

The Government on His Shoulder?

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[0 : 00] chick vibe still, you know what I mean? Like she was like a crunchy chick for Jesus now. And she had a rule for her family where they couldn't give gifts of like stuff. They could only give gifts of service. So they had to do things for each other, which I think are actually some of the best gifts. And so one year her husband sent them into town overnight for something. And she thought, well, that's the gift. And it's kind of cheating because, you know, you're paying for a hotel room and so on and so forth. But he didn't go. And they came back and he had rented a snowcat and had carved a luge down their whole mountain, a sledding luge, like with high bank walls. You guys don't look impressed enough. I'm not explaining this well. This was like an Olympic luge, people.

And he had toboggans. And that was his gift to his family. He built them like a luge, people. Come on. Wow. Thank you. Thank you. And we just happened to be there that day or around that time when it still was up. And so we borrowed a bunch of ski clothes from some other friends because thankfully there was one other large man that I knew who lived there. And we, our family, skied or sledged down this thing. And then we would get, we would have to walk up the mountain. That was the only bad part.

He didn't have time to build a lift. But, and then inside the cabin, they had all this wild game, like cooked up. And so like, we would like, literally guys, literally, I would sled down this mountain, hike back up with snowshoes on, go eat some bear, and then get back on the luge over and over and over again. And I do love the idea of acts of service as gifts. And what I decided to do, as you know, I was out of town a while back and had some time to think and plan through kind of our Christmas, approach to Christmas this year. What I decided to do this year was just, I just want to give you two sermons that are just gifts. They require nothing of you except your attention span, which I know is asking a lot of some. But I just, over the next two weeks, I just want you to sit back, listen, and be encouraged. Okay? That's all I'm going to ask from you over the next two weeks is just to sit back, listen, and be encouraged. So let me read our text. Isaiah 9, 6 through 7.

Revelation 10, 6 through 8. Revelation 10, 6 through 8. Revelation 10, 6 through 8. Revelation 10, 6 through 9. Revelation 10, 6 through 9. Revelation 10, 6 through 9. Revelation 10, 6 through 9. Revelation 10, 6 through 9.

Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10.

[2 : 47] Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10, 6 through 10. Revelation 10 through 10. Revelation 10 through 10. from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

And we know from God's word that every single word of God is true, and that his word does not return void. And you may have heard over the years, someone around this time of year, talk about how many Old Testament prophecies that were made that were fulfilled in the person of Jesus.

You can't quite say with all of it fulfilled by the person of Jesus, because not all of the prophecies about Jesus were things he could do. Some of them had to be done to him, like being born in Bethlehem, for instance, which obviously increases the level of complexity involved in fulfilling these prophecies.

So let me just give you the two-sentence version of what I'm talking about. Tons of predictions made hundreds of years prior came true with one man born at a certain time, a certain place, with certain characteristics, who lived a certain kind of life with a certain kind of people around him, dying a certain kind of death, raising a certain kind of way.

So that's the idea when someone talks about all of these Old Testament prophecies made hundreds of years prior being fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Now, how many prophecies are we talking about?

[4 : 08] Well, there was this guy named Alfred Eldersheim who counted 456 prophecies fulfilled in the person of Jesus. Now, I can tell you right now, I know exactly what kind of person Alfred Eldersheim was, that he would sit down and he would count out 456 prophecies related to the person of Jesus.

That's kind of the high number, because we're asking how many prophecies were there? Alfred's number would be the high number, 456. We're going to deal with eight. And this is not the main point of the sermon, it's just a part of the introduction.

We're just going to deal with eight. A number of years ago, a group of folks who are trained in probabilistic statistics tried to come up with odds of Jesus fulfilling eight key prophecies.

They went very conservative. They didn't go 400. They went eight. And these were people that were specifically trained in discerning probabilistic type stuff.

And they decided to kind of ask, well, what are the odds that one person would fulfill eight of the Messianic prophecies that occurred hundreds of years prior and the number that they came up with was 10 to the 17th power.

[5 : 13] 10 to the 17th power. Means nothing to me. And if you're like me, you need some kind of illustration. Well, they went on to illustrate in the paper what that looks like kind of in a way that we can understand.

