

Prophecy/Mystery Combined #11 - The Essence and Condescension of God #2

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] Thank you, ladies. Beautiful song, beautiful message. And that baby boy really grew up to be something else, did he not? And let's read about him in Revelation chapter 4.

Would you open your Bibles there, please? Revelation chapter 4. This is going to be part 2, the essence and condescension of God.

It's going to be a three or four part series that we are doing in connection with the season of the year. And some utterly remarkable truths to share with you.

They're just absolutely beyond our ability to grasp as much as we would like. So let us pray. Our Father, as we gather this morning, we do so out of a sense of anticipation simply because we are together.

And your word is being opened. And we are focusing once again upon what you've been pleased to provide for us. So we pray for an understanding unction from you as regards the content.

[1 : 13] And then the wisdom to apply its principles to our daily lives. Thank you for this magnificent provision you've made for us and for this season of the year when even the world is forced to stop.

And think perhaps in just a little different vein. We are so grateful for your having provided this and for providing the information that you have that accompanies it.

For those unable to be with us this morning because of illness or other obligations, we ask your blessing upon them wherever they are. I want to lift up my brother Wayne and his wife as he undergoes treatment for the virus and its difficulties that you will undertake for them and strengthen and establish them.

Most of all, cause them to know that you are the ever faithful God that never leaves us nor forsakes us. Thank you for the presence of each one here this morning, for the truth that is before us, and for all that it involves.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen. Received word just recently about my brother, half-brother Wayne. He's had a knee operation.

[2 : 26] He's got terrible neuropathy in both legs, but he had a knee operation and then a few days afterwards developed infection in it. Had to go back to the hospital and have the operation completely redone.

And now he's in a rehab facility and dealing with COVID-19 on top of it, as others are there. So it's a difficult time for him and for his wife, Lee, and she too is in bad physical condition.

So appreciate your remembering Wayne and Lee and your prayers. We're going to be looking at Revelation chapter 4 and 5 for our scripture reading.

And if you would turn to it, please, if you haven't already, I want to explain just a couple of things before we begin with the text. Because I suspect it might be considered a little unusual for the beginning of the message to start with the end.

And then we're going to end with the beginning. So we'll be in Revelation to begin with. And we'll be in Genesis then for a conclusion. But that will simply stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

[3 : 34] And you'll be able to keep everything in order. And if it so happens that you cannot tell Revelation from Genesis, then we've got a different kind of problem. So we won't worry about that.

But we're going to be looking at this from the standpoint of our God's condescension. And that will be in this portion. And then in his essence, that will be closer to the end of the message.

And I'm not promising you a Q&A; this morning because it usually never works out anyway. So I'm not even going to tell you that I'll give you that. Usually I'm not able to do so.

So I do want you to look at the scripture reading. Then we'll have a few announcements and we'll go to the text. Revelation chapter 4. And these two passages, chapter 4 and 5, and a couple of verses in each one, explain, in my estimation, better than anything else, why there is something rather than nothing.

It is an age-old problem that has plagued philosophers and theologians for centuries. And only in the scriptures do we find an answer that we believe is consistent with all that we see about us, with the facts, with history, and with everything else.

[4 : 50] You can take your choice, but you can only choose one. And you must choose between the evolutionary model, which, by the way, is by far and away the most popular today, particularly in academia.

And their mantra is this, that creation is religion and faith, but evolution is science.

And some actually go so far as to say, and science has disproved creation and the creation account.

You would be amazed how many people believe that just because they heard someone who has a PhD from Harvard say it.

It is amazing how many people believe that just because they heard someone who has a PhD from Harvard say it.

[5 : 50] And the principle thing that has scared me from the beginning about this pulpit. I'll repeat it, even though you know it as well as I, and I've said it many times, but so say I now again.

There are two legitimate fears that every preacher should have. One of them is that people will not believe what he says. And the other is people will believe what he says.

And both of those are extremely serious. I cannot tell you how I tremble sometimes to come into this pulpit knowing that I'm going to be held accountable for what I say because there are going to be some people who believe it, and then they will go out of here and act on it.

And what if you told them wrong, Marv? This is why I think James says, my brethren, be not many teachers.

Be not many of you teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment. And that's something that I take very, very seriously. That's why over the decades that I've been with you, I have been forced on two or three different occasions to retract some things that I taught you earlier that I later discovered were not true.

