

Title: **“BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD”
AGAIN**

Text: John 1:29-36
Subject: *Christ as the Lamb of God*
Date: Sunday Morning — March 9, 2008
Tape: John #10
Reading: *Leviticus 16:1-34*
Introduction:

Is the Bible a sealed book to you? Do you have great difficulty understanding its doctrines, its precepts, and its ordinances? Many people do. To them it is like a treasure chest with a lock on it. They know that it contains many rich gems. But they have no key to open it.

There is one key which will open the Book to you and reveal its golden treasures. That key is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Foundation, the Center, and the Mainspring of all Divine Truth. This is what he said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." If we would avoid error in interpreting and applying the scriptures, we must understand that everything in the Bible speaks of and relates to Christ. **Divorce any doctrine from Christ and that doctrine becomes heresy. Divorce any precept from Christ and that precept becomes self-righteous legality.**

For example: I have heard men preach on **the doctrine of the church** as though the church were nothing more than a physical religious organization begun by our Lord during his earthly ministry. But the church is much more. It is the body of Christ. It is a spiritual building, made up of men and women redeemed by Christ and vitally joined to him by faith. Christ is the Foundation upon which the church is built, the Head by which the church is governed, and the Bread upon which the church lives.

I have heard men talk about **the Kingdom of Christ** as though it were nothing more than a continuance, or re-establishment, of the physical kingdom of David. Again the Kingdom of Christ is spiritual. Our Lord entered his kingdom by the door of the cross. And he builds his kingdom upon the cross. Christ sits upon the throne today as a direct result of his finished work at Calvary. Whether we are talking about the kingdom in its present or its future manifestations, being a part of this kingdom is nothing more or less than surrendering to the claims of Christ as Lord and King.

I have even heard men preach on **election** as though it were nothing more than a logical part of a theological system. Election is a precious truth of Divine Revelation when it is understood properly. Our election is in Christ. God predestinated us to be conformed to the image of Christ. Election is nothing more or less than God loving a people before all worlds., putting them in Christ, and determining to make them like Christ. Election is God choosing to save us rather than damn us, as we justly deserve, for Christ's sake.

As for the precepts of scripture, these too are centered in Christ and motivated by him. Those things that we call "practical godliness" ought to be preached. But they must be motivated by gospel principles. The Christian life is not an extension of the Mosaic law or merely a system of morality. It is obedience to Christ. It is following his example. **Wives** are to be submissive to their husbands, as the church is submissive to Christ. **The husband** is to love his wife. as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. Servants (employees) are to serve their masters (employers) "*as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.*" **Believing business men** are to treat their employees with kindness and generosity, knowing that Christ their Master is in heaven, treating them with kindness and generosity. **Believers** are to forgive offences against them, even as God for Christ's sake forgives us. We are to love one another, as Christ loved us. **We are to give with a willing heart**, generously, even as Christ willingly gave all for us and to us. **This kind of service to Christ is free, spontaneous, unconstrained and motivated by a loving heart. It arises from a knowledge of the gospel.**

I know that these are only a few of the doctrines and precepts of the Bible. But they will suffice to illustrate my point. Christ is the key to sacred scriptures. Every doctrine of the Bible must be understood and taught in the light of the gospel. Every precept of godliness must be motivated by gospel principles. **We truly preach the whole counsel of God only when we preach it in the light of Christ and him crucified.**

The key that opens the treasure chest of Holy Scripture is Christ crucified. If we are to understand the Book of God, we must "*Behold the Lamb of God*" in it.

(John 1:29-36) “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, **Behold the Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world. (30) This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. (31) And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. (32) And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. (33) And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. (34) And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. (35) Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; (36) And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, **Behold the Lamb of God!**”

I want to pick up today right where I left off last Sunday morning. I want once more to try to preach to you that message which is the message of Holy Scripture, the message for which the first Baptist is famous, “**Behold the Lamb of God!**” I want to do what I can to make everyone who hears my voice, reads what I write, or is in any way influenced by me see that **the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God is...**

- The Subject of Holy Scripture. — The Bible is a “Him Book.” It’s all about him.
- The Preacher’s Only Message (1 Corinthians 2:2; 9:16).
- The Gospel’s Glorious Revelation. — “*I knew him not*” (vv. 31-34; 2 Corinthians 5:16).
- The Sinner’s only Hope. — Christ is our Hope.
- The Believer’s only Rule. — “*Do as I have done unto you.*”
- The Worshipper’s only Object (Revelation 4 and 5).
- The Embodiment and Glory of the Triune God (vv. 14, 16; Colossians 2:9).

