

The deity of Christ

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- [0 : 00] Now we turn this morning again to the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 9 and verse 6.
- Isaiah chapter 9 and verse 6. This verse that we've been looking at for some weeks now, verse that sets forth the Passion of Messiah.
- Prophetically sets him forth. And the verse which has been interpreted for us very wonderfully in the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- The person of our Lord Jesus, so wonderfully full, that no one title can ever fully represent him to us.
- This person so complex, or even a combination of titles and names, doesn't exhaust what he is to the Christian believer.
- [1 : 27] We've been looking at the fact that he was a child born, and yet he was also a son given.
- Two things that seem different and paradoxical, and yet we see how wonderfully they were fulfilled in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- He was a child born into the world, and yet he was the eternal son given. We've been looking at the titles that Isaiah the prophet by the Spirit gave to him.
- Wonderful. And of course he is. Wonderful. Wonderful sets out the glory of his Passion. Counselor puts before us the wisdom of his great plan of salvation and his wise dealing with his people.
- Mighty God, the title we were looking at last week, sets out his ability and his power to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him.
- [2 : 44] He is not only the historical Jesus, he is the divine Messiah. This morning I want us to go on and look at the next title that our Lord has given here.
- He is not only the mighty God, he is, as I say, the everlasting Father. This name perhaps is more striking than any other, revealed to us the paradox and the whole set of paradoxes that we find in the Person of our Lord.
- One who is called a son given and yet at the same time is called a father. Is that not a contradiction?
- Is it not a contradiction that the one whom we call the eternal Son of God should have the title Father applied to him at all?
- I think it's strange. I don't think it's a contradiction, but I do think it's strange. Strangely wonderful. He is wonderful.
- [4 : 09] It's not a contradiction, it's a paradox. But we see paradoxes running all through the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- For example, Isaiah says that he is to be called a man of sorrow. And yet Scripture says elsewhere that he is to be called and thus call him God over all, blessed forever.
- the two things seem so contradictory, don't they? And yet we see how they blend and merge and come to a rounded unity of fruition and fullness in the personal work of the Lord Jesus.

Ah, yes, he was a man of sorrow for he went all the way to the cross. But he is God over all, blessed forever. For from the cross God has highly exalted him and given him the name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.

He was a child and yet the Bible calls him the Ancient of Days. he was able to see death and yet the Scripture says of him that in him was life and that life is the life of man.

[5 : 50] Paradox, we can see it running all through Christ but paradox is not either contradiction or confusion or confusion. And he's not called everlasting father in any way so as to confuse him with the one whom we most often think of as God the father.

Isaiah is speaking not of Christ's relationship to the other persons of the Trinity.

Isaiah is speaking not of the interpersonal relationships of the Trinity at all. but Isaiah is speaking of what Messiah is to his people.

He is speaking not of the relationship of the son to the father or of the son to the Holy Spirit but he is speaking of the relationship of the son to the people that the son is redeeming and saving.

He is talking of the relationship to his people. He is talking of Messiah's relationship to you and to me if we are believers in Jesus.

[7 : 31] And so when we think of it that way it is not strange that the Lord Jesus should be called the everlasting father.

This is the one of whom we were reading in Hebrews chapter 2. This is the one of whom it is true what scripture has said that he shall appear and he shall say to the father of all his unfath he shall say behold I on the children whom God hath given behold I and my children and my children what Messiah is to his people and you could take the words everlasting father and translate them very literally and it has often been done maybe some of the modern translations that you have if you have them translated this way the father of eternity the one who has come into a certain relationship with his people and the one who has come into that relationship in a eternal and lasting way the father of eternity two thoughts there you see blended together very beautifully the thought first of all of tender care and the thought of eternal life the thought of the tender care of a person father with his child surely no one will be more tender surely no one will have more care and more concern for the child than the father