[7 : 09] And I wanted to correct them. So that's the way it is when you come to a pulpit, and that's the way it is when you sit there in the pew or in the chair and you listen to what is said.

You've got, you've got to be a Berean. You've got to check out the scriptures and see whether the things that come from this pulpit are so. And we all need to be held accountable.

So, keeping that in mind, you've got either the evolutionary model, which simply says, by way of consequence, that there is no one who caused, no one and nothing caused everything.

And if you can buy that, my estimation is it takes a lot more faith to believe that than it simply does to believe that someone was in the beginning. He was responsible for the creation of everything, because by him all things were made and came into being.

That's the creation model. And only in the creation model do you have intentionality, purpose, value, dignity, and destiny.

[8 : 16] In the evolutionary model, we are all here as a fluke. We are all a cosmic accident. We were never planned nor intended.

There is no purpose. There is no meaning. And there is no destiny. That's what you are confined to if you buy the evolutionary model. But you would be surprised how many people are willing to do it.

And by the way, this kind of thinking also automatically subscribes to moral relativism, which allows everyone to make their own rules, set their own standards, and each person becomes their own personal North Star, because there is no overarching authority that has a position on everything for everybody, because the authority doesn't exist.

This is how and why people reach some of the conclusions that they do. This is why people can justify stealing, especially when they are convinced that actually it's for the benefit and the welfare of the nation if we can rig an election so that our guy wins, and it will be better for everybody, and they'll thank us in the end.

And you can actually buy that. There are people who do that. There are people who believe that, who think that way. And I put them in one of two categories. First of all, there are just the out-and-out atheists, people who really believe there is no God, so everybody is their own God.

[9 : 45] And then there are those that I call practical atheists. Oh, they would go so far as to say, there may very well be a God. I'm not saying there isn't. There may very well be a God, but it doesn't make any difference.

They are the practical atheists. And we've got a lot of these people, one kind or the other, in important decision-making capacities right now.

A generation or two ago, there were a lot fewer of them. But thanks to academia and thanks to other elements coming out of Hollywood and other places, their number has grown.

And we find ourselves as believers that there is a God and that he is ultimately going to hold everyone accountable. That is becoming less and less in vogue.

And with that, you get the policies and the attitudes and the actions that we have today in our local and state and federal governments, in the positions that are made and the laws that are passed and the verdicts that are rendered.

[10 : 58] So, it is a cause and effect thing, and you can see how this works. All right, let's go to Revelation chapter 4 because we're looking at the creation model. And we're going to begin at the ending.

Seen in heaven. John the Revelator writes, After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me said, Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.

Immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and one sitting on the throne. And he who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance.

And there was a rainbow around the throne and an emerald in appearance. And around the throne were 24 thrones, and upon the thrones I saw 24 elders sitting, clothed in white garments and golden crowns on their heads.

I have no idea who these people are. All I know is they are not angelic beings. They are humans. And the text will indicate later that they are recipients of redemption, which would, of course, require them to be human beings, because only human beings have the benefit of redemption.

[12 : 28] Angelic beings do not. So I have no idea really who they are. And the commentaries and the experts, if you will, give us all kinds of answers, but there isn't anything we can be concrete about.

But it's a fascinating scene to contemplate anyway. From the throne proceed flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.

And before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass like crystal. And in the center and around the throne four living creatures, obviously I would say not human but still created beings of some order, full of eyes in front and behind.

And the first creature was like a lion. Remember, it doesn't say it was a lion. It says like a lion, lion-like. Second creature, like a calf.

The third creature, like a face of that of a man. And the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within, and day and night they do not cease to say, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.

[13 : 57] And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne, to him who lives forever and ever, the 24 elders will fall down before him who sits on the throne and will worship him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne saying, Worthy art thou our Lord and our God to receive glory and honor and power.

For or because thou didst create all things, and because of thy will, they existed and were created.

I do not know of any other verse of scripture in all of the Bible that so clearly states why there is something rather than nothing. And this is just a simple expression of it, very straightforward.

And it tells us that there is something rather than nothing and everything that we see today is simply the result of God's good pleasure. That's all you can say. It pleased God.

He deemed it wise in his eyes to bring all these things into existence. Now this, of course, brings up all kinds of issues like if God knows from the beginning to the end what's going to happen, if he knew that Adam was going to fall, he knew that all of this death and disease and misery was going to come upon the world, why in the world did he bother to create?

