

Father in heaven, we bless you,
O Lord our God, for your Word and its truth. And we pray that
you would come this morning, rending the heavens and coming
down through your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by your Holy
Spirit, and you'd fill this place with the powers of the age to
come, that every man, every woman, every boy, every girl would feel
themselves in the presence of God the great searcher of the
hearts and minds of men, who will one day render to every
man according to his deeds. Eternal life to those who by
patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and
immortality, but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey
the truth, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish on every
soul of man who does evil, to the Jew first, but also to the
Gentile. for there is no partiality with
God. And so we come this morning and
we pray, speak to us, make your word clear and plain through
your servant, in Jesus' name. Amen. If you would, turn with
me in your copy of the Word of God to John's Gospel and chapter
5. And let me read the whole passage
here this morning to you from chapter 5 verse 1 to verse 29. This is the word of the
living
God. This is the third sign that Christ
did. You remember in John's gospel
there are seven signs and seven I am sayings connecting Christ's
identity back to Yahweh, Jehovah in the Old Testament, the unpronounceable,
unutterable name. that the pious Jews in the day
of Christ and to our day won't take that tetragrammaton Yahweh
to their lips, and it is the great I Am though, the Lord God
Almighty, and Christ again and again in John's gospel calls
himself by that unutterable name, I Am. Seven I Am Signs, and seven
signs proving his divine identity as the Son of God. We're in the
third sign. The first was turning the water
into wine at the wedding of Cana, showing that he came to cleanse
us in a deeper and better way than the lukewarm washings of
Judaism. Then the second was the healing
of the ruler's son at a distance by his word, you remember, showing
that Christ is the true prophet whose word brings life. And in
chapter 5, we see Christ identified with the Godhead. He has equality
with God, and yet he is distinct in his person, but united in
his nature. That's the heart of the Christian
conviction of God. There's one God, and in that
one, there are three persons. And the three does not abolish
the oneness, and the oneness does not abolish the threeness. It's an e pluribus
unum, an ultimate
reality, that there's one and there's three and there's three
and there's one, a community of persons in the heart of the
Godhead that helps us make sense of ourselves as image bearers
and our longing for community as those who bear God's image
on earth. Let's read together the word
of God, beginning in chapter five, verse one. After this, there was a feast

of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now, there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, an Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for 38 years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he'd already been there a long time, he said to him, do you want to be healed? The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no one to put me into the water, into the pool, when the water is stirred up, and while I am going, another steps down before me. Jesus said to him, Get up, take up your bed, and walk. And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, It's the Sabbath day, and it's not lawful for you to take up your bed. But he answered them, The man who healed me, that man said to me, take up your bed and walk. They asked him, who is the man who said to you, take up your bed and walk? And the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn as there was a crowd in that place. Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, see, you're well. Sin no more, that nothing worse

may happen to you. The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, my father is working until now, and I am working. This is why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own father, making himself equal with God. So Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I said to you, the son of man, sorry, the son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the father doing, for whatever the father does, the son does likewise. For the father loves the son and shows him all that he himself is doing, and greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the son gives life to whom he will. For the father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself, and He has given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice

