

## The Triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ

### Easter Sunday, 4'21'19

**Text:** Colossians 2:6-15

**Thesis:** The cross and resurrection are about the public spectacle and triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ over our sin and death and over all powers and principalities on earth and in the heavens. And the life, death, crucifixion, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus are about God coming to put heaven and earth together; and, it is about God bringing us into forgiveness so that we can have the life of God in us now. God comes in Jesus to address our corruption and brokenness, so that we can be part of God and what he is doing in bringing wholeness to the entire universe through Jesus.

Or, as one T-shirt which I saw this week says, "Silly bunny. Easter is for Jesus."

Let's read our text for today.

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. 9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. 11 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross (Colossians 2:6-15 NIV).*

1. **So then** (Colossians 2:6 NIV).
  - a. This phrase points back to what Paul has already been saying in Colossians 1 and 2.
  - b. (NT Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon*). Paul, towards the end of [Colossians] chapter 1 (verses 26-27), speaks of God's secret plan, a plan that has lain hidden, like a map in a locked and dusty cupboard, for ages and generations.

Now, quite suddenly, it has come to light in the events concerning Jesus, the Messiah. Paul is in possession of the map, and is inviting as many people as possible to come with him to find the treasure.

- c. In the present passage he tells them plainly what the treasure is; what dangers they will face as they try to make it their own; and which route they must take to get to it. After what he's already said, we shouldn't be surprised that the theme all through is King Jesus, King Jesus, King Jesus. **He is the secret plan; he is the treasure; he is the one 'in whom' they will be able to ward off danger; he is the one 'in whom' they must find their way to the goal.**
  - d. First, Jesus the Messiah, the king, the 'Christ', is the heart of God's secret plan. Nobody, no matter how learned or devout they had been before, could have guessed that, when the one true God unveiled his blueprint for bringing the whole world under his sovereign and saving rule, that blueprint would consist of a man suffering the cruel punishment that the Romans used for rebel slaves and revolutionary leaders—and then rising from the dead three days later. But once these astonishing events had unfolded, Paul and others came to see that this map did indeed make sense.
  - e. And the treasure that was hidden, to which the map would lead them, was again Jesus Christ himself. We can't stress often enough that Paul didn't see the human plight like so many do today, that people need to have some kind of spiritual experience and that Jesus the Messiah could supply it if they wanted. It was that King Jesus himself was the centre of the cosmos, the key to life and the universe, the image of the invisible God, the clue to genuinely human existence.
  - f. Christianity, says the old slogan, is Christ. Put him in the middle of your picture of the world, and the world will stop spinning in incomprehensible circles and begin to make sense. Find him, and you've got the treasure. It may take you a while to get it all out of the treasure chest and inspect it, but when you do you'll find—so Paul is saying in verse 3—that all the wisdom and knowledge that ever there was finds its full meaning in him. [Jesus] is, quite simply, what it's all about (NT Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon*).
2. **...just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him** (Colossians 2:6).
- a. This is how we came into relationship with Jesus.
  - b. **Admit your need** (lining up with God's wisdom)
    - i. God created us in his image to rule and reign with him on the earth forever (Genesis 1:26-30; Revelation 1:4-6, 5:9-10).

- ii. God created us for life and for abundant life. God created us for relationship with him. In God we find our meaning and purpose for living.
  - iii. But we messed up our lives thinking we could find meaning and purpose on our own, without God.
  - iv. So, we come to God and admit that we messed up our lives.
  - v. It is difficult for people to admit their needs, to confess their sins (1 John 1:7-9). But God's wisdom dictates that we bring every thought and area of our lives which are wrong to God (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). We need to admit when we are hurting, thinking wrong thoughts, or need God's help.
- c. **Repent** (lining up with God's will)
- i. **To repent is to turn** from sin and self and to turn to Jesus (Acts 20:21). God's will is for us to repent, to exercise an effort to stop sinning, and to perform deeds correlating to repentance (Acts 26:20b).
  - ii. It is God's desire to meet us when we turn to him; he will meet us with grace and give us victory over sin.
  - iii. We no longer live for ourselves. We now live for Jesus, for the one who died and who was raised as King of Kings, and for his kingdom, and not for ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 6:10).
  - iv. *And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer (2 Corinthians 5:15-16).*
- d. **Believe in Jesus** (lining up with God's provision)
- i. Jesus is God's only provision for everything we need (John 14:6), including forgiveness, healing, salvation, and deliverance (Luke 4:18-19).
  - ii. We are to put our faith in Jesus, not our works, our power, or our righteousness (Acts 13:38-39; Hebrews 11:6).
- e. **Follow / obey Jesus** (lining up with God's purposes)
- i. Jesus issues the invitation to relationship: *"Come, follow me"* (Matthew 4:19). Christianity is about relationship with the Living God through Jesus Christ.
  - ii. As Jesus was sent and commissioned by the Father, Jesus calls us to follow him, to serve him, and to carry out his purposes on the earth (Luke 9:23; John 12:26, 20:21) with the power, help, and anointing of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

