



Week 4 - Solus Christus (Christ Alone)

Opening prayer

Prayer for the persecuted church:

INDIA

Mamata lives in a very remote village in Central India. In her childhood she never heard about God or understood the hope of His promises. When she did hear the gospel, she gave her life to Christ. However, she didn't read the Bible and rarely prayed. Recently, she realized how far she had drifted from the Lord. Today, Mamata has started reading her Bible. And even though she suffers for her faith, she's growing in the Lord. Lord, please let your wisdom rest in Mamata because she am studying now, help her to study well. I pray that the ministry will be

strengthened through her husband and her as they labor for you.

Prayer for a local church:

This morning we pray for our brother Kasey Crawford and Elevation Church.

Closing prayer

INTRODUCTION

There are certain statements when spoken within the walls of a Christian worship gathering that sound less than controversial (unlike last week's verses), such as...

John 14:6

6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Most of us with evangelical church backgrounds will nod our heads in agreement, silently saying, “Amen.” But today, we’re going to be reminded of why the proclamation of Christ Alone is still such a controversial claim in our culture.

- Explanation of series – Christ alone – Solus Christus – the torch of the Reformation – what

most of us consider normal Christianity today is that torch burning dimly – when the fullness of the gospel torch is preached today even Christians feel its burn

The implications of John 14:6 become apparent to most of us and that's the reason for the controversy. It says the only way to be accepted by God and gain entrance into heaven is through Jesus Christ. Alone. There is no other means, no other way, no other person that gets you to the Father.

Not through your sincere beliefs, not by your good works, your kindness, or anything else can you earn a place in heaven, but only through faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is the only way you can reach the throne room of Almighty God.

What does it mean to deny this claim? What does it mean for the person who claims to be a Christian but denies this claim? Because this is not an isolated idea in the Bible.

Acts 4:12

12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

That is the proclamation of the gospel and to deny it is to deny the gospel. To deny the gospel is to deny the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Whoever denies Jesus, whatever they claim about themselves, cannot be defined as a Christian. It is not Christian to deny Christ.

That's this morning's big idea: When we lose Christ alone, we lose Christianity.

Now is Christ Alone a reasonable proclamation? Well, that depends. If it's not true, then it's unreasonable and we should just shut up and go home. But if it's true, then God have mercy on us if we ever compromise the proclamation of Christ alone.

Compromise is always the temptation when we fear offending people. This is where evangelical Christianity has weakened itself. In the name of reaching people, which is a good and right endeavor, the church has worked hard at

removing language and concepts that people outside the church find offensive. The call for compromise is always in the name of reaching the lost.

“Many of the compromises that destroyed the mainline denominations were introduced in the name of reaching the lost.” (Douglas Wilson)

Rather than compromise, why not just give a thorough explanation of why Jesus said:

John 14:6

6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Why is He the way? Why isn't He just one of the ways? Why the exclusivity? Why does Christianity proclaim Christ alone can save? Is it ignorance, arrogance or simply narrow-mindedness?

For the record, all truth claims are exclusive by nature, even when they sound very tolerant. Take for example, this common belief that the most

important thing is love and that all religions are just different expressions of loving God.

Though that sounds tolerant it rejects the Bible's view of salvation. Not only that, this same tolerate view rejects Judaism's claims of knowing the one true God. Not only that, it rejects Islam and every other religion that doesn't agree with it. This view that all religions lead to the same place redefines those religions. It just arrogantly dismisses what they actually teach about themselves. Who knew tolerance could be so narrow-minded?

This morning, we're going to look at John 14:6 in its context and find four reasons why the centerpiece of the Reformation was Solus Christus or Christ Alone. It was the centerpiece of the Reformation because it's the centerpiece of the gospel, the good news of what Christ has done.