and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. The grass withers and the flower falls off, but the word of God endures forever." It's always interesting to me to hear people talk about Jesus and to try to explain what they think of him. And as you listen to people out in the world and sometimes in the church trying to explain their thoughts of Jesus, it's easy to see that they tend to take little parts of Christ, his teaching, his concern for justice, his attack against the ruling authorities, the religious authorities, Herod and so forth. And they take a little bit of it and they kind of miss the whole. So you've got people, for example, who see Christ as the great moral teacher. They look at the Sermon on the Mount, blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and so forth. These amazing ethical statements that, in a large measure, form the ethical background of Western civilization and Christendom. You've heard it said to those of old, by those of old, that you love your neighbor hate your enemy, Christ says, no, I tell you, love your enemy and pray for those who hate you and despise you. And those words resonate with us. And so many take Christ's teaching and they try to follow his example. But what do they do with his wonders, his miracles, his resurrection, his death upon the cross, the claims he makes about himself? They kind of cherry pick just the teaching. Well, you have also then you've got Christ, the social revolutionary, who came to overthrow Rome and the powers that be in the temple, Sadducees, the Pharisees, and so forth. And yet he pushed too far and too hard, but many admire his call for justice and compassion. And they take that little piece of his ministry and they kind of magnify it and they go and try to do their own social revolutions in this world. They're social, they're political activism, and they think they're following Jesus. But what do they do with his words? Like when he says to Pilate at the end of John's gospel, my kingdom is not of this world. Every social revolutionary is looking for a kingdom in this world, and Christ explicitly said, my kingdom is not in this world. My rulers don't fight for it in this world the way the rulers of this world and the kings of this world fight to maintain their power and to get a grip on power. Then you have a third group in the church, especially the more liberal churches that don't believe in the stripped Christianity of its supernatural power and message. This is not God's word to man, it's just man's word to God. And they see Jesus, and they see the Christ of history, the real Christ, as bearing very little connection to the Christ we meet in the Bibles. The Christ of history, they say, said some pretty amazing things. But we

don't believe in miracles, we know they don't happen, they say. And so we know that all this miraculous stuff in the Bible, Christ raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, giving sound back to the deaf, raising the dead, being raised himself from the dead, that's all legend that the early church added on to the Christian message. And what we've got to do is filter all that away and get back to the real Christ. It's hard to know, though, where do you begin and where do you stop pulling the threads of Scripture to get back to the real Christ. And that have you believed these well-intended but woolly-headed people, that the men who developed Christ, the greatest figure the world has ever seen, were a bunch of uneducated fishermen. And they think that these fishermen who believe that Christ - I mean, when they describe in the Gospels, they put themselves forward as bungling fools. who don't ever understand what Christ is saying, who are always a day late and a dollar short, and who come to the empty tomb and aren't even expecting it to be empty. And these people who will put forth Christ, the stuff of legend, they want you to believe that these discouraged, dispirited, uneducated fishermen designed the greatest literary figure in all history. And from their lie came the Christian church. and that these men were willing to lay down their life for something they knew was a lie. I find it much easier to believe the reverse, not that these men designed the Christ of history, but that the Christ of history rescued these men and built a church upon his teaching and on his glory. There's a fourth or fifth view of Christ that people have, and it's very common in the church, and that is Christ the genie in the lamp. that many people grow up in the church and you largely ignore Jesus. He's kept on the shelf like the genie in the lamp until you really need him, until there's a term paper, it's due tomorrow and you've got to write all night this paper, or an exam you haven't studied for, or you find yourself sliding out of control in a car on the road and you think, Jesus, help me, and suddenly you pull down the genie of the lamp and you rub it and out comes the genie. And the first words out of the genie in the lamp explain the folly of such a position. What's the genie always say? What is thy bidding, my master? Which shows, if you treat Christ as a genie in the lamp, you think you're the master and he is the servant. You will use him when you want to. You'll call upon him when you need him. But he's there like a butler in the corner. He's not the Lord of heaven and earth. And the problem with each of those views is they take little bits of Christ, his teaching, his social justice, his power, his miracles. They'll take little pieces of Christ, but they miss the whole person. So they never understand Christ and they end up stumbling over the things Christ said and the wonders he did and the claims he made because they don't understand who Christ is. And that's exactly the problem with the Pharisees. The Pharisees are bent out of

