

AUGUSTINE

“He who has Christ has everything.

He who has everything but does not have Christ, has nothing.

And, He who has Christ plus everything has no more than he who has Christ alone.”

Christ Alone

Eight Encounter Sessions

for

“Christ Huddles” and “Kingdom Clusters”

as well as other small groups and prayer bands

Study Guide



“Awake to Christ for ALL that He is!”

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How to approach the eight Encounter Sessions

This study guide flows out of two major developments.

The first is extensive research just completed for my next book, titled *Christ is NOW! Joyful Tributes to the Supremacy of God's Son* (a follow up of my last book, *Christ is ALL! A Joyful Manifesto on the Supremacy of God's Son* (2004).

The second is the 19th annual **New York City PASTORS PRAYER SUMMIT** conducted for three days the end of January, 2010, involving over 200 pastors and leaders from the metroplex. (The yearly summit is just one pearl in a fascinating necklace of united prayer initiatives across metro New York that have unfolded over the past twenty-two years facilitated by Concerts of Prayer, Greater New York – visit www.COPGNY.org). Each of the seven sessions you find here were incorporated into the plenary times we shared together, book-ended by seasons of worship and responses in small and large group prayer. During each assembly, a brief time of teaching was provided on a major aspect of Christ's majesty and supremacy, followed by an extended time to lift up to Him directly the "TRIBUTES" you find here.

I've said for years ... that whenever and wherever the Church returns to God's Son to give Him His rightful place in all things – to give Him the supremacy He deserves in all we do (Col. 1:18) – that is when and where God will command the blessing. That week in January we watched the Father command a blessing beyond what we could have asked or imagined.

I've said for years ... that the awakening the national prayer movement has been seeking these past two decades is nothing less than a "Christ-awakening". I define this as "... *God's Spirit using God's Word to re-convert God's people back to God's Son for ALL that He is.*" That week, at some level, virtually everyone received from the Father this "re-conversion" experience. He awakened us to a vision of the glory, greatness and majesty of His Son that most had not known before. We became consumed with the wonders of who Christ is TO us, FOR us, OVER us, BEFORE us, WITHIN us, THROUGH us and UPON us.

During the Summit we "saw" the future – we witnessed a foretaste of the answers to our years of prayer for a Christ-awakening – and it was glorious! Many of us left the gathering convinced that what happened those days was nothing less than a *foreshadowing and promise* of the larger Christ-awakening just ahead, not only for NYC (so strategic for the Kingdom, as the most influential city in the world) but for God's people in cities and communities all across the land, and beyond.

This STUDY GUIDE was developed as a small group experience for *anyone*, but particularly for bands of leaders and pastors geographically near one another, able to meet for eight consecutive, weekly sessions. In some parts of the country such regular gatherings already exist – sometimes called "**Christ Huddles**" or "**Kingdom Clusters**" – where Christians together are growing a larger, biblical "Christology" even as they pray together for a God-given Christ-awakening in their lives, their churches and their communities.

THE RECOMMENDED APPROACH: (1) Meet at least one hour for each session. (2) Read and discuss briefly the key Scriptures for that session. (3) Spend a season of worship and prayer based on the passages. (3) One person reads the TRIBUTE (*or* read it in unison; or make it a responsive reading, by alternating either sentences or paragraphs). We suggest you do this on your knees. (4) Discuss the themes of the TRIBUTE using the discussion questions provided. (5) Conclude with extended prayer for each other, each other's ministries, your churches and communities – *praying for a greater revelation of God's Son, for a Christ-awakening.*

DAVID BRYANT

CHRIST ALONE

Overview of SEVEN KEY PREPOSITIONS

to unpack a Biblical vision of Christ's supremacy

The core of Christ's supremacy — what gives the ring of truth to the phrase "Christ alone" — can be expressed using just seven prepositions. In these Encounter Sessions we will unpack and proclaim the reality behind these seven dimensions. This will greatly encourage us. It can also help us discover new ways to motivate our people to more fully embrace for themselves the wonder and vastness of Jesus' preeminence, glory and majesty — so that we all might give ourselves more fully to "*Christ alone*".

Christ's supremacy can be defined, in part, in terms of who He is, right now:

- TO us
- FOR us
- OVER us
- BEFORE us
- WITHIN us
- THROUGH us
- UPON us

QUOTABLE QUOTE

In today's church historic Christian belief in Jesus Christ is like Humpty Dumpty: it has had a great fall, and now lies before us broken in pieces. Everyone picks up some of these, but few have them all or know what to do with those they have. (Dr. J.I. Packer)

Such simple words! Yet, virtually everything Scripture presents to us about the marvels of our Savior can be explored by using these seven phrases. Each preposition proclaims one dimension of the primacy of the Person we are to adore throughout endless ages. They tell us *why* He is to be adored as well as *how* to adore Him. Together they construct an exciting Biblical "resume" for God's Son, one to incorporate into all of our prayers for a Christ-awakening among God's people and for the advance of His Kingdom. Using these phrases as tools, we can proclaim who Christ is and ALL that He is to our fellow believers in whole new ways, in order to build them up in Him and ignite them with new passion to glorify Him. These magnificent vistas of our Victor confirm why all of life is about "**Christ alone!**"

1) Who He is TO us – now ... This speaks of how His supremacy is eternally rooted in His deity, His nature, His character, as well as His Trinitarian existence as the Son of the Father. He is the embodiment and fulfillment of all the purposes, prophecies and promises of Scripture. In Him we see the fullest display of God's holiness, love, righteousness, justice, compassion — as well as God's commitment to the reclamation of His whole creation along with all who trust in Him (Heb. 1). Jesus said "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14). Colossians 1 tell us "Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation..." There's nothing God wants to reveal to us about Himself beyond who Jesus is. It's all to be seen in "Christ alone".

2) Who He is FOR us – now ... Concerning His incarnation we read in Colossians 1 — "God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him" (vs. 19). He became one *of* us, *for* us. His supremacy became visible through the totality of His earthly ministry, including His righteous life as He kept the Law perfectly on our behalf. Then, in His flesh He offered Himself for us by His redemptive, sacrificial crucifixion, followed by His victorious resurrection to conquer death for us. We read in Colossians 1 — "through Him (the Father) reconciled to Himself all things ... through His (the Son's) blood ... through whom we have redemption by His blood, the forgiveness of our sins". All He did *for* us means that our hope about our eternal destiny is based on the redeeming work of "Christ alone". It is totally sufficient.

3) Who He is OVER us – now ... He is supreme-to-the-max as the King of the universe, the Ruler of history, the Lord of the nations and the Master of our lives. Preeminently, He reigns as the Head of the Church, which is “the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph. 1). In fact, He “ascended above the heavens that He might fill the whole universe” (Eph. 4). Jesus is over all because God the Father has “rescued us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of the Son He loves ... (because He is) the firstborn over all creation ... firstborn from among the dead ... head of the body, the Church; (because He has) reconciled all things whether things on earth or things in heaven, making peace by His blood shed on the cross” (Col. 1:13, 15, 18, 20) His on-going reign in Heaven and earth assures the fulfillment of God’s purposes for the ages through “Christ alone.”

4) Who He is BEFORE us – now ... First, Jesus goes before us into the Throne Room of heaven, opening a living way for us through His blood so that we can follow Him boldly into the Holy Place (Heb. 10). There He also intercedes without ceasing. He is also the “first fruits” of the Resurrection (I Cor. 15). He has gone ahead of us into death and resurrection, so that now we can reckon ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Him (Rom. 6). In His triumph over sin and death, He became the eternal heir of all the promises of God (Rom. 8). Thus, through Him we may enter into those promises, as in Him they become our inheritance as well (II Cor. 1). Because He already reigns on high, as we set our hearts on what His kingship is all about, we get to share in all the resources of His Kingdom (Col. 3). Regarding all God has for us, “Christ alone” goes ahead of us and prepares the way for us.

5) Who He is WITHIN us – now ... Christ reveals His supremacy by His saving presence among His people. He sets up His throne among us. By His Spirit He dwells within us, reproducing in us His godly characteristics, His inexhaustible wisdom, the fruit of His Spirit (Gal. 5). He transforms us individually and corporately to become more like Him, helping us overflow with His love for the Father and each other. He unites us by His reign among us. Paul writes in Col. 1 — “Christ is in [among] you, the hope of glory ... I ask God to fill you ... (you) share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light ... (so) live a life worthy of the Lord”. Our life together is bound around “Christ alone”.

6) Who He is THROUGH us – now ... His reign is manifested as His Spirit works through His Church to reach multitudes of unloved, disinherited, oppressed, impoverished and, above all, *unreached* with the Gospel, both neighbors and nations. He reigns as He empowers His people to further that Gospel worldwide. Concerning this dimension of Christ’s reign through His followers, Paul writes about “the commission God gave me ... to make known among the nations the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ ... to this end I labor, struggling with all His energy He so powerfully works in me” (Col. 1). Christ scatters the strongholds of dark powers as He brings God’s purposes to their ordained climax. Our mission advance is about “Christ alone”.

7) Who He is UPON us – now ... Because Christ’s reign is inexhaustible, there is always “so much more” the Father desires to give us. Sometimes He comes upon us when His glory breaks through by outpourings of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of His people – what some call “Christ awakenings”. During these times, Jesus intensifies and accelerates our experiences of His supremacy. Our King is also passionate for the *consummation* of all things. One day He will come “toward us” in a spectacular, bodily return, as He triumphs throughout the universe forever. Both now and later, the “increase of His Kingdom” has no end (Isa. 9). We wait continually for more of “Christ alone” as we pray “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22).

To, For, Over, Before, Within, Through, Upon – what a résumé this is! No wonder Paul sums up the magnitude of this seven-fold vision of the greatness, majesty and glory of God’s Son with that decisive declaration of the Father’s everlasting intent, in Col. 1:18

“ ... that in everything Christ might have the supremacy.”

Christ Alone
ENCOUNTER SESSION I

Seeking Christ Together

Why this is important and what it could mean for us

In 1822 the French scientist Augustin Fresnel revolutionized the impact of lighthouses all over the world. For 2500 years, attempts to improve safety for ships at sea focused on increasing fire-power to intensify lighthouse beams. But Fresnel took a totally different tactic. *He studied the characteristics of light itself.* It wasn't long before he discovered light waves. Subsequently, he manufactured glass domes that incorporated several prisms compatible with these waves, refracting them with incomparable brilliance. Known as the Fresnel lens, for the next two centuries his invention was used in lighthouses on every body of water.

What better strategy for the Church in this hour? Call it "*Fresnel's Fascination*". It's all about Christians giving priority to the study of God's Son *as* our Light. It's about all of us, including Christian leaders, ceasing our exhausting efforts to fuel spiritual fire in our churches with home-made plans and popular programs and impressive personalities — ceasing long enough to take stock of the glory of the One we're called to share with our city, region and beyond. Instead of focusing attention on biblical teaching about church growth, revival or outreach, these Encounter Sessions will major on "Fresnel's Fascination", as we focus, first of all, on what God says about **Christ alone**. We want to enlarge our vision of the One who alone can grow our churches, or revive and mobilize a congregation for mission.

That's the agenda on which the united prayer movement in metro New York has been focused for more than two decades. Our passion has been for a genuine, God-given Christ-awakening among God's people and throughout the whole region. At its core, this movement has been a heart-cry for all streams of the Church, once again, to be wrapped up in Christ alone. We need to see *Him* as the ultimate answer to all our prayers. Our plea and passion has been to experience an awakening to Him that will transform how we see Him, seek Him and savor Him for ALL He is. Which, in turn, will transform how we speak of Him, show Him, serve Him and share Him for ALL He is.

During the January, 2010, NYC PASTORS PRAYER SUMMIT, taking John 15:5 as our theme text, over 200 pastors and ministry leaders prayerfully unpacked a Biblical perspective on the supremacy of God's Son. They experienced a kind of "Fresnel's Fascination"! They did so using seven prepositional phrases to help them—the same ones we will use in these "Encounter Sessions": Who Christ is **TO** us, **FOR** us, **OVER** us, **BEFORE** us, **WITHIN** us, **THROUGH** us and **UPON** us. The **goal** for each small group session (as it was for those at the Summit) is to become better servants of Christ who share with each other a much greater vision of the glory and greatness of Jesus, so that we join in offering to the Father more effective, persistent prayers for a "Christ awakening" in our churches and communities. These sessions also can help to renew an entire prayer movement so that it truly exalts His *name*, ratifies His *claim*, spreads His *fame*, extends His *reign* and increases His *gain* through answered prayer.

In Encounter Session I, we want to touch on:

- Becoming PERSON-driven Christians who live for Christ alone
- The Ascension: Its impact on here and now for Christ alone
- Why the greatest crisis *inside* our churches is about Christ alone
- Why a "*Christ-awakening*" is our great hope today for exalting Christ alone
- How in everything we must give the supremacy to Christ alone
- Seven dimensions of His supremacy that magnify the glory of Christ alone
- How we'll spend these sessions pondering, proclaiming and praying "Christ alone"

Starting place: APPENDIX I of this study guide provides you an essay: "*Christ Alone: Foundational Thoughts*". It briefly explores each of the bullet points above. The best approach is for everyone in your group to read that document *prior* to your meeting to explore Encounter Session I. Then when you gather, follow the suggestions under "*How to Conduct*". When you discuss the essay use the following questions (Note: there is no "TRIBUTE" for this session, so an expanded set of questions is provided):

Christ Alone
ENCOUNTER SESSION I (con't)

FOR REFLECTION, DISCUSSION AND PRAYER
related to the essay: “*Christ Alone: Foundational Thoughts*” [Appendix I]

(NOTE: Each question holds vital implications for how we seek God’s face for a Christ-awakening.)

