

Beholding the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ

Lesson 2: *The Pre-Existence and Eternal Sonship of Christ*

As it is Resurrection Sunday, let's begin our lesson today with a meditation on the divine surprises in the nature and actions of our Savior King.

Behold Your King

He had it all, and gave it away;
Others scramble to get more.
He left safety and comfort;
And rode into war.

He was born in rough simplicity;
And grew up as a refugee.
He knows the plight of those;
Whose kings cause them to flee.

In all He does is healing and peace;
But people always demand more.
Seeking flashy, dramatic rulers;
They walk away confused and bored.

He stoops under a heavy load;
Beaten and bleeding;
Mocked and rejected.
"Weak" in the face of "power".

Onlookers rage at Him;
He looks back in pity.
He willingly submits while;
Soldiers covet authority.

His people are dispersed;
Spiteful crowds gather and grow.
Rulers surround themselves with slaves;
He walks alone.

Their shouting grows louder;
Quietly He prays.
Clouds gather, darkness falls;
His light cannot die.

My King knows His death is coming;
But still He presses on.
His heart is heavy but it's lifted;

He trusts that death will be undone.

“To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.” Ephesians 3:8–12

Introduction

As I started outlining the different sections of this Sunday School series, I was compelled to add a section at the beginning about the pre-existence of Jesus but, to be honest, I didn't really understand the importance of this aspect of knowing Jesus until I started to dig into it. I was not clear on why this aspect of Jesus' nature is important for a believer to lay hold of and I had a hard time seeing the devotional and pastoral applications of this truth. In light of this starting point, I have been very blessed by searching for greater clarity on this issue and I hope to share some of the wonders of meditating on the truth of Jesus' eternal existence and the implications for our walk with Him.

This lesson and the next are related. First, we will see how Jesus has unique glory as the eternally existent second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, and how this infuses bewildering majesty into the eternal plan of redemption. In our next lesson, we'll look at how the Old Testament sets the stage for Christ's appearing as the incarnate Son of God. It is also clear that the truth of Jesus' pre-existence is closely related to the doctrine of the Trinity and the attributes of God. Furthermore, studying the pre-existence of Jesus will provide deeper glimpses into the glory of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus along with the wonders we get to live out as believers who are united to Christ through faith. So, basically, meditating on and seeking greater understanding of the pre-existence of Jesus ripples out into how we view all of who Jesus is and who we are in Him. So let's dig in...

Some people think that you must start with Jesus in his historical context in order to get a true picture of who He is and what His life and teaching mean for Christians. They come to Jesus critically and they critique the written records about Him. While this truth about Christ being truly divine and, therefore, having existed prior to the creation of the world as the Son of God may not be a stumbling block for you, it's important to know that it has come under attack regularly throughout history. Even scholars who would consider themselves Christians have tried to undercut this glorious truth by

splicing and dicing Scripture in unusual ways or claiming that this belief about Jesus developed over time in the early church and was not even something that Jesus thought or taught about himself.

One of the primary objections presented against Jesus being truly divine, and therefore eternal in nature, is the idea that there was no precedent for this sort of an idea in Jewish history or the Judaic religious system. The thought is that no self-respecting Israelite in the first century would come on the scene claiming to be the One True God and Jews hearing this would not have had any expectation that this proclamation would come from the awaited Messiah. In some respects, this objection makes sense, the plan of God was a mystery hidden for all ages before being revealed in Christ (Eph. 3:8-9) so Jesus' message about Himself often confused those He taught and angered the religious establishment who knew the content of the ancient Scriptures and should have been more clear on what God was going to do for His people.

But, as we saw in the first lesson, ascertaining truth is often more related to the state of a person's heart as opposed to the sufficiency of the information that they have. We know that God was doing a work for thousands of years leading up to the culmination of redemptive history in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. God's revelation tends to be progressive and it would not fit His character to just drop something out of nowhere. We would expect that there would be clues, tips, hints, and forms throughout history and in His special revelation of Himself about the plan of salvation, the way it would be worked out, and the type of person who would accomplish it. As we look back through Scripture with eyes of faith and a desire to behold God's glory, it is an amazing gift to see the ways that God laid the foundation through time for us to understand that He Himself, the pre-existent One, purposed among Himself to condescend in love for His people by sending forth His Son to perfectly uphold the terms of the covenant so that His righteous glory might be manifest to all nations and His people would be restored to relationship with Him. History and Scripture unfolds this picture in a beautiful way.