shape because in their minds Christ has broken the Sabbath day. Now they can't figure it out because Christ is doing amazing things. Nicodemus says in John 3, we know you are a teacher come from God for no one can do the things you are doing unless God is with him. What figures? And yet here he goes breaking the Sabbath day and they can't put the dots together. And in our text today is Christ is answering their challenge. How can you break the Sabbath day? Sabbath is a day for resting, and Christ could easily have explained to them, as he did elsewhere, listen, it's not wrong to do works of mercy on the Sabbath day, and you Pharisees know that. If your donkey, your favorite donkey falls into a ditch, And he's suffocating in the mud, sinking in the quicksand. You don't say, we'll get you out tomorrow if you're still alive. No, you grab that donkey by the jowls or by its rope, and you pull him out of the ditch, be it a Saturday or a Sunday or a Monday, it doesn't matter. You know that there's works of mercy and necessity are fine on the Sabbath day. He could have done that and probably won the argument. But Christ doesn't do that. He goes for the theological jugular. He says to the Pharisees, in a sense, the issue is not what I did and what I did not do on the Sabbath day. The issue, Pharisee, and the issue for you here this morning, Christians, and your members, and Christians who are visitors, and those yet here this morning to commit yourself to Christ, the issue, the only issue that matters is who I am. And so when Christ is answering the Sabbath challenge, he goes back. He said, you'll never understand what I'm doing on the Sabbath day in this passage, healing this man and so forth. If you don't understand what I've been doing from the very beginning of human history, what I can do for your soul right now, and what I will one day do at the end of history when I come back to raise the quick and the dead. And Christ presented this awesome picture of his glory. the glory of his person in our text. Will you walk with me through it this morning? First of all, you'll never really understand the gospel. You'll never understand who Christ is until you can see what he's been doing in the past from all eternity. Look with me at the text, verse 16. The Jews are persecuting Christ because he was doing these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, This is amazingly profound, but it gets to the core of the issue. My Father is working until now, and I am working. Notice the tenses. My Father is working until now, and I am working. Now, notice Christ calls God his Father. And he says God is working. What's he mean? He's saying really that there are certain things that God has been doing seven days a week, 52 weeks a year, 10 years a decade, 100 years a century, 1,000 years, a millennia, that God is working every single day of the week. What kind of things?

Sustaining the universe, guiding the universe, governing the universe, upholding the universe. You all knew this. Why is there something and not nothing? Because God spoke. Why? Is there still something and not nothing? Because God continues to speak. He upholds the universe, the Bible says, by the word of his power. And God does that seven days a week. He doesn't, on the Sabbath day, he doesn't go, right, hands off. We're going to vacate the throne for a day and see how things go. Or take our hands off the universe and see what happens. The universe would return to the nothing from which it was created. And God does that Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Sabbath or no Sabbath, God is working. Now, the Jews knew that. But here comes the kicker. And

I am working. Jesus puts his own working beside his father's working in the same text. My father is working until now, and I am working. I am working with him. I am working alongside him. I'm reminded of Michelangelo's famous question. Whenever his teacher was arguing with him as a young student, and Michelangelo had this kind of strange fascination with painting men and women in the nude, and the teacher said, Michelangelo, that's a bit weird. Why are you doing that? And Michelangelo said, well, I like to see men as God sees them. And his teacher said, yes, Michelangelo, but you are not God. And do you see this morning, essentially what's happening here is Jesus says, I am working as God is working." And the Jews instinctively want to say, but you are not God. But that's exactly what Christ is claiming. He is God the Son. This is why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own father, making himself equal with God. And Jesus doubles down, look at verse 19. So Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, the son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the father doing. Now look at this, for whatever the father does, whatever the father does, that the son does in like manner. Remember in the playground, boys and girls, when you were much younger than you are now, you would say, anything I can do, you can do better. Or anything your daddy can do, my daddy can do better. It's a childish rhyme, we would say that. Well here Jesus is saying, anything my father does, I can do just as well. Not just some things, but all things. Whatever my Father does, the Son does likewise in like manner." And so Christ said, before you listen to my teaching, before you examine my claims, before you wonder about my wonders, You've got to understand what I've been doing since the beginning of creation. I've been working alongside my Father as my Father's assistant, helping Him and doing things only God could do. If Jesus does things only God can do, what does that make Him? That's the first point. The second point is, Jesus