- 1) If you were to Twitter just one description of the greatness of Christ to another believer, what would you say? How would you turn that Tweet into a prayer of praise?
- 2) What does the Ascension mean to you? When was the last time you heard someone teach on it or when did you last teach on it yourself? In either case, how did the teaching enlarge your vision of Christ? How might that vision increase, enlarge and empower your prayers? What would you like to say to the Father right now about the splendid reality of Christ’s ascended glory and on-going reign?
- 3) Do you see a “crisis of Christology” manifested in any way in your own Christian circles? If so, in what ways does it express itself? What kind of prayers of *repentance* should such a crisis elicit from us? How should it change the way we pray for a *Christ-awakening* in our churches?
- 4) If confronting and curing this crisis requires a Spirit-given “Christ-awakening” among God’s people, what do you think the Spirit requires of us, especially of Christian leaders, to foster such a movement? If we truly desire for this great hope to be fulfilled, how might we re-shape our *teaching* and *preaching*? How might we better fulfill Colossians 1:27-29 and 3:16, increasing our conversations about the glory of Christ so that we saturate our lives with the truth in Jesus?
- 5) Where do you already see early signs of such an awakening for which to give the Father praise? How could those signs help renew praying and preaching for all of us?
- 6) How would you sum up each of the seven dimensions of Christ’s supremacy explored at this Summit? If you were to pray and preach based on this seven-fold “Christology” how could this transform the faith and obedience of the people God has called you to serve? In other words, if God were to awaken His people to this larger, more comprehensive vision of Christ alone, what specific differences would this make to our worship, or fellowship, or praying, or daily discipleship?
- 7) In what ways do *you personally* need to restore to Jesus more of His rightful place in your heart and ministry? How do *you* desire to encounter Him afresh as your supreme Lord, without whom you can do nothing? In what ways do you want the Spirit to change you so that your life and ministry become more and more about Christ alone?
- 8) How might we as pastors and leaders collaborate across the region, in a John 17-type unity, so that God’s people in this region might be renewed to a transforming passion for Christ alone and for greater manifestations of His supremacy among us and through us?
- 9) Why would all of us, but especially pastors and leaders of the Church, praying *together* help to prepare the spiritual soil far better for a Christ-awakening in our region? Specifically, how should leaders *pray for each other* as spiritual shepherds, as we seek together to foster and serve such a Spirit-given movement toward “Christ alone”?
- 10) At the same time, how might all God’s people, especially leaders, *help one another* more consistently, effectively and powerfully spread among fellow Christians a fresh, biblical vision of the glory and greatness of “Christ alone”?
- 11) What are other practical ways we might *labor together* right now in this strategic effort?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: Col. 1:12-20, 24-29 / II Cor. 10:3-5; 11: 1-4/
II Jn. 8-10 / Zechariah 8: 20-23; 9:9-13

CHRIST ALONE

Who He is TO us

Who He is FOR us

Who He is OVER us

Who He is BEFORE us

Who He is WITHIN us

Who He is THROUGH us

Who He is UPON us

Christ Alone ENCOUNTER SESSION II

Who He is TO us

Who He is TO us – now ... This truth speaks of how His supremacy is eternally rooted in His deity, His nature and His character, as well as in His Trinitarian existence as the Son of the Father. He is the embodiment and fulfillment of all the purposes, prophecies and promises of Scripture. In Him we see the fullest display of God's holiness, love, righteousness, justice, compassion – as well as God's commitment to the reclamation of His whole creation along with all who trust in Him (Heb. 1). Jesus said "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14). Colossians 1 tells us "Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation..." There's nothing God wants to reveal to us about Himself beyond who Jesus is. It's all to be seen in "Christ alone".

The Essentials

- Behold who He is TO us *as defined by who He is to and in the Triune God*
- Behold who He is TO us *as the full and final revelation of God Himself*
- Behold who He is TO us *as summed up by His unique attributes and characteristics*
- Behold who He is TO us *as He embodies the principles, prophecies and promises of Scripture*
- Behold who He is TO us *as the Father's inexhaustible treasure to be uncovered through all ages*
- Behold who He is TO us *as we find out who He is for, over, before, within, through and upon us*

Read TRIBUTE I, then discuss and pray around these questions and passages:

- 1) What are some of the great, eternal truths about God's Son that impress you the most or have had the greatest impact on your life? Why should those truths compel you to seek *greater* revelations of His glory and more of His advancing Kingdom?
- 2) How would *you* describe His infinite place and relationship within the fellowship of the Triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)? Why should those truths encourage you to be more and more focused on Christ alone? How might it change your expression of worship toward God? Or change how you preach about God's Son?
- 3) What are some of the various ways God reveals His nature, His glory and His purposes to the nations? How is His revelation to us in Christ similar to these other avenues? How is it significantly different? In what sense is Christ the *final* revelation of God – that God has nothing for us beyond who Jesus is?
- 4) One early Church father wrote: "The glory of Christ is the Person of Christ". Simply based on who He is TO us, why would a fresh, Spirit-given Christ-awakening among God's people be deeply renewing, reviving, re-energizing? In what ways should this hope shape the agenda we pursue as we pray and preach for the advance of His Kingdom in our region?
- 5) What is one aspect of who Christ alone is TO us where *you personally* would like to "grow in the grace and knowledge" of Him, so as to better share Him with believers and unbelievers alike? How might you go about seeking God to help you grow fresh intimacy with Jesus?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: John 1:1-14 / Hebrews 1:1-3 / Psalm 72.

TRIBUTE I

(Note: Have one person read it, or read in unison or responsively. Consider doing so on your knees.)

Father: We come to you to proclaim the name of your Son together – to spread His fame, embrace His reign, increase His gain and honor His claim about he is FOR us. As we do, awake us to Him afresh for ALL that He is. May the praise we bring to Him in these moments come forth alive in us by your Spirit and rise up as a blessing to you forever. We use your Word to magnify your Son, without whom we are nothing and can do nothing. This TRIBUTE is all for Christ alone, who stands here among us, right now, our one and only Hope of Glory.

Lord Jesus Christ: THIS IS OUR TRIBUTE TO YOU – OUR TRIBUTE TO WHO YOU ARE TO US,

There IS one God and Father from whom all things come and for whom we exist. There is equally one Lord – You are that one Lord; through you all things come and through you alone we exist. We celebrate you for who you are TO us. You are the Son the Father loves, with whom He is well pleased – with whom we are well pleased, too. All that the Father has is yours. Therefore the Spirit takes all that is yours and reveals it to us. We receive this revelation with great joy. And, we are hungry for more. By the will of God, we are your disciples, focused on you alone and on all you are to us, because we have been baptized into the name of the Triune One – Father, Son and Spirit.

Like John, we stand in awe of your face shining like the sun. We behold your eyes like flames of fire. We hear your voice like the thunder of mighty waters. We are as dead men before you. We declare you to be TO us Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End, the First and the Last. Before Abraham was, you always were. We have no other past but you; we want no other future but you. This is who you are TO us as well as to all the nations.

You were in the beginning with God and you are God. You, the one eternally folded in the bosom of the Father, you are the only one who truly knows God and yet, you have declared Him to us. You said that those who see you actually do see the Father. Your Word says those who have you automatically have the Father, too. You said that eternal life is to know both you and the Father. John wrote that you, as God's Son, are the true God and eternal life. Truly, You are the holiness of God. You are the perfection of God. You are the righteousness of God. You are the wisdom of God. You are the power of God. You are also the lover of our souls. And what wondrous love is this!

Forever you are the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his very being. Forever you are the image of the invisible God the first born of creation, the firstborn from the dead. No wonder by you all things were made, in heaven and earth, visible and invisible. You are before all things and in you all things are held together, as you alone sustain all things by your powerful word. No wonder you are superior to everything that has ever been created, including even the angels around the Throne. No wonder your name is the name above every name, both in this age and in all the ages to come. This is who you are TO us, as well as to all the nations.

To us you are the one who fulfills the royal praises in Psalm 45, which declares: You are most excellent, anointed with grace, God-blessed forever. In your majesty you ride forth victoriously. Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever. You are anointed with joy, with robes fragrant with the Glory of God.

You are almighty. Supreme. Majestic. Wonder-filled. Incomparable. We behold you, Lord Jesus, at the center of the Father's throne, with myriads of angels proclaiming you as worthy, worthy, worthy. We behold you magnified by the floodlight from lamps which represent the seven-fold Spirit. We behold you and rejoice in you as the triumphant Lamb before whom all creation and all the redeemed of all the ages bow down and worship, before whom all of us here and now, bow down and worship – to YOU belong blessing and honor and glory and strength and power forever and ever. All of Scripture, all of creation, all of history, all of the purposes and prophecies and promises of God are summed up *in you alone*.

This tribute expresses a small part of the inexhaustible riches of who you are TO us and to all peoples.

So, Father: This is how we celebrate your Son in this hour – our Lord Jesus Christ. We exalt Him. We exult in Him. We do so because of all He is TO us – now. Therefore, everything we are and have, every breath we breathe, every step we take, every service we render, every prayer we pray, every praise we bring, is only possible by Him and Him alone. For without Him – without all He is TO us – we are nothing and we can do nothing. More and more, by the revealing work of your Spirit, awaken us to Christ alone – awaken your whole Church to Christ alone – so that increasingly He might become TO us our all in all. **AMEN.**

CHRIST ALONE

Who He is TO us

Who He is FOR us

Who He is OVER us

Who He is BEFORE us

Who He is WITHIN us

Who He is THROUGH us

Who He is UPON us

Christ Alone ENCOUNTER SESSION III

Who He is FOR us

Who He is FOR us – now ... Concerning His incarnation we read in Colossians 1 – “God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him” (vs. 19). He became one *of us, for us*. His supremacy became visible through the totality of His earthly ministry, including His righteous life as He kept the Law perfectly on our behalf. Then, in His flesh He offered Himself for us by His redemptive, sacrificial crucifixion, followed by His victorious resurrection to conquer death for us. We read in Colossians 1 – “through Him (the Father) reconciled to Himself all things ... through His (the Son’s) blood ... through whom we have redemption by His blood, the forgiveness of our sins”. All He did *for us* means that our hope about our eternal destiny is based on the redeeming work of “Christ alone”. It is totally sufficient.

The Essentials

- Behold who He is FOR us *as He becomes forever one of us, in the Incarnation*
- Behold who He is FOR us *as He sacrifices Himself in the place of us, on the Cross*
- Behold who He is FOR us *as He defeats death on behalf of us, by the Resurrection*

Read TRIBUTE II, then discuss and pray around these questions and passages:

- 1) How does Christ’s *incarnation* enrich and expand your understanding of God? of Creation? of what it means to be human? of the purposes of salvation? of how we should respond to one another? of our ministry to neighbors? of our mission to the peoples of the earth? of our outreach to the poor? of our hope about the ultimate outcome of God’s plan for the ages?
- 2) How could any or all of these implications of the incarnation enlarge your vision of the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ? How might they increase your involvement in His Kingdom’s advance? How might they unleash new directions and agendas in your praying and in your preaching?
- 3) In what critical ways does Christ being “FOR us” in His incarnation directly impact all He has done “FOR us” by His dying and rising again? What implications does the *integral relationship* among His coming, His sacrificing and His triumphing have for how we worship Him, seeking Him and proclaim Him?
- 4) What truths about the cross and its results reinforce our theme of “Christ alone”?
- 5) In what senses might we call the cross is the *pinnacle display* of Christ’s supremacy?
- 6) How does Jesus’ resurrection impact, spiritually and strategically, what we hope for, what we pray for, what we preach for and what we labor for?
- 7) As we seek a fresh Christ-awakening movement in our region, why would a stronger emphasis (by prayer and proclamation) on who Christ is FOR us help prepare God’s people to receive it? How would the “FOR” aspect of His reign also be more fully magnified through such a Spirit-driven renewal?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: | John 1:1-2:2 / | Cor. 15:17-27/ Isaiah 53

TRIBUTE II

(Note: Have one person read it, or read in unison or responsively. Consider doing so on your knees.)

Father: We come to you to proclaim the name of your Son together – to spread His fame, embrace His reign, increase His gain and honor His claim about He is FOR us. As we do, awake us to Him afresh for ALL that He is. May the praise we bring to Him in these moments come forth alive in us by your Spirit and rise up as a blessing to you forever. We use your Word to magnify your Son, without whom we are nothing and can do nothing. This TRIBUTE is all for Christ alone, who stands here among us, right now, our one and only Hope of Glory.

Lord Jesus Christ: THIS IS OUR TRIBUTE TO YOU – OUR TRIBUTE TO WHO YOU ARE FOR US.

You were made flesh and dwelt among us, as one of us, FOR us. You are Emmanuel – God with us to be FOR us as the Son of Man. You manifested the glory of God in human form, full of grace and truth – and so now out of the fullness of your incarnation we will forever receive one blessing after another. YOU, the one who was from the beginning. YOU were seen with your disciples eyes, touched with their hands, heard with their ears, proclaimed by their lips. YOU are the mystery of godliness – it is all about you and what you have done FOR us – that you appeared in a body, that you and your mission of salvation were vindicated by the power of the Spirit; that you were seen by angels in resurrection glory, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up to the Throne of Heaven. YOU came among us as one of us yet without sin, so that now we too can have fellowship with you, even as your blood keeps on purifying us from all sin. You did this for us. You are ready to do this for all the nations.

In fact, you are the atoning sacrifice not only for our sins but for the sins of the whole world. You said, that You did not come to be served, but to serve and to give your life as a ransom for many. Truly, it pleased the Father for all His fullness to dwell in you, so that through you He might reconcile all things back to Himself, making peace by your blood shed on the cross. In you are fulfilled those ancient words that foresee: It was you who took up our infirmities FOR us. It was you who carried our sorrows FOR us. It was you who was pierced for our transgressions. It was you who was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brings us peace with God landed on you. By your wounds we are healed. By yours and yours alone.

More than that, you are the Resurrection and the Life, both for us and for the nations and for all creation that waits for you to deliver it from its bondage to decay. That's why you said that those who live and believe in you will never die. That's why you also said that whoever hears your word and believes in the Father who sent you has eternal life and will not be condemned but already have crossed over from death to life. That's why you said that because you live we shall live also. That's why you said that the time has already come when the dead will hear your voice and those who hear will live because the Father has granted to you, His Son, to have life in yourself – for our sakes. If you had not been raised from the dead, how pitiful would be our condition. But you are raised from the dead FOR us. You are first fruits of our own, coming resurrection. In you all who belong to you will be made everlastingly alive. You have conquered death FOR us. You have brought life and immortality to light and you did it all FOR us. You were dead, but behold you are alive forevermore and you hold the keys to death and Hades, FOR us. Truly, you are the Living One. You were crucified because of weakness but you now live by the power of God. Even so we are weak in as we surrender totally to you, but because of you, and you alone, we will live by the power of God in order to give ourselves to you and to your alone forever.

This tribute expresses a small part of the inexhaustible riches of who you are FOR us and for all peoples.

