

God's Ultimate Purpose

By Don Green

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Bible Text: Ephesians 1:9-10
Preached on: Sunday, July 27, 2014

Truth Community Fellowship

Creation Museum
2800 Bullittsburg Church Road
Petersburg, KY 41080

Website: truthcommunitychurch.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm

It seems that there is no exhausting the majesty of the riches of God's word and today will certainly prove to be another example of that. The past few weeks from Ephesians chapter 1 we have studied the glory of our salvation. We have seen through the testimony of God's word that Christians are chosen, adopted and redeemed. The penalty against our sin is canceled and we are reconciled to a holy God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I trust that what you have seen through those times in God's word is that that produces deep within our hearts a profound sense of worship that there is a grateful reaction to that that comes from deep within our hearts. It's not the emotionally manipulated arousal that comes from lights on the stage and loud thumping music, it's something actually according to truth, something that is according to God's word. It is the informed response of a sanctified and thankful mind that says, "I was lost in sin. I was under judgment. My eternal future was at stake and in peril and yet the Lord Jesus Christ has intervened and redeemed me through the power of his blood. My sins are forgiven. I am reconciled to God. There is a glorious future ahead for me. Praise God! Praise God!"

Look at Ephesians 1:3. You see the theme of worship that runs through the opening half of this chapter. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." Blessed be the God and Father, he says. In verse 6 he says, "to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." Verse 12, "to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory." Verse 14, the Holy Spirit "is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory." To the praise of his glory. To the praise of his glory. To the praise of his glory. Worship: to give honor and reverence to God in response to his revelation and his saving work in our lives. The more we know the purpose of God and the character of God, the better we will worship him, the more we will accomplish what we were created to do. To enjoy God and to glorify him forever.

Now, with those thoughts of introduction in mind, look at verses 9-14 which is the passage we'll be studying today and probably for for the next couple of weeks hereafter. What's happening here as we're going to see is that Paul is moving beyond the realm of our personal salvation into a greater realm and that's what we see in verses 9 and 10 which will be our particular focus this morning. Verse 9, God

9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation - having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

As we study this passage in the coming weeks, we are going to just continue to have our sense of God expanded and deepened and it's going to be a magnificent time together. For today, I want you to see something very fundamental as we start: we are so accustomed to making the message of Scripture and our approach to the Bible and to salvation, we're accustomed to making it a self-focused kind of thing in that, what I mean by that is, that we say that God has saved me and this is how it affects me and the praise songs of the modern day focus on how I respond to God and I praise you and we have a way of perverting worship and putting ourselves right at the center of it in the name of saying that we are worshiping God. Well, what I want you to see today is this: God's purpose for the universe extends way beyond you and me. God's ultimate purpose in creation and in the culmination of creation goes so far beyond you and me that we start to realize that we're incidental in the process. God has been wonderfully gracious to us. God has poured out his love and mercy upon us individually by name. We have said that many times from this pulpit and we love and adore him for that. But beloved, what we must see, what we must remember, is that our personal salvation is something that occurs in the context of something much, much greater and bigger than us, that there is far more at stake than your personal salvation.

To be sure, Paul has spoken with eloquence about the nature of our salvation but now in these verses that we're going to look at this morning, he spans, as it were, the range of the camera. He pulls back and he expands the range of the view beyond our salvation to a cosmic design that is completely breathtaking in its scope and we get lost, as it were, in the wonder of what God has in store for the universe. What is the ultimate purpose of God? It is, at the risk of severe understatement, understand that the ultimate purpose of God is a whole lot bigger than me and you. It transcends time. It transcends space. It takes in the totality of the reason that he created the universe and it gathers up everything and everyone that ever has existed and drives it to one culminating climactic point of magnificent glory and that's what we need to see this morning as we come to Scripture. What is the ultimate purpose of God? Beloved, it is no less than this: the entire universe, the entire realm of what is visible; the entire realm of what is invisible; things in the past, things now and things in the future; things that we understand and most things that we don't; things that submit to Christ and things that do not submit to Christ, all of it is going

to be gathered up into one great unit and be submitted to the power and glory of Jesus Christ and all of creation, all of the universe, will recognize and bow down to the glory of Christ and honor him for the greatness of his surpassing glory. It's nothing less than that. Those of us who are redeemed get to be on the winning side of that display of glory but understand that the purpose of the universe is not centered on man. It is centered on Christ and the display of his glory and that is where the universe is going and that's what we're going to see as we look at verses 9 and 10 here as we study together on this Lord's day in the greater Cincinnati region.