One article says that if you covered the state of Texas with silver dollars and stacked those silver dollars two feet high, the chances of picking just one correct silver dollar, one particular silver dollar out of all of those silver dollars is similar to this number, 10 to the 17th power.

So it's a remarkably impressive thing that all of these prophecies were fulfilled in the person of Jesus. But in our text, we read one prophecy that I don't hear many people talk about.

It's only now beginning to get particular attention. And that is the reference that appears twice in our text that says that the government will be on his shoulder. Unto us a child is born.

And really, a significant amount of the prophecy in that text relates to this idea that Jesus Christ would have some effect on the governing of the world after he came, lived, died, raised, and was seated at the right hand of the Father.

[6 : 23] And so what I want to do today is ask, is there any way that we could look at history and come to see whether that prophecy has come true? Is there any way we can look back at history and say something happened 2,000 years ago that affected the governance of the world at large?

Which is kind of a big ask. This sermon took me a lot of work. This is like my luge for you guys. Come on. My luge and my bear meat. This is my offering. This did take a little bit more work than normal, and it might take a little bit more work for you just to pay attention because we're going to get into what I'm talking about, what I began to think of as moral history.

What is moral history? What I mean is, is the development of morality throughout history. We didn't always believe what we believe now. Not all cultures believe what we believe right now.

Our culture didn't believe what we believe right now. Morals have developed, and they've come from somewhere, and we can go back carefully considering the development of moral history.

Shout out to Nate Wilhoff, who turned me on to one of the books I'll use today called *The Air We Breathe*, and this is a new, I would call it sort of a new genre of writing, not all of it Christian, that it simply does moral history.

[7 : 41] What is the moral, what is the historical development of certain morals? Now, that's what I'm going to do with you guys today. Theologically, what's happening when it says that the government will be on his shoulder is most clearly articulated in Psalm 110, which is the most quoted Psalm, as I've told you before, in the New Testament, and Psalm 110, 1 in particular, that says, The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. The story of Jesus we most often tell is he was born to a virgin, lived a perfect life, died on a cross, was raised, and we kind of stop there.

But the New Testament, when they talk about the story of Jesus, always includes this last piece. He ascended to the right hand of the Father, where he must reign until his enemies are made his footstool.

And it's all over the New Testament. The apostles use it constantly. So what I'm going to do is I'm going to ask, can we go back 2,000 years and see evidence that that has been happening?

Can we go back 2,000 years and see evidence that the government has been on his shoulder? We've looked at all these other prophecies and seen how remarkable that is that they've been fulfilled. And I feel like we all get a bit of a bump of faith when we're reminded about, for instance, Texas full of silver dollars.

[9 : 05] Well, that's what I'm shooting for today. But over the question of the development of morality, there are a number of works that are being written these days that I want to make you aware of that are dealing with this particular question.

And you can see why. Because America is flirting with, Western civilization is flirting with suicide. And suddenly, a renewed interest, not only amongst Christians, but amongst just people who think, is starting to ask, like, hey, before we pull the trigger, should we consider, if perhaps, we're throwing away a great treasure?

And if so, where did this treasure come from? Probably the most famous of the books right now dealing with this is written by a man named Tom Holland. And the book is called *Dominion, How the Christian Revolution Remade the World*.

By the way, you can go to [sermons.savgracekc.org](https://yetanother sermon.host) and you'll get all these quotes. They're already there. You don't need to take pictures of the screen. You're going to have a lot of quotes today, okay?

I'm going to excite from a number of books. You can get all the quotes from the sermon manuscript. It's online as we speak. So probably the most famous book, the one that most people are talking about now, and it would be one of the harder reads, is Tom Holland's book, *Dominion, How the Christian Revolution Remade the World*.

[10 : 23] Another book is called The Book That Made Your World, How the Bible Created the Soul of Western Civilization, written by an Indian man whose name I can't pronounce. In that book, he says, the Bible created the modern world of science and learning because it gave us the creator's vision of what reality is all about.