says,
you've got to understand not just what I have been doing from the beginning, but what I am doing right now and what I can do for you this very morning. And that is, I can raise the spiritually dead and give them new life. Look at the text. Verse 20. For the father loves the son and shows him all that he himself is doing. That's a breathtaking statement. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. Now, what are these greater works? So Christ has been healing and doing these wonders, and now Christ says, if that's blown your mind, brace yourself for even greater things to see. What greater things? Well, Christ says, I'm going to give life to a dying world and a dead world, and I'm going to render judgment to a wicked world. And that's going to be the rest of this chapter. First of all, he's going to give life to a dying world. Where am I? Yes. So that you may marvel, verse 20. Verse 21, for as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will. There's giving life to a dead world. For the Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son - there's the judgment of a wicked world, and we'll hear more about that in a second - that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him." And here's the kicker. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life." And when we hear of Christ offering resurrection, We often think of the resurrection at the end of time, and Christ's going to get there at the end of this passage. But he's speaking now about a resurrection today that you can have right now in your seat, a resurrection from spiritual death to spiritual life. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word now and believes him who sent me now has eternal life now. He does not come into judgment, but is passed now from death to life. Verse 24. Look at verse 25. Now many people are assuming that's the judgment at the last day when we all rise from our graves. No, it's not. Notice, truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. That's verse 25. Compare that with verse 28. Do not marvel at this, what I just said, for an hour is coming. But he doesn't say, and now is here. And our is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out those who have done good to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. Do you see that Christ here is speaking about two different resurrections? One at the end of time, which is coming when he will speak and the tombs will open. And

one that happens right now as he speaks. And people move from a different type of death, not physical death, but spiritual death. It's the teaching of Paul in Ephesians 2, that by nature, you and I are dead in our trespasses and in our sins. The best illustration of this, and I've never seen this movie, but when I was at seminary, a good friend of mine James Akeem was preaching in Romans 6, and he used the Sixth Sense movie as an illustration that I've never forgotten. And the Sixth Sense movie is a movie with Bruce Willis in that he stars as Dr. Malcolm Crewe, who's a child psychologist. And he helps this little boy who can see the dead and can talk to the dead. And at first, Bruce Willis' character, Dr. Crewe, doesn't believe him. But the more he talks to this boy, the more the boy seems to make more and more sense. And there's this chilling moment in the movie when the boy looks at Bruce Willis' character and says, I see dead people everywhere. They don't even know they're dead. They only see what they want to see. And the kicker is at the end of the movie, excuse the spoiler, Bruce Willis' character, Dr. Crew, finds out that he himself died at the start of the movie. And the reason he can see this boy and this boy can see him is because Bruce Willis is in fact dead and never knew it. I see dead people everywhere. They don't even know they're dead. They only see what they want to see. And the Bible's teaching about the human predicament is not just that we are sick in our souls. It's worse than that. By nature, we are dead in our souls, that our souls have been disconnected from the life-giving presence of the living God, and we are profoundly estranged from him. And the symptoms of this are everywhere to be seen. Profined self-centeredness. like the legs of that dead cockroach I described last week, that they always curl in, and so the dead soul. We were designed to focus upon God, to be God-centered, glorifying God, enjoying God, and serving Him, and serving others. And yet instead, we tend to, rather than use God's gifts and worship the giver, we worship the gifts and use the giver. And we use other people, too. We manipulate them. We tend to put people in categories, those who are useful to me, those who are useless to me. And we treat them accordingly. And we're profoundly self-centered, even in our marriages. So often, we approach our spouse with a, you scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours attitude. And even the best of us in our best moments, it's so hard to escape a profound self-centeredness that infects our marriage. And that's symptoms of spiritual death in our souls. Now the Christians, by God's supernatural power, have been revived out of that spiritual death, but the shadows of it still lurk in our minds. But if you're an unbeliever here this morning, you're profoundly