There are three things that we are going to build this message around. By way of acknowledgment and perhaps a little bit of further introduction, let's just acknowledge that it's not that way right now. Everything is not, in a sense, submitted to Christ right now because there is rebellion in the demonic realm that has not yet been subdued, there is rebellion in the human realm. We see it on display in the news, in the supermarket displays, every moment that we move and live and have our being. There are in your own heart desires, sinful motions, sinful affections that have not been brought into perfect conformity with the image of the Son of God. External and internal. Visible and invisible. There is a realm of rebellion against Christ that would argue against this great climactic display of his glory ever coming to pass because we can't even comprehend a universe that is like that because the only environment we have ever known is an environment that is in rebellion against its Creator. Well brothers and sisters in Christ, it is not always going to be that way. What we are walking through now in this sin-cursed, sin-filled environment, is a temporary passing phase that is only setting the stage for a greater display of the Almighty conquering power and the perfect display of the glory of Christ. That's what's coming. That's the ultimate purpose of God and, beloved, it will not fail.

Now, I said that there would be three points this morning. Let's take a look to kind of give us a running start into Ephesians chapter 1, I want to take just a moment to give you some Scripture to set in your mind what we'll call in our first point this morning: the disorder of the universe. The disorder of the universe. To appreciate God's ultimate purpose, you must remember how far things have gotten out of hand and it was like that from the beginning of Adam's sin in the Garden. There is rebellion on earth. I want to take you to just a couple of passages. Look at Genesis 6:5, early on in the days of Noah. After God had placed man in a perfect environment, man snubbed the grace that had been shown to him and sinned his way out of it and the consequences quickly in Genesis came to this in Genesis 6:5, "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Turn over to the book of Romans 1 as we accelerate into the modern era, you might say. We're just kind of looking at these passages as bookends, Old and New Testament, very ancient history and now a declaration of the modern situation and you see that there is no difference. Romans 1:28 as we see the disorder of the universe, "And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without

understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them." My Christian friends, step back and see the big picture and realize that this is disorder of incalculable magnitude. Before creation began, there was only God existing and dwelling in the perfect inter-Trinitarian glory and there was the communion between Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the perfection, the unspeakable glory of their being. In perfect righteousness. In perfect love. Immutable character. Here is God over all, self-existent, perfect and needing nothing, content, self-existent. That was perfection at the very top of the circle and now and that's a realm we really can't even enter into. We can just describe it and faintly see it through a heavy mist but now look at the way things are now in light of what we just read. There is a universe, there is this human race that is intent on evil continually, that is full of wickedness, Scripture says, all unrighteousness. And then it manifests itself in various ways: in the greed, in the deceit, in the malice, the murder, the immorality, no understanding, doing everything possible to murder this God who before creation began dwelt in unspeakable perfect glory. Something is horribly wrong for it to be like that. There is rebellion on the earth. From the race that God created to rule over the earth is in rebellion now against him and Scripture says that creation groans under the weight of it.

Look at Romans 8. We're seeing the chaotic disorder of the universe and we're seeing that the breadth and the extent of it is vast. It has existed for millennia like this. In Romans 8:19, we see that the "the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption." The creation is in slavery to corruption now, waiting for, longing for "the freedom of the glory of the children of God." Verse 22, "For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." It's as if the very world is trembling and groaning and heaving under the rebellion of man and there's even rebellion in heavenly places.