So, Father: This is how we celebrate your Son in this hour – our Lord Jesus Christ. We exalt Him. We exult in Him. We do so because of all He is FOR us – now. Therefore, everything we are and have, every breath we breathe, every step we take, every service we render, every prayer we pray, every praise we bring, is only possible by Him and Him alone. For without Him – without all He is FOR us – we are nothing and we can do nothing. More and more, by the revealing work of your Spirit, awaken us to Christ alone – awaken your whole Church to Christ alone – so that increasingly He might become FOR us our all in all. **AMEN.**

CHRIST ALONE

Who He is TO us
Who He is FOR us

Who He is OVER us

Who He is BEFORE us
Who He is WITHIN us
Who He is THROUGH us
Who He is UPON us

Christ Alone ENCOUNTER SESSION IV

Who He is OVER us

Who He is OVER us – now ... He is supreme-to-the-max as the King of the universe, the Ruler of history, the Lord of the nations and the Master of our lives. Preeminently, He reigns as the Head of the Church, which is “the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph. 1). In fact, He “ascended above the heavens that He might fill the whole universe” (Eph. 4). Jesus is over all because God the Father has “rescued us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of the Son He loves ... (because He is) the firstborn over all creation ... firstborn from among the dead ... head of the body, the Church; (because He has) reconciled all things whether things on earth or things in heaven, making peace by His blood shed on the cross” (Col. 1:13, 15, 18, 20) His on-going reign in Heaven and earth assures the fulfillment of God’s purposes for the ages through “Christ alone.”

The Essentials

- Behold who He is *as the King OVER all creation and the cosmos*
- Behold who He is *as the Lord OVER the unfolding and outcome of history*
- Behold who He is *as the Sovereign OVER all nations, languages and peoples*
- Behold who He is *as the Ruler OVER all authorities in every sphere of human endeavor*
- Behold who He is *as the Master OVER all heavenly hosts and demonic forces*
- Behold who He is *as the Head OVER His one Body in Heaven and earth*

Read TRIBUTE III, then discuss and pray around these questions and passages:

- 1) To what extent is Christ’s redemptive work “for” us ratified and empowered by who Christ is “OVER” us – by His ascension, His coronation and His on-going reign at this very moment?
- 2) When was the last time you taught or preached on one of the six “OVER” tributes above? What were your major points? What Scriptures did you use? How did people respond?
- 3) How should a comprehensive grasp of the current, active, engaging reign of God’s Son as “the Christ” (“Anointed One”) alone transform the way we look at such issues as (pick one): discipleship, worship, holy living, suffering, occupational life, justice issues, social and political transformation, world evangelization, the daily world news, community development, city-reaching? How should it transform our prayer movements as well as our preaching?
- 4) In a Spirit-initiated Christ-awakening movement, how might Christians demonstrate, practically, their experience of a fresh, even radical, encounter with all that Christ is OVER us and the nations? Why might this *seem* like a re-conversion for awakened believers? How would this bring them to fresh convictions that the Christian life is fundamentally about “Christ alone”?
- 5) Of the six key areas listed above where Christ manifests His rightful place OVER all things, which one would you like to begin exploring more fully, in order to deepen your prayer life for others as well as your preaching to others?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: Phil. 2:6-12 / Rev. 11:15-12:12/ Ps. 110

TRIBUTE III

(Note: Have one person read it, or read in unison or responsively. Consider doing so on your knees.)

Father: We come to you to proclaim the name of your Son together – to spread His fame, embrace His reign, increase His gain and honor His claim about he is OVER us. As we do, awake us to Him afresh for ALL that He is. May the praise we bring to Him in these moments come forth alive in us by your Spirit and rise up as a blessing to you forever. We use your Word to magnify your Son, without whom we are nothing and can do nothing. This TRIBUTE is all for Christ alone, who stands here among us, right now, our one and only Hope of Glory.

Lord Jesus Christ: THIS IS OUR TRIBUTE TO YOU – OUR TRIBUTE TO WHO YOU ARE OVER US.

You said that all authority has been given to you, already – all authority in Heaven and on earth. That’s because you have fulfilled the vision of Psalm 110 that speaks of the wondrous day when the Father invited you to sit at His right hand in order to transform your enemies into your footstool. From there you rule in the midst of your Church and among all nations, in this, your appointed season of battle.

Your earliest followers reported that after you had spoken to them in your resurrection brilliance you were taken up into heaven and sat at the right hand of God. Therefore, as your disciples went out and preached everywhere you continued to meet them where you sent them, as you ruled over them and worked with them, to sovereignly confirm their message about you by your signs that accompanied them.

On Pentecost, Peter proclaimed who you are OVER us. He told the multitude that after the Father freed you from the agony of death, he filled you with joy in His presence, in the hour when he exalted you to his right hand. Then He gave you the Holy Spirit to pour out upon all flesh, reversing the disgrace of your crucifixion, making you both Lord and Christ OVER us. Because you became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, we now behold you exalted by God to the highest place, that at your name every knee should bow in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess you to be Lord over all of us – you and you alone.

In fact, because you have ascended into the heavens to reign, even angels, authorities and powers are in submission to you at this very moment. You have crushed Satan under your heel. You alone are the ruler of the kings of the earth – you and no other! You alone are destined to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, because the Kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our God and of you, His Christ, and you will reign for ever and ever. In you has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. Just as the ancient prophet foretold, the God’s government rests upon your shoulders so that its increase OVER us will have no end, as you implement your Kingdom ways, establishing them and upholding them among the nations, with justice and righteousness forevermore.

But wonder of wonders, when the Father placed all these things under your feet, appointing you the head over everything, ultimately He did so for the sake of your subjects, the Church. You are Head over the Redeemed in heaven and earth; we have become your body. As you rule over us you continue to saturate us with even more of the fullness of yourself by which you are saturating everything, in every way. When you ascended on high you took your people captive – to you and with you alone. Therefore, even now as you inhabit the whole universe with your supremacy and your activity, you are also pervading and filling your Body with that same supremacy and activity, bringing us to unity in the faith and in the knowledge of you as the Son of God. Because you are our head OVER us, our destiny together is to attain to the whole measure of your magnificence as the Christ, that we might grow up into you as our head. This is our hope because of who you are OVER us, prevailing with the same incomparable authority by which you are ruling OVER the entire cosmos. No wonder you said that calling you Lord and obeying you as Lord, would place our lives on an unshakeable foundation.

This tribute expresses a small part of the inexhaustible riches of who you are OVER us and over all peoples.

So, Father: This is how we celebrate your Son in this hour – our Lord Jesus Christ. We exalt Him. We exult in Him. We do so because of all He is OVER us – now. Therefore, everything we are and have, every breath we breathe, every step we take, every service we render, every prayer we pray, every praise we bring, is only possible by Him and Him alone. For without Him – without all He is OVER us – we are nothing and we can do nothing. More and more, by the revealing work of your Spirit, awaken us to Christ alone – awaken your whole Church to Christ alone – so that increasingly He might become OVER us our all in all. **AMEN.**

CHRIST ALONE

Who He is TO us

Who He is FOR us

Who He is OVER us

Who He is BEFORE us

Who He is WITHIN us

Who He is THROUGH us

Who He is UPON us

Christ Alone ENCOUNTER SESSION V

Who He is BEFORE us

Who He is BEFORE us – now ... First, Jesus goes before us into the Throne Room of heaven, opening a living way for us through His blood so that we can follow Him boldly into the Holy Place (Heb. 10). There He also intercedes without ceasing. He is also the “first fruits” of the Resurrection (I Cor. 15). He has gone ahead of us into death and resurrection, so that now we can reckon ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Him (Rom. 6). In His triumph over sin and death, He became the eternal heir of all the promises of God (Rom. 8). Thus, through Him we may enter into those promises, as in Him they become our inheritance as well (II Cor. 1). Because He already reigns on high, as we set our hearts on what His kingship is all about, we get to share in all the resources of His Kingdom (Col. 3). Regarding all God has for us, “Christ alone” goes ahead of us and prepares the way for us.

The Essentials

- Behold who He is *as the one who goes BEFORE us into the new creation of God*
- Behold who He is *as the one who goes BEFORE us into the holy presence of God*
- Behold who He is *as the one who goes BEFORE us into the grand promises of God*
- Behold who He is *as the one who goes BEFORE us into the eternal triumphs of God*

Read TRIBUTE IV, then discuss and pray around these questions and passages:

- 1) By going through the “valley of the shadow” ahead of us and coming out victoriously into Resurrection life ahead of us – and by the Father reckoning us to be united to His Son throughout this whole drama (Rom. 6) – how does Christ open to us the life of the New Creation *right now*? And guarantee eternal life in the New Heaven and Earth yet to come?
- 2) What images come to your mind when you think of personally entering God’s holy presence? If you stepped into that position *without* Christ what would you expect to happen? In what ways does Christ going BEFORE you into God’s presence change the whole experience? How does it change the way you look at the Father and at your relationship to Him? How should that shape the way you pray? The way you preach?
- 3) In what senses are we, as Paul says, “heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8)? How do the promises of God become ours to claim? In what ways should knowing Christ has gone BEFORE us to claim the promises and that we belong to Him (I Cor. 3) change the *scope* and *hope* of your praying and your preaching?
- 4) Since Christ precedes us into all four realms – new creation, holy presence, grand promises, eternal triumphs – how should this ignite, purify and strengthen our passion *for Him alone*?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: Heb. 7:15-8:2 / Rom. 8:16-39/ Micah 2:12-13; 5:1-5

TRIBUTE IV

(Note: Have one person read it, or read in unison or responsively. Consider doing so on your knees.)

Father: We come to you to proclaim the name of your Son together – to spread His fame, embrace His reign, increase His gain and honor His claim about he is BEFORE us. As we do, awaken us to Him afresh for ALL that He is. May the praise we bring Him in these moments come forth alive in us by your Spirit and rise up as a blessing to you forever. We use your Word to magnify your Son, without whom we are nothing and can do nothing. This TRIBUTE is all for Christ alone, who stands among us, right now, our one and only Hope of Glory.

Lord Jesus Christ: THIS IS OUR TRIBUTE TO YOU – OUR TRIBUTE TO WHO YOU ARE BEFORE US.

We have set our minds and our affections on things above, where you have gone BEFORE us into the presence of the Father, making a way for us to follow, as you sat down on His glorious throne. We are dead and our life is hidden now with you. Therefore we can reckon ourselves a part of the same perfect fellowship you have with the Father. Truly, all things are ours because we belong to the Christ who *precedes* us and *welcomes* into the presence, promises and purposes of the Triune God. We anticipate the day when, in a similar invitation, you will go BEFORE us into the climax of the ages so that we might join you and appear with you in glory.

You said that because your Kingdom is forcefully advancing ahead of us, we can lay hold of these *prior* initiatives, follow in the steps of your triumphs and, as a result, become a people of Kingdom breakthroughs – all because you go BEFORE us. In this way you fill up Micah's promise when he foresaw: One whose origins are from of old, from ancient times, would break open the way to go before us, that our king will pass through the gate and go ahead of us, leading us at the front lines of God's plan for the nations. In this way, as you assured us, you are not only the gate of the sheepfold but also the shepherd who calls us by name and leads your people through the gate, as you go on ahead of us to feed us with virulent pastures. Lead on, O King Eternal. The Day of march has come.

We celebrate how you died, were buried and rose again so that we might follow you into death, burial and resurrection, right now. Because you went first, all of us can now reckon ourselves dead to sin but alive to God, passionate for the One who died and rose again ahead of us, but including us. Of course we should declare ourselves new creations. It comes from our union with you, in whom the promised New Creation has already begun. As the firstborn from the dead, YOU resound with the recapitulation of the whole universe as you exhibit in yourself an unparalleled transformation that will one day encompass everything, everywhere, including all of us.

You go BEFORE us – therefore God, who is rich in mercy, has made us alive with you right now, has raised us up with you right now, has seated us with you right now in heavenly realms where we can focus entirely on you, in order that both now and in the coming ages the Father might pour out on us the comparable riches that have *already* become yours, now to be shared with your people forever. Yes, your Church has become co-heirs of the living God of the universe because you, God's Son, share with us your inheritance of all things.

Furthermore, because you have been raised to life and placed at God's right hand, you intercede for us. You go BEFORE us by your prayers. You open up to us all the promises of God. You guarantee that those promises will be "YES" to your people, because of who you are and what you have done ahead of time, even while we were still ungodly and reprobate. Such a high priest meets our need – because you are holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. You have gone BEFORE us to the Throne of Grace, making a way for us by the power of your indestructible life. We come with confidence then to enter the Most Holy Place by your blood, Lord Jesus. We now walk the new and living way you have opened for us through the giving of your body for us. With such a great priest over the house of God, we dare now to draw near to the Father without fear and in full assurance of faith.

We bless you, the one who is holy and true, who holds the key of David so that you can go BEFORE us to open what no one can shut. What wonder is this: going before us, you have set before us an open door into the presence of God, the power of God, the promises of God, the unfolding of the purposes of God, the everlasting praises of God.

This tribute expresses a small part of the inexhaustible riches of who you are BEFORE us and before all peoples.

So, Father: This is how we celebrate your Son in this hour – our Lord Jesus Christ. We exalt Him. We exult in Him. We do so because of all He is BEFORE us – now. Therefore, everything we are and have, every breath we breathe, every step we take, every service we render, every prayer we pray, every praise we bring, is only possible by Him and Him alone. For without Him – without all He is BEFORE us – we are nothing and we can do nothing. More and more, by the revealing work of your Spirit, awaken us to Christ alone – awaken your whole Church to Christ alone – so that increasingly He might become BEFORE us our all in all. **AMEN.**

CHRIST ALONE

Who He is TO us

Who He is FOR us

Who He is OVER us

Who He is BEFORE us

Who He is WITHIN us

Who He is THROUGH us

Who He is UPON us

Christ Alone ENCOUNTER SESSION VI

Who He is WITHIN us

Who He is WITHIN us – now ... Christ reveals His supremacy by His saving presence among His people. He sets up His throne among us. By His Spirit He dwells within us, reproducing in us His godly characteristics, His inexhaustible wisdom, the fruit of His Spirit (Gal. 5). He transforms us individually and corporately to become more like Him, helping us overflow with His love for the Father and each other. He unites us by His reign among us. Paul writes in Col. 1 – “Christ is in [among] you, the hope of glory ... I ask God to fill you ... (you) share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light ... (so) live a life worthy of the Lord”. Our life together is bound around “Christ alone”.