self-centered. And even when you help others, isn't it true so often you're helping others to feel better about yourself? Maybe you've got money and so you give money to the poor and you kind of feel better then when you go down to the Lululemon store and spend all those monies on those glorious yoga pants. And man, we have our toys too. Another symptom of spiritual death, disinterest in spiritual things. We're not really interested in spiritual things. And you might say, that's not true. I know plenty of my non-Christian friends will read books about angels and demons and about tarot cards and the occult and other things and even Buddhism and Shintoism and Hinduism and they meditate and all those things. But yes, but when a dead soul tries to engage with the sacred, He's always doing it for his own sake. He's using the sacred as a tool for his own self-development, his own self-fulfillment, his own self-actualization. He's not coming to God and saying, Lord, not to me, but to thy name be the glory. In our unconverted state, we tend to use God for our own benefit. We use him our way, in our time. and for our pleasure. We tend to have a seared conscience, too, in spiritual death. Yeah, we'll admit that our life, we're not perfect. But what we'll not admit, though, is that our whole existence, every thought we think, every word we say, everything we do, is essentially a middle finger raised heavenward. I'll not serve you, O God. I live for myself. I may live in your world and drink your water and eat your food and enjoy the cool breeze you send and the rain on my grass, but I'll not serve you. It's all about me." That's our natural posture. And then profound hardness of heart. Whenever people try to rescue you from that and point it out to you, maybe a father speaking to his daughter or to his son, or a husband speaking to his wife when she doesn't share his faith and she's a dead soul, or a wife speaking to her husband, and you plead with them about their soul, And they get defensive. Oh, there you go, you're nagging me again about the gospel. Trying to scold me into the kingdom of God. The child goes, ah, you always tell me to read my Bible, read my Bible. And they gaslight you. They tell you, you know, you're the problem. It's the way you're always telling me. It's not, I don't mind reading my Bible. It's you're always nagging me to reading the Bible. It's gaslighting. They're redefining what you're doing. You're trying to save them. But in their mind, all you're doing is irritating them. But the irritation is not found in their father, or their mother, or their husband, or their wife. Their irritation is actually toward God. Their souls are dead in sins, and they're estranged from God. And they view God as a threat to their own autonomy. That's spiritual death, dead in sins and trespasses. And Christ says, I'm the answer. Whoever believes, ever hears my word and believes him who

sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed now from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live." And he's speaking about the dead and the souls. That's why we spend so much time in our services preaching the Word of God, because this Word is the manifestation of the Word of God. God manifests. He makes His Word tangible as it's read, as it's preached, as it's heard, as it's believed. It comes with the voice of God. But the same means that God used to make the world in the beginning is the same means He uses to recreate the world now. He brings life through His Word. And as we'll read through the gospel, through His death, Jesus, we don't just need to be given life, we need to be redeemed. And redemption always involves the payment of a cross, a cost, sorry. Trying to find this here. Jesus said in John 11, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? That for this life to come, Christ must speak, yes, but he also must die. Because our sins, our wrongs against God deserve punishment. They're a debt that must be paid. And either we pay them ourself or Christ pays them for us. But you've got to pay the ferryman. The books must be balanced. Christ is the one who's been working from the beginning, sustaining the cosmos, and he's come now. And what he can do for you now is he can give you life in your soul. And then he says, what I have been doing, the works of God, what I am doing, giving life to dead sinners, and what I shall yet come to do is judge the world. Verse 28, do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, the Son of Man's voice, and will come out, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to a resurrection of judgment. It's amazing, you know. This verse, what I just read, describes your eternal destiny, whether you know Christ now or whether you know Him not, whether you believe in Him, whether you don't believe in Him. You may try to escape Him this morning, but you'll not escape Him forever. There's a day coming when you will die, and your body will go into the tomb, but it'll not stay there. For there's another day coming when Christ shall return in the skies as the Son of God, and He will speak. His voice will sweep out in the concentric ring of reviving power that will speed east and west and north and south, not just through this world, but through the cosmos. If human beings ever get to Mars or some other distant planet and maybe some astronaut dies there or some lady falls on the red planet and dies and is buried by her friends or cosmonaut colleagues and they bury her there in a grave and her body rests there, it'll not rest forever. The same