But some powerful Jewish leaders did not understand Jesus' teaching about Himself and were so offended that He would claim equality with God that they called for His crucifixion and allied themselves with their Roman oppressors in order to accomplish this. As we know, Jews were unique in many ways and particularly in their monotheistic religion as opposed to the pluralistic and polytheistic worldviews of surrounding cultures. One of the core prayers of the Jewish people, known as the *Shema*, started with "Hear O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is One." (Deut. 6:4) There are many other Old Testament passages that would further show this, but this is sufficient for now. We'll

come back to see how the New Testament writer's use of this common prayer demonstrates that Jesus' divinity was clearly a core tenet in the earliest stages of the first century Christian church.

So, with centuries of experience and tradition as a monotheistic culture, how could Jesus come on the scene and say the radical things He did about His nature without contradicting all that was previously taught about God? Although critical scholarship over the past few decades has been trying to undercut this teaching of Jesus, it is encouraging to look at Scriptures and other writings to specifically search out what is said about Jesus' pre-existence and eternal nature of His identity as Son of God. When we put it together, we can clearly see that this great mystery does indeed have foundations in the Old Testament, that it fits within the revealed character of God, it is clearly taught by Jesus Himself, and was embraced by the early church as true leading them to worship Jesus as the One True God. There are many scholars who are building clear, compelling pictures of how the coming of God's Son fits in with foreshadows and types laid out in the Old Testament. We'll look at some of these in this lesson, but we'll continue to flesh out a robust redemptive-historical picture of the deity of Christ throughout this whole study.

The fact that the person of the Son of God existed prior to the Incarnation is crucial to seeing the depth and majesty of who God is and the glory of His plan of salvation. By soaking our hearts and minds in the reality of Jesus' pre-existence and eternal Sonship our hearts will be drawn to worship him with joy and reverence as He deserves to be worshipped.

Survey of Scripture

To firmly establish the truth of Jesus' eternal nature in our minds and hearts, we will look at a selection of Scripture across the broad sweep of history. We'll take seven different types of passages at various points throughout biblical history:

1. the protoevangelium;
2. an early encounter;
3. a prophecy;
4. a prayer;
5. ancient hymns;
6. early Christian practice; and
7. a vision.

All of these will demonstrate that the Father sending the Son was not a surprise move that God came up with at the last minute to respond to a dire situation, but was the certain and progressively clearer plan of God from before the creation of the world.

The Protoevangelium (“the first Gospel”)

Let’s begin by looking at a very early passage in primeval history which establishes a core facet of who God is in relation to His people. In Genesis 3, we hear how God addressed the serpent, the man, and the woman after the Fall into sin. This is an incredibly rich passage of Scripture where we see the depths of the curse that humanity and all creation have fallen under. But alongside that, we also start to see the gracious redemptive work initiated by God. This gives us a glimpse from the very beginning of what will take place to achieve God’s purposes in creating the cosmos.

Right from the start, in Creation and even in the response to the Fall, we get a picture of God’s character as a gracious, condescending God. He loves His people and acts unilaterally to protect and provide for them even in the face of treachery. Edmund Clowney, in his book *The Unfolding Mystery: Discovering Christ in the Old Testament*, puts it this way,

“Adam, the representative man, prepares us for Christ. Christ is more than a substitute for Adam, a stand-in, as it were, to succeed where Adam failed. Christ, who is Omega, the goal of human history and of created humanity, is also the Alpha, the true Adam, Head of the new and true humanity. He is “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation” (Col. 1:15), for He is not only the Prince of creation; He is also the Creator. His image-bearing infinitely exceeds that of Adam, for as the eternal Son, He is one with the Father. At the last, Adam’s created sonship can only reflect the greater Sonship of the divine model. The apostle Paul rejoices that the sonship we gain in Christ far exceeds what we lost in Adam (Rom. 8:14-17)...In Jesus, the promise of man’s creation in the image of God is given the fulfillment of heavenly glory. It was God’s will from the beginning that man should be like God, not in rebellion but in the union of Christ’s sonship. Man’s creation in the image of God not only made the Incarnation possible, it was God’s own design according to His purpose of the Incarnation. Adam’s creation, the forming of Eve, the testing in the garden - all prepare us for Jesus Christ.”

