

## Introduction

When we come to the communion table, we come to remember the Lord Jesus in a distinct and special way because He said, “do this in remembrance of me” (Lk 22.19). Because He said, “in remembrance of *me*,” it is appropriate that we direct our thoughts to Christ emphasizing who He is in the fullness of His person. This does not mean that we do not value His work; nor does it mean that we think we can separate His person from His work. Actually, when we remember Jesus as a person, we remember that Jesus is the person who came into the world in the incarnation in order to do the work of saving sinners. We cannot separate His person and His work, but we can emphasize some of the richness of His person at one time, while waiting to emphasize some of the richness of His work at another time. Thus, we may have His person in the background when we put His work in the foreground, or as we want to do today, we may put His work in the background when we concentrate in a special way on His person. However, His work may be in the background, but it will not be very far in the background.

For us as Christians, there is no person in the entire history of the human family that is more important than our Lord Jesus Christ. We flee to Him for refuge and help, for love and friendship, and to our astonishment, we find that the one we have come to know and love is not merely a man, but in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in a bodily way! He is awesome and full of wonder and that is what I want to consider this morning, the wonder of Christ. The main text is Luke 10.21-24. I want us to reflect on how He is a cause of astonishment; that who He is in terms of His person is astonishing. Three things in this text serve to bring out the wonder of Christ. They make up the outline, and they are the authority, the mystery, and the ministry of the person of Christ.

### 1A. The authority of this person

There are two things to consider here: He has a delegated authority, and He has a comprehensive authority.

#### 1B. He has a delegated authority

Note the suggestion of delegating authority in the opening words of Luke 10.22, “**All things have been handed over to me by my Father.**” Christ is a man under the authority of God from whom He received the rights and powers of His office on earth. This kind of self-reflection by our Lord is common in the record of John, “**So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise”** (5.19). Therefore, it should not surprise us to discover that Jesus lived a life of dependence on God expressed in prayer. Look back at Luke 10.21. Jesus praises the Father as Lord of heaven and earth, thanks Him for His sovereignty, and rests in the wisdom of His grace. Jesus is a man of prayer because He is a man under authority.

Interestingly (and perplexingly), the handing over of things to Jesus indicates both the fact and the acknowledgement of inferior ranking before a superior. Per the parallel account in Matthew (11.29), Jesus acknowledges His inferior position by saying, “I am lowly.” This is perplexing because humility is not an attribute of God. Being humble implies a relative smallness before someone greater. If we could apply humility to the divine nature of God, then that would imply imperfection in God. It would imply someone greater, thus, humility is something impossible for God to possess as a quality of His nature as a perfect being. God cannot be humble for that would mean there is someone greater (to attribute humility to God would not be true because there is none greater than God is). Therefore, our Lord Jesus acknowledges His position of inferiority in relation to the superiority of God the Father, and in

doing this, He identifies Himself with us as a true man in the fullest sense! Thus, He says, “The Father is greater than I” (Jn 14.28; cf. 10.29; 15.20).

In the wonderful quality of Christ as lowly and humble, we have Him as our example of what it means to be a true human being and the matchless image of God on earth. What Adam was supposed to be, Jesus is. Adam, the image of God, fell into disobedience by asserting His autonomy. Jesus, the image of God par excellence, stood tall in obedience by affirming His humility! Despite all the questions that may come up because of this lowliness, Jesus is very forward and clear in His prayerful submission to the Father. For in case you missed it, it is in prayer that Jesus humbles Himself by acknowledging that all that He has is by the will of the Father to which He commits Himself without reservation. He has a delegated authority and we have to talk about the wonder of Christ in His personal humility.

## 2B. He has a comprehensive authority

In light of the delegated authority and true humanity of Christ, we can now consider the comprehensiveness of His authority. He says, “**All things have been handed over to me by my Father**” (Lk 10.22). The language here is very generic and encompassing (all things). In context of Luke 9-10, some of the things He refers to are the harvest of sinners, discipleship, His crucifixion, kingdom glory, healing and resurrection of the body, eternal judgment, Satan, and evil spirits. The point is that everything pertaining to the destiny of the human race is in His hands by the gift of the Father. He must be able to receive this comprehensive authority. He must have every qualification necessary to save sinners. To put it another way, the demons, principalities, powers, Satan, rebels, sinners of the earth, the very earth itself, and the very heavens are under His authority. He received it all as the gift of His saving death and resurrection (which He anticipates here). Some passages to ponder in this connection are the following.

**For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. <sup>22</sup> The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son (Jn 5.21-22).**

**you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him (Jn 17.2).**

**And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mat 28.18-20).**

All things, in all this fullness and comprehensiveness, are under the authority of this wonder causing humble man. The greatness of His authority magnifies the astonishing greatness of His humility; together, these things magnify the greatness of His person (His personal greatness is astounding).

## 2A. The mystery of this person

Jesus says, “**All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him**” (Lk 10.22). To say that no one knows who the Son is except the Father is to say more than mere identification as the Son, just as “who the Father is” refers to more than mere identification. It is similar to assigning a name. Naming who God is refers to defining His attributes and glory; the name of God stands for the perfection of His attributes and being. The parallel in Matthew 11.27 helps us see the point here: “**no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son.**” In other words, the point is that no one can know Christ in the depths of His attributes and being except God. This is astounding! What patriarch, prophet, or king ever spoke like this? Here is the explanation (along with His atoning work) as to how this man could receive such unparalleled authority. It is because this man is unfathomable, unknowable, and incomprehensible in His attributes and being; it is because He is the eternal Word become flesh (Jn 1.1-14) and His *name* is Immanuel or God with us (Mat 1.23). We must

confess with our mouths that this man Christ Jesus is God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. He is a wonder. This is astonishing. He is so mysterious and majestic that only God the Father can know Him, only God can plumb the depths of this ocean of majesty and glory!

