we could put and answer this question, "Who is Jesus really?" and so if you are here today and you have ever asked that question, or you are asking that question today, "Who is Jesus?" I want you to know you are in good company. The church was asking that question when the Nicene Creed was written, and if you are ever confused by the religious confusion or the spiritual noise or Instagram theology that is everywhere right now, so many people have something to say about Jesus, then you are in good company, because today we are going to take a look at what it means to answer this question, "Who is Jesus?"

In fact, that is what we are going to spend the next few weeks talking about, because that is the majority of the Nicene Creed. They are trying to answer this question, and so my purpose today and what I want to try to do for us as we gather today is I want to elevate our vision of Jesus, and I want us to see Him as the divine Lord and savior, who is worthy of our allegiance, our awe, and our adoration. So, the road map for how we are going to do that is we are going to walk through the first stanza of the Nicene Creed, where it shifts to Jesus, we are going to look at the titles given to Jesus, and then we are going to look at the attributes of Jesus.

So first, when we come to this section that shifts from the Father, and it begins talking about the Son, it begins this way: "We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God." Now when we come to these titles, many of us, we feel like we know Jesus on a first-name basis, and it can be so easy to breeze past all of these other titles like, "Yeah, it is Jesus. He is my friend. He is my Lord. He is my savior. I worship him on Sundays," and we just miss what is going on and do not actually think about the specific title, so I want to walk through them one by one, because what we call Jesus matters, and so the first title that is given to Jesus is this title, Lord.

Now that is not just a title of reverence. It is not just a title of exaltation of like, oh yeah, we think He is a great teacher. It is much, much deeper than that. In fact, in the ancient Hebrew they had a title for God. His name was Yahweh, and the ancient Israelites did not want to say his name, and so in the place

of Yahweh, they would often write out or speak Adonai, which meant Lord, and it was the title given to the God of Israel, but here that title is given to Jesus. This title that was reserved exclusively for God is given to Jesus, so when we confess that Jesus is Lord, we are saying that Jesus is the same as the God of Israel, but it also has another meaning to it as well. The title “Lord,” has a political meaning, because around this same time, Caesar called himself Lord. He wanted to be known as Caesar is Lord. He wanted everyone to profess that Caesar is Lord, and so when we say that Jesus is Lord, we are not just claiming that He is the Son of God. We are also claiming that He is Lord, He is king, He is ruler, and therefore Caesar is not. Caesar is not. There is no other king. There is no other ruler. There is no other kingdom. Jesus alone is king.

Then we get to the titles we are a little more familiar with, so Jesus is Lord, He is king, He is sovereign, He is ruler, He is God, and let me get to his personal name, Jesus, the one that if He had been given a birth certificate would have been scribbled across it, but what we sometimes miss in the name “Jesus” is that it actually has this ancient meaning. It is encapsulated in this idea of the same name as Joshua, Yeshua, God saves. That is what Jesus’ name actually means, Yahweh saves, so He is a king, He is one with God, and yet at the same time, He is God who saves.

Then we get the name Christ, which is just Jesus’s last name, so it really does not have any meaning or importance, and we can just keep moving. I am just seeing if you are still awake with me. Some of you are. All right, some of you wake back up. We have got coffee for you if you need it, okay? All right, so Christ, that is not just his last name. That is not just like I am Paul Joslin. It is not that. It has a specific meaning. Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed one, and in ancient Israel, kings were not crowned with a crown. When the king became a king, they were anointed with sacred oil, and it was this symbolism that the oil was being poured out on them to anoint them to rule God’s people and represent God to the people and represent the people to God, and so Jesus is given that title. He is the anointed one. He has been the one who is deemed worthy to be the representative to God of the people and to represent God to the people. Even hidden in this meaning was this idea that the anointed one would win this decisive victory for God on God’s behalf and on the people’s behalf against their enemies, so Jesus is not just Lord and king. He is also the one who saves, and He is also the one who has been anointed and chosen by God.

Then finally, the last title, Son of God. It is a Biblical way of saying that this person is a human representative of God on Earth, made to reflect his rule and reign. It is a kingly reference again, so throughout the titles, where they are saying over and over and over again in every way they know how, Jesus is king. Jesus is God. Jesus is the Son of God, the king who has come to save the world. That is really the main point of those titles is that Jesus is the king who saves. He is God in human flesh, the promised Messiah, the king who reigns with no rival. He is the Lord over every empire, the savior of the world, and the true Son, who perfectly represents God’s rule on Earth. So, every time throughout this series, when we profess the creed, this is what we are proclaiming, but I think there are two ways that we have lost this idea that Jesus is the king who saves in our cultural moment today.