[15 : 33] Why did he do that? And I pointed out to you before, the only alternative God had was to create everyone apart from a volition so that they would all automatically obey the will of the creator.

There would be no conflict. There would be no rebellion. There would be no anything because people would be pre-programmed to always do the right thing and never cross the creator. That was his other option.

God chose to make us volitional beings. He chose to create angels with volitional powers as well. That is the ability to exercise their will, to obey or to disobey.

Now, we may foolishly question the Almighty for having done that, but all I can suggest is that God knew full well everything that was going to transpire.

He knew full well that there was going to be an angelic rebellion. He knew full well that he would succeed. Satan would succeed in recruiting Eve, deceive her, recruit Adam, and the whole of humanity would be dropped into what we are in now that is called a state of fallenness.

[16 : 48] And it is the epidemic of sin that is systemic to our being, and sin is that which is anything contrary to the will of God.

And our world is reeking in sin. And we are all recipients of a sinful nature that allows us to do the kind of evil, wicked things that we see taking place in our world today.

God knew all of that well in advance, and he still chose to create people with volitions. And we still wonder why.

We can only offer this. Life and living has something to offer. Life is good.

Life is valuable. Of course it has its pitfalls. Of course it finds human beings decimated sometimes with all kinds of injustice and everything that goes with it.

[17 : 56] And despite all of that, God knew full well that a remedy would be provided, and that's where the idea of redemption comes in.

In chapter 4, we have the concept of creation. In verse 11, it says, Because thou didst create all things. And then following hard on the heels of that, in chapter 5, I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals.

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals? And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it.

And I began to weep greatly, because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, Stop weeping.

Behold, the lion, that is from the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.

[19 : 13] In other words, his having overcome gives him the right to open the book. And his having overcome is the price that he paid on Calvary when he said, It is finished.

It was then that Jesus Christ paid the price for the title deed of planet earth. Verse 6 said, And I saw between the throne with the four living creatures and the elders, a lamb standing as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Now, I dare not stop here because that'll be the end of the message if I do. But we've treated this before in our series on the Revelation when we went through it a couple of different times, verse by verse.

So we'll resist the temptation and keep moving. And verse 7 says, And he came, that is, this lamb, none other than Jesus Christ, and he took it out of the hand of him who sat on the throne.

And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures, who also are unidentified, and the 24 elders from the previous chapter, fell down before the lamb, having each one a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

[20 : 47] And they sang a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book. And by the way, let me just inject something here, if I may.

they sang a new song. What was the old song? Think about that. They sang a new song.

Worthy art thou to take the book and to break its seals for, and here again is that word because, what made him worthy is because, thou wast slain and didst purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

So this is redemption and that thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God and they will reign upon the earth.

And I looked and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders and the number of them was myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing and every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea and all things in them I heard saying to him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.

[22 : 37] And the four living creatures kept saying Amen and the elders fell down and worshiped and these four living creatures are the lion-like calf and the man and the eagle from the earlier passage.

So this is the ending and if you will turn back to Genesis chapter 1 we're going to look at something of real significance because this book is put together in such a way that there is a theme there is a redemption story there is the paradise that is created the paradise that is lost and the paradise that is regained and we have been seeing that.

So I'm going to read if I may well I'm not going to read the whole text I'm just going to point out certain things that I think are really significant and perhaps it will give you a perspective a little different from what it was previously.

I want you to look at let's just read the first three verses in the beginning God created and I've explained I think adequately in times past this is Elohim this is the plurality of beings this is a compound unity it is not a simple unity whereby there are three in one and one in three and this simply indicates that the being and character and nature of God is Trinitarian that there is Father, Son and Holy Spirit but there are not three gods there is but one God there is no human solution to that there is no human explanation to that the best I can tell you is that the Almighty dwells in a sphere that is completely unlike that of humanity so please don't try to use your ordinary arithmetic in figuring out the Trinity because it simply will not work.

my suggestion is that you think of the deity as the otherness because that's what he is and let me put it this way there isn't any way that you and I could begin to understand the nature and character of God because there is no way that deity could simplify it adequately put it into words so that we humans would be able to grasp it.