- iii. A true believer, a sincere follower of Jesus, will obey the Lord out of love (John 14:15, 21).
- f. This is how we came into relationship with Jesus, **and it is how we continue to walk in relationship with him.**
  - i. The problem is that we start in the Spirit; we start our journey as Christians in dependency upon God and in partnership with the Lord.
    - 1. Then, at some point, we start living by our own wisdom, power, and effort (Galatians 3:3).
    - 2. How is that working for us?
  - ii. Here is how we are supposed to live the Christian life: **just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him** (Colossians 2:6).
    - 1. Admit your need (walk in the light, 1 John 1:7,9)
      - a. We need God; we need each other.
    - 2. Repent
    - 3. Believe in Jesus
    - 4. Follow Jesus
- 3. **...rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught** (Colossians 2:7).
  - a. *In the same way you received Jesus our Lord and Messiah by faith, continue your journey of faith, **progressing further into your union with him!** 7 Your spiritual roots go deeply into his life as you are continually infused with strength, encouraged in every way. For you are established in the faith you have absorbed and enriched by your devotion to him!* (Colossians 2:6-7 Passion NT)
- 4. **...and overflowing with thankfulness** (Colossians 2:7)
  - a. This note is sounded often in Colossians-- **you must have thanksgiving overflowing in your lives. When that happens, you will know that you are on the right track.**
  - b. Moreover, when your life overflows with thanksgiving, then, you will be **attractive and delightful to people.** They will look in bewilderment at these people living a whole new sort of life.
- 5. **See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ (Colossians 2:8).**
  - a. Now, the Messiah has come. He has been marked out by God, through his death and resurrection, as Israel's king and the world's true Lord. Anything which adds to or detracts from Christ is empty and deceptive.
  - b. *Beware that no one distracts you or intimidates you in their attempt to lead you away from Christ's fullness by pretending to be full of wisdom when they're filled with endless arguments of human logic. For they*

*operate with humanistic and clouded judgments based on the mindset of this world system, and not the anointed truths of the Anointed One (Colossians 2:8 Passion NT).*

6. ***For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority (Colossians 2:9-10).***
  - a. *Everything of God gets expressed in him, so you can see and hear him clearly. You don't need a telescope, a microscope, or a horoscope to realize the fullness of Christ, and the emptiness of the universe without him. 10 When you come to him, that fullness comes together for you, too. His power extends over everything (Colossians 2:9-10 MSG).*
  - b. *For he is the complete fullness of deity living in human form. 10 And our own completeness is now found in him. **We are completely filled with God as Christ's fullness overflows within us.** He is the Head of every kingdom and authority in the universe! (Colossians 2:9-10 Passion NT).*
  - c. *Jesus embodies or incarnates the fullness of God.*
  - d. ***And, in Jesus, you have been given fullness, too. Just let that sink in.***
  - e. *Jesus didn't come to change God's mind about you. Jesus didn't come to give you morality or to help you live a better life. Jesus came to show us how to live as God meant us to live, as people filled to the fullness of God. We no longer live for ourselves. Rather, we live for God through Jesus. In Christ we experience our purpose and reason for being. And, we are called to live out of the fullness of Christ to partner with God in revealing his eternal purposes in Christ Jesus as Lord over all creation, powers, and authorities, in heaven and on earth.*
  - f. ***Jesus came to show us how we were meant to live in union with God and as people filled with the Spirit of God, as people who are ruling and reigning with Christ forever.***
7. ***In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ (Colossians 2:11).***
  - a. *Through our union with him we have experienced circumcision of heart. All of the guilt and power of sin has been cut away and is now extinct because of what Christ, the Anointed One, has accomplished for us (Colossians 2:11 Passion NT).*
  - b. *If you've already got Jesus the Messiah as your Lord, you don't need to be 'completed' by any other system at all, and certainly not by a Judaism that refuses to acknowledge him. The two main things he says (the first in verses 11-12 and the second in verses 13-15), are that you certainly don't need to get circumcised, and that the Torah, the law of Moses, has no claim on you (NT Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon*).*

