

Without Christ (Subtitle: by Him, through Him, and for Him)

John 1:2-3 (New American Standard Bible)

<sup>2</sup> *He was in the beginning with God.* <sup>3</sup> *All things came into being through Him, and **apart from Him** not even one thing came into being that has come into being.*

## Introduction

There are three approaches people take when it comes down to believing in God's Word, the Bible: accept, reject, or I don't know. This morning, I am going to challenge all of you to take your stance on Christ and His claims on creation, salvation, and redemption.

The Bible declares that Christ was with God in the beginning. All things came into existence through Him, by Him, and for Him. Apart from Him not even one thing came into existence that has come into being. Here's another one: Christ is the One and Only One for our salvation. There's no other. One Way to God. The Way to God. The Only Way to God. Apart from Him, God's wrath remains on us no matter how morally good we are.

So, I urge you to carefully consider these seemingly so *outrageous and exclusive* claims of Christ. Do you accept them as the truth of God who never lies? Or do you reject them as false? Make up your mind.

This morning, we will consider the uniqueness of Christ in creation, His exclusive claims on salvation, and what it means to be without Him, that is, if we reject Him.

## Content

To better understand and accept Christ's claims, we must begin with absolute truth (never changing universal truth). We are living in a time of relativism "*the doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute.*" (www.lexico.com). You believe one thing; I believe the other. And neither of us is wrong. For instance, you call one color blue. I call the same color red. Both of us are correct. We don't want to hurt each other's feeling by calling the other's claim false.

Some people argue that there's no absolute truth. Everything is relative, they say. They further argue that there's no absolute truth except the very statement that there's no absolute truth. That's an oxymoron. Consider this. If I say the Sun rises from the East, that is an absolute truth, isn't it? It has been that way, is, and will be so tomorrow. If I say everyone dies eventually, that too is an absolute truth, right? Here's another one. If I say no one can survive without breathing more than 5 minutes, that's an absolute truth as well. There are certain things we call absolute truths.

### **The ramifications of rejecting absolutes.**

When people reject absolutes, everything becomes confusing and permissible. *No one is wrong. Everyone is right. Who are you to judge?* Just look at our own times. Ever wondered about the directions the whole world is going? When the foundation of absolute truth is shaken, all troubles run rampant. Everyone walks in the ways they are pleased with. *Everyone dances to their own DNA.* No boundaries. No reference points. Confusions and frustrations ensue.

It's time that we went back to the basics. It is time that we made up our minds on the absolute truths. We need to see things from 'the truth' point of view not from 'pleasing the crowd' point of view. We need to understand the Word of God from 'the never changing' perspective, not following what the world says. God's Word is the North Star in the world of confusion. It guides us through our navigations in life.

When Christ made all the claims in the Bible about Himself regarding creation and salvation, He was least interested in pleasing everyone. Rather, He was most interested in speaking the truth and nothing but the truth that comes from the mouth of God. He spoke God's truth that is consistent, true, and essential for our life, both temporal and eternal. Will you take His truth?

### **What It Means to Be without Christ**

Imagine a world without Christ. First, there would be no history divider such as B.C. and A.D. Next, there would be no Church of Christ that we know of. Thirdly, there would be no America which was started by the Pilgrims. I wouldn't be standing here before you, either. The list goes on.

Another thought. Why did God send Christ to humanity? Why did He die on the Cross? Would there be salvation without Christ? The answer is No. Christ is so unique a way of God's saving us from our iniquities that there's none other like Him before or after. Period.

This is what God's Word says about us being apart from Christ.