The first is, I think when we see this statement, Jesus is the king who saves, the only Son of God, God’s representative on Earth, He is the one who saves, some of us look at that, and our culture can look at that and think, “Oh, that feels a little exclusive, doesn’t it?” To say Jesus is the king who saves implies that no one else can save, and that feels a little intolerant. It feels a little bit like we are saying we have a

claim to some kind of truth that other people do not have, and you might hear the argument even that, “Haven’t we moved beyond this idea? If you look at the ancient world, there were a lot of different beliefs, but they were all worried about who the God was and who the right God was and who we were supposed to worship, but we’ve evolved beyond that. Now we have tolerance, and we have this idea that you can worship what you want to worship, and we need spiritual humility to say, yeah, that might be true for you, but it is not really true for me. We need to affirm all religious paths as valid, and to claim that Jesus is the only Son of God, the one Lord over all things, it is seen as arrogant or oppressive or even regressive, because we have moved past all that. We know better now than the old people. We do not need creeds. We have matured into a more inclusive worldview,” but here is the thing, that view of history, that view that the old people, the ancient people worried about what was to be believed, and we have moved past that, that is not actually true. It is a modern myth.

In fact, I would argue that if you look at the ancient Roman world, they were just as, if not more, religiously pluralistic than we are. I mean, they carried all sorts of different beliefs. You could adopt gods from this country and these people and this family, and you would have your own personal gods, and you would just do this smorgasbord of picking whoever you thought would maybe help you out, and you would adopt gods from over here, and you would say, “Oh yeah, this one seems nice. I do not really like that one, so we will get rid of that one,” and there was just total openness. In fact, Rome did not really care who you worshipped as long as you were willing to say Caesar is Lord. The whole point, the whole purpose of Rome was saying, “You can believe whoever you want. You can worship whoever you want, but you have to say that Caesar is Lord,” and that in fact is what the Christians were not willing to say. They said, “Jesus is Lord,” which means Caesar is not. The early Christians were not persecuted because they believed in God. Everyone believed in gods, and everyone believed in lots of gods, and the early Christians were not persecuted because they said Jesus was a good teacher. The Romans loved philosophy. They loved moral teachers. The reason Christians were persecuted was because they said Jesus Christ is Lord the one Lord, the one who can save, and Caesar is not, and that upset the whole empire, and so Rome called that belief intolerant and said you can’t go there. That is the one line you cannot cross, so it is the same confusion that we deal with today, where people feel like, “Oh, that is an exclusive claim, and we should just be open to anything,” and while that can sound nice, it misses out on what Jesus actually says about Himself and who He claims to be.

It is so important that we do not miss this. This exclusive claim that Jesus is the one Lord, it is not to make us less loving, and it does not mean we get to be less humble about that belief, but it does make us distinct, and when we claim the exclusivity of Jesus, it is not because we are saying we are better than everyone else. It is because we believe Jesus is better than everything and everyone. That is an important distinction, so the Creed’s declaration that Jesus is Lord, the king who will save, that affirms his universal authority. It moves us beyond just personal preference for what we want Jesus to be. He is not just another spiritual option. He is the one Lord, and the early church affirmed that through the Creed, which leads us to the second reason I think we sometimes struggle with this notion that Jesus is the one who will save and the only one who can save.

I think many of us struggle with this idea of Jesus as king. It sounds fine in the title, and it is a cute title. “Yeah, King Jesus. I love that. I’ll lift Him up as king,” and we really love to lift Him up as king at

Christmas, because that is when Jesus came to be born for me, and we really like elevating Jesus as king at Easter, because that is when He died and rose again for me, and I love that part of the story. I love Jesus, who loves me and died for me so that I could live forever. We get excited about that, but when it shifts, and that is true. Let me pause for it. That is true. Jesus does love you, and He did die for you, but we stop there, and we do not go far enough with the story. We like the Jesus who saves us, but not necessarily the Jesus who rules over us. We want a personal savior, but not a sovereign king, and so we say things like Jesus is king, but deep down we want to reserve veto power. We want to say, “Yeah, Jesus, you can forgive my sins, and that is fine. I need that. I want that, but I do not really want you to tell me what to do with my money or my politics or my sexuality or my time or my preferences. We like that Jesus died for us. We are not sure that we want to live under Him, but when the Nicene Creed says He is Lord and Christ, it is not just giving Him fancy spiritual titles. It is declaring that Jesus is the king of kings, not in theory, but in reality, in actuality. It is saying that the universe does not revolve around me. It revolves around Him. He is not just a comforting savior for your private life. He is the reigning king of the cosmos, and that kind of king demands not just appreciation, but allegiance.