In the gospel of John, in the 13th chapter, Jesus is speaking to His disciples on the eve of His crucifixion. So, He knows He is about to depart this world. And what does He do? He washes their feet. He tells them that they call Him Lord

and they are right, but says if He washes their feet then they ought to wash one another's feet.

You see, everything you do is grounded in some truth or something you believe to be true. In Christianity, everything we do is grounded in this reality that Christ is Lord.

Then Jesus tells them they cannot go where He is going right now. But Peter objects and claims that He would give his life for Jesus. This is when Jesus prophesies that Peter will deny Him three

times before the morning comes. So, Jesus tells Peter that he is going to fail, then He says:

John 14:1

14 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

Have you had a great failure? Have you had a great fall? Do you feel hope is lost? Is your heart troubled? What can you comfort your soul with? What truth? What news? What reality? The answer Jesus Himself gives — “Believe in me.”

Now, here's why Jesus tells us to do this. And His reason is going to also tell us why He is the only way to the Father.

In this first statement, Jesus says belief in God is equal to belief in Himself. "Believe in God; believe also in me." This is why He begins with "Let not your hearts be troubled," because it shows the expanse of His reach — the human heart, your very soul. He has rule over the human heart because He is the God who created the soul of each individual.

Listen to the expanse of His influence.

Philippians 2:10-11

10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

He is king over everyone in the spiritual realm (heaven), because He is their Creator. He is ruler of everyone on earth, because He is our Creator. Nothing is out of His dominion because He even rules what is under the earth. He rules hell. Even

the devil is used for God's purposes, but God reigns over all and He shares that glory with His Son, Jesus Christ who is Lord.

This leads us to our first point.

1 Reason #1 - Jesus is the only way to God because there is no higher authority in the universe than Jesus Christ.

EXPLANATION

If you have offended the King, the only one who can spare your life is the King. Others can plead your case, but only the King can pardon you. How much more the God of the universe whom you have offended?

Matthew 15:19

19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.

The human heart has been corrupted through human rebellion against God. That's what sin is — rebellion against God. If you have a corruption

problem how can any outward act change the state of your heart?

Well, it can't.

That's why the cry of the Reformation is Christ Alone. Not indulgences, not penance, not confession to a priest, not Hail Mary's, not the Mass, not prayers to saints. But Christ Alone. Not Confucius, not Buddha, not Allah, not Sun Young Moon, not Krishna, not Gandhi, not Billy Graham, not even your grandmother. But Christ Alone.

Christ Alone means you cannot have faith in anything or anyone else for your salvation. It's not Christ plus anyone or anything, it's Christ alone.

I like how Steven J. Lawson put it, "There is not one drop of salvation outside of Jesus Christ."
Christ Alone because...

John 1:1-4; 14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was

not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The first reason that salvation is in Christ alone is because you can't go to a higher source of authority in the universe than Jesus Christ.

ILLUSTRATION

Have you ever been trying to solve a problem and asked, “May I speak to a supervisor?” Christianity says, “Forget the supervisors. The Founder of the company has come to us.”

2 Reason #2 - Jesus is the only way to God because He fulfilled the law of God.

EXPLANATION

John 14:2-11

2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and

prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

The second thing to keep in mind is that Christ has you in mind. He has a plan for you. He has a place for you. He will come to get you one day, whether through His second coming or through the door of death itself, but it will be Jesus who takes you to the place He has prepared for you.

Let's consider this emotionally. Think of someone who doesn't know you exist, the person in the

world you admire most. Maybe a writer or director or actor or singer or scientist or inventor or entrepreneur. Whoever. Now, do you have your person in mind? Imagine they call you up personally and say, “I have a place for you in my home. I want you to come and live here. I’ve designed it especially for you.” Wouldn’t you feel special and cared for and wouldn’t you brag to all your friends and neighbors about that?

Jesus can prepare a place for you that is exactly right for you because He became as you are — human. The second reason Jesus is the only way

to the Father is because He is fully human. It's why Christ can have your mind and fully understand you. He, too, is fully human. It is the human nature of Christ that was placed under the law of God.