Look at Revelation 12. We view this from God's perspective and we say, "This is all so wrong." A perfect, loving, gracious God and looks at creation and finds creation in rebellion against him. Collectively and individually. And in Revelation 12:7 it says, "there was war in heaven." In heaven. You talk about disorder. "Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." There was rebellion in heaven. Satan and a multitude of fallen angels were cast out. They were cast down to earth and so in the realm that we see, there is rebellion, in the realm that we do not see, there is rebellion through Satan and the demons that were cast out of heaven with him. The universe is out of order. The universe is not what it should be. It should not be this way. On what possible basis, on what possible defect in the character and goodness of God is there any justification for his creation to rebel against him? There is none. He is perfect. The defect, the rebellion, the cause of all

of this order rests in creation, not in any defect of the Creator. There is nothing in God that called forth rebellion against him because he had never been and never will be anything but perfect, glory and goodness and greatness on display.

And so, thinking about the circle here with me, it will help you to think of it in a circular way here this morning. So you start at the pinnacle with God and the perfection of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 and Satan falls and brings man down with him and rebellion goes and goes. Then at the very bottom, the very basement, the very gutter for an even better expression of it, in the most heinous display of man's rebellion against God, they crucified Christ and said, "We will not have this man reign over us." They, as it were, took the cross and tried to kill and extinguish God when he was with them on earth and they were there in time. Apart from Christ, beloved, you would have done the same thing. In your sinful condition, your sinful heart, you too would have raised your hand against the Son of God. In fact, that is the very expression of sin, isn't it? "God, I know what you would have. I will not do it. I will do it my way. Get out of the way so that I can do what I want." The shame of that, the evil in that, is inexpressible. There is great disorder in the universe. There should be no strand of rebellion anywhere against this great God of the Bible and yet those are the only strands apart from the redeemed people of God that exist.

Now that's at the bottom of the circle but God. That disordered, rebellious chaos is not going to have the final word no matter how it might look to us right now. Turn back to Ephesians as we come to our second point and we see the disclosure of God's purpose. The disclosure of God's purpose. All of that disorder was simply to set the stage so that we might find the full power of what God has said in his word here in verses 9 and 10. God despite the rebellion of man, has a greater plan that he will most certainly bring to pass, in fact, even through man's rebellion against him, he is most certainly working to accomplish this great ultimate purpose that we see in the passage in front of us now. Ephesians 9, God has "made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth." In light of all of the rebellion and disorder that we just saw from Scripture, what could this possibly be talking about? It does not at all look like the world is on a trajectory where all things are going to be summed up under the pinnacle of Christ, does it? And yet, Scripture tells us here that God has a plan, that he has a purpose, that he has an intention. As you move into verse 9, as we zero in on verse 9, what we see here is an extension in the context of what Paul is saying, we're seeing an extension of God's goodness to his people. We've already seen that he's been good to us in choosing us, adopting us and redeeming us by the power of his hand, not by the motions of our own heart. Now we see that in blessing us so greatly, he has done something of great particular value to those who are the redeemed. He has revealed to us in Scripture, he has pulled back the veil, he has motioned us, beckoned us into the counsel of the Godhead and said, "Let me tell you what's going to happen."

Look at verse 9, "He," meaning God, "He made known to us." God has disclosed this. He has revealed it, he has unveiled something to our understanding that Paul has not just yet said in the first eight verses. Is that just me or is it the fan? It's the rain on the roof. It

seems like this happens a multitude of times. Tuesday we got thunderclaps and now what we've got for those of you that are going to hear this on CD, you probably can't hear it. We're in an auditorium and there's this pounding rain on the roof that just started as I was speaking. What God, in that providential moment, illustrates for us is that he has rained down upon us a disclosure of his will that came from heaven. There is an unveiling of a shower of mercy that is poured out upon God's people that we could never have called down from heaven on our own. God has made known to us the mystery of his will.

Now, to call it a mystery does not mean that it is something that is difficult to figure out as if we were reading some kind of fictional murder mystery, "I wonder who did it." That's not the meaning of mystery. It's also not a mystery in the sense that this is only a secret for the initiated. It's not that. The idea of mystery in Scripture refers to something that formerly had been unrevealed but now God in the progress of revelation has made it known. God has taken that which was not known in the Old Testament and in the New Testament he has made this known to us. We are on the receiving end of the disclosure of a mystery that was previously unknown. God, part of his purpose to his redeemed people, is that we would know what we are about to see in Ephesians 1:9 and 10.