The temptation where Adam failed is mirrored in the temptation of Christ following His baptism and initiation of His ministry. Christ, God's eternal Son and perfect image, succeeds where Adam failed. This makes it possible for sons of Adam to die in the flesh, be reborn in the Spirit (the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead demonstrating His acceptance as the obedient Son of God), and to be conformed to the image of Christ. Hallelujah, what a Savior! What a plan that God designed!

An Early Encounter

Next, as we move through biblical history, God establishes Abraham as the father of all His people. Abraham was drawn into a relationship with God by God's initiative and was a party to the covenant of God to bring His grace to all nations of the world. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness (Romans 4:3) so he is lifted up as a model for believers in the New Testament. A key event in his life was an unusual encounter with a shadowy figure named Melchizedek. We're just going to touch the tip of the iceberg on this one. We'll talk much more about this encounter and its significance during our next lesson on Christ as Mediator.

Please take a moment to read Genesis 14:17-24. One thing that stood out to me while reading through this recently is that this encounter took place immediately before one of the most significant events of biblical history. Abraham defeating the kings to rescue Lot and then being blessed by Melchizedek on his way home is immediately before God makes the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15. This tells us that this encounter is not just a random occurrence but fed into the incredible act of God descending to commune with Abraham and make a covenant with him about his offspring.

After reading Genesis 14-15, read Hebrews 7-9. The main thing to notice at this point during our survey of biblical references to the pre-existence and eternal Sonship of Christ is that the writer of Hebrews makes '*one like a Son of God*' the template for thinking about who Melchizedek was, not the other way around. This is another instance of God pre-figuring what He would do at the culmination of the plan of redemption through a unique occurrence in the Old Testament. Again, we'll look more at this event and its significance in the next lesson.

A Prophecy

Now, we'll look at a prominent Old Testament prophecy to catch glimpses of Jesus as God's pre-existent Son and King of creation.

Near the end of a dramatic vision given to Daniel while in Babylon, after judgement is rendered on an assortment of beasts (signifying earthly kingdoms), he sees “one like the son of man” coming to the Ancient of Days in a throne room. Daniel 7:13-14 reads, *“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”*

As we mentioned above, some people claim that a messianic figure that is both human and divine was a foreign concept to Judaism, but this passage seems to relatively clearly foreshadow this type of person. The commentary in the ESV Bible states, *“The one like the son of man combines in one person both human and divine traits. Elsewhere, this phrase ‘son of man’ often distinguishes mere human beings from God. However, this son of man seems also greater than any mere human, for to ‘come on the clouds’ is a clear symbol of divine authority.”* To be allowed into God’s presence is a sign of righteousness. This son of man must be righteous to be presented before the Ancient of Days and the biblical record up to this point is clear that no mere son of Adam is deemed righteous on their own accord. Then this son of man is rewarded with dominion, glory, and an eternal kingdom which appears to be equivalent to the type of rule ascribed to God in Daniel 4:34. This figure is clearly a unique merging of human and divine characteristics and roles. While there is much more to consider about Daniel’s vision and especially the idea of the son of man and how Jesus applies this label to Himself, it is sufficient for now to note that Daniel gives Israel a type by which Jews in the first century could interpret Jesus actions and teachings.

So that is a very insufficient look at a couple key Old Testament passages which start to shape our view of the character of God and sketch a picture of the eternal Son who will be the prophet, priest, and king sent to redeem all of creation. Let’s transition to the New Testament.