That is what made the modern West a reading and thinking civilization. Postmodern people see little point in reading books that do not contribute directly to their career or their pleasure.

And this is a logical outcome of atheism, which has now come to believe or realized that the human mind cannot possibly know what is right or true. Science does not emerge out of a perspective that says the human mind cannot possibly know what is right or true.

Science emerges from a perspective that says the world is intelligible. We expect to find laws of nature because we believe in a lawgiver. Another book that's well-known related to this, I think this might have been the first one that came out.

This was a few years ago by Rodney Stark called The Triumph of Christianity, How the Jesus Movement became the world's largest religion. He writes this, In fact, all known societies above the very primitive level have been slave societies.

[11 : 41] Even many of the Northwest American Indian tribes had slaves long before Columbus' voyage. Amid this universal slavery, only one civilization ever rejected human bondage, Christendom, and it did it twice.

In fact, maybe some of you remember the song we sang, Oh Holy Night, was an abolitionist hymn. Written around the time of the Civil War, right before, I believe. And you might even remember one of the verses that we didn't sing.

I guess it's the sloppy wet kiss of that era. And it's, you could look it up because I don't remember all of it, but it said, The slave is our brother. In the Christmas carol, it's saying, We cannot let this stand.

Another book that seems to me to be one of the most interesting that I did not read yet, it's called The Weirdest People in the World, written by Joseph Heinrich. And in that book, he does all sorts of really clever analysis of, he essentially gets close to the Protestant Reformation and then looks to see what effects came within close proximity to the Protestant Reformation.

Here's an example. In 19th century Switzerland, after, other aftershocks of the Reformation had been detected in a battery of cognitive tests given to Swiss Army recruits.

[12 : 58] Young men from all Protestant districts were not only 11 percentile points more likely to be high performers on reading tests compared to those of all Catholic districts, but this advantage bled into scores in math, history, and writing.

So we're doing, we're kind of unpacking this basic idea, the government's on his shoulder, eh? What's, where's the evidence? Where's the evidence that Christ has made a difference in the world over the last 2,000 years?

Now before I go any further, I want to anticipate an objection, and that objection is our own hypocrisy as Christians and the number of times throughout history when Christians have used Christianity to justify their sin.

So I want to deal with this objection. There's a joke that I found online that's pretty funny, it's actually a fact. There's one holiday celebrated on different days by over 58 unique countries.

One holiday celebrated by over 58 unique countries. And the dates of that celebration are very different, they're not grouped in together like Christmas is, for instance.

[14 : 09] They all celebrate the same thing, and actually, just about every seven days, one of these 58 countries is celebrating this day. You know what the holiday is?

Independence from the British day. The British had two main hobbies, tea and colonizing stuff. And the whole time as a Christian nation, right?

And so we've got this tension. I'm talking about all this good that Christianity has done, but we've got this tension. And in his book *Dominion*, Tom Holland says this, repeatedly, let's skip through some of this, the confidence that had enabled Europeans to believe themselves superior to those they were displacing was derived from Christianity.

Let me read that again. The confidence that had enabled Europeans to believe themselves superior to those they were displacing was derived from Christianity. Repeatedly, though, it was Christianity that provided the colonized and enslaved with the surest voice.

The paradox was profound. Dig into this one. No other conquerors, of which there have been many, Assyrians, Babylonians, Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, not a Christian, no other conquerors carving out empires for themselves had done so as the servants of a man tortured to death on the orders of a colonial official.

[15 : 42] Jesus Christ tortured to death on the orders of Pontius Pilate who was a colonial official Rome occupying Palestine. No other conquerors had installed an emblem of power as they're marching in and taking over things.

They've got crosses on their stuff. An emblem of power so deeply ambivalent as to render problematic the very notion of power. So you've got colonialism?

Yes, granted. Oddly enough, it came with its own toxic undoing. Most of the countries that are free from British occupation are free because the British simply lost the will, the cultural will, to remain in that particular position.

And while they were in that position, the results of their position were mixed. take this for instance. Charles James Napier, commander-in-chief of British India.