[24 : 57] Now the time is coming when we will have a glorified body and we'll be able to grasp a whole lot more than we do now but I suspect that we will never be able to really grasp the Almighty in all his glory and this by the way is something that we talked about earlier when Moses asked God to see his glory recall that back in I think Exodus 33 somewhere in that area show me your glory and the Lord said can't do that Moses because there is no human being who could see my glory and survive and he said however I will put you in the cleft of the rock and I will pass by and you can see my hinder parts but no one could look on my face and live and my suggestion is and I don't know that this is true

I think it's maybe just a wise opinion so be advised when we have a glorified body radically different from the body we now possess we may have that ability to see God in his glory because then we will have the kind of substance that might be able to withstand that which these mortal bodies that we now have could not and neither could Moses so no one has looked upon God at any time in the full essence of his glory closest anybody ever came was the mount of transfiguration when our Lord just pulled back the veil of his humanity just a little bit and they were able to see his glory and it is described in all of the gospel accounts so I want to point out something here in the Genesis account the beginning God created the heavens and the earth the earth was formless void darkness over the face surface of the deep spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters and in verse 3 and God said let there be light get that let there be light in other words it was nothing but the spoken word of God that brought light into existence all it is saying is that God willed for there to be light and he spoke it into existence actually he probably didn't even need to speak it into existence but for our benefit it explains how it got here he commanded and stood fast he said let there be light and there was light and then in verse 6 and God said let there be an expanse and in verse 9 let the waters below the heavens be gathered and it was so and in verse 11 let the earth sprout vegetation none of these things are hands on they're just verbal they're just spoken and they come into existence and they come into existence out of nothing where there was nothing all at once these things that are spoken into existence by this almighty comes into being a concept of course that is completely foreign to us in every regard because we simply cannot contemplate this in verse 9 let the waters below the heavens be gathered and it was so and in verse 11 let the earth sprout vegetation and it was so and in verse 14 let there be lights in the expanse of the day and it was so and in verse 20 let the waters team with swarms of living creatures and in verse 22 let birds multiply on the earth and verse 24 let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind and then in verse 26 let us make you get that that's different isn't it he doesn't simply say let there be man and all of a sudden man just pops in out of nowhere just like the vegetation and everything else no let us make and the

plurality of this noun that is used is correct it is let us and it will not suffice to say well he's talking about angels this is the pluralis magistatus the latins try to tell us it is it is a plural of majesty whereby whereby well as to quote the queen of england with some statements that she made in the past and someone asked her about what did she think about it and she said we were not amused and she used what is known as a monarchial we or the monarchial plural or the plural of majesty whereas she was talking about herself personally but she used the plural pronoun we and some suggest that this is the explanation here when god says let us create man but i think that the rest of scripture just gives the lie to that because too many places and too many times in both the old and new testament the beings of the trinity are described as deity each of them and yet the scriptures also just as strongly assert that there is a oneness to god not three gods but a oneness to god subsisting in three persons so let us make man in our image according to our likeness and that's different and if you come over to chapter 2 in verse 7 and the lord god formed man man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being there is no denying that this is a hands-on proposition that is accomplished by the creating being none other than god himself and we also realize that christ is referred to as the creator we looked at that in our previous study where he is described as the word of god and we're told that the word became flesh and that all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made and there it is talking about the son and colossians informs us that he is before all things and by him all things consist or all things held together and we find numerous places throughout scripture that the spirit of god is referred to as well as deity so we have three persons who subsist in one god and they are co-equal and co-eternal and when we use the designation father son and holy spirit we are using the terms father and son and the scriptures use the terms father and son in a way that communicates to us otherwise we'd never be able to grasp it now what is this connection between father and son suffice it to say it has nothing to do with the kind of connections that we have between fathers and sons and yet that is the one that most of us make because it's the only one we can identify with and yet with god he is as i've said the otherness the father never had any cohabiting relationships with another being that produced the son yet those are the only terms that we can think about because we are limited to our sphere of humanity and this is the only way we can see reproduction occurring so our muslim friends bring that kind of they extrapolate that and bring that over to the deity and they say it's impossible that god have a son he's cohabited with another being whoever it might have been and produced a son that's ridiculous and therefore

they throw out the whole concept of the train all we're trying to say is that god dwells in a sphere and he has an essence and a character and a quality about him that simply transcends our ability to comprehend well let me put it this way the distance if that's a word I can use the distance that separates humanity from deity is infinity it is a distance that is greater than that which separates you from the worm does that give you any perspective I'm saying the distinction and the difference that separates us and our humanity from a common worm is less than the distance that separates humanity from deity and we would not have even an inkling of the almighty if it were not for his gracious condescension to stoop and I cannot think of a better word to stoop down to humanity and become clothed in human flesh to become one of us that's what God did to bridge this incredible distance that separates deity from humanity the creature from the creation from the creator here in

