

Eminent!

You may notice a slight change in the sermon title. We just spent five weeks in a sermon series called Imminent! We looked at five ways the imminent return of the Lord impacts us as believers. You remember that **Imminent means “appearing as if about to happen; likely to happen without delay; impending.”** There is another word, pronounced the same, but with a different meaning. **Eminent means “rising above other things or places; high, prominent; renowned, exalted, distinguished; outstanding, remarkable, noteworthy, celebrated.”**

The imminent return of the Lord will place us face to face with the eminent Lord! For certain, Jesus is eminent, above all other persons or places or things, prominent, high and lifted up, renowned, exalted, remarkable in every sense. Jesus should hold the place of eminence in our lives. We are going to talk about that a bit more next Sunday. But this morning I just felt we were to take a few minutes to focus on the glory of who Jesus is. His eminence.

We walk this interesting path in our relationship with Jesus. We talk about him being our Savior and Lord, about him being a friend that is closer than a brother, but we also know he is God incarnate, God in flesh. The Nicene Creed declares he is the “only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten not made; being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made; Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of the Father and he shall come again with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.”

God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made...but it also says he was made man. He is fully God and fully man. We don't want to make so much of his humanity that we neglect his divinity. We don't want to make so much of his divinity that we find him unapproachable, but we don't want to make so much of him being our friend, of us being heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ that we forget his eminence! He is above all in every sense of the word!

The Apostle Paul said, **“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities...he is before all things and in**

him all things hold together...he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him and through him to reconcile to himself all things..." Colossians 1:15-20 Eminent!

I've been thinking about how the disciples handled the pre-eminence of Christ. I quoted last Sunday from 1 John 3. **"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure."** 1 John 3:2-3

John was unique among the 12 disciples in this sense. He knew Jesus, walked with him for three years of ministry. Then John was one of the three, Peter, James and John who saw Jesus transfigured on the mountain as his clothes became like dazzling white and they saw something of his glory revealed. John saw Jesus transfigured, saw him crucified, saw him after the resurrection, watched him ascend into heaven, and then John saw the ascended, glorified Christ in Revelation 1. He described, **"His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire...his voice was like the sound of rushing waters... His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance."** In response, John said, **"When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said; 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.'" Revelation 1:14-18**

Then John saw Jesus in Revelation 5 as "the Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders." To the Lamb they sang a new song, **'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they will reign on the earth.'** Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands and ten thousand times then thousand. They encircled the throne...and in a loud voice they sang, **'Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise.'** Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea

and all that is in them singing: To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever.” Revelation 5:9-13

John alone saw Jesus in all of these ways, and in 1 John 3 he is still trying to figure it all out. “I don’t know exactly, but what I know for certain is that Jesus is eminent, pre-eminent, he is above all and in all and we will be with him and will be made like him, we will know him. He is above all things, exalted, noteworthy, remarkable in every way.” This is who he is! Eminent! Eminent in every sense! Do you get it? Savior and Lord and Son of God. He is everything!

St. Augustine in his *Confessions* wrote, **“Who then are you, my God? Most high, utterly good, utterly powerful, most omnipotent, most merciful and most just, deeply hidden yet most intimately present, perfection of both beauty and strength, stable and incomprehensible, immutable and yet changing all things, never new, never old, making everything new...always active, always in repose, gathering to yourself but not in need, supporting and filling and protecting, creating and nurturing and bringing to maturity, searching even though to you nothing is lacking...you ‘repent’ without the pain of regret...you will a change without any change in your design. You recover what you find, yet have never lost. Never in any need, you rejoice in your gains...you pay off debts, though owing nothing to anyone; you cancel debts and incur no loss. But in these words what have I said, my God, my life, my holy sweetness? What has anyone achieved in words when he speaks about you?” ...Saint Augustine**

Eminent. This is who he is. We can keep on trying to describe him, to speak of him, to proclaim his eminence but we fall short. What have we achieved in words when we speak of him? The writer of Hebrews declares, **“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory, and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.” Hebrews 1:1-3**

Eminent. Heir of all things. Maker of all things. The radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being. If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. In fact, Jesus said, “If you’ve seen me, you’ve seen the father.” God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, of one substance with the Father. Savior and Lord. Jesus.

Eminent. This is who he is. Above all others, above all powers and principalities and thrones, above all other kings or kingdoms. Above the storms of our life, above the trials of life, above the attacks and schemes of the enemy. He is eminent! Paul declares, **“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”** **Philippians 2:9-11**

Name above all names. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and power forever! This is who he is. The Lamb of God to whom all glory is given. Now, stop and think about it. This Jesus, the one who rules and reigns with all authority and dominion and power, he is the one who calls us to himself. He is the one who declares we are co-heirs with him, adopted into his family by his grace. He is the one who needs nothing and is complete in himself and therefore when he promises to provide all we need, we can trust him! He is with us, he holds us and no one can pluck us out of his hand. He has promised to never leave us and never forsake us. We are satisfied in him, we will be made complete in him. Believe me when I tell you his grace is sufficient for you. He is eminent and He is Savior and he is Lord. Trust him. Rest in him. Cast your cares upon him because the Eminent one, the one above all others, He cares for you. This Jesus is the one who is preparing a place for you and someday we will see him as he is, face to face and we will be like him. As I said last Sunday, we will see him, unhindered by our doubts, unhindered by the scars of our sin or the limitations of our physical body, we will see him, we will be with him, we will be like him. Oh, glorious day. This fills us with hope. It motivates us, moves us, reassures us. What a day, a glorious day that will be! Are you anticipating that day? Are you longing for him and for his appearing? Have you made preparation for that day? The imminent return of the Eminent One!

I'm going to a city, there'll be no more night
I'm going to a city, where Jesus is the light
The trumpet's gonna sound and I'll be called away
I'm going to a city someday.

By and by, when the morning comes
When all the saints of God are gathered home
We will tell the story how we've overcome
And we'll understand it better by and by.

Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King
Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King
Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King
Alleluia, Alleluia, we're going to see the King.

No more crying there, we are going to see the King
No more crying there, we are going to see the King
No more crying there, we are going to see the King,
Alleluia, Alleluia, we're going to see the King.

Oh, the tell me of a home far beyond the sky
And they tell me of a home far away
Oh they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise
Oh, they tell me of an uncloudy day

Oh the land of cloudless day
Oh the land of an uncloudy sky
Oh they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise
Oh they tell me of an unclouded day.

My heavenly home is bright and fair
I feel like traveling on
No pain nor death can enter there
I feel like traveling on

Yes I feel like traveling on
Yes I feel like traveling on
My heavenly home is bright and fair
Yes I feel like traveling on

Some glad morning when this life is o'er, I'll fly away
To a home on God's celestial shore, I'll fly away

I'll fly away oh glory, I'll fly away
When I die hallelujah by and by, I'll fly away

Just a few more weary days and then, I'll fly away
To a land where joys shall never end, I'll fly away

I'll fly away oh glory, I'll fly away
When I die hallelujah by and by, I'll fly away.

Oh I want to see him, look upon his face
There to sing forever of his saving grace
On the streets of glory let me lift my voice
Cares all past, home at last, ever to rejoice.

What a day that will be, when my Jesus I shall see
And I look upon his face, the One who saved me by his grace
When he takes me by the hand and leads me through the Promised Land

What a day, glorious day that will be.

There'll be no sorrow there, no more burdens to bear
No more sickness, no pain, no more parting over there
And forever I will be with the One who died for me,
What a day, glorious day that will be.