I know there can be exceptions but the exceptions are aberrations aren't they how lovely that their salvation is centered in one who is a person and who cares for us in a way that only the most tender caring loving relationship that we know can illustrate his care for us father handed care and linked in with the thought of eternal life eternal life's a wonderful thought isn't it and yet it's a frightening thought but the soul which is mine the soul which is yours the I that I am and the

I that you are that that should go on living and existing conscious forevermore that's a frightening thought isn't it not a frightening thought if we think of the existing and the living taking part and taking place within the orbit of a family care and a family love as happiness source and it's being one who is a father too one of the things that brings shadow and darkness into our own life and our own experience and earth is just the continual severing of family bond isn't it we can't always live in the sense of dependent security that that belonged to us when we were little children then the cares of life didn't press in upon us why because we had fathers who cared for us and fathers who carried the cares for us and we could live free from anxiety and worry comparatively at least then one of the things that changed life for us and changed our experience and altered our outlook and made our situations change was our earthly fathers in many cases here today anyway our earthly fathers were taken from us carry the thought of our life of dependence security and trust and comfort carry that thought over into your thought of eternal life for my friend in

Christ we are our fathers whom we can never lose and the text divides itself very very humbly for a free church preacher it divides itself into three natural streams or lines of thought and I want first of all just to isolate the word everlasting everlasting what a solemn word that is solemn word when you think of life your own life and I think of my life when you think of your life as touched unsoiled and sometimes broken by sin and sadness and pain and pain of soul the very thought of everlasting then is a solemn when you think of being accountable to God when you think of giving account to our holy

[14 : 51] God and when you think of the possibility and to all my friends from the whole teaching of scripture we have to think of the possibility the reality when you think of the reality of a soul living on everlastingly under the condemnation under wrath under curse of God what a solemn word everlasting is if this is true if your life partakes of the everlasting ah my friend what a solemn thing attaches to your life and of course this is what the gospel is all about this is why

Christ came this is why the pictures plead with you because there is the quality of everlasting attached to human life you soul will live on and my soul soul but what a lovely word too a word that delivers from what we were reading about in Hebrews 2 for those who are in Christ it delivers from the thing that we are all our lifetime subject to through bondage the fear of death what a lovely word when we take it and apply it to the Lord Jesus our Savior Jesus of the cross

Jesus of the deep down going out going love everlasting in him that which will endure and go on in him that which cannot change in him that love which held him to the cross and that love throbbing now with the same power and the same vitality and the same tenderness as it was when he was giving his life blood for you and for me that love unchanged and unchanging on everlasting do you see tenderness perhaps it's the only place you ever see it do you see reality do you before the cross see these things tenderness and reality and read somehow a meaning and a path was real and valid and close and dear into the whole muddle and maze of your living that's what the cross often means for me and take that glimpse that you get before the cross of

God and extend it for it is everlasting everlasting this this is the one oh Jesus of whom the scripture speaks and says thy throne oh God is forever and ever this is the one who spoke to John and John was the one who was closest to him in his human experience and there John the apostle spoke to John when John was an old man and partners revealed himself to John there as him who is and who was and who is forever revealed himself to

John and said John I am the alpha and the omega take life take the whole language of humanity history and I am the first letter in its alphabet that begins to put our message into life and our meaning into life and our purpose into life doesn't it can't read without the alphabet can you can't write without it you can't communicate without it what's it all about this strange thing we call life and whatever it's all about we can say this it begins with Jesus for it says I am the alpha and my friend it rounds off with Jesus the meaningfulness the message the purpose of our living about having been created and about being redeemed it all rounds off with

[20 : 39] Jesus for he says it's not only the alpha he is the omega he is the last word of the alphabet as well he is at the beginning of everything and he is in the rounding off of the fulfilling of everything too everlasting just let this all throb through your heart my friend that Jesus and all that he means to you as savior is everlasting without it makes us think of the eternity of his love everlasting takes us our way back into the time when there was no time it makes us think of his loving us before the foundations of the world his love roots back and his love shines on into the future my friend if you love if you love by

Jesus this morning you have been loved by Jesus from everlasting and you are loved by Jesus to everlasting you to love to to God to you know the beginning in him in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was