8. **...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead** (Colossians 2:12).
  - a. *If it's an initiation ritual you're after, you've already been through it by submitting to baptism. Going under the water was a burial of your old life; coming up out of it was a resurrection, God raising you from the dead as he did Christ (Colossians 2:12 MSG).*
9. **When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross** (Colossians 2:13-14).
  - a. *When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, 14 the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross (Colossians 2:13-14 MSG).*
  - b. *This "realm of death" describes our former state, for we were held in sin's grasp. But now, we've been resurrected out of that "realm of death" never to return, for we are forever alive and forgiven of all our sins! 14 He canceled out every legal violation we had on our record and the old arrest warrant that stood to indict us. He erased it all—our sins, our stained soul—he deleted it all and they cannot be retrieved!*  
**Everything we once were in Adam has been placed onto his cross and nailed permanently there as a public display of cancellation** (Colossians 2:13-14 Passion NT).
10. **And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross** (Colossians 2:6-15)
  - a. *He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets (Colossians 2:15 MSG).*
  - b. *Then Jesus made a public spectacle of all the powers and principalities of darkness, stripping away from them every weapon and all their spiritual authority and power to accuse us. And by the power of the cross, Jesus led them around as prisoners in a procession of triumph. He was not their prisoner; they were his! (Colossians 2:15 PassionNT).*
  - c. (NT Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon*). Anyone looking at the cross of Jesus with a normal understanding of the first-century world would think: **the rulers and authorities stripped him naked and celebrated a public triumph over him. That's what they normally did to such people.**
  - d. **On the cross, Paul declares, God was stripping the armour off the rulers and authorities! Yes: he was holding them up to public contempt! God was celebrating his triumph over the principalities and powers, the very**

powers that thought it was the other way round. Paul never gets tired of relishing the glorious paradox of the cross: God's weakness overcoming human strength, God's folly overcoming human wisdom (as he says in 1 Corinthians 1) (NT Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon*).

## Closing

The cross and resurrection are about the public spectacle and triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ over our sin and death and over all powers and principalities on earth and in the heavens. And the life, death, crucifixion, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus are about God coming to put heaven and earth together; and, it is about God bringing us into forgiveness so that we can have the life of God in us now. God comes in Jesus to address our corruption and brokenness, so that we can be part of God and what he is doing in bringing wholeness to the entire universe through Jesus.

1. If you are a believer in Jesus, remember that *Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15 NIV).
  - a. Who are you really living for?
  - b. Remember who you are.
2. If you are a believer in Jesus, remember that, *just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him (Colossians 2:6)*. Your real life is found in Christ; *you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God* (Colossians 3:3).
  - a. I invite you to the eternal adventure of finding out who Christ is and, in the process, finding out who you are in Christ.
3. **If you want to experience real life, abundant life, and your purpose for living, then I invite you to follow Jesus. If you want to see the mess of your life and the mess of this world put right, then I invite you to follow Jesus, the one who has the wisdom, patience, and power to make all things whole and put everything back as it was intended by God.**
  - a. Admit your need
  - b. Repent
  - c. Believe in Jesus
    - i. Jesus came to make all things new.
    - ii. Jesus came to set all things right.
    - iii. Jesus came to clean up your mess and my mess.
    - iv. Jesus came to bring us into the forever family of God.
    - v. Jesus came to purchase us for God, with his own blood, that we might be kings and priest to serve our God and to join him on

his mission. What a purpose. What a champion. What a savior.  
Surely, he is the Son of God.

- d. Follow Jesus from now on, with the help of the Holy Spirit