1. *Without Christ, no one would have been in existence (John 1:2-3).* In fact, not just us, but the entire humanity, the whole universe. Are you thankful that you are alive? Then, thank God for Christ, because you owe Him the very breath in you, the life. Genesis 1:1 says this: *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* John 1:1 also says that *in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The Word, the Logos, the Christ, was before the creation of the heavens and the earth. Before the creation, there was Christ, Christ was with God, Christ was God. *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation (Colossians 1:5).*

Apart from Christ there would have been no universe. As a matter of fact, Christ was involved in the creation of the universe and everything in it. *From the beginning to the end.* He is the reason and purpose for the creation, He is the instrument for the creation, and He is the sustainer of all creation. Every creation is subject to Him and worships Him (Philippians 2:10-11): *At the name of Jesus **every knee will bow**, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,* <sup>11</sup> *and that **every tongue will confess** that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Listen more to God's Word to understand how much the whole creation owes Christ their life: All things came into existence through Him, and ***apart from Him not even one thing*** came into being that has come into being (John 1:3). 1 Corinthians 8:6: *and one Lord, Jesus Christ, **by** whom are all things, and we exist **through** Him.*

In every creature we see Christ's fingerprints. Every living being, whether people or animals, trees and all other creatures, as long as they breathe, they owe Christ life, because it is through Christ that God has given them life. That makes sense because Christ Himself is the Life (John 11:25, 14:6). The Scripture declares: ***by*** Him (Christ-kc) *all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created **through** Him and **for** Him* (Colossians 1:16). It further declares: (God) *has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, **through whom He also made the world.*** <sup>3</sup> *And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature and **upholds all things by the word of His power*** (Hebrews 1:2-3). *He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together* (Colossians 1:17).

Silly of us to still think and act like we owe Christ nothing. Can you imagine a robot created by you flatly denies that it owes you its own existence? As creator, how would you feel? Without Christ, we have no life. We owe Him everything. How can you still believe that you came into existence by random combination of time, matter, and chance? If you deny Christ and reject His claims about creation, it will be an insult to God the Creator to whom we owe everything: *life*, for one. *Intelligence* is another. How about the strength to make wealth? Deuteronomy 8:17-18 says, "...you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' <sup>18</sup> But you are to remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth." Without Christ, we are nothing.

2. Without Christ, no one can come to the Father (John 14:6). Every believer owes Christ not only the breath in them, but also eternal life. We need Christ for our salvation. Some believe that there are other names besides Christ by which we get saved. Listen to Acts 4:12: *there is salvation in **no one else**; for there is **no other name under heaven** that has been given among mankind by which we must be saved.*" Only Christ opens the gate to Heaven for us. No other humans. No one else. In His name only we enter into God's eternal presence and peace. Listen to Jesus: *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **no one comes to the Father except through Me*** (John 14:6).

Here's another claim of Jesus about Himself. <sup>7</sup> *"Truly, truly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."* <sup>8</sup> *All those who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them."* <sup>9</sup> *I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture"* (John 10:7-9). No one comes to the Father except through Christ.

3. *Without Christ, God's wrath still would be upon us.* Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, Jesus says, but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:36). Last Sunday, I spoke about God's justice and divine retribution. On the day of judgment, God will repay evil with evil and reward good with good according to each one's words and deeds. Now, because Christ has paid the wages of our sins, we are free of our guilt and shame. He sets us free from the bondage of sin and death through His own death. Our sins are forgiven. The Bible calls His action "Redemption." We are bought by Christ's blood (Ephesians 1:7). Our debts/iniquities are paid off through Christ's sacrifice on our behalf. Therefore, God's wrath upon us is gone! Praise God. All because of what Christ has done on the cross.

Now, please understand that salvation is a choice that each of us makes. Know that God never forces anyone to make a choice against their own will. It is up to us. If we don't believe in what Christ has done and reject His gracious offer of salvation, His redemption will not be available to us. That means, God's wrath due to our sins still would be upon us. That's why I say that outside Christ, without Christ, apart from Christ, no pardon of our sins. No forgiveness or peace with God (Romans 5:1). Peace with God is achieved only in Christ due to His sacrifice. Let's face it. No one has ever died for you and me to save us from our sins except Christ. Only Christ Jesus loved us and died for us. The Good Shepherd laid down His life for us (John 10:11) and God's wrath is gone from us!

## **Conclusion**

Without Christ, we wouldn't be in existence. Apart from Christ, we would be still lost in darkness and sin. Without Christ, God's wrath still would be upon us. Apart from Christ, there is no life in us, temporal or eternal. We owe Him life. Let us give thanks to God for Christ who has given us life. Amen.