Christ who comes to this earth will come to Mars. He will speak at all of the graves of all of the men and women, rich and poor, slave and free, emperors and kings, princes and paupers. Every nation, every tribe, every tongue, the graves will disengage themselves of the dead. They've been resting undisturbed for centuries, but they come forth now at the voice of Christ into two great companies. When all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life. Those who've been rescued from their sins, who've become spiritually alive and therefore able to do good works, not to earn salvation, but to evidence the fact they've been saved and have come to life. And those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment, those who have never had their debts paid, and those, as we all have, who have sinned and done evil to a resurrection of judgment. I set before you then ultimate reality, eternity, a resurrection of life or a resurrection of judgment, and time is pulling us toward one or two of these contrasting eternities. Where are you going? When you came in the church this morning, to which of these two realities were you headed and to which one will you go now this afternoon? And your fate and my fate hangs on our relationship to Christ. We hear His word and believe Him, trust Him, trust Him as Lord, trust Him as Savior. We have life today. We do not come into judgment. We have passed from death to life today. But if you resist Him, if you reject Him, we leave Him no choice but the resurrection of judgment. And that's why, as I close our sermon this morning, that's why it's very important that when you hear Christ, you don't just take a little piece of His teaching, like a child putting his finger into a bag of candies and pulling out a pink one or a green one or a purple one, whatever they wanted. No, you gotta take the whole bag. which is a great thing with candy. Take the whole bag. But with Christ, you gotta take the whole person. He's not just a teacher. He's not just a savior. He's not just a lord. He's the whole thing. He's the son of God. He's the king of kings. He's the lord of lords. He's the only name under heaven by which we can or must be saved. He's the king. He's the prophet who preaches truth. He's the priest who dies in the place of sinners. He's the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He's all of that or he's nothing. So C.S. Lewis says, I'm trying here to prevent anyone saying the really stupid thing, foolish thing, that people often say about Jesus. They say, oh, I'm ready to accept Jesus as the great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing Lewis says we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He'd either be a lunatic on a level of a man who said he's a poached egg, or else he would

be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was and is the son of God or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up as a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any of this patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us, and he did not intend to. So here's Christ. And you'll never understand why he's doing this or that on the Sabbath, or his teachings here or there, or his miracles or his healings, until you realize who he is. He's God's Son, who's been working with his Father from the beginning. From before his incarnation, he's been working in providence, ruling the world, upholding the world, sustaining the world, caring for his people. And then in this moment he's here, offering life to a dead world. And very soon he will return. to bring judgment to a wicked world, and your eternal destiny hangs on your relationship to this great central figure of history, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of the Carpenter. What will you do with him? What are you doing with him? Not to make a choice is to choose. Is Christ everything, or is He nothing, or something in between? Oh, Christ says, it is the Father's will that you honor the Son as you honor the Father. And that's my cue. Let's pray. Father, we thank you, Lord God, for your mercies to us this afternoon. We pray that you will speak to us, O God, through the word of your Son. We thank you for his glory, his majesty. We pray you'd be present here in this place, searching hearts, exposing them. There were deep waters in this passage, O God. I've had a thousand tongues of angels. I couldn't describe them clearly and accurately. Use my fumbling words, O Lord, to make these things clear and speak through the preaching of your word that you might save the lost in this place and call sinners home to God through the wonder-working power of your Son, who's here this morning speaking, promising, reaching out to dead souls and dying bodies. Oh, make them alive, Lord Jesus. In your name we pray, amen.