

The Glories Of The Lord Jesus Christ

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"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3:16)

Tonight I want to briefly consider the glories of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. [The *pre-incarnate* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
2. [The *incarnation* of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
3. [The *baptism* of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
4. [The *temptation* of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
5. [The *transfiguration* of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
6. [The *crucifixion* of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
7. [The *burial* of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
8. [The *resurrection* from amongst the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)
9. [The *ascension* of our Lord Jesus Christ and His taking the seat in unchallenged supremacy at the right hand of the majesty on high](#)
10. [The *second coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)

1. The Pre-Incarnate Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ

"And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall he come forth unto me who is to be Ruler in Israel: whose goings forth are from of old, from the days of eternity" (Micah 5:2)

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:6)

The child is *born*, but the Son is *given*. In the world to come, to which we are looking forward, in the millennial reign of Christ, the government shall be upon His shoulder (singular); a poor lost sinner is on His shoulders (plural), but the government of the world to come is going to be on His shoulder (singular), "Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end", in the sense that no other dynasty will take over His government. So the world to come is spoken of even before the Lord Jesus Christ's incarnation. There are thousands of believers who do not even know what the world to come is, but mentioned over and over and over in the Scriptures is that glorious age when Christ will come to reign for a thousand years. So even before He came into this scene *He always was*.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:1-3)

Not only did the Son always exist, but He is the Creator of all. When people quote the apostle's creed, "God the Father maker of heaven and earth", they are incorrect, it is God *the Son* who is the maker of heaven and earth. Colossians 1 says, "all things have been created *by him and for him*. And he is before all, and *all things subsist together by him*" (vv.16b-17). The whole universe is held out in space by the word of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ who created the world (Heb.1:1-2). How good that we are dealing with someone who is the creator of the whole universe, none other than our Lord Jesus Christ! So His Sonship predates His incarnation.

Further, this blessed One came into this scene to reveal the Father. Dear friends, God had to be the Father before this, otherwise it would not be a revelation. I know some people think that the Lord Jesus only became the Son when He came into the world, and that may sound very nice as far as human wisdom is concerned, but for the Lord Jesus to reveal God the Father He *always* had to be the Father back in eternity, and the Lord Jesus had *always* to be the Son.

Coming into Manhood, "Thou art my Son" (Heb.1:5) is a timeless phrase, "this day have I begotten thee" is a time phrase. If you take Vine's dictionary or a Greek interlinear and do a Greek exegesis of the passage you will find this for yourself. So how wonderful that we are dealing with One who's goings forth was from all eternity and He came into Manhood (Heb.10). That is the incarnation.

2. The Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ

"Wherefore coming into the world he says, Sacrifice and offering thou willedst not; but thou hast prepared me a body. Thou tookest no pleasure in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin. Then I said, Lo, I come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do, O God, thy will. Above, saying Sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou willedst not, neither tookest pleasure in (which are offered according to the law); then he said, Lo, I come to do thy will. He takes away the first that he may establish the second" (Hebrews 10:5-9)

The incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ was for the purpose of doing the will of God. Someone may say, "Well, the Lord Jesus came into this scene to die for me", well He did, but that is secondary, primarily He came into this scene in Manhood to glorify His God and Father and to do His will. He could say, like that Hebrew servant in type (Deut.15:16-17), "I love my master" - Christ loves God the Father, "I love my wife" - He loves the church, "I love my children" - He loves us as individual believers and so He says "I will not go out free". The servant is taken to the door post his ear is bored through with an awl, the Lord Jesus was taken to Calvary's cross, He was bored through on that cross, He is a Man forever. He came into this scene for the express purpose of doing the will of God.

Another reason He came down here was to reveal the Father, to reveal the Father's heart, the Father's love, the Father's councils, and the Father's house (John 14:2). Is it not wonderful that

Christ came down here for that express purpose, to open up this truth concerning *His* God and Father who is now *our* God and Father through faith and trust in Himself?