There are many teachings and occurrences in Jesus’ very life that we could examine to see how He clearly spoke about Himself as co-existent with the Father and truly divine. He exhibited this in His miraculous power over creation, He taught it in His parables, and He clearly testified to it as He moved towards Jerusalem, which is evidenced by the Pharisee’s charge of blasphemy leading them to call for His crucifixion. There is much to meditate on in Jesus’ life that is inexplicable without

coming to the conclusion that “truly this man was the Son of God!” (Mark 15:39). For our purposes now, we’ll just look at one of Jesus’ most memorable and powerful prayers.

A Prayer

In John 17: 1-5, Jesus begins the high priestly prayer by “lifting up his eyes to heaven and praying, *“Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”*

The specific words and phrases that Jesus uses are remarkable in and of themselves, but even more so is the incredible sense of intimacy in this prayer. The closeness of the Son praying earnestly to His Father as He moves towards heightening affliction and suffering is palpable. Jesus is no longer teaching about God to the disciples. He is not giving a lesson or demonstrating something by His actions. He’s going directly to the source of glory that He has known from all eternity for comfort and resolve. He is earnestly asking for the Father to reveal the Son to His followers so that they may know the joy of eternal life. The remaining verses of John 17, include saying like *“I have manifested your name to the people...”; “they...have come to know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me.”; “As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.”; “...that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you...”, and “Father, I desire that they also...may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”*

Some may see too much distinction in Jesus’ prayer because He is praying to the Father as the Son. There are clearly two distinct persons interacting, but does language like this imply that there are two different beings? In response, John MacArthur has said,

“Expressions like “eternal generation,” “only begotten Son,” and others pertaining to the filiation of Christ must all be understood in this sense: Scripture employs them to underscore the absolute oneness of essence between Father and Son. In other words, such expressions aren’t intended to evoke the idea of procreation; they are meant to convey the truth about the essential oneness shared by the Members of the Trinity. Human father-son relationships are merely earthly pictures of an infinitely greater

heavenly reality. The one true, archetypical Father-Son relationship exists eternally within the Trinity. All others are merely earthly replicas, imperfect because they are bound up in our finiteness, yet illustrating a vital eternal reality.”

Now, let's look at the epistles and Revelation briefly to see what they say about pre-existence and eternal Sonship.

Ancient Hymns

There are a number of places in the epistles where it is widely accepted that the authors are using commonly known hymns or short creeds which were developed at the very earliest stages of the Christian church. The authors use these snippets to relate to their audience and verify that they are 'on the same page'. We'll look at how two of these speak to the pre-existence of Jesus as a person of the Triune God.

In 1 Corinthians 8:6, Paul references a re-working of the *Shema*, the ancient Jewish prayer that we looked at earlier. This citation of a commonly known phrase is used by Paul in the context of eating food sacrificed to idols, which was related to polytheistic or pantheistic religious practices. This context isn't that important for our current focus, but the language that Paul uses is remarkable in highlighting how the early church strained to unify the traditional monotheistic views of Israel with the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

1 Corinthians 8:4-6 reads, *“Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.”*

A quick summary of the issue at hand is given to us by Crispin Fletcher-Louis in his book, *Jesus Monotheism*, *“the two words that denote Israel's deity - ‘God’ and ‘Lord’ in the Shema (“Hear O Israel the Lord your God, the Lord is one.”) - are each taken to refer to different entities, or persons, within the divine identity (‘God the Father’ and the ‘Lord Jesus Christ’).”* Looking at the New Testament use of ancient Jewish language related to God, you get the sense that the writers wrestled with how to accurately portray Jesus as true God without absolving monotheism. The language reads awkwardly sometimes and it is hard to understand. One explanation could be that the New Testament writers were confused, overly superstitious, and/or uneducated. Another explanation (the true one!) is that

they were wrestling with the limits of human language and human cognition to describe an eternal truth about the triune nature of God which had recently been consummately revealed in the coming of Jesus Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

Another ancient hymn is worthy of much more reflection than we are capable of now. Philippians 2:6-11 reads, *“[Christ Jesus], who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

Jesus did not pre-exist as a human, but as the *Logos*, whom was sent to take the form of a servant to visibly express God’s invisible glory (Col. 1:15). Jesus’ “becoming” was not a ceasing to be what he had been previously, but a “taking on” of human flesh and blood. The fully divine Son added full humanity to his pre-existing person.