Genesis chapter 7 God formed man of the dust of the ground and this is so look at this breathed into his nostrils what did he breathe into his nostrils with his own breath his own breath where did he get his own breath who is this what is this I cannot reach any conclusion other than this is a Christophany this is nothing more nothing less than Jesus Christ appearing in human flesh thousands of years about 4,000 years if you will 4,000 years before he will be enfleshed in the womb of Mary when

[37 : 06] God created how did he decide how did he decide what to make humans like we don't know much about angels except angels are spirit beings which is just so mind blowing we cannot angels angels have an essence that is not physical but it's really extraordinary because they also obviously possess the ability to assume a physical form now I know this really sounds otherworldly well I guess it does sound otherworldly it is otherworldly they have an ability to assume a human form so that you would not know them from what we would call an ordinary human Hebrews talks about some who entertained angels unawares and you know Abraham did that

Abraham and his wife Sarah they entertained these three men this is in Genesis I think 18 19 we won't go there for time's sake but Abraham was sitting there in the opening of his tent one day and lo and behold here come three strangers walking toward him and it says three men and Abraham didn't know them they were complete strangers to him but they were three human beings and apparently they were attired wearing the same kind of garments that everybody else was and Abraham rises up to welcome them and has no idea no idea at all that two of these beings are angels and one of them is the Lord himself now where did he get that body this is what I call a

Christophany and most of the commentaries call it a theophany which simply means an appearance of God but a Christophany makes it an appearance of Christ well actually he was both but Abraham and Sarah entertained them and they're given the message that Sarah is going to have a child this is when the laughing occurs and so on and two of those angels two of those angels are there on assignment and when they leave Abraham they are going to Sodom and Gomorrah and they're going to destroy their cities they have every appearance as men in fact when they get to the town of Sodom and the town Sodom gets its name of course from the sexual perversion Sodomy and years ago gay people were called

Sodomites today that would be probably considered unacceptable but that's a biblical name for them it's Sodomites and they wanted they wanted to sexually interact with those two men because they were strangers can you imagine that strange flesh appealed to them because of their perverted thinking and this is one of the reasons that they had come to destroy those cities and they ended up destroying them and the only survivors were Lot and his two daughters but these three beings there in Genesis 18-19 are supernatural beings one of them is Christ himself 4,000 years before Bethlehem and the same one is going to appear to Joshua as the captain of the host of the Lord so we've got a thickening plot here when God created the first people

Adam and Eve how did he decide what to make them like why didn't he give them three arms and legs instead of two arms and legs and why didn't he give them five eyes instead of two and why didn't they put a couple in the back of their heads and why are we the way we are and when God created Adam that first one how did he decide what did he use as a pattern may I be so bold as to suggest this he used himself he used himself we see various descriptions of angelic beings some having multiple eyes and and multiple arms and so on and and they're completely different from humans and we we see humanity with one head and two eyes and two ears and two legs and two arms we see that as normal but normal according to what it's only normal according to humanity and all I'm suggesting is that when God decided that he was going to create he had this pattern of himself that he used if you will as a kind of standard and when the text tells us in

[42 : 40] Genesis chapter three that that God walked with Adam in the cool of the day what do you think he walked with I think he walked with two legs I think he appeared to Adam as a fellow human being there wasn't anything human about him he was supernatural but he was in a body much the same way he's going to be in a body 4,000 years later and I can't say that all I can say is that there are similarities and when he breathed into Adam he infused into him that essence that characteristic that quality that made him come to life and it was an immaterial quality it's what the scriptures call the spirit spirit we all have one but nobody's ever seen one because spirit is immaterial spirit has no visible characteristics to it you cannot measure it you cannot weigh it you cannot say oh there it is when someone dies the spirit exits the body but nobody's ever seen it leave when Jesus died on the cross among his seven last words were father into thy hands

I commit my spirit and he bowed his head and he gave up the spirit and the translation in some renderings is he gave up the ghost that's synonym that we use for the spirit because ghostly like has no physicality to it so Adam becomes a spirit being and a physical being all wrapped up into one and in the image the image of God is in his body let us make man in our image let us make man physically so he looks like us and that was that physical body used as a model or as a standard so Adam is both made and created he is made physically from the dust of the earth put together from the dust of the earth and I get my