The Essentials

- Behold who He is as *He INHABITS our life together in the fullness of His Spirit*
- Behold who He is as *He INDWELLS our hearts individually in the witness of His Spirit*
- Behold who He is as *He EQUIPS us to serve one another in the power of His Spirit*
- Behold who He is as *He UNITES us as one Body of Christ in the love of His Spirit*

Read TRIBUTE V, then discuss and pray around these questions and passages:

- 1) In what tangible ways have you experienced the manifest presence of Christ WITHIN believers gathered together in His name? How did believers respond to such moments?
- 2) What are practical ways to help intensify for believers the reality that God’s Son truly inhabits us right now and is actively at work within our life together as His people? What changes in the way you pray and the way you preach might lead to an increase in the revelations of Christ’s reign among your people?
- 3) How does the current ministry of Christ WITHIN individual believers *differ* from how He works with the corporate Body? How is it the *similar*? How important is His *corporate* presence to our *personal* experience of His indwelling fellowship? And *visa versa*?
- 4) What specific gifts of the Spirit, designed to extend Christ’s ministry within His church, do you long to see most of all? Are there ways you can pray and preach that would unleash these gifts more fully in your congregation or fellowship? How would expressing those gifts to one another magnify the reign of Christ among you?
- 5) Why does a stronger display of our *visible unity* in Christ validate our claims before our region that Christ is alive and reigning WITHIN us? Why would calling all our people to exalt and exult in Christ alone, more and more, help ensure this unified witness?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: II Cor. 13:1-6 / Eph. 3:14-4:7 / Joel 2: 28-31; 3:16-21

TRIBUTE V

(Note: Have one person read it, or read in unison or responsively. Consider doing so on your knees.)

Father: We come to you to proclaim the name of your Son together – to spread His fame, embrace His reign, increase His gain and honor His claim about he is WITHIN us. As we do, awake us to Him afresh for ALL that He is. May the praise we bring to Him in these moments come forth alive in us by your Spirit and rise up as a blessing to you forever. We use your Word to magnify your Son, without whom we are nothing and can do nothing. This TRIBUTE is all for Christ alone, who stands here among us, right now, our one and only Hope of Glory.

Lord Jesus Christ: THIS IS OUR TRIBUTE TO YOU – OUR TRIBUTE TO WHO YOU ARE WITHIN US.

You who sit in the center of Heaven's Throne also dwell within your people in equal measure. As Revelation portrays you, you walk among your churches, like a priest among lamp stands, in the majesty of your ascendancy. To use the words of Zechariah, You are a wall of fire around us, but you also are the glory of God within us. Borrowing words from David, we have lifted our gates. Therefore you, the King of Glory, have invaded our midst to conquer us and draw us to yourself. As you inhabit us as your living temple, made up of us as your living stones – even so, you have become within us the master fulfillment of the Shekinah cloud that once blazed in Israel's Holy of holies. Therefore, we must be silent. We humble ourselves under your mighty hand that you, at work among us, might lift us at the right time and in the right way, for your sake alone.

The riches of the mystery of the gospel is that YOU – the one Anointed to reign over heaven and earth; YOU – the one anointed to fulfill all the prophecies and promises of God; YOU – the one Anointed to bring all of God's purposes to their consummation; YOU – the one Anointed to have first place in everything; – YOU, the Christ of God ... YOU dwell WITHIN your people. Now we can have intimacy with you in your supremacy. You do so in order to take us with you into the completion of every hope we have in you. You come among us to remove all veils, so that we might keep gazing on you face to face, as it were. Now, your Spirit can keep on transforming us into your likeness, individually and collectively, with ever increasing glory.

Because we each have been crucified with you, no longer do any of us really live but it is YOU living in us. Because you rose again, even when we suffer for you, your life is revealed in us, within the weaknesses of our mortal bodies. Inwardly you renew your people day by day. No wonder, like the Emmaus disciples, our hearts burn *within* us because you always are present *within* us, sharing yourself with us, magnifying yourself to us by your Spirit and by your Word. Every time we gather together in your name, you are in the midst of us, declaring God's glory to your brothers and sisters. In fact, you rise up in the presence of the congregation to actually join us as we sign our praises to the Father. As Zephaniah predicted: You, our mighty Deliverer; you, the one in the midst of us – you take great delight in us. You are here, right now, not only rejoicing with us but rejoicing over us with songs of thanksgiving.

Every time you draw near to breathe on us we receive greater measures of your Spirit. By infusions of your Spirit, you dwell within every single heart as well as among our hearts united, both at the same time. By infusions of your Spirit, we have become one spirit with you. By infusions of your Spirit, you actually and literally move among us. By infusions of your Spirit, you draw closer to us than we could ever draw to each other. By infusions of your Spirit, you bind us together, set us at your feet, teach us more of who you are, so as to unveil to us the mystery of your Person and your purposes, for now and for the ages. By infusions of your Spirit, you take all that the Father has given to the Son and share it with us, place it within us, unleash it among us. As Joel foretold: Whenever the Spirit is thoroughly poured out on us, we will hear you roar from the bowels of your Church. As we run to you to drink of you, you will become within us a swelling fountain, flowing out of the very core of our shared existence, so that, all peoples might know that the King of Heaven dwells among His people.

Every time we encourage one another with the truth that is in you, Lord Jesus, the message of who you are dwells more and more richly within us because that truth is spirit and life. That truth is ultimately a Person, not a doctrine. That truth is You yourself, unveiling your majesty within us. Every time we eat the bread and take the cup you become once again our shared feast, the everlasting food and drink for our souls. We consume you into our very beings, individually and corporately, and in turn we are consumed by you.

When you ascended on high you gave gifts to your Church, gifts of the Spirit, in order that you might work through all of your people. You manifest yourself – by how you serve your people, among your people, by your people.

Your love is manifested among us in such a way that you vindicate your claims on us as your disciples. As you who minister to us by how we love one another, we keep growing up unto you in all things as our Head.

You said, you are the vine who calls us to act like branches, abiding in you, wrapped around you, drawing sustenance from you – even as you abide in us, implanting your life within us, dwelling among us to produce in us much fruit. You said that without you abiding within us (and we in you) we can do nothing. And so we join you in your passionate prayer of John 17 – For your sake we pray: Place within us the glory the Father gave you that we may be one as you and the Father are one. You in us, and the Father in you, that the world may know the Father has sent you. Continue to make the Father known to us in order that the love He has for you may be WITHIN us so that you yourself may inhabit and abide WITHIN us.

This tribute expresses a small part of the inexhaustible riches of who you are WITHIN us and through all peoples who trust in you.

So, Father: This is how we celebrate your Son in this hour – our Lord Jesus Christ. We exalt Him. We exult in Him. We do so because of all He is WITHIN us – now. Therefore, everything we are and have, every breath we breathe, every step we take, every service we render, every prayer we pray, every praise we bring, is only possible by Him and Him alone. For without Him – without all He is WITHIN us – we are nothing and we can do nothing. More and more, by the revealing work of your Spirit, awaken us to Christ alone – awaken your whole Church to Christ alone – so that increasingly He might become WITHIN us our all in all. **AMEN.**

CHRIST ALONE

Who He is TO us

Who He is FOR us

Who He is OVER us

Who He is BEFORE us

Who He is WITHIN us

Who He is THROUGH us

Who He is UPON us

Christ Alone ENCOUNTER SESSION VII

Who He is THROUGH us

Who He is THROUGH us – now ... His reign is manifested as His Spirit works through His Church to reach multitudes of unloved, disinherited, oppressed, impoverished and, above all, *unreached* with the Gospel, both neighbors and nations. He reigns as He empowers His people to further that Gospel worldwide. Concerning this dimension of Christ's reign through His followers, Paul writes about "the commission God gave me ... to make known among the nations the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ ... to this end I labor, struggling with all His energy He so powerfully works in me" (Col. 1). Christ scatters the strongholds of dark powers as He brings God's purposes to their ordained climax. Our mission advance is about "Christ alone".

The Essentials

- Behold who He is *as He CALLS us to join Him in fulfilling the purposes of His reign*
- Behold who He is *as He EMPLOYS us as the base of operations for extending His reign*
- Behold who He is *as He SENDS us to impact the nations on all levels with fruits of His reign*
- Behold who He is *as He USES us in defeating the Dark Powers by the triumphs of His reign*

Read TRIBUTE VI, then discuss and pray around these questions and passages:

- 1) What are your thoughts about the statement "Christ meets us where He sends us"? What does this suggest about the unfolding of His reign right now, right where you live? What does this promise us about how He wants to work THROUGH us to advance His Kingdom right where you live? What does this imply about how you should pray and preach the supremacy of Christ alone?
- 2) Where and how do you expect to see greater demonstrations of Christ's sovereign, saving work among the nations over the next decade or two? How do you envision the Spirit of God using the people of God to accomplish this? In what sense do you see not only your own congregation but millions of other churches across the globe serving as "bases of operation" THROUGH which Christ extends His scepter among all peoples? How might that vision lead you to *pray* and *preach* more confidently for a Christ-awakening among your own people?
- 3) To what extent does the global cause of Christ face serious opposition from the powers of darkness? Where have you seen this battle exhibited in your own sphere of ministry? How have you witnessed the Enemy directly defeated in the spread of the message of Christ alone? How fully were victories accomplished specifically by what Christ did THROUGH believers (rather than *apart* from them)?
- 4) If the glory of Christ was visibly displayed in greater measure in your community or in this region – if His reign broke THROUGH His people in more potent and transformational ways – what would be different? For example: Among our neighbors? Within the marketplace? In terms of corruption and crime? In the face of moral compromise and degradation? In governmental policies? In turning unbelievers to faith in Christ? In the planting of new churches around you?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: Acts 26:15-23 / II Cor 2:12-17; 4:1-15 / Jer. 33

TRIBUTE VI

(Note: Have one person read it, or read in unison or responsively. Consider doing so on your knees.)

Father: We come to you to proclaim the name of your Son together – to spread His fame, embrace His reign, increase His gain and honor His claim about he is THROUGH us. As we do, awake us to Him afresh for ALL that He is. May the praise we bring to Him in these moments come forth alive in us by your Spirit and rise up as a blessing to you forever. We use your Word to magnify your Son, without whom we are nothing and can do nothing. This TRIBUTE is all for Christ alone, who stands here among us, right now, our one and only Hope of Glory.

Lord Jesus Christ: THIS IS OUR TRIBUTE TO YOU – OUR TRIBUTE TO WHO YOU ARE THROUGH US.

As Paul says, we will not venture to speak of anything except what you have accomplished through us in leading others to obey you. We will only boast about what you have accomplished through us by the power of signs and miracles, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that those who have not heard of your great salvation might come to know you for ALL that you are.

As you did for ancient Abraham, you bless us to make us your blessing to the families of the earth. You infuse us with every blessing in heavenly places as we are united with you in your Kingship, so that through us those blessings might enrich neighbors and nations. As Jeremiah envisioned, you come to us to give us a future and a hope in you, so that as we prosper in you, prosperity might come to the cities where we dwell. We celebrate the great promise that through your Church you will bring to yourself renown, joy, praise and honor before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things you have done for us. They will stand in awe of you and tremble at the redeeming work you have unleashed among us. Like Isaiah envisioned, we want you to shine through us with the glory of the Lord so that nations come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn. We want you to take us in our barrenness and desolation and produce through us so many children that we will spread out to the right and the left, to dispossess nations and resettle desolate cities with your life alone. As Zechariah envisioned, we want you to take us as prisoners of waterless pits and transform us into prisoners of hope, so that in the battle of the ages you can employ your people like a bow and arrow, you can wield us like a warrior's sword.

As you proclaimed in Nazareth, reading from the prophet, even so, to this very hour, the Spirit of the Lord remains upon you, anointing you. Forever you are Messiah – the “anointed one”. So now, in the same way, clothe us with your anointing so that you might preach good news to the poor THROUGH us; so that you might bind up the brokenhearted THROUGH us; so that you might proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners THROUGH us; so that you might proclaim the year of the Lord's favor THROUGH us; so that you might comfort all who mourn, rebuild ancient ruins, raise up a people clothed in your garments of salvation, and make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations – all of this THROUGH us.

You said that, since all authority is yours, we should not hesitate to make disciples for you among all the nations, especially because you would be with us, accomplishing it through us, to the end of the age. You said you were sending us the same way the Father had sent you, equipping us with power from on high to thrust us out. So, by the Spirit's filling, bear witness of yourself at all times and in all ways THROUGH us. Lead us forth in your triumphal procession, as you journey from here to ends of the earth. Spread through us your truth, in word and deed, as richly and deeply as waters cover the sea. Make us your aroma among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. By our lives and the gospel we proclaim, release through us the fragrance of the knowledge of you alone – the invitation from your life to your life ... your life, working through us to bring life to others.

As Redeemer and Lord you have reconciled us back to the Father. Thank you! But you have also given us the ministry of reconciliation, as though YOU were making your appeal through us. Therefore, as your ambassadors, we implore all we meet on your behalf to be reconciled to God. We are determined to share, not ourselves but you, Jesus Christ, as the supreme Sovereign you are. We will do this by simply to offering ourselves to serve our hearers for your sake alone, so they might encounter you alone the way we have. In our hearts we set you apart as Lord and Christ – we consecrate you to your rightful place in our lives and our churches – in order to remain ready and able to give an answer to anyone who asks us for reasons we have such a great hope we have found in you alone.

Lord Jesus, only YOU can work in us that which is exceedingly pleasing to the Father. Only YOU can equip us with everything good for doing God's will. Lord Jesus, you are the vine from whom all your branches draw sustaining power to serve you. We did not choose you. You chose us. It was you who ordained that in relationship with you we

should go forth and bear much fruit, fruit that endures forever. Already, all over the world, the good news of who you are is spreading and bearing fruit; so now, may it do so through us, for your praise among all peoples. You are building the Church on the foundation of the revelation that you truly are the Christ, the Son of the living God. You have given your people the keys to that Kingdom, to open what Heaven has already opened and to shut what Heaven has already shut. So, lead us on. Through us engage and prevail against the very gates of Hell and Hades.