God when the beginning began he was there and he had been there long before the beginning ever began or contradiction of terms he is everlasting we can project an imagination as far back as imagination will take us and my friend he is there and the same applies to the future not just eternity past but eternity to come project your mind aeons ahead and he is there unchanged and unchanged everlasting and then we have to link that word in with the second word don't we everlasting father that's the word you're wanting me to get to how can

Jesus the eternal son be a father to you and to me what are we to understand out of Isaiah's terminology what why has God the spirit given us this title for the Lord Jesus in what sense is Jesus a father to his people and the first thought that comes into my mind when I read this is this thought the thought of federal headship they are musing an old theological term one sadly but has almost disappeared from the preaching terminology of evangelical life today and so I suppose I don't know but I suppose when I say federal headship then not too many people really understand what I mean that's the state of our theology and pulpit and putity if we had said it a hundred years ago in our

Scottish pulpit anywhere in Scotland everybody would have understood what you meant what does federal headship mean the federal headship of Christ means that he is representative of all who are in him it means that he is responsible for them to God it means that he is linked into them in a link that is closer than the link between a father and a son it means that he is the head of a covenant that's where the very thought of federal comes from or the word comes from means that he is the head of a covenant and as the head of that covenant he is the representative of and he is responsible for every single person whom the covenant embraces ■■■■■ now can just mean by reminding which

[26 : 40] Adam was not only the natural head of the human race from which all humanity has come by natural generation but Adam was the federal head of the human race how does sin come down from generation to generation why do you why do I pass sinnership on to our children and the answer of the bible has been looked at in two ways by theology by and large two ways one says sin flows naturally through the blood natural generation and there is a sense in which that is right but that's not the whole answer because God when he had created Adam made a covenant with Adam remember he took Adam round the garden to put it like that and he came to one tree and he said Adam all the other trees you can eat of them but of this one tree you must not eat on the pain of death in the day that you eat of it you will die but if you don't eat of it you will live he was making a covenant with Adam and we call that covenant the covenant of works because it demanded just one thing about him obedience to God's word and God's will

Adam was the representative of himself and of all men in that covenant so shorter catechism says the covenant was made he is the federal head of the covenant of works he is the federal head of the whole human race not just the natural head he is the federal head of the head of the head of the head of the head of the human race we may not be so used to it in the idea of him as a covenant head but he is certainly we can think of him as the natural head of the human race and so we call Adam in one sense the father of all living and so we can call Christ the father of all who lives spiritually

Adam is the head of one covenant ah but Christ is the head of the other we have a better covenant based on better promises having a better mediator says Hebrews of Christ Christ is the head of a gracious covenant which reveals gracious love to unworthy sinners you might think that the covenant of works is older than the covenant of grace but not so for the covenant of grace is much older than the covenant of works the covenant of works was entered into between God and Adam in time and the covenant of grace was entered into between father and son from all eternity far says the new testament you were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world but in that sense

Christ can be called father he's the federal head one more short and not just by way of explanation still in Corinthians Paul speaks of all who are in Adam as in Adam in Romans he says as in Adam all died now we can get that idea quite clearly Adam's sin involving all who were in Adam and Paul applies the same thought conversely to Christ as in Christ all in Christ are made alive you see so we say he's not only he's our father because he is our federal head but not only is that so he is our father because being our federal head he is the one who gives us life we're coming right down to a very understandable realm where does a son or a daughter where do they trace their life to on a human level to the father where does the Christian believer trace his life to to Christ whoever is in Christ draws life from Christ unless the child is the result of generation so spiritually the believer is the result of regeneration life conversion brings us into Christ we are

Christ's seed Christ's children the father has promised Christ through Abraham that is seed shall be as the sons of the seashore innumerable or as the stars in the sky without number and we can think of Christ in the sense of being Christ as father in the sense of being founder one sense in which even although God was behind this creation Adam is the founder of the human race so Christ is to be the founder of the new race let me remind you of our sermon last Sabbath evening Calvinistic universalism humanity humanity as an organic whole is not to be lost it is to be saved