You see, one of our problems as humans isn't just the removal of the guilt of our sin before God, which is a question the Bible asks, "How then can man be in the right before God? How can he who is born of woman be pure? Behold, even the moon is not bright, and the stars are not pure in

his eyes; how much less man, who is a maggot, and the son of man, who is a worm!”

We are guilty, yes. Why are we guilty? We broke the law of God. God does not just overlook the breaking of His law because His law reflects His own nature. So, to just overlook the law would be to say His holy character does not matter. God does not set aside His just requirements of His law. It is who we're supposed to be — image bearers of His character.

The just penalty for breaking God's law is death. His wrath is against all unrighteousness. It's

against everything that goes against His glorious character and nature. When we're not offended by sin it's because we do not understand who God is.

How low has our character fallen? As low as a worm, according to Scripture. Our view of ourselves is off. We are descent folk fooled by the exterior curb appeal of our suburban lives. We do not see inside the heart.

Our representative, Adam, failed. He turned from God to self. This bent of humanity to look inward

for truth is the very definition of sin — to look to self for answers. This is what has brought the estranged relationship humanity has with God. If you are not currently a Christian, let me say this as gently as possible, but if you are not a Christian you do not have access to God. You do not have His ear. You are cut off.

Christ can bring you back, because as one of us, as fully human, He can mediate between you and God.

On the cross, Christ took the guilt of your sins upon Himself. That's what the gospel removes — the guilt of our sin. The cross removes the negative weight of sin. The cross takes care of our demerits. In the cross we see that He is the victim of our wrongdoing. This is what is called the passive obedience of Christ. God's wrath was poured out upon Him. Our sin was placed upon Him. It's passive obedience because it was done to Him.

Now, Christ could have done that by coming down from heaven as a 33-year old man and dying for us. He came as a babe. Why?

As fully human, Jesus Christ completely obeyed the Father. He did not break one law. He fulfilled all the righteous requirements of God's law. He showed the goodness of the law. His entire life displayed the sinless perfection that everyone finds so appealing.

R.C. Sproul comments that it's funny that Christ rising from the dead is the difficult thing to believe

for a lot of people. What about a sinless human being? Just as amazing.

But in His living a sinless life, God takes the perfect life of Christ and imputes it to you. That means He transfers the holy life of Christ to you. Now, when God looks at you He looks at you the same way He looks at the sinless One, Jesus Christ.

Not only is your guilt removed, but His righteousness is transferred to you. That's a complete salvation, folks. That's the active

obedience of Christ in how He lived His human life before the Father.

In the place He creates for you, not one thing is overlooked.

4 And you know the way to where I am going.”

5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” **6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.**

When Jesus tells us how to get to heaven, He doesn't point us to a set of things to do. He points us to Himself. He is the way. We look to Him and what that means is that we put our trust in what He accomplished on the cross 2,000 years ago.

He bore your sins in His body. He experienced separation from the Father, so He took the penalty for your sins. Then He died. He was buried. Then He rose again from the dead to show that He conquered death and sin for you.

3 Reason #3 - Jesus is the only way to God because He is the Second Person of the Triune God.

EXPLANATION

7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Point #3 sounds very similar to Point #1, because Jesus Christ being the only way to the Father comes down to the fact that Jesus Christ is the Second Person of the Triune God. He can take

you to the Father because He is One with the Father. He is God in the flesh.

That is why He could pay for your sins by giving His perfect life on the cross for your sinful life. He could give His life for the life of the church because His life has infinite value. It's not like we're exchanging one life for another here. It's the life of God in the flesh which has enough value to pay for the sins of everyone God calls to Him.

8 Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

So many Christians have this same mentality — if only I heard the Spirit speak to me inside, then that would be enough. If only I spoke in tongues, then that would be enough. If only God would give me a sign, then that would be enough. If only God would meet my requirements, is what we’re really saying.