Now has come the salvation and the power and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of you as His Christ. By you the accuser has been hurled down. Therefore, thoroughly overcome him by your blood, O Lamb of God. Thoroughly overcome him through our testimony, spoken to one and all, about who you are, about *all* that you are – even if that means we must lay down our lives for your sake and the gospel. We are ready to be given over to death for your sake, that your life might be revealed in our mortal bodies. So, let death be at work in us, as long as your life is at work in others through us. We can do no less. Your love compels us. You deserve for us to lay before you the fruits of the travail of your soul. So exalt yourself through us, before the eyes of the world, whether by life or by death. Because, for us to live and serve is Christ and Christ alone.

This tribute expresses a small part of the inexhaustible riches of who you are THROUGH us for the sake of all we serve.

So, Father: This is how we celebrate your Son in this hour – our Lord Jesus Christ. We exalt Him. We exult in Him. We do so because of all He is THROUGH us – now. Therefore, everything we are and have, every breath we breathe, every step we take, every service we render, every prayer we pray, every praise we bring, is only possible by Him and Him alone. For without Him – without all He is THROUGH us – we are nothing and we can do nothing. More and more, by the revealing work of your Spirit, awaken us to Christ alone – awaken your whole Church to Christ alone – so that increasingly He might become THROUGH us our all in all. **AMEN.**

CHRIST ALONE

Who He is TO us

Who He is FOR us

Who He is OVER us

Who He is BEFORE us

Who He is WITHIN us

Who He is THROUGH us

Who He is UPON us

Christ Alone ENCOUNTER SESSION VIII Who He is UPON us

Who He is UPON us – now ... Because Christ’s reign is inexhaustible, there is always “so much more” the Father desires to give us. Sometimes He comes upon us when His glory breaks through by outpourings of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of His people – what some call “Christ awakenings”. During these times, Jesus intensifies and accelerates our experiences of His supremacy. Our King is also passionate for the *consummation* of all things. One day He will come “toward us” in a spectacular, bodily return, as He triumphs throughout the universe forever. Both now and later, the “increase of His Kingdom” has no end (Isa. 9). We wait continually for more of “Christ alone” as we pray “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22).

The Essentials

- Behold who He is *as He prepares us for the impending CONSUMMATION of His eternal reign*
- Behold who He is *as He stirs in us EXPECTATIONS of more of His eternal reign right now*
- Behold who He is *as He pours on us dynamic APPROXIMATIONS of His eternal reign right now*
- Behold who He is *as He visits us with refreshing AWAKENINGS to His eternal reign right now*

Read TRIBUTE VII, then discuss and pray around these questions and passages:

- 1) What do you envision about the end of history? the climax of the ages? the completion of the Father’s redemptive plan? the summing up of all things in Christ in heaven and earth? the Consummation in Christ Jesus of all the prophecies and promises of God’s Word?
- 2) What do *you* expect to experience in the Hour when God’s Son comes UPON His people, His enemies, and the whole universe, in His grand and glorious Final Victory?
- 3) Are you and your people *ready* for this ultimate revelation? If not, how could you help them live with greater expectations and more eager anticipations of the Christ’s great appearing?
- 4) In what sense would it be correct to say that the Eternal State (Rev. 21-22) is all about “Christ alone”? How should that shape the way we *pray* for more displays of His glory and reign *right now?* or the way we *preach* about the extent of Christ’s supremacy *right now?*
- 5) In what ways are you and your people experiencing regularly, by the work of the Spirit, more and more of Christ presence and reign? In what ways today might you be “tasting the powers of the Age to come” (Heb 6) beyond what you are now experiencing? In what ways are you and your people seeking God’s promises in Jesus for more “approximations” of the Consummation?
- 6) How might all the dimensions of a vision of Christ UPON us reinvigorate your *praying* for a Christ-awakening? Or enrich your *preaching* on Christ and the hope of reawakening to Him?
- 7) If Christ were to come UPON His people in this region in whole new ways – in what we might call revival or renewal or, more specifically, a *Christ-awakening movement* – how would you expect that blessing to intensify, accelerate, expand, deepen and fulfill much of what He is *already* doing here? What might that look like?

KEY SCRIPTURES to ponder, pray, proclaim: II Thess. 1 / Eph. 1 / Isaiah 60 / Rev.1, 20-22

TRIBUTE VII

(Note: Have one person read it, or read in unison or responsively. Consider doing so on your knees.)

Father: We come to you to proclaim the name of your Son together – to spread His fame, embrace His reign, increase His gain and honor His claim about He is UPON us. As we do, awake us to Him afresh for ALL that He is. May the praise we bring to Him in these moments come forth alive in us by your Spirit and rise up as a blessing to you forever. We use your Word to magnify your Son, without whom we are nothing and can do nothing. This TRIBUTE is all for Christ alone, who stands here among us, right now, our one and only Hope of Glory.

Lord Jesus Christ: THIS IS OUR TRIBUTE TO YOU – OUR TRIBUTE TO WHO YOU ARE UPON US.

Oh, that you would rend the Heavens and come down. Come down to make your name known to your enemies. Come down to cause the nations to quake before you. For whenever you have done awesome things that we did not expect, you came down.

You said a day would dawn when the heavenly bodies would be shaken and all would see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory, causing our full redemption to draw near. You said that when you come in your glory with all the angels with you, you would sit on your throne in heavenly majesty and all the nations will be gathered before you. You said the Father has given you authority to judge because you are the Son of Man, and therefore a day is approaching when all who are in their graves will hear your voice and rise to face your verdict as it comes upon all peoples with perfect justice. Jude says: You are coming with thousands upon thousands of your holy ones, to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of their ungodly acts. Truly, one day you will come UPON the nations, even the whole creation, resulting in the heavens disappearing with a roar. On that day, when you come UPON all nations, the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Oh King of kings and Lord of Lords, we tremble in anticipation of that hour when you yourself will be revealed from heaven in blazing fire. We tremble because you will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the good news of who you really are as the Lord Jesus Christ.

Most of all, however, we tremble knowing that on that day you will come UPON us, as well, as your people. You will descend to us to be glorified among your saints, as you deserve, and to be marveled at among all who have believed. You will appear a second time, not to bear sin but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for you. And we *are* waiting for you. As the righteous Judge you will present a crown of righteousness to those who have longed for your appearing. And we *long* for your appearing. We do not fear your appearing. We look forward to that day when you will come UPON a new heaven and new earth, bringing us forth to dwell in a habitation where righteousness forever will be our home.

But until that hour arrives, please come UPON us *now* by the outpouring of your Spirit to awaken us, to revive us, to renew us, to empower us. Come UPON us *right now*, by your Spirit, to fulfill every good purpose we have intended and every act of love prompted by our faith in you. Come UPON us *now*, by your Spirit, so that your name, Lord Jesus, may be glorified in us and we in you, more and more and more. Come UPON us *now*, by your Spirit, that we might enjoy foretastes today of the powers of the age to come. Come UPON us *now* with approximations of that Consummation, that we might be revitalized and redeployed by YOU alone. Where ever sin abounds, come UPON your people *now*, abounding with grace far greater than our sin. Let your grace reign throughout your Church to bring forth the fruits of eternal life.

Behold, the night is nearly over, behold, the day is at hand. Therefore, you deserve to be the one with whom we clothe ourselves right now, losing ourselves, in new ways, in you and you alone. You deserve for us to awake from any form of deadly slumber that you might shine on us, in new ways. Come upon the eyes of our hearts; heal our blindness. Focus us afresh on the full extent of all we have in you. Focus us afresh on the sure and victorious hope you have won for your people. Focus us afresh on the riches in glory you have inherited for your people. Focus us afresh on the resurrection power you have unleashed in your people – the power the Father exerted when he brought you out of the tomb, the power which seated you at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the age to come. Focus us afresh to our destiny in the plan of the Father who works everything according to His good pleasure. We celebrate the plan which He purposed in you, the plan to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment – His plan to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under you as the one and only Head. Yes,

awaken us, reintroduce us and reconvert us back to these awesome truths that proclaim the majesty of your everlasting supremacy upon us all, Lord Jesus Christ.

We worship you, with reverence and awe. We worship you, the consuming fire you are. Even so, we invite you, as an act of devotion, to come like fire UPON us right now, so that we might live and labor in a way that hastens the day of the Lord. As Malachi envisioned, we invite you to suddenly come upon your temple. Come, be a refiner's fire. Come, purify your leaders; refine them like gold, so that all your people might again bring you offerings in righteousness.

Great God and Savior, as we wait for the blessed hope of your glorious appearing, come UPON us *now* to purify those you have already redeemed from all wickedness, so that increasingly we become a people eager to do for you what is good. As we wait for that blessed hope, come upon us *now* in such a way that we might be confident and unashamed before you at your coming. As we wait for that blessed hope, help us *even now* to increasingly purify ourselves even as you are so pure, knowing that when you appear we shall be like you, because we shall see you as you really are.

Open the floodgates of heaven. Pour out upon us blessings that are so full of YOU, Lord Jesus, that it will feel to us as if there is not enough room for all that your visitation accomplishes. Pour out UPON us your manifest presence. Do so, so totally, that we, with all your saints, might have power to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is your unfathomable love, so that, in unexplored dimensions, we might be filled with the full measure of the fullness of God. Bring upon us immeasurably more than we ask or imagine by your power at work in us, so there might be even greater glory for the Triune God, amplified in you and then in the people you have redeemed.

But we also stand in holy fear before you, for behold your judgments have already begun with the household of God. So, in holy fear, we pray: Restore in us a supreme love for you, so that you will not need to come UPON us to remove our lamp stand. In holy fear, we pray: Convict us of everything that offends you or denies you, so that you will not need to come UPON us to fight with us with the sword of your mouth. In holy fear, we pray: Show us how to walk fully in the truth of who you are and all that you are, so that you who searches hearts and minds with eyes like blazing fire will not need to come UPON us to discipline us for our spiritual adultery. In holy fear, we pray: Wherever you find lukewarmness among us, come to the door of your Church, speak, knock, be for us gold refined in the fire, be for us clothes to cover our nakedness, be for us salve to heal our blindness. Come UPON us, dine with us, then take us with you to sit with you on your Father's throne.

You are the lion of the tribe of Judah. You have triumphed. You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals. Slain, you have purchased a people from every tribe, language and nation to make them a kingdom and priests to your God, and they shall reign with YOU on the earth. You are the Lamb at the center of the Throne, destined to be our shepherd forever. You are the lamp of the New Jerusalem where the brilliance of your reign will invade the ends of the earth, so that nations will walk in your light and kings in the brightness of your rising. From that day forward there will be no more night. Instead, your servants will see your face clearly, even as you inscribe your name of total ownership UPON them.

Behold, on tip toe we await the Grand Finale promised at your return. You said you that return is coming soon. So come – come UPON the redeemed of all the ages. Come – come UPON the entire cosmos itself. The Spirit and the bride say to you: COME. Even so, all of us here and now say to you, COME. Come, Lord Jesus. Come.

This tribute expresses a small part of the inexhaustible riches of who you are UPON us and who you will ultimately be upon all peoples.

So, Father: This is how we celebrate your Son in this hour – our Lord Jesus Christ. We exalt Him. We exult in Him. We do so because of all He is UPON us – now. Therefore, everything we are and have, every breath we breathe, every step we take, every service we render, every prayer we pray, every praise we bring, is only possible by Him and Him alone. For without Him – without all He is UPON us – we are nothing and we can do nothing. More and more, by the revealing work of your Spirit, awaken us to Christ alone – awaken your whole Church to Christ alone – so that increasingly He might become UPON us our all in all. **AMEN.**

APPENDIX I
CHRIST ALONE
Foundational Thoughts

Becoming PERSON-driven Christians

Mega-church pastor Rick Warren has introduced into Christian vernacular the helpful phrase “the purpose-driven church” and “the purpose-driven life” (selling over 40 million books on the topic). These are great concepts! But, let me ask: How many of us have discovered, first of all, what it means to be *Person*-driven, in our churches and our own lives? In other words, how many of us are drawn into a passion for the *Person* of the supreme, sovereign and all-sufficient Son of God – for whom the *purpose* for our churches and our lives exists to begin with?

Tragically, many recent studies suggest that for multitudes of Christians there appears to be little of a compelling, *Person*-driven core to their sense of God’s purpose. Motivation based on Christ for ALL that He is, remains marginal. Relatively few of us are propelled with a hope and passion worthy of God’s Firstborn, ignited by Scripture’s teachings on His Lordship in everything. Instead, far too often we find ourselves stumbling over a life that is all about “Christ alone”.

George Barna, respected demographer of American Christianity, concluded extensive research a short time back with this troubling summary: “Overall, Christian ministry is stuck in a deep rut. Too many Christians and churches in America have traded in spiritual passion for empty rituals, clever methods and mindless practices. The challenge to today’s Church is not methodological. *It is a challenge to resuscitate the spiritual passion and fervor of the nation’s Christians.*”

Why would there ever be a need for spiritual “resuscitation” if Christians were truly following “Christ alone” as nothing-less-than the King of Glory, the Lord of the Universe, the Hope of the Nations, Head of the Church and Master of our lives? Could it be that our affections languish because Christ is not preached *inside* our churches for ALL that He is? Are we “stuck in a rut” (to use Barna’s phrase) because we’ve failed to engage Him in the full extent of His majesty and supremacy?

Some might wish to challenge that last statement. They might insist that in most evangelical churches today “Christ is being preached”. But is He? A closer look may reveal that our messages, more often than not, are about how Christ fits into who *we* are, where *we* are headed, what *we* are doing and how *we* are blessed. That’s important, of course. But is that adequate? To “preach Christ” – in the full view of His supremacy – is something else altogether. It involves helping Christians discover how they fit into who *Christ* is, where *Christ* is headed, what *Christ* is doing and how *Christ* is blessed.

But the good news is this: If we turn back to exalt once again in our Savior as the Monarch He is – if we spread this grander message about God’s Son to God’s people, inviting them to re-discover in His reign all the hope we are meant to have – we can create a life-saving paradigm shift inside the Church. We can trigger a re-ignition of our passion for Him as Lord of all. It can return us to the dynamics of a *Person*-driven discipleship.

To revitalize “the whole Church to take the whole Gospel to the whole world” (words from the Lausanne Covenant) we must restore the *whole vision* of God’s Son among God’s people. We must strive to proclaim a message that “re-converts” Christians back to Christ for ALL that He is – transforming many, once again, into *Person*-driven disciples. In turn, such a campaign can help believers become the *purpose*-driven people we long to be to advance Christ’s Kingdom where we live and beyond.