Early Christian Practice and Language

The following quote and citation of various New Testament texts by Crispin Fletcher-Louis in his book, *Jesus Monotheism*, will help us see how the practices and language of the early Christian church clearly expressed the belief that Jesus Christ was God. But the church was very careful to not set up Jesus as a new God outside of the revealed character of the God of Israel, YHWH. This tension in how to express this mysterious reality is often the reason behind why New Testament language appears confusing, contradictory, or redundant. The writers needed to use existing languages and concepts to try to express this grand new reality that was manifested in Jesus Christ, *Logos*, Son of God, Being of one substance with the Father.

“The peculiar beliefs about Jesus and his inclusion within the identity of the One God are reflected in the form that Christ devotion took. For a (non-Christian) Jew, the early Christians treat Jesus the way Israelites were expected to treat the one God himself. Before long the earliest believers were rubbing shoulders with, and evangelizing, non-Jews. In many and various ways, what the early Christians did to Jesus meant that non-Jews in the wider pagan environment would justifiably conclude that Jesus was

being treated as a god or a divine ruler (like the Roman emperor). For example, calling Jesus the Son of God and announcing his arrival (including his birth) as “good news” would evoke the language of the cult of the (divine) emperor. But the early Christians were not ‘ditheists’. The worship of Jesus was not expressed through the setting up of a new temple shrine to him. Jesus was not added to an existing pantheon. The birth of Christianity was not marked by the worship of a new Mediterranean god, but by the belief that the one unique God - Yhwh-Kyrios - had climactically, at the end of Israel’s history, appeared in fully human and highly personal form. The NT texts adopt various strategies to ensure that the grammar of their devotion remained firmly within the boundaries of a belief in one God.

By the same token, this distinctive ‘binatarian’ worship of one God without two cults is mirrored in the distinctive language of New Testament Christology. The twoness of the one God’s identity is expressed through the intimate, relational language of the Father and the Son, not through wholly separate names of discrete, potentially competing, divine entities (e.g. Zeus and Apollo). Glory given in worship to Jesus Christ the Lord goes through Jesus to God the Father (Phil. 2:11, 1 Peter 4:11). The Son is the visible image and form of a Father who is invisible (explicitly in Col. 1:13-15 and implicitly in Phil 2:6, Heb. 1:3, Rev. 1:13-16; 4-5) and as such the Son shares and manifests God the Father’s glory (Heb. 1:3, cf Phil. 3:21, 2 Cor. 3:12-4:4, Col. 1:19). Both are responsible for creation, but everything comes from the Father through the Son (1 Cor. 8:6, Col. 1:16, Heb. 1:2, John 1:3).”

A Vision

Lastly, as the Biblical record closes, we see Jesus exalted in glory. All of Revelation is a pulling back of the curtain of the material world to show us what is really going on in the spiritual realm. As Jesus is shown to be the *Omega*, this is intended to bring to mind the fact that He is also the *Alpha*.

The drama of redemption is played out in scenes and images which are mysterious and seem vastly otherworldly. Angels are sent forth, battles are wrought between dragons, virgins, and children, and a Lamb is deemed worthy to open the scrolls and judge the whole world. As the vision concludes, there is a picture of the glorious new creation being brought forth. Revelation 21:1-6 reads, “*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,*

prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment."

The King and Judge who has conquered the dragon is now seated on the throne. The prayer that we saw Jesus pray in John 17 has been answered. He asked that those He loves would be with Him in glory and now we see that "the dwelling place of God is with man." The Word that was with God and was God at the first creation has now eternally removed all pain, tears, and death in the re-creation, which has become more glorious because the covenant of redemption purposed by the Father and Son has been fulfilled. The Pre-Existent One took on flesh to pay for sin and raise human nature so that we might dwell with God forever. Jesus' entrance into this material world was not a beginning, but a becoming. It wasn't his start, but his commission. He was not created. He came. In Revelation, we see that He conquered.

Without a clear vision and firm grasp on this teaching, the plan of salvation is not a certain reality borne from divine intention and power, but becomes only the reactive action of an psuedo-god who neglected to foresee human rebellion. The pre-existence of the Son of God is crucial to grasping the heights and depths of God's powerful love.