9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip?”

**Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.
How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?**

Have you read the Bible for so long and still do not recognize my voice? If you have read the Bible you have heard my voice.

Again, here we see the third reason that Christ is the only way to be saved — He is God. In this little exchange, Jesus claimed that He and the Father are One. But Jesus also affirmed there is only One God. There are not three Gods. There is One God who is Three Persons. When the

Scriptures are examined, the doctrine of the Trinity is all over the place.

4 Reason #4 - Jesus is the only way to God because only He rose from the dead.

EXPLANATION

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father

and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

What miracle are you looking for to believe God? There is only one miracle that matters. It is the miracle that will save you. It is the miracle you can know. It is the miracle you can experience today — the resurrected Christ. That's the final reason to believe that Jesus is the only way to heaven, because you can experience Him here today. He is the risen Lord.

- *Bonus reason - Why is Jesus the only way to God? This is the wrong question. The question is, “Why is there any way to God?”*

APPLICATION

Even before we rebelled against God in the garden, Christ was the plan. As God pronounced the consequences of our rebellion, He also spoke of the One who would crush the serpent’s head. Christ alone has been God’s plan from before the beginning. There is wonder and worship in contemplating this reality that God had your

good in mind before the foundation of the world. He had your place in His universe in Christ in mind.

Where is your relationship with Christ? Do you know that you are a Christian? Have you turned from all other avenues of salvation and looked to Christ alone? Does your heart finally say, “I see now. I see why Christ is the way the and truth and the life.” Will you embrace the truth of Jesus Christ today? Will bow to the Person of Christ today? If you will, realize He had you in mind before this very moment even as you turn to Him

now. Call out to Him in your heart, in your soul worship the God who gave Himself for you, His life as a ransom for many, as a ransom for you.

The role of the Christian in the public realm is to make this message plain and clear — that's your call, Christian. For what is the hope of the godless when God cuts him off, when God takes away his life? (Job 27:8) The hope of the godless is Christ alone. The hope of the sinner is Christ alone. The hope of the Christian is Christ alone.

In comparison to any other religious figure or man or woman or leader, only Jesus Christ stands above reproach. Tell me your complaint about Christ. Show me where you can charge Him with injustice or wrongdoing in any way. However distasteful it may be in our culture, there are facts that can be pointed to that reveal the mere humanity of the most beloved religious figures in history, except Jesus Christ. My imperfect and fallen friend, His perfection is your only hope. His perfect life given for our broken lives. His perfect record given for our rap sheet of sins.

The unity in the body of Christ is this reality of Christ alone, from the rich to the poor to the educated to the GED holders, the only way forward with God is Christ alone. He shows no partiality.

The place we least apply this cry of Christ alone is often the workplace. Do you pray about your job? Do you trust Christ in how you do your job and in why you do your job or in how you treat your coworkers or employees? Is Christ alone taken into your workplace considerations?

When our marriages need wisdom, and a boost or whatever else it is that you feel your marriage needs — in all the helps that you consider, have you considered Christ alone as your great help? “He delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity.” (Job 36:15) The marriage issue you’re facing could be the key to your greatest growth in trusting Christ alone.

In the education of your children, are the concerns of Christ alone your concerns? Have

you somehow separated Christ from your children's education?

My Christian friends, do you find yourself still struggling, still needing freedom, still feeling defeated? These are all indicators that we are looking either to ourselves or something other than Christ for deliverance. It is Christ alone for the Christian. Christ alone begins the Christian life and this same cry brings growth and freedom and joy to the Christian when we look to, when we trust in Christ alone.

CONCLUSION

It is the cry of the ancient church. It is the cry of the church from the Reformation forward. It is the cry of this local church — Christ alone. With every practical strategy we apply to help you grow as Christians and to help those of you who may still be searching, our trust for your growth and wellbeing and discovery is Christ alone.