Hebrew words mixed up I don't know which there one is bara and the other is yatsar one is create and one is make so Adam was both made that is physically with hands on fashioned if you will from the dust of the earth and by the way I know most have great difficulty and they say well you can't take that literally I don't know how else to take it how else do you fashion something with your hands if you don't do it literally how do you do that figuratively how do you do that spiritually some people just don't want the Bible to be as physical as it is because they somehow think that the physical is demeaning and there's nothing demeaning about it because it's that which God created so when God created Adam he created him in his image physically so that he looked like him had one head two arms two legs etc that's the image but it also says that he created him in his image and likeness that's different and I know most commentators tell us that that is what's the word they use for

I can't think of it perhaps it'll come to me a tautology t-a-u-t-o-l-o-g-y a tautology where you use two different words but it means the same thing image and likeness image and likeness are identical and all I'm suggesting is that they are not image is one thing likeness is another image has to do with the physicality the likeness has to do with the internal essence that about us which is like God is that we have a spirit we have an immaterial part of our being that connects with his spirit like Paul tells us when he writes to the Romans that that our spirit bears witness with his spirit that we are the children of

God and it is this immaterial essence that every human being has and the point that I always like to make about this because it kind of rankles the atheists since they insist that they don't have one that there is no such thing as spirituality it's all physical and if it isn't physical it has no objective reality even an atheist has a human spirit it is part of what makes you a human being there is no such thing as a human being without a human spirit because we are made we are comprised of body which is our physicality and spirit which is our immateriality and the body and the spirit together comprise the soul and as I've told you in time past this means we do not have a soul we are a soul the wholeness of you as a unit is your soul and at death the unit is broken up and the body goes one way and the spirit goes another way that spirit part of your being is the only part of you that is regenerated when you came to faith in

[49 : 22] Christ that's the part in you that was born again that's what was made new in Christ that spirit and when you die physically your spirit leaves your body goes to be with the Lord just as Jesus did from the cross and this is why James says the body without the spirit is dead so when they are brought back together again in a renewed life with a resurrected body and a glorified body then we will be in total once again body soul and spirit so all of this points to just one thing in so far as creation and redemption is concerned the passage in revelation 4 and in 5 and the redemption had to do with Christ's use of his body that body that became flesh that dwelt among us whose glory men beheld that same body went to the cross and allowed human beings to put that body to death but it was not just a body it was the body and in his death he balanced the scales of the universe because his moral perfection was of such a quality and character that it was capable of canceling out all of the ugliness of the sin of humanity so that

God was in Christ reconciling the world everybody to himself most incredible concept we could ever contemplate what we are discussing now is the most significant event that has ever taken place in all of the universe and all of history and it will never be taught that he who knew no sin was made to be sin for us so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him this is this is the message this is everything this isn't most of it this is all of it this is everything if you don't have this you have nothing as I've often said it makes no difference what you're right about if you're wrong about

Jesus Christ who he is why he came what he did and why it matters if you're wrong about that doesn't matter what you're right about this is the dividing issue for all humanity for all the world for all times this is it this is why that song is sung in revelation four ascribing glory and worthiness and honor majesty for his having created all things and for your pleasure and by your pleasure they were created and then in chapter five the same is ascribed to him because thou hast redeemed us and purchased for us with your own blood a righteous standing with God this is called what else could it be called this is called the good news this is the gospel this is the good news well if it's such good news why isn't it more widely believed

I want you to think about that why isn't it eagerly embraced wherever it is heard why isn't it spoken of more frequently why are we who have knowledge of this so reluctant or so timid in declaring it is it because it sounds too fanciful sounds too unbelievable is that it is it because we somehow fear that what appears to be fanciful may be connected to us and our reputation and somehow people may think less of us you believe what but what's your alternative what's your alternative what have you to put your faith and trust in that exceeds that what is your good news do you have any good news apart from this good news and what would it be what do you have to offer like dr.