Beloved, I don't know how to get you to value, place the proper esteem and price upon what we are about to hear. God has not left us to stumble about in our sin-imposed darkness as if we were a drunken fool bouncing from light-post to light-post, staggering down the street with no place to go and no idea or understanding of our surroundings. God has not done that. God has not left us and abandoned us to that. When he chose us, when he adopted us, when he redeemed us, he brought us into a realm of knowledge and understanding which pleased him to give to his people that we did not deserve but now we have been given a priceless knowledge about what God's ultimate purpose is. God has not only saved us, he has revealed to us his plan. Scripture has given us the key to the universe and mark it, Scripture tells us the outcome of history in such a way that human wisdom could never have discovered. Human wisdom knows nothing about what we're going to see. Human wisdom could not discover it through the scientific method. This is a realm that is hidden from the rebels of God but God has freely given it to his beloved family. He has let us in on priceless knowledge.

Look at verse 9 with me. This is the disclosure of God's purpose. "He has made known to us the mystery of His will," and he did it according to his kind intention which he purposed in Christ. This was according to the good pleasure of God. It made God delighted. It gave him satisfaction. It satisfied what he wanted to do by making these things known to us. With the truth that we are about to see in verse 10, we are on the receiving end of a great gift from God and God is the ultimate, cheerful giver and he has given to us a revelation of incalculable worth because it simply pleased him to do that with us. We couldn't call the rain down from the sky. We couldn't call down and say, "God, tell us what your ultimate purpose would be." We have no right to expect that. No right to ask that. No standing to appeal to the court like that. God, on his initiative said, "Here it is."

He has disclosed it because it made him pleased to do so and so God has disclosed his purpose and now as we move into verse 10, we're going to see what that purpose is. Here's point number 3: the destination of his purpose. We've seen the disorder of the universe; we've seen the disclosure of God's purpose; and now in point 3, we see the destination of his purpose. Where is history going? What are all the great philosophical streams of human thought? All of the motions of nations which rise and fall? All of the great thinking of minds and the great discoveries and the scientific inventions? Humanly speaking, on the highest order of human achievement, where are the highest orders of human achievement going? Where are those lower orders of human rebellion, where is it all going to come out? Have you ever asked questions like that? Scripture asks and answers them. Scripture tells us. Scripture teaches us. Think beyond this world. Think beyond your self-centered thinking about life. Look beyond. Look up. Look beyond the horizon and say, "Where is all of this going?"

And here in verse 10, God's ultimate purpose is disclosed in a stunning economy of words, in an utter simplicity of supremacy, Scripture gives the answer when it says in verse 10, God his "made known to us the mystery of His will, with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times." Paul hasn't told us what the mystery is just yet. He says, "It's with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is," here it is. Here's the mystery. Here's the intention. Here is God's ultimate purpose for the universe. You hear the thunder, right? God thundering forth to us this morning the purpose of the universe, that is: "the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth."

Now, just a preliminary observation: Paul says "the summing up of all things" and then he explains what he means by "all things." It's the things that are in the heavens and the things that are on the earth. Those things that are on land and those things that are in the skies of creation. And it's just a statement to expand the concept that nothing is left out. What you see and what you don't see, past, present and future, what's on earth and what's everywhere else. The physical realm, the spiritual realm, all things are included in the purpose of God. Beloved, there is no stray detail in the universe. There is no random occurrence. There is no atom in the universe that will thwart the will of God. There is no sinner who will reject Christ and thereby thwart what God had purposed for the universe. God accomplishes his purposes because he is God which means he is the supreme authority over all and nothing thwarts his ultimate will. Even the rebellion of men, he turns to accomplish this one great purpose found in Ephesians 1:10. The word "administration" gives the idea that God governs the universe and he is moving by the power of his hand. He is moving everything and funneling it to this one great climax that Paul describes here in verse 10.