[34 : 26] God sent his son into this world to be the saviour of the world and when his redeeming work is complete the world will have been saved one of our old professors John R. Mackay taught that he used to say ah yes a world will be saved even if in its saving some of its sons should be lost a human race will be saved even if in its saving some will be lost let's stop thinking of salvation as being a fragmentary atomized thing which will touch only a few lives and bring only a few of the human race into heaven and the vast majority of the human race to be lost in hell that would be for Satan to have the preeminence though my friend

Christ will have the preeminence in all things now there's no much point of me repeating last Sabbath evening if you went here last Sabbath evening then you'll have to ask somebody who was as I look over the congregation it saddens me that so many come in the morning who never come back in the evening let me say that as your minister too four years I've been here now and some of you I have seldom seen in uneven service that saddens me because I can't have too much hope for people who don't really use the means of grace let me not start in another sermon either you think of that prayerfully and carefully but whether you be saved or I be saved oh my friend

Christ will save a race a great multitude which no one can number and in that sense he will be the father of the new race he will be the father of a new creation for the old heavens and the old earth will pass away and there will be a new heaven and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness and it will all stand in him the word was used by the Hebrews the word father in this sense remember in Genesis how you read for example about Jubal remember who Jubal was Jubal says Genesis was the father of such as play the harp and then there was another fellow who had a very similar name but a wee bit different not Jubal but

Jabal and Jubal was the father of such as well and well in and and have flocks of sheep and cattle why they were the originators of the systems Jubal I hope I've got their names attached to the right thing but I think I have Jubal was the man who started making music with harps and things and Jebel was the man who started going away with a tent with his sheep and his cattle they started new systems Jesus is the originator of a new system every blessing that comes to the Christian in his Christian life stems from Jesus every doctrine that makes up the Christian faith it traces back to Jesus too we owe everything to Jesus and then finally just link the two words together everlasting

God what Jesus is to his people he is to his people for always here is a father who cannot die out of his fatherhood do you remember what he said to his disciples I think before the cross he said I will not leave you orphans is the Greek word I think it's comfortless in the authorized version I will not leave you comfortless I will not leave you orphans I will send another comforter the paraclete I will send another paraclete another to be with you or to be beside you and he was going to the cross by his spirit you see

[40 : 00] Jesus dwells in and with his people and death cannot rob him of his fatherhood of his people one thing is true of the Christian the Christian just can never ever be made an orphan he will always have Jesus who has the everlasting father where the time has gone I hope that although we've only touched the surface of the meaning of the words I believe I hope that it has given us some insight and understanding as to why God should give them to us at all of Messiah I hope they've made us see again the precious fabric of the relationship into which

Christ has brought us brought us by his grace if we are his now let me finish by speaking because really these sermons are to the people to whom Christ is wonderful and to whom Christ is precious let me speak to all who are present here every person here today stands in a covenant relationship everyone you are either a member of the covenant of works or you are a member of the covenant of grace if you are a Christian if you are in Christ if you have been converted you have been transferred from the covenant of works into the covenant of grace and Christ is your father in that sense if you are not a Christian then you are in the covenant of works and your father is still old

Adam you could know better father than that you are either a child of nature or a child of grace and my friend and I ask you today to search your heart and ask yourself which of these you are and then by God's grace to do something about it trust in Jesus and you'll know him and you'll have him as the wonderful everlasting father let us pray oh gracious God we humble ourselves before the marvel and mystery of thy love toward us in Christ and we humble ourselves before the tenderness of thy love humble ourselves because of our own hardness of mind and heart and responding to it forgive us oh God because we do not more highly prize the great salvation which thou hast given us forgive us because we do not more loyally rejoice in

Christ oh Savior make him precious to us by thy holy spirit through the truth and help us oh God to live and to walk as his children hear us cleanse us redeem us for his name's sake Amen Amen Thank you.