You will notice in our text that **this was John’s message on two consecutive days**. On the first day John was preaching to a large crowd in the open air in Bethabara beyond Jordan. It was a mixed multitude. Many were believers he had just baptized, young converts at best, many were lost religionists, Pharisees and their disciples, and many more were on their way

to hell and just curious about this strange man who was regarded by all to be a prophet though he was rough as a cob and anything but a stereotypical preacher. On the next day, John was privately instructing two of his disciples. Yet, on both days his message was exactly the same — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*” And that is my message to you. — “**Behold the Lamb of God**” — **Again!**

Behold him as...

- **Slain from Eternity** (Revelation 13:8).

(Revelation 13:8) “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

- **Vicariously Sacrificed at Calvary** (Romans 5:8-10).

(Romans 5:8-11) “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. (11) And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

- **Enthroned in Glory to save His People** (John 17:2).

(John 17:1-3) “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: (2) As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. (3) And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

- **Interceding in Heaven for God’s Elect** (1 John 2:1-2).

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.”

- **Coming again to Judge the Quick and the Dead** (2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5; Revelation 6:12-17).

(2 Timothy 4:1) “I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.”

(1 Peter 4:5) “Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.”

(Revelation 6:12-17) “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; (13) And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. (14) And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (15) And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; (16) And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: (17) For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

In my message last week, I labored the point that this is the universal message of Holy Scripture and the singular message of true gospel preachers. Today I want us to behold the Lord Jesus as the Lamb of God again; and I want to make some very practical observations about this message.

Proposition: Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God sacrificed, slain, risen from the dead and exalted in all his saving efficacy and fullness is the message God has given us to proclaim.

Let me give you five reasons why I preach this message exclusively.

PERFECT BALANCE

Let me begin by stating emphatically that **Christ as the Lamb of God is the perfectly balanced message of the gospel.** — If one more man comes up to me and says, “I think you need a more balanced message,” I think I will be hard pressed to keep from balancing him on his back. That is a criticism I have heard for forty years. Every time a man wants to excuse himself for not preaching the gospel or wants to justify his criticisms of those who do, this is the line that is used — “I believe we ought to have a balanced message.” Yet, those who use that line seem to me to always have a lopsided message of works.

Still, I want to make my point. **Christ as the Lamb of God is the perfectly balanced message of the gospel.** When Christ crucified is a man’s message, when Christ is all in all in preaching, you have everything in that message. Christ crucified is a message of doctrinal instruction, experimental grace and practical godliness.

All vital doctrinal instruction is contained in this message. — “Behold the Lamb of God!” That preacher who preaches Christ crucified clearly and constantly gives his people the best possible doctrinal instruction for he proclaims...

- The Eternal Deity of Christ. — “*He was before me.*”
- The Incarnation of Christ. — “*This is the Son of God.*”
- The Strict Justice of God. — “*The soul that sinneth it shall die.*”
- The Gigantic Evil of Sin. — The Sacrifice Required to Put It Away.
- The Utter Inability of Man. — No Need for this Lamb if a Sinner can Save Himself!
- The Glorious Efficacy of Christ’s Atonement. “*Taketh away sin!*”
- The Superabundance of God’s Grace (Romans 5:20-21)

(Romans 5:20-21) “Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: (21) That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might

grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

- The Infinite Love of God.
- The Infallible Security of God’s Elect. — How can they perish for whom such a sacrifice was made?

If you want a personal, experimental religion, as I do, if you need experimental grace, grace that is felt in the depths of your soul, this is the message that will promote it. — “Behold the Lamb of God!”

- Are you vexed with sin? — “Behold the Lamb of God!”
- Are you troubled with affliction? — “Behold the Lamb of God!”
- Are you in need of comfort? — “Behold the Lamb of God!”
- Do you need reviving? — “Behold the Lamb of God!”
- Are you fearful about your soul? — “Behold the Lamb of God!”
- Are you concerned about the future? — “Behold the Lamb of God!”

If you need instruction in what men call practical godliness, you need to hear this message. — “Behold the Lamb of God!” What can be more practical, what can so effectually promote good works, what can be more inspiring to godliness than Christ crucified? (See Titus 3:4-8.)

(Titus 3:4-8) “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, (5) Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; (6) Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; (7) That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (8) *This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.”

- Do you want to learn how to give? — “Behold the Lamb of God!” (2 Corinthians 8:9)

(2 Corinthians 8:9) “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

- Do you want to know what kind of father and husband you ought to be? — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*”
- Do you want to know how to serve God’s church and kingdom? — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*”
- Do you want to know how to love one another? — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*”
- Do you want to know how to bear affliction? — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*”
- Do you want to know how to pray? — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*” (See Matthew 6:9-13.)
- Do you want to know how to live? — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*” — “*Thy will be done!*”
- Do you want to know how to die? — “*Behold the Lamb of God!*” — “*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*”

OUR CONSTANT NEED

*Second, **Christ must be constantly preached because we need to always have him before our eyes.*** Christ Jesus as the sin-atonement Lamb of God ought to be the constant and dominant object of every believer’s heart. I know that we live in this world and must, of necessity, give thought and consideration to many things. But the one topic which ought to engross our thoughts is the Lord Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer (Colossians 3:1-3).