This is when India was ruled by the British. Enforced a ban on the Hindu practice of burning widows. So the Hindu practice was that when you die, men, your wife have no other use because you, the men, are dead, so let's throw the woman alive on the fire.

[17 : 07] This was the practice in India that colonization stopped. Colonization's 100% right?

Nope. Not. Little burning, 100% wrong? Yes. So this was the practice and Charles James Napier made it illegal.

A group of irate Hindu priests asserted that the customs of their nation should be honored. Here's how Napier responded. This burning of widows is your custom, therefore prepare the funeral pile.

But my nation also has a custom. When men burn women alive, we hang them and confiscate their property. My carpenters shall therefore erect gallows on which to hang all concerned when a widow is consumed.

Let us all act according to our national customs. So we're dealing with this tension of I'm arguing that Christianity has been overwhelmingly good for the world.

[18 : 13] I'm not arguing that it's been perfect. But I am arguing that I know history well enough to make somewhat confident assertions about this and the majority of people who are whining about the current state of civilization know nothing about what they speak.

They take it all for granted. They think we have always believed these things. We haven't. We haven't. That's what moral history is for. Moral history is to say, nope, we didn't always believe these things.

We used to worship trees, we used to burn our widows, so on and so forth. Another way that's more winsome to say this is from Glenn Shribner's book, which is *The Air We Breathe*, which I think is a great title for talking about this because we just assume the moral universe we live in now has always existed and it has not.

But dealing with this concern or this question about Christian hypocrisy, I thought the way he said it was so good, he said that Christianity is a song. Christianity is a song. And Christians are singers of that song.

And not all of them sing that song well. None of them sing it perfectly and some of them sing it badly. But the song itself is a very, very good song.

[19 : 30] So that's an objection I want to anticipate. Now I want to just talk to you about one specific area of morality that has developed since the government has been on his shoulders, as Isaiah tells us.

And that area is in particular the issue of equality. Before we get to the issue of equality, though, I just want to make another point that's interesting as I've read all this stuff, the development of this kind of genre of moral history.

The atheists are taking a crack at it too. And they're coming away stumped. Not speaking about equality, but another virtue, perseverance. George Scaliaba, good Greek name, writes, perseverance in virtue will sometimes require self-sacrifice.

So now he's talking about the moral virtue of perseverance and preserving in moral virtues. Perseverance in virtue will sometimes require self-sacrifice. And self-sacrifice seems to require some transcendental justification or motivation of which the most common and perhaps the most logical is belief in the existence of God.

He's like, in order to persevere in a moral quality, you're going to have to self-sacrifice, but there appears to be no reason to self-sacrifice for a moral quality except for the existence of God.

[20 : 51] He doesn't believe in that. And then he says this, and there is the quick of my discomfort, the cause of my discomfort, the suspicion, powerfully and plausibly, albeit tactfully and tentatively expressed, that the ideals I most prize are at bottom inadequate.

I confess, I see no alternative to living with this suspicion perhaps permanently. I want the virtues, he says. I can't believe the thing that requires, the thing that is required for those virtues to even exist.

So let's talk about equality. Picking equality, it's the first chapter in Shrevener's book, but I think that it's the first in a sense because it has such a strong appeal.

Because since the simple truth, the idea of equality that all people are equal has absolutely no scientific basis. Let's be, we say true things here, even if they are controversial.

The idea that all people are created equal, that all people are of equal worth, has absolutely no scientific basis.

[22 : 11] Now I believe it, but I don't believe it because of science, which is now held up to us as the better authority. Here's another atheist, wrote the runaway bestseller two, three years ago, read and massively pushed by all the technocrats out in Silicon Valley and that book I'm speaking of is Sapiens and it was written by a man named Yuval Harari.

He's an atheist who does not believe in universal human rights. He says this, most legal systems in the world today are based on a belief in human rights, but what are human rights?

Human rights, like God in heaven, are just a story we've invented. They're not objective reality. They're not a biological fact about Homo sapiens. Take a human being, cut him open, look inside, you will find the heart, the kidneys, neurons, hormones, DNA, but you won't find any rights.

The only place you find rights is in the stories we have invented and spread. They may be very positive stories, very good stories, but they are just fictional stories that we have invented.