I think one of the proper responses to understanding the titles of who Jesus is, understanding what He claims about Himself, and what the early church claimed about Him, is faithful allegiance. Jesus is not just a figure that we are supposed to admire. He is a king that we are supposed to follow. Philippians 2:9 through 11 puts it this way, “Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every other name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on Earth and under the Earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is” what? “Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Jesus is a savior, and He is even a personal savior, but He is so much more than that, and sometimes we do not outright reject Jesus, we just minimize Him, but He is king of the cosmos.

When I started working on this message, we were in Texas, and I took a break one afternoon. We were hanging out with family, visiting family, and I went to a coffee shop, and the coffee shop was really fascinating. I did not know anything about it. We were friends, and it was the closest one, so I walked in, and immediately, I mean there was an American flag on the back wall. It was as big as this stage. It was massive. They had this massive sign that said, “Pledge of Allegiance,” and it was scripted out in this really beautiful handwriting. I mean it was just like America threw up on this coffee shop, even the Wi-Fi password. Do you know what the Wi-Fi password was? It was, “Stars and stripes.” Everything about this coffee shop was just like America. They really love America, and I was talking to the person, “What is going on in here?” and I was being respectful about it, but it was just so unique. I have never seen a coffee shop like it, and she was like, “Oh, yeah. I had this desire to support veterans,” and so that is a part of the coffee shop, and I was like, “Oh, that is beautiful. I love supporting that.” I was like, the coffee is not great, but that is okay. We can move past all of that stuff.

Here is what was fascinating is this coffee shop was in the middle of Texas. Is anybody from Texas before or spend some time in Texas, or anybody go to school, elementary school in Texas? If you are not from Texas, I am going to let you in a little secret. It is crazy. It is a little weird. They do this thing before school every day where they say the pledge of allegiance to the American flag, and then they also say the pledge of allegiance to the Texas flag. Did you know that? I do not think they; do they do that to the Colorado flag? No, they do not, and Colorado is so awesome. If anyone, we should do that maybe.

No, Texas is so, so strange, and so you say the pledge of allegiance to the American flag, and then you say the pledge of allegiance to the Texas flag, and in this coffee shop, I saw that playing out a little bit, because there's America everywhere, pledge allegiance to the flag. Literally the entire pledge is written on the back wall, and then there is this little section over in the corner, and it had a bunch of Texas flag paraphernalia, and so they are supporting America, and then over here, there are all of these little flags that have Texas flag on them, and I kid you not, there was even a T-shirt that said, "Make Texas a country again." I was just like, "What are we doing?" Like, what? There is support the troops, and America is so great, and stars and stripes, and yeah, but you know what? If it does not go great, here is another option for us over here. Maybe Texas could just go and do its own thing.

I was sharing this with the Saturday night service, and I do not know if you know this, but the Republic of Texas, when it was its own country, actually had this little arm that snaked all the way up to Colorado, and Littleton was actually part of the Republic of Texas, so that is free information for you, so if they ever secede, maybe we go too. I don't know. I do not know how that works. All right, I am just going to keep moving past that a little bit, and we are going to keep going, so it was crazy, and I could not believe it. I was like, okay, support the troops and America. Yeah, great, stars and stripes, and then, yeah, but Texas over here, and I told, I was working on the sermon. I was thinking about allegiance to Jesus, and it just felt like the perfect picture of how we live our life with Jesus, because we pledge allegiance to the king, He is king. He is sovereign. He is great. We have our kingdom banners out, but then what do we do? We have these little flags over here that we like to wave, our American flag, our political flag, our pride flag, our money flag, our career flag, our fitness flag, our faith flag, our family flag, and we say Jesus is king, and then we give our allegiance to other things that are smaller things, that are not as good or as sovereign or as worthy of our praise, and we live in this dichotomy. Yeah, sure, Jesus is king, but I am really going to have a backup plan in case things do not go the way I hope they will.