(Colossians 3:1-3) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Allow me to paraphrase Psalms 1:1-3 “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. (2) But his delight is in **Christ** the LORD; and in his **Savior** doth he meditate day and night. (3) And he shall be like a

tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

GREAT, ENNOBLING SUBJECT

Third, I preach Christ crucified as the Lamb of God incessantly because **Jesus Christ crucified is the greatest, most glorious, and ennobling subject of thought in all the world.** I do not claim to be a scholar, or a man of great brilliance. I am neither. But I have done a little reading, and have had a little experience in many things. I have found nothing to compare with Christ crucified. **He is...**

- The Sum of all Truth.
- The Essence of all Knowledge
- The Purpose of all Creation
- The Explanation of all Providence
- The Soul of Life
- The Light of Light
- The Heaven of Heaven
- The Glory of Glory!

In a word, “Christ is All!”

(Colossians 3:10-11) “And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (11) Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.”

“What the hand is to the lute,
What the breath is to the flute,
What is fragrance to the smell,
What the spring is to the well,
What the flower is to the bee,
That is Jesus Christ to me.

What’s the mother to the child,
What the guide in pathless wild,
What is oil to troubled wave,

What is ransom to the slave,
What is water to the sea,
That is Jesus Christ to me.”

C. H. Spurgeon

No subject in the world is so vast, so sublime, so elevating as this —
“*Behold the Lamb of God!*”

- Talk of mysteries — Try God incarnate, slain, and glorified!
- Talk of romance — Try describing the love of God!
- Talk of beauty — Try the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!
- Talk of science — Try the science of substitution, satisfaction, and imputation!
- Talk of philosophy — Try the philosophy forgiveness.
- Talk of Law — Try justice satisfied with mercy granted at the same time!

Compared with these things, a preacher long ago said, “What are the sciences but human ignorance set forth in order? What are the classics but the choicest of Babel’s jargon compared with his teachings? What are the poets but dreamers, and philosophers but fools in his presence?” Jesus Christ alone is wisdom, beauty, eloquence and power. Compared to Christ crucified, everything else is just contemptible (1 Corinthians 1:17-31).

(1 Corinthians 1:17-31) “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. (18) For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. (19) For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. (20) Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? (21) For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (22) For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: (23) But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; (24) But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. (25) Because the foolishness of God is

wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (26) For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: (27) But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; (28) And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: (29) That no flesh should glory in his presence. (30) But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

ONE THING NEEDFUL

Fourth, I preach Christ as the Lamb of God because **he is the one thing needful** (Luke 10:42).

(Luke 10:38-42) “Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. (39) And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. (40) But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. (41) And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: (42) But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

We may forget many things without harm. We may even forget some important things without endangering ourselves or anyone else. But we must have Christ. He is the Bread of life. Without him we cannot live. He is the Water of life. Without him we must die. Christ crucified as the Lamb of God is our faith, our doctrine and our hope. **His blood is the life-blood of true religion**. Any other faith is a lifeless, false faith.

GLORIFIES GOD

Fifth, I preach Jesus Christ crucified as the Lamb of God for sinners because **this message glorifies God**. This message, “*Behold the Lamb of God*,” declares our God to be both a just God and a Savior, and calls sinners to him (Isaiah 45:20-22).

(Isaiah 45:20-25) “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save. (21) Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me. (22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. (23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (24) Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. (25) In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

- Salvation begins in the experience of it with beholding the Lamb.
- Salvation is maintained beholding the Lamb (Hebrews 12:1-2).

(Hebrews 12:1-2) “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, (2) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

- Salvation is consummated and completed beholding the Lamb (1 John 3:2).

(1 John 3:1-2) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2)

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

APPLICATION

“*Behold the Lamb of God*” with reverence. Lift you eyes up to heaven and behold him now.

- Trust Him!
- Worship Him!
- Love Him!

“*Behold the Lamb of God*” in this blessed ordinance we are about to observe together in memory of him who loved us and gave himself for us. In our baptism we confess our faith in and union with the Lamb of God in his death, his burial, and his resurrection. In this ordinance of the Lord’s Supper we remember our Savior’s work of redemption, beholding the Lamb of God...

- In the bread that symbolizes his holy body.
- In the wine that symbolizes his sin-atoning blood.

Amen.