

Getting to Grips with

God

How our understanding of God changes everything

Part 2: Following the Son

Session #3 Christ and His Church

"... For this God is our God..." – Psalm 48v 14

Sladebrook Evangelical Church

www.sladebrook.org.uk

Introduction and Aim of this Teaching Series:

This series of Sunday morning talks introduces us to the magnificent doctrine of God. Often trivialised (and certainly simplified) Christian faith and maturity depends on an ever-increasing appreciation of who God is and what He has done. As well as “*getting to grips with God*” we will also attempt to loosen our grip on what God is not, dispelling some commonly held misunderstandings. It is hoped that with Scripture as our guide and with the Holy Spirit’s help, we will discover more about the God we worship and seek to apply this knowledge in our daily Christian walk and witness.

Subject in this series include:

- Honouring God the Father (September)
 - *Who God is (and isn't) – Reality, Trinity and revelation of God/unhelpful stereotypes*
 - *God in God's own words – biblical descriptions of God/Who He is/what He does*
 - *Finding the Father's Heart – understanding just how much God loves us, and how that should be experienced*
- Following God the Son (October)
 - *Why Jesus changes everything for everyone*
 - *Finding acceptance in Christ – what Jesus has brought us into: forgiveness/acceptance/purpose/unconditional love/grace*
 - *The current role/ future prospects of Jesus and His church*
- Welcoming God the Spirit (November)
 - *Who is the Holy Spirit? Confusions and clarifications regarding the Holy Spirit*
 - *What does He do? The ministries and manifestations of the Spirit*
 - *How should He work in me? The role of the Spirit in the life of the believer*

Getting to Grips with God: Christ and His Church

When we think of what Jesus has done for us, we mostly think in terms of His historical intervention: 2,000 years ago we read how Christ “*became flesh and dwelt among us*” (John 1v 14), interrupting the sinful order by living a perfect life, interrupting the natural order by performing signs and wonders and interrupting the religious order by introducing Himself as the Messiah. Jesus heralded the coming Kingdom of God, fulfilling every Old Testament prophecy along the way to a Roman cross, where He died for sinful humanity. Three days later, as predicted, His tomb lay empty as history’s greatest occurrence took place. Christ rose from the dead and changed everything forever. These exploits are rooted in history and are fundamental to our understanding the revelation of God and His purposes.

However, to assume the role and contribution Jesus makes is simply historical is to overlook His ongoing role within the Godhead and in our lives. As we have charted the course of Divine revelation, from the beginning of time to its high point when, “*in these last days*” (Hebrews 1v 2) Christ came as the final Word concerning God’s gracious plan for humanity, we must ask the question; *where is He now and what is He doing?*

Jesus is alive and today; a human heart beats in heaven! Amidst that celestial scene; where angels sing and cherubim/seraphim respond ecstatically to the eternal glory of God, Jesus sits at the right hand of His Father: Exalted as God the Son, yet engaging all His human senses in the heavenly realms. Jesus Christ continues His ministry, on our behalf in the throne room of God.

The relationship between Christ and His Church is a precious one spanning eternity. Yet this relationship has ongoing, present day implications: **Jesus builds His Church**, the Body, and also **Jesus beautifies His Church** the Bride. Jesus said “*I am going to prepare a place for you*” (John 14v 2) Active now, Jesus is preparing a place for us and preparing us for that place!

Read: John Chapter 14 v1-4 & Hebrews Chapter 7 v23- Chapter 8 v2 & Revelation Chapter 22 v12

(Also: Acts 1v 4-11; 17v 30-31; Romans 8v 34; Ephesians 5v 22-33; Philippians 2v 5-11; Hebrews 4v 14-16; 7v 25; 9v 24-28; Revelation 1v 10-20; 19v 11-16; 22v 7-17 - for more references about Christ and His Church.)

Christ and His Church

Although His historic intervention is perhaps better known, Jesus is alive and active in heaven today on behalf of His people. His role and relationship to His Church has various aspects and implications, past, present and future.

1. Christ Currently: Relates and Represents His Church

- **As The Essential Mediator:** 1 Timothy 2v 5; Hebrews 9v 15
- **As The Great High Priest:** Hebrews 4v 14-16; 8v 1-3
- **As The Ongoing Advocate:** 1 John 2v 1-2

2. Christ Shortly: Returns and Resurrects His Church

- **As The Soon Coming Saviour:** 1 Thessalonians 4v 13-18

3. Christ Eternally: Reigns and Rewards His Church

- **As The King of Kings:** Revelation 17v 14; 19v 16
- **As The Righteous Judge:** Romans 14v 1-12; 2 Corinthians 5v 10

Following the Son:

Questions:

- *What do you think about a man physically being in heaven today?*
- *In which of the roles above do you best relate to Jesus? Which role do you think you need to consider more seriously?*
- *“Christ builds the Body and beautifies the Bride” which do you think you have been more focused on? Why are both important?*
- *If you knew Jesus would return tomorrow, what would you do today? Should this be different to any other day?*

Response:

- *Take some time this week to consider each aspect of Jesus’ current role on behalf of His Church. Spend some time in worship and give thanks for His living, active, ongoing role in heaven on your behalf.*
- *Jesus is preparing a place for us and preparing us for that place! How are you currently being built up as part of the Body? How can this happen even more? Likewise, how is Jesus beautifying you now as His Bride? Where are you still resistant? What needs to change? Spend some time asking Christ to work in and through you in ways that will bring noticeable and lasting change as well as glory to God.*