It is toward this great outcome that the metro New York prayer movement was raised up. The ultimate answer to all of our prayers these past decades is a God-given “Christ awakening” and even more a “Christ awakening movement” that exalts Christ alone for all that He is right now. Here’s one way to define this revitalizing work: “*God’s Spirit using God’s Word to re-convert God’s people back to God’s Son for ALL that He is right now.*” As

leaders of this prayer movement seek to renew it and refocus it, this “re-conversion” is surely at the heart of all we desire to see God do in our region.

“That in everything He might have the supremacy”

Within the Trinity, the Father Himself is so thoroughly consumed with the primacy of His Son that He insists, throughout the New Testament, on being known as “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. Can we choose to be any less passionate about this same Person? Should we not be inspired by how the Father both *exalts* His Son and *exults in* His Son?

Colossians 1:18 reports that for God the bottom line of every constellation He’s created – the stunning climax of every facet of salvation He offers – comes down to this: “... *that in everything Christ might have the supremacy.*” If securing Christ’s reputation is such a big deal to Heaven, should it not be equally a big deal for all of Heaven’s citizens? Should we not eagerly join with the Spirit in His role to promote Christ’s preeminence in all things? Jesus explained it this way: “The Spirit will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That’s why I said the Spirit will take what is mine and make it known to you” (Jn. 16).

Paul tells the Colossians that Christ is the “*mystery of God*”. Without question the Lord of Eternity, though plainly revealed in time-and-space-and-history, remains at the same time profoundly inexhaustible, incomprehensible, uncontainable as well as thoroughly unsearchable (as Paul specifically tells us in Eph. 3). There will always be so much more of Him to know than anyone can completely fathom. No set of categories will ever fully encompass the one “in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in bodily form” (Col. 2). In that sense, He will always be a “magnificent mystery”.

Here’s how Eugene Peterson pictures “supremacy” in his rendering of Colossians 1:17 in *The Message*:

He is supreme in the beginning, and
— leading the resurrection parade —
He is supreme in the end.
From beginning to end he’s there,
towering far above everything, everyone.
So spacious is he, so roomy,
that everything of God finds its proper place in him
without crowding.

Missionary statesman E. Stanley Jones understood this larger perspective on Jesus well. Reflecting on how He proclaimed the Savior throughout India for 40 years in the 1900s – doing so among multitudes of devotees to thousands of Hindu deities – Jones found it necessary to remind Indian Christians that Christ was simultaneously their center and their *circumference* (or, to use our terms here, both central and supreme). That was something no village idol could claim. Start with Christ as our center, Jones argued, but then keep moving toward the circumference. However, do so knowing that because He is God and Lord no one should ever expect to reach the “end point” of His reign. “Christ is all infinite and boundless,” he declared. That’s the language of “supremacy”.

The Messiah that Christians follow is one who is both central *and* supreme, both intimate *and* infinite – a Sovereign who is wholly *above* us while at the same time wholly *among* us. This is how the Church today must see and seek Him once again. This is how we must speak of Him once again. If we’re ever to recover fully all that His *centrality* holds for us, it will be necessary to increase our emphasis on the place of His *supremacy*. Given the current crisis in our Christology, we must do so without delay. The effort must receive our highest priority.

On one hand, centrality calls us to let our lives be *wrapped around* who Jesus is. On the other hand, supremacy requires that our lives also be *wrapped-up into* who Jesus is. Without question, there is a delightful difference between these two complementary positions! As one of the opening pages of our *Joyful Manifesto* suggests:

Centrality is about Christ's right to be kept at the center of who *we* are, where *we* are headed, all *we* are doing and how *we* are blessed.

Supremacy speaks of so much more.

It proclaims Christ's right to keep us at the center of who *He* is (focus), where *He* is headed (fulfillment), what *He* is imparting (fullness) and how *He* is blessed (fervency).

Watch how this distinction emerges in five familiar New Testament texts (and there are many more like them): "Christ is all [supremacy], and in all [centrality]" (Col. 3). "For us there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things [supremacy] and through whom we exist [centrality]" (1 Cor. 8). "Therefore, I press on to take hold of that [centrality] for which Christ has taken hold of me [supremacy]" (Phil. 3). "If a man remains in me [supremacy] and I in him [centrality], he will bear much fruit" (Jn. 15). "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness [centrality] through our knowledge of Jesus our Lord who called us by his own glory and goodness [supremacy]" (2 Pet. 1).

Centrality and supremacy – center and circumference. Any recovery of hope in our churches begins as we're re-introduced to our Savior as both. If vast numbers of Christians are to be re-awakened to Christ for ALL that He is, however, our word to one another must retain its strongest emphasis on His *supremacy*.

Ultimately, Christ's supremacy does not consist in His ability to *impose* His will uncontested – to break, or to take, or to shake things up (all of which He will do one day). Rather, His supremacy is preeminently about His ability to *redeem* – to reclaim, to reconcile, to restore, to remake and to re-deploy salvaged sinners to serve Kingdom agendas. Therefore, *the Cross is really His crown*. Final vindication of the Son's right to the Eternal Throne consists of His willingness to lay aside His rights, to obey His Father even to the point of submitting unto death. Hope triumphs, not only *through* His travails but *in* His travails.

Therefore, the Cross will forever remain the high watermark of all manifestations of Christ's supremacy – unsurpassed, throughout endless ages. At no point will Jesus ever appear to Christians to be more exalted than when He became the sacrifice for our sin. Nowhere will He ever blaze forth in victory more vividly than when He was vanquished on Golgotha's tree. To worship Him as He deserves, focused on Him as supreme upon His throne, we must learn first to marvel at Him supreme upon His Cross.

Ratified by the Ascension of the Son of God

Why was the early Church's vision of the Savior so expansive and so highly exalting? The simple answer: Beyond His incarnation, crucifixion and Resurrection, 1st century Christians lived daily in the full awareness of Christ's *ascension* (Acts 2). Their hearts were set on His coronation and current position at God's right hand (Col. 3). They breathed the very air of His active role from the throne of Heaven, holding sway as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords that He *already* was.

To be sure, Christ inherently possessed the *power* to govern the universe by virtue of His creating it. In addition, He could claim the inherited *right* to preside over it because of His death and Resurrection. But now, seated at God's right hand, He had a *direct role* in the success of His reign due to activities unfolding at His throne every moment. And the early Church knew it, because they experienced it.

Our Lord has no serious rivals in the universe. Instead the Father is aggressively uniting all things under His Son's feet this very moment. Christ is not waiting to be crowned as king. He is only waiting to be *recognized* as king. Reigning as its only Sovereign, He is responsible to judge the world and then cleanse it for His own uses, one way or another (Acts 17). Even as you read these words, He is actively restoring all creation, according to God's eternal plan, by the increasing subjugation of all things to Himself (Eph. 1). One day, earth's peoples from all the Ages, will be convincingly conquered at the great Climax. They will be summed up in our Lord forever, either by *redemption* or by *judgment*. His supremacy comprises the only horizon toward which all of us are moving, whether believers or unbelievers.

The message of the Ascension comes down to this: *What Jesus will be Lord of ultimately, He is fully Lord of now. Whatever hope Jesus' reign will offer the universe ultimately, it offers believers now.* All things are as much under

His authoritative oversight at this moment as they will be in the day of His Return. Even now, He freely exercises all of His divine prerogatives, executing divine purposes. This is as true today as it will be at the crowning hour of the Consummation.

In Psalm 110 (the most frequently quoted or referenced Old Testament passage by New Testament writers) we read that His reign is rolled out in His strategic role as *High Priest*. Heaven-bound in the Holy of Holies, He has taken charge permanently *as a man of prayer*. This may be the most strategic confirmation of His reputation as the summation of Christian hope.

Poised every moment at God's right hand, our Lord Jesus bears on His heart two things: Heaven's promises and the saints' pleas – simultaneously – mingled together. Persistently, He presents both to the God of all hope. As our Chief Intercessor, He stands up for His people's longings. He claims for us the Father's absolute favor. It is due Him as the Son and as the King of all kings. His perpetual priesthood procures for us God's promises for every godly desire, every act of obedient faith, every redemptive mission, every battle with the Devil – and especially, for every crisis of supremacy we may experience.

But there's more. Because He is supreme, Jesus is also the ultimate *answer* to all of our prayers. That's why the last prayer of the Bible (Rev. 22) simply says: "Come, Lord Jesus." Who He is, in kingly array, will finally bring total satisfaction to every cry of our hearts. His prayers ensure for all of us that the crowning conclusion of our prayers will unfold – as it unfolds for His universal Kingdom – just as the Father ordained from eternity (Rom. 8).

The triumphs of the Empire of the Son, present and future, are inseparable from how the Father delights to respond to the prayers of the Son. This certainty should hold every Christian captive to a Kingdom-sized vision that refuses to let us go. Because He is Lord, as the Bible teaches repeatedly, those who hope in Him (and pray accordingly) "will not be disappointed" (Isa. 64).

Why is the doctrine of the Ascension so important? Quite simply, it strikes at the very heart of the short survey we've just conducted. It explains the critical nature of the 2,000-year-old battle over the true parameters of Christ's sovereign glory. What we've discovered is that frequently from its inception – and especially in recent decades – the Church has been required to choose between two radically different perspectives on God's Son. Evangelical theologians describe it as a choice between a "Christology from *below*" versus a "Christology from *above*". Each time the choice was made, the outcome shaped a generation's message about Him and service to Him.

Think of it this way. We must, of course, embrace the truths about the humanness – the Incarnation – of Jesus (this is the "below" perspective). But the "above" approach attempts to filter every facet of our vision of the Redeemer (including the Incarnation) through one primary lens: *Who He is, at this very hour, seated upon the Throne of Heaven*. It invites us to see Him as God of God – exalted to the Father's right hand, incomparable in authority and majesty, reigning over earth and Heaven – and to regard everything else in this light: worship, prayer, service, fellowship, the gifts of the Spirit, evangelism and missions, lifestyle choices, applications of Scripture, our struggles with sin, as well as the macro "sea-changes" (political, religious, economic and otherwise) among the nations.

The Ascension helps Christians put everything into its *proper* perspective. Our Sovereign longs to fill our horizons with a view of Himself that is *super* – overflowing with the realities of His wonder, greatness and grandeur as Lord of all. To do this, He invites us to interpret all of existence, ours and creation's, perched on the footstool of His throne.

Restoring the metro New York prayer movement to its glorious calling requires that we and all of God's people return to the overriding truth of the *Ascension*, because *all* of our prayers should result in:

- *Exalting the name* of Christ alone for all He is right now
- *Affirming the claims* of Christ alone for all He is right now
- *Spreading the fame* of Christ alone for all He is right now
- *Extending the reign* of Christ alone for all He is right now
- *Increasing the gains* of Christ alone for all He is right now

The Greatest Crisis We Face *Inside* Our Churches

Increasingly across the Body of Christ, leaders are waking up to a critical “crisis of *Christology*” among God’s people. It rises inside the Church wherever Christians are paralyzed by a significant shortfall in the way they understand the person of the Son of God, His leadership in the Purposes of God, His distribution of the Resources of God and His honor from the People of God.

This disquieting discrepancy has blindsided far too many believers around us. It has sabotaged a host of unsuspecting disciples. It has preempted the vitality of our worship, prayer, community life and ministry outreach. In too many cases, it has numbed our daily walk with our Redeemer. Above all, it has robbed God’s Son of His rightful place and praise among His people before all peoples.

John tells us: “Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching about Christ does not have God” (2 John). Period! No exceptions! Could anything be more debilitating for the global cause of Christ than this verdict? Even *Christians* can come up short on how they view and value the *supremacy* of God’s Son. They can also renege on living out before the world the *implications* of His supremacy.

Many in today’s Church wrestle with the ultimate “*identity crisis*”. It’s not so much a misunderstanding about our own identity (although in the end this is also affected). Rather, it is a disturbing confusion about *Christ’s* identity. It is our blindness to the glory of the One we claim as Lord.

We might think of this crisis in another way: as a “shortfall”. Our vision of Christ alone falls short of Who He is and ALL He is right now. For some Christians the shortfall may be less than for others; for some churches less than for others. But for the vast majority of Christians and congregations there is a “shortfall” in our Christology in at least seven areas. For now, here’s one way to summarize this pervasive phenomenon (given in their logical sequence, each one leading to the next):

- A shortfall in how we SEE Christ alone (we need to enlarge our vision)
- A shortfall in how we SEEK Christ alone (we need to intensify our prayer)
- A shortfall in how we SAVOR Christ alone (we need to enrich our devotion)
- A shortfall in how we SPEAK Christ alone (we need to reconstitute our conversations)
- A shortfall in how we SHOW Christ alone (we need to transform our discipleship)
- A shortfall in how we SERVE Christ alone (we need to deepen our love)
- A shortfall in how we SHARE Christ alone (we need to embolden our witness)

The crisis of supremacy is so intractable, so pervasive, that it will never be cured with half-hearted measures. It requires nothing short of a new kind of *reformation* – a re-forming, if you will, of vision about the *whole* Christ throughout the *whole* Church that helps us embrace *whole*-heartedly the *whole* extent of His glorious reign for the *whole* city and the *whole* world.

There’s insufficient space here to explore the multiple statistics, studies and stories that convince many about the challenge we face. (Consider the center three chapters in *Christ Is ALL!* as well as recent books like *Christless Christianity*, *Jesus Made In America*, *American Jesus*, and others.) However, it is quite *self-evident*, actually, when you come right down to it. To discover this for yourself, try this experiment with your congregation:

For the next 30 days, monitor the conversations that go on among your Christian friends. Listen as well to what you hear taught in Sunday school or in your small group Bible study. Ask yourself two questions: (1) How often do I hear the name of the Lord Jesus mentioned *at all* (apart from quoting one of His sayings, or a phrase at the end of a prayer, perhaps)? (2) And whenever I hear His name, if I do, are the things said about Him intended in any way to magnify more clearly His glory as God’s Son? – or to celebrate more fully the advances in His global cause?