In another place he writes, human rights are as fictional as the God who underwrites them. There is no scientific basis for the equality of all persons.

[23 : 34] Neither is there any historical basis for the equality of all persons. Glenn Scrivener, he says, imagine we have a guest on a TV show, Plato is brought in.

The father of Western philosophy, Plato is brought in, blinking at the studio lights and baffled by the technology. He's asked whether he agrees with the claim some lives are worth more than others.

The ancient thinker frowns. What is the debate exactly? It is trivially, trivially, trivially obvious to the father of Western philosophy that lives are of unequal value.

Some are men and some are women. Some are Greeks and some are barbarians. Some are free and some are slaves. They are rich and poor, wise and foolish, strong and weak. All that we see in nature is difference.

Compare any two people concerning any one attribute and what will you conclude? This one has more of that than this one. This, of course, is the definition of unequal. To insist that two people are equal really when every human trait betrays inequality raises the question, equal how?

[24 : 45] Where is this magical realm where their equality exists? Can you show it to me? If Plato was being polite, he might say, your faith in equality fascinates me and I'd like to be able to see what you see.

Clearly, equality is important to you. You live your life in light of this belief and I can respect that. To me, it looks as if you've just decided to believe in something with no reason or evidence. I'm afraid I'm not convinced.

Now, what I'm saying right now is the idea that all people are of equal worth has no scientific basis and no historical basis. I just so happen to also be reading another book on this philosophical heresy called Neoplatonism written by Mr. Rush Dooney.

And I'm going to read this to you. It's going to be hard to hear this. Scan the audience here so I can age adjust this. All right. You can trust me. I have a good self-editor with that stuff.

All right. The gospel of Sir Thomas More was his utopia wherein man's mind imposed its idea on all the world of matter.

[25 : 56] For more, wives were meant to be selected after being inspected unclothed. Their minds were not important enough to count. So unimportant was matter or particularity. So little was it the world of spirit that wives were to be chosen without regard to the unity of mind and matter, naked on inspection like cattle.

For Aristotle, women were misbegotten males, an inferior form of humanity, more material. And Plato wondered as to whether women could be called reasonable creatures.

Aristotle held that men, slaves, women, and children all have souls. However, although the parts of the soul are present in all of them, they are present in different degrees. Women thus have less soul than men and are thus more material.

As a result, the Neoplatonist tradition has tended strongly toward hostility toward women as the principle of sensuality and materialism.

The implication of Moore's principle, which he applied to his daughter, by the way, was that women are at best essentially flesh rather than spirit and hence, like cattle, to be inspected physically before marriage.

[27 : 04] The feminist movement, despite its serious errors, has some justification and that the Neoplatonist movement has consistently treated women with contempt. In the Bible, women are presented as no less intelligent than men nor any less capable of redemption.

The question is one of authority, not humanity or dignity, whereas in the Neoplatonist tradition, women are seen almost as different species, very inferior to the form of man.

This is the last paragraph of this quote. The influence of the Hellenic Greek thought on Islam, something people don't really realize. Islam was massively informed also by Greek thought. The influence of Hellenic thought on Islam is a marked one and women are the victims of it.

Islam is a good example of man setting up a sexual order for their gratification all the while insisting that men are rational and spiritual and women are, of course, material and sensual in nature.

They're also supposedly inferior to men. The Bible teaches not the inferiority of women but their subordination which is a very different thing. There's no scientific and no historical basis for this idea that we all believe in, Lord willing, that we're all equal, that we're all of equal value.

[28 : 18] That is a purely Christian thought. That is a purely Christian thought. Remember what I'm doing. I'm asking, what evidence is there that the government has been on his shoulders?

And we can say that we're tracing moral history and saying that there is some evidence that someone new has been running things for a while now.

We can see this through the development of particular morals. A letter from 1 BC from a Roman soldier to his wife. I am still in Alexandria.

I beg and plead with you to take care of our little child and as soon as we receive wages I will send them to you. If in the meantime, in the meantime, if good fortune to you, you give birth, if it is a boy, let it live.