Not only did He come to *reveal* the Father, He came to *declare* the Father. In John 17:26 He said, "I *have* declared thy name" and He certainly did, He declared the Father's name to His disciples and to us too, and He goes on "and *will* declare it", that was the burden of His heart when He rose from the dead, "go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (20:17). So He came down here to reveal and declare the Father.

He came also to bear witness to the truth. He could say in John 14:6, "I am the way", the way to the Father. "..... the truth", the truth of the Father, and "..... and the life", He *is* the life. "No one cometh unto heaven.....", is that what the verse says? No. It says, "No man cometh unto *the* Father, but by me". He even said before Pilate that He was bearing witness to the truth (John 18:37).

Further, He became incarnate to put away sin (I do not say not sins, but sin) by the sacrifice of Himself, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). He has removed from God's holy sight all that is offensive to God the Father in those who believe in Him by bearing their sins in His own body on the tree (1 Pet.2:24). Now God can come out in blessing to His creatures. He has taken away that which has offended God.

1 Timothy 3:16 says, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness". I remember once a man said to me, "I do not understand it", and I replied, "I don't understand it either!" We do not have to *understand* or *comprehend* it, but we can *apprehend* it, we can lay hold of it by faith and go on our way rejoicing and get the benefit from it. We do not have to figure it out, it is a mystery of piety beyond human comprehension, but the simplest child can lay hold of it by faith and get the benefit of it by trusting Christ as their personal Saviour. He was "God manifest *in* flesh"; there is no "the" in the Greek New Testament (i.e. it is *not* "God manifest in the flesh", but "God manifest in flesh"), there was no flesh *in* the Lord Jesus, He *became* flesh and blood. He came in Manhood, of course, but there was nothing in Him that answered to what we know as "the flesh" (e.g. Gal.5:16, 2 Pet.2:10), "God was manifest in flesh".

Yet another reason He came down here was to call sinners to repentance. It was said of Him, "this man eats with sinners" (Matt.9:11, Mark 2:16, Luke 15:2), He dined with them. He received them. Is there a sinner here tonight without Christ? If you *are* here tonight without Christ then, on the authority of God's word, "this Man receiveth sinners", and *to you* He says "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). So if there is perchance one here, in such an audience as this, as I do not know everyone present, if there is one here without Christ He will receive you. "Come" is all He asks of you. He did all the work, there is nothing for you to do, there on Calvary's cross He died for everyone and all He asks you to do is "C-O-M-E:

C = Children

O = Old people

M = Middle aged people

E = Everyone.

He calls *all* to come to Him. "This man receiveth sinners". Is that not wonderful? He died for sinners, He loves sinners. Are you a saved sinner tonight? If not, why not come to the Lord Jesus Christ for He will certainly receive you.

Another reason why He became incarnate was to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). In His earthly ministry He bound the strong man and spoiled His goods (Matt.12:29, Mark 3:27, Luke 11:21-22). Every dealing with Satan would take too long to go into, but on the cross of Calvary, when He died, He defeated Satan. Satan is a defeated foe by the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are many other reasons for the incarnation of our Lord Jesus. One last reason before we pass to our next point, was to bring many sons to glory (Heb.2:10). It is not *sinners* to glory, although that is all we were, but we are not going to be there as sinners, we are going to be there in heaven as sons of God. I do not break bread on Lord's day as a sinner, not even as a sinner saved by grace, although that is all I am, but I am there as one of His brethren (John 20:17) in the dignity of sonship. He is bringing many sons to glory. I trust everyone in this room tonight is going to glory. If you are not you definitely can, there is an invitation for you to come to Him and to go to glory to be with the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptised of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:13-17)

Psalm 119:63, "I am the companion of all that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" has been fulfilled. The Lord Jesus was here identifying Himself with the believing remnant of Israel. The Lord Jesus did not have to be baptised as He was not a sinner, but how gracious of Him to identify Himself with those who were taking their place in John's baptism. The emphasis in Matthew 3:15 is "becometh", "for thus it *becometh* us to fulfil all righteousness". It was 'just like Jesus', that is what that means, it was becoming for Him to do that. He did not *have* to do it, but in grace He identified Himself with those who were taking their place in baptism with John the Baptist on the banks of Jordan; it was just like Jesus, it was becoming of Him.