You can step back for a moment. It's okay to do this. To step back for a moment and say, "Wow!" The macro sense in which we've talked about here today, let me make it personal as well: what this means is that the glorious liberty of this for your life and for your hope and for your spiritual condition is this, that even in your own life, your successes and your failures, the things that have rejoiced you, the things that have shattered your heart, your obedience to Christ and your sin before you came to Christ, the people that have

wronged you, the people who have blessed you, however you want to expand and define that, God is taking everything that has ever happened in your life and he is sweeping it into the accomplishment of this great purpose, this great overarching purpose. That which you cannot understand, that which brings you low and humbles you and grieves you. All things. God is administering all things. He is governing and directing all things. The good and the bad. The happy and the sad. All of it. God doesn't miss a beat. He hasn't lost track of a single incident. Somehow in an incalculable display of his perfect omniscience and sovereign decree, God takes all of that and incorporates it into the one great eternal purpose that he has to glorify Christ.

Nothing in your life, beloved, has escaped the ultimate purpose of God. It's all there. It's all included. And even in these times right now where things might seem just particularly bleak and black, here in verse 10, you have the ray of light that shines light on the darkness. It says in verse 10 that God is administering the universe to accomplish the purpose which he has revealed to his people and that purpose is to sum up all things in Christ. In light of the disorder of the universe, let me say it this way: God is not a bystander to human rebellion. God is not a bystander to demonic rebellion. God is not a bystander to your unrewarded obedience. God is not indifferent to the sorrow of this life. To the contrary, God is moving all of macro and all of micro-history toward a supernatural conclusion that will display the glory of Christ in its incontestable splendor. There is a purpose, in other words beloved, for it all.

The incomparable Martyn Lloyd Jones said this and I quote, "There is nothing higher than this, nothing beyond God's final purpose. It is bigger and greater than our personal salvation. In this verse, we are transported above the matter of our personal salvation into the realm of ultimate things. God's grand, comprehensive, final, ultimate purpose, the human mind can never contemplate anything greater. God gives us no greater privilege than to be allowed to look into this." This is the mystery. I haven't explained it yet in case you were wondering, "Man, did I miss something?" You haven't missed it. Look at verse 10 with me again. We want to look at this just with some care fitting of God's ultimate purpose. God has made known to us the fact that he is administering the universe "suitable to the fullness of the times." When everything has accomplished its purpose, when the fullness of everything has been done, this is what the outcome will be. God is moving it in that direction and he has made it known to us, that is, here it comes: "the summing up of all things in Christ." You roll off eight English words "the summing up of all things in Christ." In eight simple English words comes out of the mouth the whole purpose of the universe and everything that's ever happened, God is going to sum it up in Christ.

What does it mean to sum it up? Well, to sum up, that word means to summarize. It describes, watch this, stick with me now because we're seeing from God's word what the purpose of the universe is. That matters. That's pretty important. That's more important than anything. That word describes the focal point at the end of a speech that shows how each part of the speech relates to the whole. Think about it this way: when an attorney gives his closing argument at the end of a trial and he's standing before the jury box and he's describing what they have just seen and heard, sometimes over a few hours,

sometimes over days or weeks if it's a really long trial, when an attorney gives his closing argument, he is summing up the case. He pulls together the evidence. He talks about the different testimony that the witnesses gave, the evidence that was introduced and he says, "Here's how it all fits together and because it fits together like this, there is only one conclusion for you to reach. You should render a verdict in favor of my client." He's taken all of the individual parts of that entire trial and he summed it up in a logical, orderly way and has come to a conclusion that says, "This is the only outcome possible of what has been displayed to you. You should render a verdict in favor of my client." That attorney has to account for every part of the case to persuade the jury to render the correct verdict.