If it is a girl, expose it. Didn't just find this one magical letter of this one bigoted Roman, guys. This was the way.

[29 : 21] Have you ever heard the word foundling? Christians would patrol garbage heaps in the early centuries of the church looking for children who have been abandoned.

The word foundling represents this very thing. It's a very old word and it has to do with discovering a baby cast out. We're looking again and trace historical evidence that something changed with the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and reign of Jesus Christ.

Well, there's something. In fact, this idea took root in, Christianity took root in the Roman government. You might have heard of a fellow named Constantine.

When did throwing your daughters out to be exposed, throwing your disabled children out to be exposed, when did this become illegal? When, God forbid, politics and religion got mixed.

And Constantine, as a result of pressure from Christian officials, Christian influencers in the culture said, we must end this practice. My friends, some of you might be thinking about, well, has it really gotten any better?

[30 : 32] After all, there's abortion. I want to draw your attention to two differences. One, it must be done in secret. Our consciences have been refined to the point where we can no longer cast them on garbage heaps as they live.

Number two, the entire appeal, the entire appeal for the legality of abortion is the equality of women, which is a Christian virtue. So yes, things are different.

Abortion is not the same as infanticide in that respect. All right. Now, what I want to do now is I want to ask, okay, things have changed.

How did they change? We have this grand theological explanation that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father, reigning until his enemies are made his footstool.

Let's see if we can get a little more specific than that. A lot of these moral historians just use the Jesus story as the explanation. Like, the story itself is what's changed us.

[31 : 34] Next week, we're going to see that it's more than that. But I do like this quote from Scrivener. Scrivener, if natural selection, friends, if you've seen the memes, which way, modern man, let's be super clear where we're at as a culture right now.

So we have two choices, and they're represented in this quote. If natural selection means the survival of the fittest and the sacrifice of the weakest, and it does. Christianity is about the sacrifice of the fittest, Jesus Christ, for the survival of the weakest, us.

Which way, modern man? In 2 Corinthians, chapter 10, verse 4, Paul writes, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but we have divine power to destroy strongholds.

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ. If you're asking me, and we'll talk about this more next week, how practically has Jesus, reigning at the right hand of the Father, made the difference he has made?

Not only in the area of equality, but in so many other areas, I would say that he is doing what Paul is describing here. Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father, reigning until his enemies are made his footstool, and many of his enemies are ideas, arguments, lofty opinions, and one of the most cancerous, toxic, and cruel, but also most natural and self-evident opinion that existed before the coming of Jesus was, some people are more important than other people.

[33 : 17] And as he has sat at the right hand of the Father, reigning until his enemies are made his footstool, he has systematically, throughout half the world, crushed that toxic idea.

Is there any evidence that he's reigning? You're going to have to explain it somehow, friends. Because we didn't used to believe this.

We didn't used to think this way. Thinking that people are not equal is the most natural, scientific, and historically consistent way of thinking.

But around 32 AD, a small group of people started thinking differently. And the people who disagreed with them were in charge and had all the power and had all the guns and all the prisons and all the lions.

And they couldn't snuff it out. Because every time they would exert force on the one proclaiming equality for all people, equal worth for all people, that person died in such a way as to demonstrate a power that was from beyond their own resources.

[34 : 33] Somehow, through the church, however imperfect we are, however bad a singer as we are, Jesus has been working through his people for 2,000 years to destroy strongholds, destroy opinions, arguments, every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God.

The inequality of a human being, the unequal worth of a human being is actually blasphemy against the creator. There's a funny debate in 2017 between Sam Harris, who is sort of the self-immolating atheist at this point.

He's just kind of screwing himself up now pretty regularly. He's not a very good atheist anymore. And he was having a debate with Jordan Peterson, and I think the first cracks of his failure started to emerge in this particular debate, because he held up a glass and he said, how much is this glass worth?

And he's like, nothing, almost nothing. He's like, but what if I told you that Elton John used to own this glass? And this is Sam Harris making this statement, by the way.

And he says, then it's worth something, because someone else, like someone's important, owned this. And he just stumbled into the precise argument for human value, which is a transcendent argument.