In other words, do the Christians around you ever spend time talking to each other about the *supremacy* of God’s Son (by whatever terms they use)? If so, do they speak in ways that indicate they desire to deposit with each other *larger* visions of who He is and how He reigns? Whether conversing between worship services, or in a weekly home Bible study, or at a Saturday men’s breakfast – do the Christians you know seek to promote among themselves greater *hope* in Christ and His Kingdom? Do they freely talk about issues that draw on Biblical teachings regarding the focus, or fulfillment, or fullness or fervency of His supremacy (see chapter 1)?

After one month, if your congregation is like the vast majority where I've applied this test, I think you'll be stunned by what you hear (or, shall I say, by what you *don't* hear?). Jesus said words reveal what's in a person's heart. Your findings will provide "proof enough" there *is* a disturbing drought of Biblical vision and passion for the Lord Jesus among the Lord's followers. It is real. It is serious. It is spiritually debilitating. And it is *now*!

Praying and Proclaiming His Superlatives

More than any other New Testament author, Paul's writings on Christ take us to the *pinnacle* of the supremacy of God's Son. Harnessing dozens of superlative phrases, Paul describes God's Son with a cascade of keen characteristics that leaves us no doubt: the whole Christian movement, and every life in it, must forever be drawn from and focused on "Christ alone". Consider a few:

- "everything under His feet"
- "above and beyond"
- "fulfillment of the times"
- "fullness of the Godhead"
- "surpassing glory"
- "every spiritual blessing"
- "above all rule and authority"
- "Him who fills all in all"
- "all things summed up in Christ"
- "the power to bring everything into subjection to Himself"
- "in Him be all glory, throughout all generations, forever and ever"
- "when He comes to be glorified in His saints"
- "brought life and immortality to light"
- "first fruits of those who sleep"
- "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord"
- "the Blessed Hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ"

Can you imagine any figures of renown, whether historic or mythological, coming close to matching the person painted in Paul's great Christological texts? I'm thinking of Ephesians 1, Colossians 1, Philippians 2, Romans 8, Galatians 3, and I Thessalonians 4, among others. What a collage of claims. What a panorama of promises. What other personality in the universe, past or present, could ever begin to compete with the Kingdom role Paul attributes to the Lord Jesus Christ? Not even founders of great world religions would dare to compare themselves with the picture penned in such passages.

After studying Paul's take on Christ over many years, I never cease to be amazed at the regal rainbow of truths he uses to exalt our Lord. He does it in a way unparalleled in any other literature, secular or Christian. Each phrase explodes even for *Christians* (Paul's primary readership) their borders of preconceived notions about what lies ahead. Each phrase pushes into new frontiers of expectations toward Christ for *Christians* to enjoy. Each phrase leaves no doubt that because Jesus reigns, God has much more for His people than we have yet experienced. As Paul puts it in Ephesians 3, by the power of Christ in His Church, God will do "exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond all that we dare to ask, or even think ... throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

Spoken in a thousand different ways over the years, every prayer we've offered in the metro New York prayer movement has really been *one* prayer. We have merely echoed the last prayer of the Bible, "Come, Lord Jesus, Come." (Rev. 22). In all our gatherings one great heart-cry continues to prevail: "*Lord Jesus, come – come and reign among us.*" If we could tie up those hundreds of hours of concerted prayer, shaping them the way the Father desires them, and putting them into one singular, matchless bundle of corporate longings, here's what I think Heaven might be hearing:

Come, Lord Jesus!

Come, ultimately, in the triumphs of your victorious return.

*But until then, come with similarly transforming power
even now, right where we live.*

Pour out preliminary experiences of Your supremacy.

Give us foretastes of what will some day fill heaven and earth.

Focus us on your glory as the Son of God.

Fill us with your resources as the Regent of God.

Fulfill through us your mission in the Purposes of God.

By Your power, transform our lives, our churches and our city.

Let Your people here become a showcase of your majesty before the nations.

*Do all of this in a way that approximates how Your supremacy
will be gloriously manifested when you are fully revealed
at the Consummation of all things! **AMEN!***

*“Foundational Thoughts” excerpted, with revisions, from
CHRIST IS ALL! A Joyful Manifesto on the Supremacy of God’s Son
www.ChristIsAllBook.com*

APPENDIX II

Insights on a Christ-awakening

Definition of a Christ-awakening:

*“God’s Spirit using God’s Word
to re-convert God’s people’
back to God’s Son
for ALL that He is.”*

God has had it much on His heart, from all eternity, to glorify His dear and only Son. Even so, there are special seasons He appoints to that end, where He comes forth with omnipotent power to fulfill this promise and oath to Christ. These seasons are times of remarkable outpourings of His Spirit. **JONATHAN EDWARDS (First Great Awakening)**

When the Redeemer comes in the triumphs of His grace to visit His churches, then his true followers are seen waking from their apathy, and going forth to welcome the King of Zion with an energy and an earnestness and an ardor of affection greatly surpassing their first love! **EBENEZER PORTER (Second Great Awakening)**

CHRIST IS THE TEXT: All preaching [*or praying*] beside Christ, is beside the text; therefore, keep to you text. CHRIST IS THE VERY FOUNDATION AND SUBJECT MATTER of preaching [*or praying*], preaching [*praying*] without Christ is building castles in the air. CHRIST IS THE LIFE AND SPIRIT of preaching [*or praying*], all preaching [*praying*] without Him is like a body without life and spirit. CHRIST IS THE GREAT END of preaching [*or praying*], preaching [*praying*] is to manifest his glory; when Christ is not preached [*sought in prayer*], that great end is lost. **JEREMIAH LANPHIER (Third Great Awakening)**

My view of the work of Christ was severely limited. It wasn’t that I didn’t believe the right truth. I simply didn’t understand how far-reaching and all-inclusive the work of Christ really was. When I discovered the universal and cosmic nature of the work of Christ, it was like being born again, again. I was given a key to a Christian way of viewing the whole world, a key that unlocked the door to a rich storehouse of spiritual treasures, treasures that I am still handling in sheer amazement. **ROBERT WEBBER (1985, Majestic Tapestry)**

We’re having a national conversation about Jesus . . . but is it the biblical Jesus? The biblical Jesus can make little sense sometimes. He’s not a Jesus fashioned in our image. The biblical Jesus is a consuming fire, a raging storm, who shocks people into stupefaction or frightens them to run for their lives! He swirls like a tornado touching down, leaving only bits and pieces of our former lives strewn in His path. We need to talk with biblical honesty about a Jesus who not only forgives but also demolishes all the cultural images we have of Him. *On Sunday mornings we should need a full supply of crash helmets!* **MARK GALLI (2006, Jesus: Mean and Wild)**

APPENDIX III

'Christ is All'

Alpha and Omega
The Almighty
Ancient of Days
Image of the Invisible God
Firstborn over All Creation
Heir of All Things
Radiance of God's Glory
The Word
The Creator of the Ends of the Earth
Only Begotten Son
I Am
The Indescribable Gift
Anointed One
Arm of the Lord
Jesus
Immanuel
Holy One
Son of Man
An Ever-Present Help in Trouble
Teacher
Physician
Servant
Messiah
Shiloh
Cord of the Harvest
Kinsman Redeemer
A Sure Foundation
The Lord of the Sabbath
Wonderful Counselor
Prince of Peace
Leader and Commander
Desire of all Nations
King of Kings
My Fortress
Ruler of All Things
Bridegroom
Friend of Tax Collectors and Sinners
Brother
Lamb of God
Living Water
Savior
Judge
Rock
Chief Cornerstone
Head of the Church
Cord of Cords
Our Hope
Mediator
Ransom
High Priest
Jesus Christ
Advocate
Atoning Sacrifice
The Amen
Faithful and True Witness
Lion of the Tribe of Judah
The Bread of Life
The Light of the World
The Door
The Good Shepherd
Resurrection and the Life
The Way
The Truth
The Life
The True Vine
Living One
The Root and Offspring of David
Anchor
Author and Finisher of our Faith
King of the Jews
Son of David
The High and Lofty One
Carpenter
Our Dwelling Place
Guarantee of a Better Covenant
Bright Morning Star

APPENDIX IV

KEY PASSAGES

On the Supremacy of God's Son

The next few pages contain samplings from Scripture that set forth the two great themes of this *Joyful Manifesto*: *supremacy* and *hope*.

Referencing certain Old Testament customs and traditions, the Apostle Paul reminds us: “These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ” (Col. 2). A shadow can be useful in providing shade or in alerting us that someone is approaching. But ultimately a shadow calls attention to something beyond itself — to the object that casts it. In the end, shadows suggest the shape of something far more vivid and tangible and useful and lasting. In the same sense, Old Testament texts on God’s supremacy, as well as the hope shaped around that supremacy, foreshadow (point us toward) the fuller revelation of New Testament teachings on His Son. For millennia God’s covenant promises were anchored exclusively in the sovereignty of His character and actions.

But then, in the “fullness of times” (Gal. 4) the promises burst forth with a whole new level of reality, in clear view of the nations. They sprang into the foreground of world history by the incarnation of our Savior who, by virtue of His preeminence at the Father’s right hand, elicited one unanimous confession from the Church: “Jesus is Lord” (1 Cor. 12; Rom. 10). Early Christians were convinced that Jesus embodied in Himself everything the Bible claimed about God’s greatness and everything His Kingdom guaranteed. The closing verses of Isaiah 45, for example, compared with the opening verses of Philippians 2 provide just one of a thousand illustrations of how 1st century believers linked the “shadows of supremacy” with the exaltation of the risen Jesus over all.

Thus, as you study Old Testament selections below, let this be one of your major goals: To determine how ancient visions of God’s awesomeness – whether from Moses or David, Job or Malachi – along with dramatic stories of God’s activities, as recorded in Exodus or 2 Chronicles or Daniel, provide hints of more to come – *shadows when compared* to how the visions ultimately found expression and culmination in the person and reign of His Son. In other words, how does our Lord Jesus “sum up” and “flesh out” what the Old Testament sets forth about supremacy and hope?

If more in-depth analysis of any of the passages is desired, you might try one of the guides to inductive Bible study outlined in Chapter 10 (*Messengers of Hope*). They are designed to help you unlock in sharper detail the teaching of God’s Word on the glory of Jesus, both Old and New Testaments.

Whatever approach you use to dig into the texts below, in the end make it your mission to mine-out of each at least one insight on the seven dimensions of Christ’s supremacy as defined in this Study Guide (as well as in ***CHRIST IS ALL! A Joyful Manifesto On The Supremacy of God’s Son***): Who Christ is To us, For us, Over us, Before us, Within us, Through us and Upon us.

And as you do, ask yourself three questions:

1. *How does this specific insight increase our vision of Him and our hope in Him, as well as our passion for Him?*
2. *How does this specific insight help us re-focus and re-shape our prayers for a Christ-awakening in my life, my church and my community?*
3. *How might someone share this specific insight with another believer, so as to give that person (or even a congregation) larger vision of Christ’s glory and greater reasons to put their hope in Him?*

One final note: I’ve given you chapter references only for each theme. Even though in some cases the title I’ve suggested for a text applies to just a portion of a chapter, reading the entire chapter will ensure a better grasp of context and thus a more faithful interpretation of the relevant verses.

DAVID BRYANT

CHRIST'S SUPREMACY FORESHADOWED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

GENESIS

- 1-2 – God's Creation Mandate to Adam and Eve
- 6-9 – God's Judgment and Re-creation Under Noah
- 15 — God's Covenant with Abraham for the Nations
- 28 — God's Covenant with Jacob Before a Open Heaven
- 45 — God Brings Deliverance Through Joseph
- 49 — The Hope that God Gives to Judah's King

EXODUS

- 3-4 – God's Commission and Mission for Moses
- 15 — Moses and Miriam Praise God's Supreme Victory
- 17 — God Delivers Israel Out of Destruction Through Moses
- 23 — The Angel of the Lord Takes His People forward
- 24 — Moses Confirms God's Covenant with the People
- 32-34 — The Reclamation of Israel Through the Intercession of Moses

LEVITICUS

- 26 — God is Sovereign Both in Reward and Punishment

NUMBERS

- 9-10 — Led By God with a Cloud and a Trumpet
- 16-17 – God Vindicates Aaron as High Priest
- 24 — Two Oracles from Balaam about God's Kingdom

DEUTERONOMY

- 8 — Honor God for His Supremacy
- 10-11 – Hold Fast to God in His Supremacy
- 30 — Return to God and His Supremacy
- 33 — Moses Sets Great Hope in God Before the People

JOSHUA

- 1-4 — God's Commission and Mission for Joshua
- 5-6 — God's Supremacy Manifested Over a City
- 24 — Renewing a Covenant with God Full of Hope

JUDGES

- 5 — Deborah's Song about God's Deliverance
- 6-7 — God Leads the People Through Gideon

1 SAMUEL

- 7 — Samuel Rules the People at Mizpah
- 16-17 — David Anointed as King of all God's People

2 SAMUEL

- 5 — The Nation Unites Under the Headship of David
- 7 — God's Covenant with His King
- 23 — How God's King Rules

1 KINGS

- 8 — The King Dedicates a Center of Worship
- 18-19 — The Prophet Proclaims the Supremacy of God

2 KINGS

- 4-5 — The Prophet Demonstrates the Supremacy of God

1 CHRONICLES

- 12 — The King and His Army
- 28-29 — Focusing the People on the Glory of God

2 CHRONICLES

- 14-15 — God's King Experiences His Sovereignty in Revival
- 17, 20 — God's King Experiences His Sovereignty in Battle
- 29-32 — God's King Experiences His Sovereignty in Transformation
- 34-35 — God's King Experiences His Sovereignty in Reformation

EZRA

- 1, 3, 9 — Recovery and Renewal under God's Chosen Leader

NEHEMIAH

- 1, 2, 4 — Restoration and Reconstruction under God's Chosen Leader

ESTHER

- 4 — Esther Has Come to the Kingdom for Such a Time

JOB

- 1, 2, 13, 19, 33, 38, 42 — How Job Discovers Hope in the Supremacy of God

PSALMS

- 1 — The King Is Installed Before the Nations
- 16 — The King Finds Joy at the Throne
- 18 — God Gives Victories to His King
- 19 — God Conquers His People by His Word
- 20 — God's Benediction on His King
- 21 — God Answers the Prayers of His King
- 22 — The King forsaken, Restored and Proclaimed to the World
- 23 — The King as a Shepherd
- 24 — Open Wide to the King of Glory
- 40 — God's Sovereign Hand upon His People
- 44 — Our Destiny Depends on God's Reign
- 45 — A Song of Praise to God's King
- 46 — Be Still and Know that God Reigns
- 68 — The King's Victory Parade
- 72 — The Full Extent of the King's Dominion
- 77 — Appealing to God's Right Hand
- 80 — God's Sovereignty in Revival
- 85 — God's Sovereignty in Revival
- 89 — God's Covenant Promises to His King
- 102 — The Appointed Time for Kingdom Work
- 110 — The King at God's Right Hand
- 118 — When the Rejected Stone Becomes the Capstone
- 132 — God Blesses His People Through His King
- 144 — God Gives Victory to His King