When the Lord Jesus was baptised the heavens opened, they could not contain themselves, they had waited thirty years for this moment, God the Father waited thirty years, God the Holy Spirit waited thirty years, the Lord Jesus waited thirty years, and now the heavens could not be contained. "Oh, that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down" (Isa.64:1)!

The heavens were rent and the blessed Spirit of God came down upon the Son in the form of a dove and there was a voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". This was ever true of Him, it was not just at His baptism, His whole life down here as well as His relationship with His Father in eternity. How wonderful was the baptism of our Lord Jesus! When Joseph was in Egypt, it was said of him, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" (Gen.41:38). Joseph was beyond compare. Our Joseph is our Lord Jesus Christ, He is beyond compare, He is "the chiefest (or "standard bearer") among ten thousand" (Song of Solomon 5:10), He is the One who is "altogether lovely" (S. of Sol.5:16), He is One Whom the Spirit of God came upon at the waters of Jordan as He came up being baptised of John. How wonderful, coming out in public service, public testimony how wonderful that we can stand back and admire and enjoy Him and that our hearts might be captivated by Him. How wonderful that was, the baptism of our Lord Jesus.

One last point, when He was baptised, dear beloved friends, He was saying in essence that He would go into death. That is why we sing in our hymn book: "Baptised in death's dark waters". He went into death.

"LORD Jesus, we remember
The travail of Thy soul,
When, through Thy love's deep pity,
The waves did o'er Thee roll;
Baptised in death's dark waters,
For us Thy blood was shed;
For us Thou, Lord of glory,
Wast numbered with the dead."

He was baptised in death's dark waters on Calvary's cross. So this baptism is just a picture of this. Scripture says in 1 Timothy 3:16, He was "justified by the Spirit". Is that not wonderful? Everything the Lord Jesus did was justified, every act, every word, every deed, every miracle. Initial justification came upon Him at the baptism of John but everything He did the Spirit of God put His approval on.

4. The Temptation of our Lord Jesus Christ

"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his

***angels charge over thee, to keep thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season."* (Luke 4:1-13)**

We will just have to consider these briefly. The Lord Jesus possessed a human soul, He was troubled (Mark 14:34), He had a human spirit, He was troubled "in spirit" (John 11:33, 13:21), He was weary and yet could call the weary to rest (John 4:6, Matt.11:28), He was thirsty (John 4:7) and hungry (Matt.4:2, Mark 11:12), but yet He was a perfect Man, a body was prepared for Him by the Spirit of God to come into Manhood to do the will of God (Heb.10:5).

Someone might be thinking "Why did the Lord Jesus have to be tempted or tested?" It was so that we might see the moral perfections coming out in our Saviour, the Lord Jesus. The temptations in Matthew's Gospel are different from the ones in Luke's Gospel, you can study them at your leisure. The account in Matthew's Gospel is the historical account, but the temptations in Luke's Gospel are given for you and for me, for our moral benefit that we might be tested also.

Firstly, the Devil wanted Him to change the stones into bread. The Lord Jesus could say, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned" (Isa.50:4), and He could say, "Great is thy faithfulness" (Lam.3:23). I wonder about us, do we have these experiences morning by morning, do we listen to what God has to say to us through His word? "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt.4:4). The Lord Jesus received fresh communication every morning. Do we receive fresh communication every morning? Well we can. Not something that has not been revealed, but something that is in the Bible, the word of God, this is how we receive these wonderful communications.