We have this divided allegiance. When we say that we believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, it is not confessing a neutral statement. It is bending the knee. It is saying He alone is king, which means you are not king, and Caesar is not king. Jesus Christ alone is king. He alone deserves our praise and our adoration and our allegiance. It means that our will needs to be set aside for his kingdom purposes and his will. It means the things that we desire step off center stage so that we can make space for his desires. It means taking down the other flags that we like to wave around, and saying Jesus Christ alone deserves my undivided allegiance. That is what we proclaim when we say one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God. He is the only one worthy of our allegiance.

So those are Jesus' titles. Those are the things that we are given that explain what his position is and what his posture is in the universe, but then there is a second part to this first stanza that helps explain a little more fully who Jesus really is, and it goes into some of the attributes about Jesus, and specifically his divinity. That is where we start, and it begins this way, that Jesus, the one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father, and through Him all things were made.

Now I want to walk through each of these lines pretty quickly. It is going to be some dense theology, but I hope you can stay alert and keep with me here. I want to walk through each of these lines, because they say something very specific about who Jesus really is. So first, it begins, He is eternally

begotten from the Father. How many of you have used that word, “begotten,” in a sentence ever in your life, not talking about church stuff? Never, right? No one here is like, “Hey, we have a baby announcement. We are about to be parents. We have begotten a child.” No one says that on Instagram, right? That would be weird. We would be like, “Why are you talking that way? Don’t talk that way. That is bizarre.” This word is so important, because it is saying two things. It is saying that Jesus is eternal, so that means He was not created. He did not come from the Father as my son Landon came from me. He has always been in existence. He is eternally begotten. He proceeds from the Father eternally. There has never been a moment that Jesus did not exist. He is timeless and in eternal relationship with the Father. Then it goes on to say that He is God from God, light from light. He is light shining into the universe, and He is God from God, light from light, and so it is trying to draw this comparison that Jesus is the same as God as light is from light.

Now I want you to think about this for a moment. When you see the sun in the sky, and then you see the light that the sun presents, can you tell the difference between the two? Yeah. It is not a trick question, right? You see the big ball of gas burning in the sky, and then you see the light that comes from it, but you can’t really see the light. They are distinct. You see the sun, and you see the light. You cannot really tell where one begins, and one ends. It is similar to how Jesus is with the Father. He emanates from Him. He shines from Him. They are distinct, and yet they are of the same essence, and then it goes on to say, “true God from true God.” Jesus is not some semi-divine being. He is not an exalted creature. He is not a glorified prophet. He is fully and truly God, the same divinity as the Father, worthy of worship, trust, and allegiance.

Then it uses this word, “begotten, not made,” again. It is fascinating how many times it repeats just in this first stanza, right? It is trying to make this point, to be begotten is not to be created. The Son was not brought into existence like the rest of creation, not like you or me. He is eternally generated from the Father, by the same nature, and if that is a little confusing, then we go to the next stanza, which helps explain it a little more, the next line, “He is of one being with the Father.” Now this is a really important word. If you spend time in seminary, you are going to look at this word for a very long time. Whole semesters are devoted to it. We are going to do it in about thirty seconds, all right, so I am just saving you a lot of money and a lot of time. The word is “homoecious.” Everybody say, “homoecious.” You can do better than that, “homoecious.” It is Greek. There you go. Awesome. All right, that means, “of the same substance,” and so what it is literally saying is that Jesus is not like God, He is the same essence as God. This is where we get the idea of the Trinity from. The Father and Son are not two separate gods, but one God in three persons. Jesus is the same essence, which means He has the same glory, power, wisdom and being as the Father, and then as if all of that was not enough, they try to hit us one more time with this idea, He was not created, because remember the controversy surrounding Jesus was, “Is He eternal? Is He actually divine? Is He actually God?” and so they are trying to say again and again and again He is not created. He is one with the Father. He is divine. They are the same substance. Through Him, all things were made. Jesus is not a part of creation. He is the agent of creation, which means every molecule, every moment, every mountain came into existence through Him, and He holds all of it together. Jesus is creator, not creature. So, the main point of this part of the of the Creed is to say this: Jesus is the eternal Son. He is uncreated. He is divine, and He is of one substance with the Father.