PROVERBS

- 2-4 – God’s Wisdom Personified and Ruling in All of Life
- 8 — God’s Wisdom Personified and Reigning Ever Since Creation

ECCLESIASTES

- 11-12 — Because He Is Sovereign, Make God Your Highest Passion

SONG OF SOLOMON

- 1-7 — A Drama Revolving Around Consuming Passion for a King

ISAIAH

- 2 — The Mountain of the Lord In the Day of the Lord
- 4 — A Kingdom Glorious and Beautiful
- 9 — A Son Is Given to Carry the Kingdom forward
- 25-27 – Celebrating the Fruits of Heaven’s Sovereignty
- 33 — The Lord Will Arise as King
- 40 — Prepare a Highway for the King
- 42 — The Servant of the Lord Advances the Kingdom of the Lord
- 43 — Israel’s Only Savior Gives Them Great Hope
- 45 — A Earthly King Exhibits What Heaven’s King Will Do
- 49 — The Servant of the Lord Redeems and Restores the Nations
- 50 — God Vindicates His Redeemer
- 52 — God’s People Awake and Sit Enthroned with Him
- 53-54 – God’s Redeemer Suffers But then Triumphs
- 60 — God’s Glory Rises upon the Nations When God Reigns
- 61 — The Lord’s Anointed Messenger Proclaims the Coming Kingdom
- 63-64 – God’s Day Exhibits Sovereign Judgment and Redemption
- 65-66 – God Reigns Supreme over a New Heaven and Earth

JEREMIAH

- 1 — A Prophet Called to Bring Divine Revolution to the Nations
- 23 — A King Raised Up to Rule Wisely
- 30-31 – The Supremacy of God Revealed In the Restoration of His People
- 33 — When God Performs Great and Mighty Things for His People
- 50 — When God Triumphs Over the Enemy of His People

LAMENTATIONS

- 3 — I Have Hope Because God Is Supreme over All Trouble

EZEKIEL

- 20 — When God Shows His Supremacy, He Shows His Holiness
- 34 — How the Chief Shepherd Takes Charge of His Sheep
- 36 — The Multi-Faceted Hope God’s Glory Gives to Us
- 37 — Dry Bones Can Live Again When the King Is on the Throne
- 43-44 – What Happens When God’s Sovereign Presence Is Made Known

DANIEL

- 2 — A Rock that Crushes the Kings and Fills the Whole Earth
- 7 — Before the Nations the Son of Man Enters the Throne Room of God

HOSEA

- 1-3 – A Marriage Drama that Pictures the Restoration of the Kingdom
- 14 — Blessings that Come Under the Sovereign Hand of God

JOEL

2-3 — What Happens When God Roars From Zion

AMOS

9 — The Throne of Heaven Is Restored

OBADIAH

1 — The Kingdom Becomes the Lord's alone

JONAH

2 – The Resurrection of a Prophet to the Nations
3-4 – God's Sovereign Purpose for a Gentile City Prevails

MICAH

4 — The Kingdom Above All Kingdoms
5 — The Ruler of All Is the Least Likely of All
7 — When God Visits His People with Power

NAHUM

1 — The Wonderful Message that God Reigns

HABAKKUK

2 — A Prophet's Vision of Great Hope for the Nations
3 — A Prophet's Prayer with Great Hope for the Saints

ZEPHANIAH

3 — God Vindicates His People IN the Presence of the Whole Earth

HAGGAI

1-2 — The Temple is Prepared to Receive the Worship of the Nations

ZECHARIAH

3 — The High Priest Is Set Apart to Lead in God's Purposes
4 — God's Promises of Restoration Through His Ruler
9 — The Coming of Zion's King Brings Great Hope
12-14 – Here's What Happens When the Kingdom Is Established

MALACHI

3 — The Refiner of God's People Suddenly Appears
4 — God's Reign Purifies, Heals and Consummates

CHRIST'S SUPREMACY *FULFILLED* IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Note: Gospel texts that are repeated by more than one writer are presented in only one of the samplings from the Gospels.

MATTHEW

- 3 — Preparing God's People for God's Messiah
- 4 — Christ's Victory over Satan
- 5-7 — Living under the Reign of Christ
- 8 — Supreme in How He Heals
- 11 — The Kingdom is Forcefully Advancing
- 12 — Our Hope IN God's Chosen Servant
- 13 — Stories on How the Kingdom Works
- 16 — Confessing Christ's Lordship and Following Him
- 17 — A Snapshot of the Glory of His Supremacy
- 21 — The King Comes in Triumph
- 22 — Called to the King's Banquet
- 24-25 — The Consummate Display of His Supremacy
- 26-27 — Crucified Because of His Claims to Supremacy
- 28 — He has All Authority Among the Nations

MARK

- 5 — Supreme over the Sick and Demon-Possessed
- 10 — Calling the Powerful to Surrender to Himself

LUKE

- 1 — Mary's Song of Supremacy and Hope
- 1 — Zechariah's Song of Supremacy and Hope
- 2 — The Angels' Song of Supremacy and Hope
- 2 — Simeon and Anna Rejoice in Kingdom Hope
- 4 — Jesus' Message of Kingdom Hope
- 10 — Jesus Sends Disciples to Proclaim Kingdom Hope
- 11 — Kingdom Prayer and the Defeat of Satan
- 12 — Serving under the Blessing of His Supremacy
- 19 — When the King Rewards His Servants
- 22-23 — Kingdom Themes Dominate the Passion of Christ
- 24 — Kingdom Talk Dominates Resurrection Day

JOHN

- 1 — The Supremacy of the Eternal Word
- 3 — God's Promise Whenever the Son is Lifted Up
- 5 — The Son Is Supreme in Life and Judgment
- 6 — Consuming and Being Consumed with the Son
- 10 — The Shepherd and His Sheep
- 11 — The Resurrection is Found in a Person
- 14-16 — Blessings for the Church Tied to the Ascension of Christ
- 17 — A Prayer about Supremacy and the Hope Shaped Around It
- 21 — Supremacy Displayed in Resurrection Glory

ACTS

- 1 — Preparing His Disciples to Serve Him in His Ascension
- 2 — The Spirit Poured Out Manifests the Reign of Christ
- 3 — A Message of Hope and Consummation for God's People
- 4 — A Prayer of Hope and Kingdom Advance Through God's People
- 10 — Peter Proclaims the Hope and Supremacy in Christ
- 11 — Gentiles Become Passionate for Christ's Great Glory
- 13 — Paul Proclaims to God's People the Hope for the Nations
- 15 — Confirming the Sufficiency of Christ's Supremacy
- 17 — Paul Proclaims the Risen Christ to Philosophers
- 19 — Christ's Kingdom Turns a City Upside Down
- 20 — Paul Commissions Messengers of Hope
- 26 — The Supremacy of Christ Expressed IN the Conversion of Paul
- 28 — The Message of the Kingdom Reaches the Center of the World

ROMANS

- 1 — Paul's Ambitions as a Messenger of Hope
- 1 — The World's Denial of Supremacy and Loss of Hope
- 4 — Abraham's Hope Foreshadows Ours
- 5 — Hope IN Christ Never Disappoints
- 5 — Christ Is the Head of a Whole New Race
- 6 — Walking in Christ's Resurrection Victory
- 8 — Dimensions of the Supremacy of God's Son
- 8 — Our Future Glory in Christ Is assured
- 9 — God's Sovereignty over His Purposes and Promises in Christ
- 10 — The Impact of the Message about the Lordship of Christ
- 11 — The Destiny of God's People under the Lordship of Christ
- 13 — The Day of the Open Revelation of Christ's Reign
- 15 — The Impact of the Message of Hope among the Nations
- 16 — A Benediction of Supremacy and Hope

1 CORINTHIANS

- 1 — Proclaiming the Power and Wisdom of God in Christ
- 3 — Laboring for Christ with the Consummation in View
- 12-14—The Lordship of Christ and the Gifts of the Spirit
- 15 — Christ's Supremacy Displayed in Resurrection and Consummation

2 CORINTHIANS

- 1 — Christ's Resurrection Power in the Ministry of Paul
- 4 — The Missionary Manifestations of Christ's Reign
- 4 — The Hope of Triumph Christ Gives His Servants
- 5 — Our Destiny as New Creations in Christ
- 10 — Bringing Every Thought into Obedience to Christ
- 11 — Bringing Every Affection into Obedience to Christ

GALATIANS

- 1-2—Called to Proclaim the Exclusivity and Sufficiency of God's Son
- 3 — Promises Given and Culminated in God's Son
- 5 — Freedom under the Lordship of God's Son

EPHESIANS

- 1 — Everything Summed Up in God's Son
- 1 — Prayer for a Fuller Revelation of the Supremacy of God's Son
- 2 — Seated with Christ in His Reign in the Heavenlies
- 3 — Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of Christ
- 3 — Prayer for a Greater Experience of Christ's Supremacy
- 4-5 — How the Church Manifests the Headship of Christ
- 6 — Clothed in the Victory Christ Brings Us

PHILIPPIANS

- 1 — A Consuming Passion for God's Son
- 2 — Celebrating Why the Son Receives all the Glory
- 3 — Laying Hold of a Life Wrapped Up IN Christ

COLOSSIANS

- 1 — Defining Major Dimensions of Christ's Person and Reign
- 2 — How the Church Expresses the Headship of Christ
- 3 — How Discipleship Flows Out of the Reign of Christ

1 THESSALONIANS

- 1 — The Impact of the Message of Christ ON the Nations
- 4-5 — The Victorious Return of Christ and Its Implications for Saints

2 THESSALONIANS

- 1-2 — When Christ's Supremacy Is Finally Revealed to All the Nations

1 TIMOTHY

- 1-2 — Christ's Glory Displayed Through Proclamation and Prayer
- 3 — The Mystery of Christ's Supremacy Defined
- 6 — Service to Christ Lived Out with the Hope He Gives

2 TIMOTHY

- 1 — Fan into Flame Your Mission for Christ
- 3-4 — The Lordship of Christ Helps Us Persevere In Hope

TITUS

- 2-3 — God's Grace Rules Because of the Work of God's Son

PHILEMON

- 1 — The Message of Christ Brings about Social Reform

HEBREWS

- 1-2 — God's Son Speaks Sitting at His Right Hand
- 3 — Jesus: The Builder of the People of God
- 4-5 — Jesus: The Great High Priest over the People of God
- 7-8 — Jesus: The Guarantee of a Eternal Covenant with God
- 9-10 — The Supremacy of Jesus Manifested in His Sacrifice
- 11-12 — A People of Hope Shaped by the Lordship of Christ

JAMES

- 5 — The Judge Is Ready to Take action

1 PETER

- 1 — A Living Hope Rooted in a Risen Lord
- 2 — Living Stones Built on the Cornerstone
- 3 — Saved by the Resurrection of Jesus
- 5 — Serving under the Chief Shepherd

2 PETER

- 1 — Experiencing the Richness of Jesus' Lordship in Our Lives
- 3 — The Day When Christ's Supremacy Is Consummated

1 JOHN

- 1 — Walking in the Presence of the Exalted Son
- 3 — He Breaks the Power of Cancelled Sin
- 5 — Victory that Overcomes the World Is in Him

2 JOHN

- 1 — Remain in the Truth about Who Jesus Really Is

3 JOHN

- 1 — Serving for the Sake of His Name Among the Nations

JUDE

- 1 — Established Forever Before His Throne

REVELATION

- 1 — The Ascended Glory of Our Lord Revealed
- 2-3 — Seven Messages from Jesus about His Supremacy
- 4-5 — The Lord of History Is Both a Lion and a Lamb
 - 7 — Multitudes Living under the Leadership of the Lamb
- 11 — The World's Kingdom Becomes Christ's Kingdom Forever
- 12 — The ascension of Christ and the War in Heaven and on Earth
- 14 — The Conquering Lamb Rules on Mt. Zion
- 19 — Jesus and His armies Come to Judge the Earth
- 20 — Jesus Reigns and Judges Among All the Nations
- 21-22 — A New Heaven, Earth and City Where Christ Remains Our All
- 22 — A Cry for Jesus to Consummate His Supremacy Soon

APPENDIX V



About COPGNY

Concerts of Prayer Greater New York is a Christ-centered network of pastors and churches promoting a culture of prayer across ethnic, economic and denominational lines. We long to see the churches of Greater New York united in concerted prayer for the advancement of Christ's kingdom. Our focus is on strengthening pastors and mobilizing churches to experience the awesome power of united prayer. We invite you to participate in our:

- Pastoral Initiatives –
such as The Pastors' Prayer Summit
- Church Initiatives –
such as The Lord's Watch Daily Prayer Vigil
- Renewal Initiatives –
such as regional, evangelistic events

Since 1988, thousands of leaders and hundreds of churches have gathered together in prayer for our region, our nation and the world. Join us in advancing a culture of prayer, for unity and revival, across Greater New York and beyond.

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About Proclaim Hope!

A culmination of David Bryant's 35 years of ministry to the Church worldwide, PROCLAIM HOPE! was founded in 2003 specifically to help envision, foster and serve a nationwide Christ-awakening movement. They seek to awaken throughout the Church fresh hope, passion, prayer and mission, focused on the Lord Jesus Christ, by proclaiming the full extent of His supremacy and by empowering others to do the same. Put simply, their motto is "Awake to Christ for ALL that He is!"

Working with denominations, ministries and leaders across the Body of Christ, this multi-faceted outreach offers a spectrum of unique resources and opportunities (most tools are for free download). Each ministry is designed to help your church or community or city enter more fully into a God-given awakening to the supremacy of Christ for which multitudes have been praying in recent years.

To dig deeper into who we are, please visit our websites and then contact us, and let's see how we might work together.

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