Beloved, multiply that by infinity. Multiply it by exponential infinity if there is such a concept. Multiply it by the millennia. Multiply it by the billions of people who have ever lived. Multiply it by the myriads upon myriads of angels. Scripture is saying that God is going to take all of that including all of the disorder of the universe and he is going to bring it to a climax that results in the glory of Christ being put on perfect display. We don't see it now. Without the revelation of Scripture, we couldn't imagine this kind of outcome because it seems like wickedness has run amok, that there is no more restraint on it. Even the authorities that are entrusted with maintaining law and order are corrupt, how could there ever be anything good and worthy to come out of that? And yet, Scripture says that there is most certainly a coming time when Christ will return to earth. There is coming in the future the conquest of Satan, the subduing of the nations. Christ will subdue the nations in his righteousness. He will gather his people together. He will judge the wicked. Christ is going to, by an exercise of his omnipotent right arm of power, judge it all. Subdue it all. Bring it all under his authority. There will be a universal proclamation without dissent that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Turn over a couple of books to the book of Philippians just to remind you of a familiar passage. Here we see the outcome of it all. There will be nothing left on the stage but Christ and a universal acclamation of his Lordship. Philippians 2:9, "For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Redeemed believers and elect angels will shout in triumph at his glory when he has brought all things under his feet. Demons, Satan and the unrepentant will be cast into hell and their rebellion is shown to have its end. Christ, Lord over the rebellious, having cast them into prison never to come out again. Christ with his redeemed people shouting and declaring his glory and our privilege now is to have a foretaste of that as we say, "Jesus Christ is Lord" here in this life. In other words, beloved, things in heaven and things on earth will be brought into line. Rebellion will be punished and then forbidden forever. The redeemed people of Christ whom he gave his life to secure will be there to acclaim and proclaim and announce and join in the proclamation, "Jesus is Lord," voluntarily giving glory. The wicked forced under the power of compulsion to acknowledge it themselves before they are sent away and there will not be any longer a rebellious strand in the universe. It will all be brought unto submission to Christ.

This is history's destination. All things will be subdued to Christ. All creation will acknowledge his Lordship. Christ will restore order and the inconceivable objection of creation, of man, of demons, to the rule of God, will be banished forever. It will be silenced and all that will be left will be this redeemed people of Christ, this universe restored to where it should be.

Now look at 1 Corinthians 15:24. When Christ has returned and judged and rewarded the saints and it's all of subdued to him and he is at the very pinnacle, no more challenge to his authority and reign and it's all going to be underneath him, then will come a climactic display of inexpressible divine glory. In a way that I don't pretend to understand, Christ will somehow hand over all of that to the Father as a great gift of intra-Trinitarian love and the eternal state will begin. Chapter 15, verse 24, "then comes the end, when He," meaning Christ, "hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when Christ has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet." Christ will subdue it all. All of creation will acknowledge his Lordship and then Christ will take it and say, "Father, here is what I have purchased. I give it to you because I love you."

This is unspeakable glory. God before time began, appointed Christ to redeem a people that would join in this. At the top of the circle that we've been describing here, God alone in his glory through the rebellion of man at the cross, Christ was rejected in the most heinous display of rebellion but then, coming out of the cross, the resurrection, the proclamation of the gospel, people coming to saving faith in Christ, proclaiming his glory while God gives them breath on earth. All of this comes to a great climax when Christ comes to earth, quashes rebellion forever and the redeemed people say, "Glory to Christ! He is Lord over all!" And then at that great final moment, Christ, you hear the rain, right? This is no accident. Christ hands it over to the Father and the full harmony of it all has been restored. Creation is back to where it was at the beginning except that now there is a redeemed humanity praising God in addition to it. And the fullness of the revelation of the glory of God will be complete. Christ over all, the Father given it all and this great expression of intra-Trinitarian love will be complete.

It has pleased God in his incomprehensible kindness to us not only to choose us, adopt us and redeem us, it has pleased him to make known to us his people, his purpose for the universe. We know the outcome of history before it happens and, beloved, in one way or another, this great climax of Christ handing it all over to the Father, somehow we're going to see it with our own eyes. We're going to be part of the gift. We're going to participate in that great inexpressible time. God has saved you for such a time as that if you're a Christian and to realize that that will be part of our future experience, that we will actually witness and participate in that, that we will be part of what Christ hands over to the Father. It shatters the mind. It humbles the heart.

What should you do? Bow in worship. Silence your hearts. Silence your tongue. Recognize that God has displayed things of unspeakable glory that sinful men should not by right be entitled to and yet in kindness he has made it known to us. There is a purpose

greater than our lives that is at work in the Gospel. There is a purpose at work in history that transcends the greatest human leaders who have ever lived. Wars will be silenced. Nations will be subdued to the very things that God has shown us in Scripture this morning. And we get to know it in advance. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. To the praise of his glory! To the praise of his glory! To the praise of his glory! And all of God's people said Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen! And amen!

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