of all – his return as the bridegroom coming to claim his bride, the church.

All these ideas are packed into this little line: **'...as he is so also are we in the world.'**

Where does my confidence come from? Why can I look with anticipation for the return of Christ and have no fear at the thought of standing before him in the judgment? Because I have been 'baptized' into Christ – I am made one with him. I am adopted as God's own son, to those who believe on his name he has given the right to be called the children of God. We have been made co-heirs with Christ. What he inherits, we inherit; as he is glorified, so we are glorified.

If at a wedding the father of the groom presents his son with a glorious mansion to live in – so also the bride is presented with the same – for they are no longer two, but one!

Communion:

I. I want you to see something of enormous significance. For whom was this world made? For Christ – consider these two passages: Colossians, Hebrews.

I believe that from the very outset God designed this world for his Son – but sin required that the Son himself redeem it. So not only is Jesus the heir of creation, he is its rightful ruler.

II. Scripture declares that we are co-heirs with Christ. This means that there is no play on words when believers are promised that the 'meek will inherit the earth'. Indeed we will – I point you towards the eternal state with the promise that you cannot fully fathom what God has prepared, but the highest joys you have found here, only stretch out to touch the fringes of that redeemed world – the new heaven and the new earth – but we will dwell there, in renewed bodies and with the Lord.

Jesus didn't return to the Father to rest – he has returned to the Father's right hand – where he continues the work he began on earth.

We are told that he has a kingly role – that he rules – and that he awaits the day when everything will be made subject to him.

We are told that he has a priestly role – standing as my mediator and advocate – pleading his own righteousness for me and interceding on my behalf.

We are told he has a prophetic role in sending his own Holy Spirit into our hearts to lead us into truth, to convict us of sin, to convince us of truth – to bring forth fruit.

d. Triumphant Return – But his session at the Father's right hand isn't the highest glory that will be given to him – the height of his exultation is before us still. It will be in his second coming, when he is finally revealed as King of kings and Lord of lords. Philippians 2:10-11 tell us that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow on heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

This is the moment that all of creation awaits – the redemption of all things and the restoration of the rightful ruler.

Conclusion: In being joined to Christ, we have become co-heirs with him. In his humiliation he identified himself as my representative, willingly taking upon himself the identity of a federal head – the second Adam. He was tempted in every way, just as we are, but was without sin. He willingly offered his life in exchange for mine and by his blood made atonement for my sin. In his burial he reached the lowest point being consigned to the grave, in spite of the fact that he had done nothing that deserved death.

Tim Keller rightly points out that Jesus was the only man who ever perfectly obeyed God and for his obedience God crushed him to powder and sent him to hell. He did that so that he could set me at liberty and bring me to heaven.

In being joined to Christ we will rise. Here is the faith of all true believers – that we will be resurrected, that eternal life awaits us. In being joined to Christ we will ascend – where he is we will be, implicit in this doctrine is the realization that our final state will not be a 'disembodied state' but a physical, eternal state. In Christ's session at the right hand of the Father we have the assurance that he is mediating for us, that he stands as my advocate, that he pleads his own righteousness for my justification and sends his own Spirit to lead me into all truth. Finally, being joined to Christ we know that the day is coming when he will return in glory. We are shown many facets of this return; his return as final judge, his return as triumphant king, his return as rightful heir and ruler of creation – but perhaps the most stunning

condemned the innocent, he, it is true, also condemned himself and human justice as he applied it, but at the same time imposed sentence on Jesus as the representative of the highest judicial power in the world, functioning by the grace of God and dispensing justice in God's name.

d. Burial – The final stage of Jesus humiliation is his burial. It is here that his lifeless body is taken down, wrapped in cloth and laid in a tomb. It is essential that we understand that the Son of God gave himself unto death – that his life was extinguished. Did his soul continue? Of course – every soul continues – you have an eternal soul that cannot be killed or destroyed – so Jesus body was laid in the tomb – the humiliation of Christ complete.

II. The Stages of the Exultation of Christ

a. Resurrection – The resurrection begins the exaltation of Christ. I must say to you at this point – the resurrection is ESSENTIAL to the Christian faith. If Christ has not been raised, there is no hope to be offered in the church – we have no message to preach.