If the above short biblical survey leaves you wanting more, here are some other key verses to ponder on this glorious subject: Micah 5:1-5a; John 1; John 8:58-59; Eph 1:8-10; Colossian 1:15-17; 1 Pt 1:20-21.

Application

So, now we come to the question that will wrap up each of our lessons over the next several weeks. We have looked into the deep mystery of Jesus Christ being the pre-existent Son of God sent from heaven according to an agreement between the Father and the Son that was laid out before the foundations of the world. We have seen that Jesus clearly taught his own deity and pre-existence. It was not something that His followers made up after the fact. Together with the resurrection,

knowledge of Jesus' pre-existence gave followers of the Way incredible boldness and audacity in laying hold of the promises of God. So, with that in our minds, how can these truths be applied to the care and comfort of souls?

There are at least three main ways that having a deeply embedded and integrated awareness of Jesus' pre-existence gives our souls great comfort and hope.

First, the pre-existence and eternal Sonship of Jesus deepens the wonder we are able to have at Jesus' mission and the love of the Father for us in sending His Son. David Mathis writes, *"No other human in the history of the world shares in this peculiar glory. As remarkable as his virgin birth is, his preexistence sets him apart even more distinctively...God himself, in the second person of the Godhead, entered into our space, and into our frail humanity, surrounded by our sin, to rescue us. He came. He became one of us. God sent God. The Father gave his own Son for us and for our salvation. Jesus is before, and he is better than, anything in the created world. And his pre-existence calls to us with the quiet reminder that it is only fitting for such a one to be the greatest Treasure in our hearts."*

Second, knowing that Jesus, in his pre-existence, was a party to the covenant of redemption laid out before time began gives us a rock solid confidence in the certainty and power of God's salvation. J.I. Packer says it this way,

"Scripture is explicit on the fact that from eternity, in light of human sin foreseen, a specific agreement existed between the Father and the Son that they would exalt each other...the full reality of God and God's work are not adequately grasped until the covenant of redemption - the specific covenantal agreement between the Father and the Son - occupies its proper place in our minds"

This is why pondering and holding tightly to the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ and His eternal Sonship is so crucial in the life of a believer. It adds a depth to the grace of God and the love of Jesus that is unknowable without understanding that Jesus is the eternal Son of God.

Lastly, beholding the glory of the pre-existence of Christ deepens our conviction that the victory of God over death by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the climax of all time and creation. Furthermore, the resurrection of Jesus proves that 'death could not hold Him.' Because He existed before creation, he existed before the fall and the curse. The divine power that lived in Jesus was so

powerful that it righted the fallenness of the human nature that he took on in His incarnation. As we behold the glory of God's Son, the firstborn beyond the grave, and put our faith in Him and His work on our behalf, our mortal bodies are enlivened by that same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead (Rom. 8:11).

What joy! What confidence in the face of temporal trials! The joy promised us, the imperishable inheritance, has no enemy that can threaten God's ability to fulfill all that He said He will do for His adopted children. The resurrection proves this and the pre-existence of Christ gives us confidence that the resurrection is not a contrived tale. The King who came to the world was not bound by the trappings of the world because He existed outside of the created order. His power was greater than the thing we fear most as created beings...our own mortality. This power was from before all time. The devil and his agents tremble as the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son, grants resurrection power to those who call on the Triune God for rescue. Hallelujah!

Prayer (based on Come to Us O LORD by Young Oceans)

O living Word, please come and dwell in us. Lord, wipe away these tears. O Ancient Son, so long foretold, we're desperate souls. Please draw near.

We want to stand securely in Your love and strength.

Our Shepherd King, please come and dwell with us. Lead us on to fields of grace.

We want to stand securely in Your love and strength.

We need You now. Break our chains by Your glory and power. Make us captive to your holy desire.

Come to us, O Lord, Prince of Peace, Emmanuel. Lord draw us close, unto Thyself. King of kings, God's chosen One. We need You now. To Thee we run.

We want to stand securely in Your love and strength.

Amen.

Song of the Week

Come to Us O LORD by Young Oceans: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vloLdl_ADoY