Concerning the second temptation recorded for us, is not the contrast of verse 6, power and glory, and verse 8, worship and divine service, wonderful? What a contrast! I wonder about us, are we looking for some spectacular thing, or do we quietly serve our Lord despite our fewness and our difficulties? We should desire to be here for our Lord Jesus Christ and His interests.

In his third recorded temptation Satan did not quote all of Psalm 91, only verses 11-12, that is just like him, because the rest of that psalm speaks about the foot stepping on the asp (v.13), and he knows *he* is the asp, and so he does not quote that completely, he always quotes verses for his own interests. But one thing about this, for the Lord Jesus to do what Satan asked would show a lack of confidence in God. The Lord Jesus, in His whole earthly ministry as a dependent Man, was dependent upon His God and Father. He said in Psalm 91:2 "In him will I trust". What about us, do we trust in the Lord with all our hearts? Are we dependent upon our God and Father? Well now that Christ has restored the confidence that was taken away by Satan in the Garden of Eden we can have every dependence, every trust in our God and Father, through and by our Lord Jesus Christ (Ps.69:4c).

So these temptations in Luke's Gospel are not just written for the Lord they are written for our benefit too. To do something spectacular and to try to perform miracles shows a lack of confidence in God, so we see how important these things are that we might be here for Christ and for His interests.

5. The Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." (Matthew 17:1-8)

The transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ is God's answer to His devoted Servant, His beloved Son, it is His pledge that Christ will reign and have universal homage. The transfiguration speaks of the glorious age called the world to come, the millennial reign of Christ upon this earth. Every passage of Scripture in the Old Testament with reference to the future is related to this world to come, and similarly every passage in the New Testament with reference to the future is also related to this world to come (with the exception of references to the eternal state: 1 Cor.15:24-28, Eph.3:21, 2 Pet.3:10-14 and Rev.21:1-8).

Christ will reign for a thousand years and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord to God the Father's glory. Kings, princes, governors and nations will all pay homage to Him in that soon coming day. The transfiguration pictures this. Moses and Elias appearing on that mountain tell us that the law and the prophets all testify of the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ and the glory that is to follow (1 Pet.1:11).

Let me mention one practical point, when they came down the mount of transfiguration they met a lunatic. When you leave the Catford lectures tonight you are descending from the mountain as it were, you are going to have to face the world. These men, Peter, James and John had a mountain top experience with the Lord Jesus there on the mount of transfiguration, but there was something waiting for them once they got down. So everything is not easy for then on because then in the real world you are going to face the issues of life, but is it not wonderful that we have Someone who will see us through, the One who will never leave or forsake us? How good to be linked up with that blessed One, the Man-in-the-glory.

6. The Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ

"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him" (Luke 23:33a)

" My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent..... I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." (Psalm 22:1a, 2, 14-18)

All four Gospels, Psalms 22 and 69 and many other passages of Scripture give us a vivid description of the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was on the cross for six hours. From nine o'clock in the morning until noon are called "the daytime of His sufferings" when mankind did all that they could to the Lord of Glory. Drunkards would stagger by the cross, He was the song of the drunkards (Ps.69:12), there those crucified with Him cast the same in His teeth (Matt.27:44).

He suffered for righteousness' sake during "the daytime of His sufferings". But at twelve o'clock, noon until three o'clock in the afternoon is when He bore your sins and my sins in His own body on that tree, in what is known as "the night-time of His sufferings" when God shut Him in. *He* was forsaken by His God, dear fellow believer, that *we* might not have to be forsaken. *He* was forsaken that *we* might come into blessing. The crucifixion, the death, the sufferings, what a description of the Lord Jesus is given there on the cross of Calvary! The elements could not control themselves, there was darkness on the face of the earth for those three hours (Luke 23:44) when God shut the Lord Jesus in, and an earthquake when He bowed His head in death (Matt.27:54).