The glory of Christ vibrates through every page of the NT like ten thousand trumpets. It is the salt in the sea; we taste of the astounding greatness of Christ no matter where we go in the NT. The baby in the manger is Immanuel. The same one who cried, "I thirst," from the cross, also said, "before Abraham was I am." He is wonderful. That is His name: His name shall be called wonderful, counselor, prince of peace, and the mighty God (Isa 9.6).

Therefore, we must acknowledge that Jesus Christ the Lord is truly and fully man and truly and fully God. He is God and man in one person. He has two natures as God and man and we must not get these natures mixed up in our minds. The Westminster Shorter Catechism captures some of the mystery of our Lord when it answers the question, "Who is the redeemer of God's elect?" The answer is, "The only redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever" (QA 21). Thus, in the incarnation, "two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparately joined together in one person without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man" (WC, VIII, 2).

It is wrong to say (or think or hint) that Jesus, the man, slept in the boat, but God the Son stilled the stormy sea. It was the person, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is both God and man in two distinct natures that slept in the boat and stilled the storms. He is both God and man in two distinct natures and one person in such a way that we must neither confound the natures nor divide the person. In other words, God was sleeping in the boat and He awoke and stilled the storms. Again, the one who said, "I thirst," is the one who said, "Before Abraham was I am." Jesus existed prior to His birth, and He came into the world as the eternal Word made flesh on a mission as the one sent by the Father. He came to do the Father's will in submission as a man to the Father of whom Jesus said, "The Father is greater than I." The Father is "greater than Jesus" and at the same time Jesus can say, "I and the Father are one" because Jesus is the unknowable and incomprehensible God that only God can know.

When we consider this man, we are amazed. We wonder. We have to stop all that we are doing and stop the flow of all our thinking and come to one place, the place of awe and astonishment. One would have to be God to comprehend Jesus fully, and Jesus can comprehend the Father fully. The person of Christ is a deep and mind-stretching mystery.

### 3A. The ministry of this person

Just when we think that enough is on the table to end our amazement, the wonder of the person of Christ shines even more brightly in His ministry. We simply have to understand why it is that Jesus came into the world as very God and very man in one person and two natures forever. He came in order to be the redeemer of God's elect. Accordingly, our text in Luke 10 announces the fact that Jesus Christ is sovereign Lord: "**no one knows...who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him**" (v. 22). Remarkably, though sinful human beings cannot penetrate the depths of God the Father, they can know Him by the revealing work of Christ according to His choosing. Those to whom Jesus chooses to reveal the Father in fact come to know the Father. They become brothers and sisters with Christ in the family of God. They receive eternal life (Jn 17.2, **you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God...**). Jesus gives resurrection life to whomever He wills to give it (Jn. 5.21, **the son gives life to whom he will**).

Therefore, in Hebrews we are told that while continuing to hold the world together by His omnipotent hand, Jesus made purification for sins and sat down at the Majesty on high with a

name more excellent than the angels (1.3-4). Jesus became “God with us” *for us*. Thus, He purchased our salvation; the blood of God obtained the church (Acts 20.28).

In frail but earnest summary, we must say that with unparalleled authority, in unfathomable mystery, and by means of an unthinkable ministry, God our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, died in our place for our certain and sure salvation as children God gave Him in the eternal covenant of redemption. This matchless person gave, yes, incredibly, gave His body and blood for our redemption.

Therefore, we must embrace His saving work and cling to our Savior with all our might.

We must worship and adore Him; He is awesome. His name is wonderful because He is wonderful. We must serve Him with all our strength. We must proclaim His greatness everywhere because He is sovereign God, universal Lord, and Sabbath king. We need thousands of tongues to sing of His glory.

In this context, when we take communion we say at least three things.

1) I need this person

I need the body and blood of this person. I have a picture here in the depths of the person of Christ of how great my sin is. By seeing the one that bears the awful load of my sin, I get a glimpse of how terrible sin is, how offensive it is to God, and how great the consequences are.

Nevertheless, what I need as a sinner with infinite guilt, is an adequate sacrifice, and Jesus is that sacrifice; it is in Him alone.

I need Him. I need the incomprehensible Christ and His unthinkable self-sacrifice. I need this one through whom I can know the Father.

O Lord Jesus, God blessed forever, I need you.

2) I own this person

I own Him as my very own. He is my Lord and God. What can that mean if it does not mean I commit myself to Him as the risen Lord? It means that I belong to Him body and soul; my life and all I possess belongs to Him. I must live, gladly live, under His authority to do His bidding.

O Lord Jesus, I commit myself to you as my prophet, priest, king, universal Sabbath Lord, and my Lord and my God. I commit myself to learn from you, to cling to you, and to serve you in all things, with repentance and for your glory.

3) I own His people

God has said that He will save sinners. Of sinners from all nations, He says, “They shall be my people and I shall be their God.” Therefore, Jesus became the firstborn of many brothers and sisters by His death and resurrection. If this person that is incomprehensible in the depths of His being, loves sinners and draws out the church from the nations, then in honor to Him I must love His brothers and sisters. He is to receive all honors! In honor to Him, I must honor, love, respect, and seek to build up His people.

O Lord Jesus, I commit myself to your family as my family.