How are we doing? Are we okay? Did we keep up through that? I want to pull it from a little bit of scripture now, because they are not just creating this and saying, “Oh, it would be cool if we just made Jesus God, if we just said it would be really cool if Jesus was God, so let’s just throw that in.” They are pulling these ideas from scripture. They are not just making it up three-hundred years after Jesus walked the earth, and so just a few scriptures that we could pull from. In John 1:1 through 5 it says this: “In the beginning was the word,” which was a title for Jesus, “and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was with God in the beginning, and through Him all things were made.” We just saw that in the creed, “and without Him nothing was made that has been made, and in Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” You can see some of the themes being pulled from these passages. All right, now let’s go to Colossians 1:15 through 20: “The Son is the image of the invisible God, the first born over all creation, for in Him all things were created, things in heaven and on Earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities. All things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning and the first born from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have his fullness dwell in Him and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on Earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on a cross.” Have I elevated your view of who Jesus is yet? Do you see his magnificence and His majesty? Do you see how He is all-encompassing, that all of creation bows to Him, because He is the creator of it all? When we understand who Jesus is, and not just his titles, but his attributes, the proper response is reverent awe.

I think sometimes we have this idea that Jesus is just a concept we believe in, but Jesus is not a concept we believe in. He is the eternal Son that we worship. To live in reverent awe means that we stop treating Jesus casually. I hate to break it to you, but Jesus is not a self-help guru. He does not exist to simply make your life better, although I think He can do that. Jesus’ purpose in the universe is not to just give us some good teaching. It is not to be your life coach. He is not a vibe or a slogan or a bumper sticker or an accessory to your plans and your life. He is the only Son of God, the king of kings, the radiance of God’s glory, and when we live in reverent awe of Him, we stop trying to fit Him into our life and recognize that our life is supposed to revolve around Him. Jesus is not something you just fit into your schedule. He is not. He is something far beyond that. All of your desires, your priorities, your time, they all begin to orbit around the gravity of his glory, because He alone is worthy.

I want to ask you a question right now. I want to ask you a question. Where are you in life, not just like in this room physically, but where are you, emotionally and spiritually? Are you weary? Are you worn out? Are you frustrated or tired? Are you feeling stressed or stretched thin or fragile? Are you really just hoping the sermon will be over soon so you can go to brunch with your mother or your mother-in-law? What often happens is as we go through life, everything down here, everything on this earth, it is fragile. It is fraught. It is fading, but not Jesus. What we understand about Jesus is that He is the eternal Son, which means before there was time, think about that, before there was time, He was there. Before there were space or stars or atoms or oceans, Jesus was. All things came into being through Him. Every molecule, every moment, and every mountain are held together by the power of his word. He is before time and beyond time.

He is beyond creation and above creation, and still, even now, He holds all things together, and this is so important, because it means you do not have to. You do not have to hold it all together. You do not have to be unshakable, and you do not have to be transcendent, and you do not have to be perfect, and you do not have to be God. That lie goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden: “You will be like God. You must be more than you are.” That is the lie that Satan whispered in Adam and Eve’s ears: “You must be like God,” but the gospel and the glory of who Jesus Christ is, is that you do not have to be divine, because Jesus is. There is only one human who is eternal. There is only one human who always will be, only one who can bear the weight of the world, and only one who can bear the weight of your soul and your story, and his name is Jesus, and when we understand who Jesus is, we understand the majesty and the glory and the transcendence, it puts everything into its proper place.

When we lose sight of Jesus, when we lose who Jesus is, everything begins to fall apart, because we try to put our allegiance on places that cannot sustain it. We try to build our life on things that are shakable and unworthy, and everything begins to fall apart. Jesus alone is worthy of your allegiance, of your awe, and of your adoration. Jesus is not just a part of your story. He holds the keys to history, so one of the proper responses to who Jesus is, is grateful adoration, grateful adoration that He is God, which means you do not have to be, which means He holds it all together, which means you do not have to. What a relief that you do not have to carry the weight of the world on your shoulders, because Jesus is already doing that.

There is this beautiful passage in Revelation, the end of scripture, Revelation chapter one. I love this passage, because it gives us this beautiful picture of who Jesus is. It shows Him revealed in his full glory, in his full majesty. I think so many times when it comes to the person of Jesus, we can get caught up in his incarnation, which is that absolutely beautiful thing, and we are going to look at that next week, but we cannot miss his transcendence and his divinity, and so in Revelation chapter one, the apostle John is ushered into heaven, and he begins to hear this loud voice proclaiming over the cosmos, and in verse 12, it says this: “I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me, and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a Son of Man.” This is Jesus. “He was dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white, like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like a blazing fire. His feet were like bronze. They were secure and strong, glowing in the furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters, and in his right hand He held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp double-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance,” and look at John’s response, “and when I saw Him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead, but then He placed his right hand on me, and He said, ‘Do not be afraid. I am the first, and I am the last. I am the living one. I was dead, and now look, I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys to death and Hades.’” He is the center of the story.