The Father never forsook the Son (John 16:42), but God forsook Christ there on that cross of Calvary. I do not believe in wearing crosses because on that cross Jesus was crucified. We want to be occupied with the One who *was* on the cross but *who is no longer there*, the One who has been raised up from the dead. In that work of Calvary there is substitution (Isa.53:5) and I trust everyone here tonight has said, 'He is my substitute, He died for me'. There is the work of propitiation also (Rom.3:25), the satisfying of a holy God, and then there is the work of reconciliation, we have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son (Rom.5:10-11). In short, we cannot do anything, the Lord Jesus has already done it all, He has brought us to God and we can joy in God through the reconciliation.

7. The Burial of our Lord Jesus Christ

"And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And after these things Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly through fear of the Jews, demanded of Pilate that he might take the body of Jesus: and Pilate allowed it. He came therefore and took away the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to

bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand." (John 19:38-42)

Lovers buried the Lord Jesus. Nicodemus who came out in true colours and Joseph of Arimathaea, a rich man, buried Him. He was placed in a tomb to fulfil the Scripture (Isa.53:9). But there was another reason He was placed in a tomb where never man lay. In 2 Kings 13 because of the invading forces of an enemy power some men hastily lowered a man's body into the tomb of the prophet Elisha, and when the dead man touched the bones of Elisha he stood right up on his feet, he was resurrected, he became alive again. So the Lord Jesus could never have been put into a prophet's tomb because the enemy could say, 'Oh yes, we know why your Christ arose from the dead because He was placed in a prophet's tomb'. He was placed in a rich man's tomb wherein never man lay to fulfil Isaiah 53 and because of 2 Kings 13.

Another reason for His burial (and I say this lovingly and kindly, do not get me wrong), is that that which has offended God must be banished out of His sight (c.f. Gen.23:8). There was *nothing* in the Lord Jesus personally that offended God but what He bore on that cross when He was made sin (2 Cor.5:21) must be taken away, taken out of God's sight, banished out of His sight, but, thank God, the third day the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ occurred.

8. The Resurrection from Amongst the Dead of our Lord Jesus Christ

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen." (Matthew 28:5-6)

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

We hear people saying, 'We preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified', but this is *not* the gospel, we see that written on buildings, but it simply means that the first man is set aside, it has nothing to do with the gospel. "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" and "are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor.15:17,19). The gospel says "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God *hath raised him from the dead*, thou shalt be saved." (Rom.10:9). That is what it takes, so do not preach a 'short change' gospel to anybody, make sure you preach the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, raised from amongst the dead.

Not only that, but He is the last Adam, He is the Life-giver coming forth in resurrection, and while we could say much more about this wonderful Man Psalm 21 (over which you could write 'Christ risen') says, "To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David". Now when David was here he was the chief musician; but who is the chief musician today? Why, it is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. In his resurrection He leads the praise, He leads the singing. He is no longer the "man of sorrows", He *was* that, but He is no longer "acquainted with grief" (Isa.53:3), He *was*

that, but now gladness fills His heart, Psalm 21 tells us that, He is the Man of joy. Is it not wonderful to have such a Man on our behalf right in the very presence of God, the Man Christ Jesus, "the firstborn from among the dead" (Col.1:18), "leading captivity captive" (Eph.4:8)? Sin and death and hell and Satan are all vanquished by His finished work, coming forth out of that tomb. We have the evidence of the open tomb.

A child might think, 'Well, the tomb was opened, the angels moved the stone away for the Lord Jesus to get out'. No, He was already gone. It was done for us to see the empty tomb. Christianity is based on this. We have an open tomb and an empty tomb, the Lord Jesus has come out of that as the Head of a new order, the last Adam, heading up a new creation, a new race, if you please (1 Cor.15:45). His resurrection is unique in that He was raised *from among* the dead.