john lennox says why should christians be thought narrow or bigoted for having received from jesus christ something that no one else even offers it's quite a statement why are we so timid in offering this we're afraid that people won't believe it but that's not really our problem and let me ask you did you believe it the first time you heard it i didn't perhaps most don't it takes some repeated tellings people have to think about it we have to sow the seed we have to give them something to think about and we have to also ask them i would be happy to hear what your answer to life and living and death is have you something better to offer i'm all ears what would it be i fear that we have been intimidated to silence because we are afraid of what people will think we don't care what god thinks of us we just care about what people think of us isn't that sad and when i point my finger to you and pointing three back to me we have the most incredible life-giving life-changing information that the world has ever heard and we are so reticent and reluctant to communicate it why is that are we ashamed of it paul said i am not ashamed i am not ashamed of the gospel i'm not embarrassed by the gospel of jesus christ for because it is the power of god through faith unto salvation to everyone who believes how can we be ashamed of that and what is it pray tell me that silences us we just don't hear this gospel being spoken of very much we just don't hear of people coming to faith very much not like they used to when i was a younger man it was a rather common thing people were common sharing the gospel rejoicing over new converts people were being added to the church and so on don't see much of that anymore have you noticed i sure have and i think in so many so many respects we've gone silent we've kind of we we somehow think that this message of ours does not compute with the latest scientific thinking and we've been sold a bill of goods and you know people tend to believe things that they hear that comes from people who are reputed to be authorities in anything i don't care what it is whether it's science or technology or whatever we we we tend to be overly impressed by people who know more than we do and you know who makes hay with this the media good grief the media how many people log on to the media and if you heard it there you heard it take it to the bank how many bum steers have we gotten from the media think about that and what we're talking about with

[58 : 41] this gospel this redemption this creation thing this is all information that's all it's about it's all it's about it's just information and what you get on the media is information and some of it is true and some of it is a flat out lie and i've made a distinction i want you to get this there's a very careful distinction to be made between misleading people and lying to people it's easy to mislead people when you tell them something that is not true but you think it is true that's misleading that can be forgiven especially once you find out you were wrong and you retract it that's we're all capable of that i shudder to think how many times i have misled my congregation over the last 50 years by things that i said that i thought were true but they later turned out to not be true at all and not only is it embarrassing but it's humbling and it just reminds us that we've got feet of clay but like i said that's forgivable especially if it's admitted and apologized but when you just flat out lie to people and you know what you are saying is not true at all but you say it for the benefit of getting people to believe you say it for public consumption there is so much of this going on in Washington

D.C. right now flat out lying and they know they are lying as they say it but that doesn't matter all that matters is will it help satisfy your base will it communicate to those you want to impact doesn't have anything to do with whether it's true is it usable can you get some mileage out of it honesty it's not worth a dime integrity doesn't count it's just for fools this is where we are in our culture in our institutions not just Washington but in our universities in academia in general it's just amazing the truth just doesn't matter that much we make up our own truth and here in the midst of all of this we have got not only a truth we've got the truth and it is the only truth that matters it's the only truth that gives guidance and direction it's the only truth that comes with built in eternal life it's the only truth that ultimately really matters and we give it a short stick

I'm amazed I'm ashamed of us and I'm ashamed of me for being all too silent all too timid when you realize how bold how bold some of these people are in the positions they take when they know they are lying through their teeth and they do it with boldness and conviction conviction of a lie and the object is to get people lined up behind it so they will support it so they will do what you want them to do and they don't have a shred of truth to it and we just stand by and shake their hands shake shake our heads and say I don't know how they could do that but where's the pushback where's the pushback it's pretty thin pretty thin and the most amazing thing is we've got the truth and the only truth that really matters and we're holding it and not letting it go

Spurgeon said giving out the gospel is just kind of like letting the lion out of the cage you don't have to defend him just let him go we need a whole lot more of letting go of the gospel oh it's going to get all kinds of negative response you're going to be called a fanatic you're going to be called a religious nut you're going to be called this and that so who cares who cares or do you care or is that what really matters bottom line is this and I want you to know I'm saying this I'm speaking of me not just you I'm not saying this is your problem I'm saying this is our problem I'm part of the problem bottom line is this we care a whole lot more about what people think than we do about what God thinks that's the bottom line and when you get into

Acts 4 and see the faith of those apostles who said we cannot help but speak of those things which we know which we have seen and heard and if you are going to oppose us so be it you just have to do with us and to us what you have to do but we cannot be silent we've got to speak out I don't know of anything that this sad confused country needs more than a clear straightforward infusion of the gospel of Jesus Christ nothing needed more and it's the only panacea it's not passing this bill or passing that bill or electing this person or electing that person this is what we need and this is nowhere near that I had planned to go with this message but this is where it's ending up so and I said we weren't going to have a Q&A; but once again