What I love about this depiction of Jesus is there is this fascinating detail that John gives that I do not think he had to give. He says that Jesus is standing there as Lord of the cosmos in all of his glory, shining like the brilliance of the sun, and He is holding seven stars in his hand, seven stars. I want you to think about the magnitude of stars. He is just holding them in his hands like they are marbles, and John is terrified, and he falls down on the ground as if he were dead, because he does not know what else to do, and with that same hand, John gives us this detail.

With the right hand that held seven stars together, He reaches down, and He touches John with that same hand. That is the beauty of who Jesus is. He is Lord of the cosmos, creator of all things, holds all things together by the power of his word, and yet steps down into human history to be with us, to touch our lives, to change our lives. Those hands that held the stars and that touched John are the same hands that were pierced. It was the same hands that were pierced for you and for me. They were the same hands that broke bread and said, “This is my body, broken for you,” and “This is my life, poured out for you.” The Jesus who is Lord of the cosmos, who reigns supreme above all things, is also the Lord who can sit at a table with his friends and tell them the most beautiful story ever told, that that same king, that same ruler, that same majestic one who is enthroned above it all, stepped down into human history to die, to be crucified for you and for me, so that we might be with Him and live with Him forever and ever. He is the beginning. He is the end. He is the first, He is the last, and yet He is also the one who loves you and me.

As we come to the table today, that is the story. That is the image that I want you to have. That is the vision of Jesus, the elevated understanding of who He is, the one and the only one who is worthy of your allegiance, of your adoration and awe and worship, and so I am going to invite the servers to come forward for communion. I am going to pray for us, and we have gluten-free elements in the back. We have stations set up around the room. If you have not done communion here at Waterstone, anyone who believes in Jesus is welcome at our table, and we also like to say that communion here is a little bit messy. It is like a family meal, and so you can stay in your seat, you can wait for a moment, you can pray, and you can contemplate who this Jesus is, or you can come to the table, and you can receive his body broken for you and his blood shed for you, but do not feel like you have to come in silence. You can talk to your neighbors. It is a messy family meal. So let me pray for us, and then in a moment, you can come forward to receive the table.

Heavenly Father, God, if there are any of us in this room today who in this moment are feeling a divided allegiance, who have proclaimed you as king, who say that you are king, and yet have their side allegiances, the divided allegiance where they have given their life or their desires to something else, God, I pray that your Spirit would convict us today of the places that we have minimized you or given allegiance to other things. God, if there are places in our lives where we have just grown accustomed to you, or we have gotten so familiar with you that we just think of you on a first-name basis, and we forgot your glory and your majesty, or we have forgotten who you truly are, I pray that you would awaken us to the awe of who you really are. God, I pray for all of us, that our response would be a life of grateful adoration, that we would not even just rush out of this room to get to Mother’s Day brunch, but we would take a moment to actually give you the praise and honor and glory and worship you deserve. We do not just come here on a Sunday because we want to receive, but we come here on a Sunday because we want to give back to you what is rightfully yours, all glory, all power, all wisdom, and all praise. God, may our hearts turn to you now as we come to the table. May we give you what you rightfully deserve. May we bend the knee before you. It is in Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

As we close today, I want to recite the Nicene Creed together and profess our belief, but before we do that, I just want to mention this book. It is called, “What’s a Christian Anyway?” by Glenn Packiam, who is a pastor out in California. It is a great book. If you want just a really simple, easy read about a little history and context of the Nicene Creed and what we are professing, it is a great way to go a little deeper

in this series, and there are some available at the information center right out there, so I would encourage you to pick one up and follow along with us in this series. You will be reading it and be like, “Oh yeah, I think Paul said that,” which is a good thing, so now let’s profess the creed together.

“We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and Earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through Him, all things were made. For us men and for our salvation, He came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit. He became incarnate of the virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake, He was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day, He rose again in accordance with the scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son, He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” Amen. Go, in peace.

45:55 minutes

Edited by Tom Kenaston

Message #847