I insist upon hanging the whole weight of the gospel, of preaching and of my life on this single hook – that Jesus Christ was physically raised from the dead. This was not a vision. This was not a dream. This was not a spiritual resurrection. Jesus was no ghost.

Jesus rose up as the first born from among the dead. He was raised and his body transformed to a body suited to eternal life.

If you cannot believe this – you do not believe the gospel.

If you can believe this – you have every reason to believe that just as Christ was once raised, so all those in Christ will be raised with him and will be made new in a resurrection body.

b. Ascension – The second part of Christ's exaltation was his ascension. Jesus spoke of his ascension, telling his disciples that he would go back to the Father; Luke tells us twice that he literally ascended into the sky after his resurrection; Paul and the author of Hebrews both refer to Jesus ascending.

This all bears on the fact that Jesus was not incarnate ONLY for the 33 or so years of his mission to earth – but that his incarnation was a permanent transformation. Jesus dwells TODAY in flesh and blood. He could not and did not 'discard' the body he was raised in.

c. Session at the Right Hand of the Father – The third aspect of Christ's exultation has to do with his work in heaven.

step of humiliation – God the Son took upon himself flesh. He was INCARNATE in the womb of a virgin. The finite cannot contain the infinite – Jesus is entirely man, and entirely God – but certain aspects of his humanity limit certain aspects of his deity – the Son of God can no longer be omni-present – he is limited to a body!

b. Suffering and Temptation – **Hebrews 2:14-17 – Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.**

And a few chapters later, the book of Hebrews declares **Hebrews 4:15 – For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin.**

This is the second step in the humiliation of Christ. Not only did he become flesh – but he experienced every aspect of our suffering. He was tested by temptation in every way that he could be – but where I failed, where I fell, where I collapsed under temptation, Jesus triumphed – he resisted every temptation and it was made evident that he was truly a righteous man.

Isaiah describes him as a suffering servant and acquainted with grief. Indeed, in every grief, and sorrow and anguish I have suffered, Jesus bore it also.

c. Death – Jesus death was unlike any other death. For in the time that he hung on the cross God poured out his infinite wrath against sin on Jesus.

The Bible tells us that God brought forth his son in the fullness of time, born of a woman, born amongst men. Underlying this statement is the understanding that God, based on his eternal purpose, chose this exact time to send forth Jesus. Louis Berkhof points to one of the reasons – that he might be tried by Roman justice:

The Romans had a genius for law and justice, and represented the highest judicial power in the world. It might be expected that a trial before a Roman judge would serve to bring out clearly the innocence of Jesus, which it did, so that it became perfectly clear that He was not condemned for any crime which He had committed. It was a testimony to the fact that, as the Lord says, 'He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due.' And when the Roman judge nevertheless

…Because As He Is
So Also Are We in this World

Subject: Ramifications of Christ's Incarnation
Theme: Conformed to the Image of Christ and Co-Heirs
Passage: I John 4:17b

Introduction: Today marks the first Sunday of Advent. You may be tempted to see the events of Christmas as of smaller theological value than the events of Easter. After all, the cross is the great transaction point at which sin was atoned for and the saved set at liberty. But Easter is not possible without Christmas.

So here is what I propose for this mornings message. I want to draw on a little portion of 1 John 4:17 and set it up as the lens through which we view advent.

Let's begin with I John 4:17 – **By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.**

The second half of this verse is tricky to translate from Greek. Translated literally from the Greek is states: *'Because even as that one is, so also we are in the world.'*

However most English translations have rendered the words: **because as he is so also are we in this world.**

Colin Kruse, in his commentary points out a few key points:

a) The reference to 'the world' is not to the world of sinful rebellion against God, but rather to our natural life here on planet earth.

b) The 'he' that is referred to is Jesus, the one before whom we will stand in judgment and have confidence before.

c) Our confidence is based on our BEING as he IS.

This invites a little bit of deeper theology. What is HE like and how does that impact our confidence in the final judgment?

Here is what I propose we consider this morning.

I. Let us look at how Jesus WAS on the earth.
II. Let us look at how Jesus IS in his exulted state.
III. Let us draw a conclusion about what this will mean for us at judgment and on into the final state.

I. The Stages of the Humiliation of Christ

a. Incarnation – **John 1:1-3, 14 – In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God – he was with God in the beginning and through him was everything made, without him nothing was made that has been made… and the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.** This was a tremendous