[65 : 29] I lied so we'll have two minutes Joe go yep yep yep thank you the pushback the pushback if you have the moxie to offer it the pushback I can promise you this will come with a price it always has and it always will and there are no exceptions so if you want to be safe and unobserved and unmolested and not have nasty things said about you just dummy up and stay dummied up and keep your mouth shut and don't let anybody know that you know what you know and you'll have it easy you'll have it easy we've got a lot of this going on right now okay

Joe to simplify what you said about the parts of the Bible it says nobody has seen God it says that in other places we know that we have seen God Jacob saw God Abraham saw God now how do you this contradiction you've got to do something about it now it's a contradiction so how can you believe the rest of the Bible if you've got this contradiction well when it says you haven't seen God it means what you did last week we haven't seen God in the form of the Trinity the Godhead the Holy Ghost God the Father and Jesus we have not seen God like that what we saw was when Jesus came out of that Godhead and became a human being became a Christophane if you said we have seen God that way that explains that contradiction okay here's one that you haven't explained and I want you to explain it you just said the soul was a combination of the body and the spirit okay but there is one verse and I can't you know where it's at probably where it says there is a there's a

God the Father the God the Spirit the Spirit soul and body it's one verse it lists them all three in other words it makes it look like they're all three separate but you made the soul a combination explain that well we're out of time Joe well I appreciate your question I think you're probably talking about 1 John 3 I think it's maybe verse 7 if it hasn't moved there's the Father the Son the Spirit these three bear witness these three are one yeah the only the only suggestion that I can offer is well it's what it's what I've been saying it's what I've said earlier the deity exists and operates and functions in a sphere and in a mode that is simply foreign to us in our humanity we are unable to grasp it any more than you and I are unable to grasp what a lower animal life form thinks about this or that or does or something all I'm saying is there is there is a difference a distinction that is impenetrable between humanity and deity and we just can't go there it's as simple as that we just can't go there so why do you believe this well it's that thing called faith and as I've often said

I believe everything in the Bible even the things that I don't understand and the reason I believe the things that I don't understand is because of the things I do understand that gives me confidence in real life and would we really want a God whose being the depths of whose being we could plumb would he be any greater than we are we just somehow we just somehow are uncomfortable with being unable to bring God down to our level where we can fully figure him out and with all that all I can say is just who do you think you are the Lord knows our frame he knows the psalmist says he knows that we are but dust and why do we have this demand that we must be able to understand him fully thoroughly the Trinity

Father Son all of that business because if he can't explain it to me so that I can buy it I'm not going to believe it is that our position or are we fully freely willing to admit there is this gray gap that separates humanity from deity and Jesus came down to earth to bridge that gap but that doesn't mean he has given us a capacity to appreciate and understand and fully explain the deity you're never going to be there except that you're a human being and even when you're a glorified human being that's still all you're going to be and that'll be wonderful but can we let God be God and just be thankful that he is and be satisfied with our humanity especially when he gets finished with the makeover when we have a glorified body wow well I wish I understood it better if I did

[71 : 57] I'd explain it to you but I don't so would you stand please father we recognize once again that we've been into territory that is certainly too deep for us to navigate we know and we are painfully aware of our own weakness our own mortality and we are also wonderfully aware of the fact that you have even addressed that and you have provided for us a life beyond this life that is more incredible exceeds our ability to understand or even imagine and you did it all through your own death and through your own balancing that moral scale we do not in our sinfulness we do not understand how deeply offended holiness absolute must be at angelic and human rebellion and we do not understand the depths of the kind of love that was necessary to correct it but we are so very grateful for it we pray for these people as individuals and as a congregation that we'll have heaven's perspective not our own but heaven's perspective as to what really matters what really counts we look back on those apostles that were so full of questions themselves and yet they knew what they knew and they spoke the word of God and what they knew with boldness simply because of what they knew would not be denied and the only response that could be offered is that they took note of them and the boldness with which they spoke and they knew that they had been with

Jesus what a compliment could it possibly be said of us as individuals as a congregation that when we leave this place and we have this wonderful gospel to share could it be said of us that anybody could tell that we've been with Jesus because of the boldness with which we speak we pray for a stiffening and a strengthening of our backbone and the decreasing of that yellow streak that we all have that runs right up our back we have so much for which to be grateful and thankful and bold about wouldn't it be wonderful to see an infusion of this boldness in this sick and dying society that's so fragmented and so confused is there any way that it could start here oh we would be so honored thank you for this thank you for this glorious truth even though we don't grasp it like we would want to we are grateful for what we do grasp and we thank you in Christ's name amen