[36 : 00] And that is, the fingerprints of God are on our glass. That's why we are equally worth. That's why we have equal worth. And you begin to notice, maybe God was doing a bit of a Balaam thing with old poor Sam, and he started making better points than Peterson could for Christ.

And he said, you know, he said, the glass is worth nothing because Elton John never existed. And I'm like, well, no, he did, and I don't love comparing Elton to Jesus, but you're making the point for me.

The worth of every person in this room is not because of your color, your size, your strength, your gender, your material possessions. The worth of every person in this room is because you have the fingerprints of God on you.

And if you are born with Down syndrome and thrown on a garbage heap, we'll go find you and we'll take care of you. If you're marginalized in some other way, if you've screwed your own life up with addiction and so on and so forth, we will find you and we will take care of you.

We are all foundlings. We're all worth what God says we're worth. So how did Jesus do this?

[37 : 08] How did he create this magnificent reversal of morality in a way that tended to the poor and tended to the weak and tended to the most sinful among us?

Well, there's a verse for that. Philippians 2, the passage we read all the time in Christmas. We have the pattern laid before us in Philippians 2, 1 through 11.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. How did Jesus destroy the lofty opinion that I'm more important than you?

How did he destroy that in me? Is that my naked moral virtue? Absolutely not. Friends, I want to tell you something. You don't have to become a Christian today. It would be really smart to do that.

[38 : 09] But please understand this. If you think the morality I'm talking about came from you, you are the problem. That is such arrogance. In thinking that, you demonstrate you would be on the wrong side of every historical scenario.

You're full of pride if you think that these moral virtues came from you. They did not come from you. You would have been a thug, just like the rest of us, if Christ had not come.

You'd have either been an oppressor or an oppressed. That's the two options, and that just depends on how much you can lift, to be honest with you. Where did this change? It changed because of what Jesus did and what Jesus is doing.

Let each of you look not only for his own interests, but also the interest of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in 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.

That word is slave in the Greek. 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.

[39 : 20] 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 would bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father.

Let me close with this statement from Richard Halverson, chaplain of the U.S. Senate from 1981 to 1995. He wrote this, The fact is, the birth, crucifixion, and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ are celebrated worldwide by folk of every race, language, and color every year.

And believing in Jesus, they have been delivered from the most evil disastrous, frustrating, debilitating habits and life forms possible. The real problem with Jesus Christ is not that folk can't believe in him, but that they won't believe in him.

So, can we, like we look at the prophecies, the other prophecies, can we say, something happened. The government is on his shoulder.

I believe the argument with an analysis of moral history is yes. And I believe that next week I'll lay another layer of evidence that will persuade you.

[40 : 40] The intention of today's message was simply to make, if you're in Christ, to make you aware of your birthright. What is your birthright? Your birthright is a marvelously, supernaturally, coherent worldview.

Your birthright is a full understanding of the full scope of history and to see Jesus Christ at work throughout every age. Your birthright is to see Jesus Christ as the Lord that he is.

And so, the point of today is to make you feel, as a follower of Jesus, so blessed and so wealthy to have been introduced to the one who is King of Kings.

And we're going to come and take communion today. If you're a follower of Jesus Christ, you've trusted in him as your plan for how you're going to face God one day, as your plan for the forgiveness of your sins.

If you've chosen Jesus as your Lord, we want you to come, whether you're a member of this church or not, we want you to come and partake of communion. In introducing communion, I'll read to you from Colossians. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

[41 : 45] For by him, all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through him and for him.

He is before all things and in him, all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

For in him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross, how did we as people change?

Listen to what Paul writes next. And you, who were once alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he is now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Let me pray. Lord God, as we partake of this table and we remember your body and blood given up for our sins, we praise you, Lord, that you have brought us into a family, a family of people blessed to live forever as debtors to the most unrelenting and lavish grace imaginable.

[43 : 06] Thank you, Lord, that you have bought us and you have redeemed us and you have brought us together. Now, Lord, let us celebrate your table with sincere gratitude for not only saving us and forgiving us of our sins, but putting us into your kingdom.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.