9. The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ and His taking the Seat in Unchallenged Supremacy at the Right Hand of the Majesty on High

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hebrews 1:3)

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." (Hebrews 8:1)

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Hebrews 10:12)

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2)

After being raised from the dead He appeared to His disciples on many occasions, "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered" Scripture says (Zech.13:7), but in His resurrection ministry He gathered all of His own back to Himself, He appeared at eleven different times.

They are called *Christophanies*, the appearances of Christ, always to His own. Each of these occasions had a different meaning for them, look them up at your leisure. Having been seen of His own, He ascended and took His seat at God's right hand. It is wonderful to look up by faith and see Him there.

1 Timothy 3:16 in the Authorised Version says He was "received up *into* glory", but that is not the correct translation, He was "received up *in* glory". What a glorious reception He received when He went back to glory. Is there any wonder Psalm 110 says, "Hallelujah", as do Psalms 111 and 112? All heaven broke forth in praise and adoration when that precious, impeccable Christ who had finished the work of redemption, having been raised from the dead, ascended and took His seat at God's right hand. Is it any wonder we sing:

"Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious;
See "The Man of Sorrows" now!
From the fight returned victorious,
Every knee to Him shall bow.
Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crowns become the Victor's brow!"

Look up by faith and see the Lord Jesus there. My Bible tells me He is crowned with glory and honour and majesty and splendour. Psalm 21 says He has, "a crown of pure gold on his head" (v.3). There are ten types of gold in the Bible, and here He has a crown of pure gold, the royal diadem decks His brow. How wonderful! Is He not worthy? Is He not deserving of it? Oh how wonderful that blessed One coming forth from the victory, and there He is now at God's right hand. He is there *personally* (Heb.1:3), He is there *positionally* (Heb.1:13), He is there *officially* to represent us as the Minister of the sanctuary and lead us in worship to God the Father (Heb.8:2), He is there in perpetuity or redemptively (Heb.10:12) and He is there in all of His moral perfection (Heb.12:2) - He knew no sin (2 Cor.5:21), He did no sin (1 Pet.2:22) and in Him is no sin (1 John 3:5). There He is, that glorious Man at God's right hand in the glory!

10. The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

***"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."* (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18)**

He is in heaven now but He is coming back again soon. He may come before we get to our earthly homes tonight, He is coming again soon. Is that not lovely? The next event in God's calendar is the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is everyone ready for His coming? Well, if you are not saved you will be left behind. But do we who know Him as our Saviour love His appearing, are we longing for His coming, are we watching and waiting for His coming because He is coming soon. Our brother reminded us in His message in Hebrews 10:37, "he that shall come will come, and will not tarry". He is coming again soon, "the Lord Himself is going to descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel....." - not so much the voice of the archangel, but His voice is *like* an archangel - ".....and with the trump of God....." - not just the trump of Christ, the whole of the Godhead is sympathetic to this wonderful event - ".....and the dead in Christ....." - this goes right back to Adam, and it takes in those who have died in this age also - ".....shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them....." - there is going to be a reunion with all of our loved ones who have gone on before:

"Some golden daybreak Jesus will come,
Some golden daybreak battles all won,
He'll shout the victory, break through the blue
Some golden daybreak for me and for you."

How wonderful this is, the Lord is coming again soon, dear brethren. "And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them *in the clouds*" - this does not mean physical clouds, it means clouds of saints, it is a morning without clouds, the word "the" is not there in the Greek. Is that not wonderful? There are going to be clouds, myriads, thousands, millions of saints at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will be caught up in clouds of saints "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord".

Conclusion

"And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." (Matthew 17:8)

"That in all things he might have the preeminence." (Colossians 1:18b)

May our hearts be captivated by the Person of that lovely One, our Lord Jesus Christ and His work. Now that He is risen He has an even more excellent ministry than He had when He was on earth, Hebrews 8 tells us that, so let us take advantage of what we really have in that Man Christ Jesus who is coming again soon.