

Christ's Name Wonderful

by Thomas Boston

This is the name of our incarnate Redeemer, and when we hear it named, it must represent to us the Son of God in man's nature.

USE 1. O the love of God to poor sinners of mankind! John 3:16, For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. The greatest work that ever God did was for their salvation. He made the world for man and gave it to him, Psalm 115:16, and the visible heavens, too, Genesis 1:17. Yes, the highest heavens also He made for them and gives to them in His Son, Matthew 25:34. But a greater work than all these He did for them when He did this miracle of the incarnation of His own Son for them, and gave Him, an incarnate Redeemer, to them. O how can we escape the most fearful doom if we neglect this great salvation! How worthy are they to perish who will not be saved when God has wrought this greatest miracle to save them?

USE 2. What unaccountable stupidity is it in men not to consider, admire, and be swallowed up in contemplation of this miracle; and not to be in deepest love with this miraculous personage given to them? Ah! Have we not all been careless, unmoved spectators of this miracle? How many have never spent a few minutes in the consideration and admiration of Him? Have ye not gazed on and wondered at some trifle more than at this greatest of the works of God? Have ye not been more deeply in love with some person or thing for its shadowy excellencies than with this miraculous person? Cease to wonder at the Jews' obstinacy in not being moved to believe by all His miracles; for a greater than them all is here, to wit, His miraculous self; and yet we are unmoved.

What is the import of Christ as God-man, His being and appearing to be a miraculous, most wonderful one? Considering this as the name of Christ, to commend Him to sinners, it imports:

1. The excellency of His person as God-man. He is an excellent, glorious, and lovely one. Hebrews 1:3, Being the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His person. Though the blind world perceives not His excellency, saying as Isaiah 53:2, He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. It is not but through their own default, by reason of their blindness; for His glory shines forth, to be perceived by those whose eyes are opened. John 1:14, We beheld His glory, etc. But the glory of the sun is not seen by the blind man, nor the glory of Christ by unbelievers.

2. The fulness of excellencies in Him, our incarnate Redeemer. His name is "Miracle," a collective word. There is a confluence of excellencies in Him. Look to Him in every part, and all is excellent in Him. Song of Solomon 5:16, He is altogether lovely. Some excel in one thing, some in another, as Moses in meekness, Samson in strength, Solomon in wisdom; but none but Christ is all. Moses, we would say, was a miracle of meekness; Samson of strength; and Solomon of wisdom. But Christ is a miracle all over: meekness, strength,

wisdom, and all other excellencies meet in Him to a miracle. There is no blemish, no lack at all in Him. Colossians 1:9, For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.

3. The uncommonness and singularity of His excellencies. Miracles are but rare, in respect of the common operations of providence. And Christ among the sons of men is as a standard bearer among ten thousand, Song of Solomon 5:10. He is a person of singular excellencies. It is observed that what is done by miracle does in its kind excel what is the product of nature in that kind. The water that was made wine was far better than the wine of the vine, John 2:10. So the man Christ is fairer than the sons of men, Psalm 45:2. So every excellency in Christ is beyond that excellency in another, so was Christ's meekness beyond Moses' meekness, His strength beyond Samson's, and His wisdom beyond Solomon's, as the sun's light is beyond that of the stars.

4. The absolute matchlessness of His person for excellency and glory. Proverbs 8:11, Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. Seek through all the creatures in heaven and earth, and there is none comparable to Him. Psalm 73:25, Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee. His match is not to be found among all the ranks of created beings.

5. The shining forth of His excellencies, fit to draw all eyes upon Him. A miracle is the center of men's eyes to which all men are ready to look. It is a sight everyone would desire to see, and to see narrowly. There is an attractive beauty and glory in this wonderful one. This is a mystery to the world who are ready to say, as Song of Solomon 5:9, What is thy beloved more than another beloved that thou cost so charge us? seeing nothing in Him to fix their eyes upon Him. But,

(1) His Father's eyes are fixed on Him as the object of His good pleasure. Matthew 3:17, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. The eyes of the Holy Spirit are on Him. Zechariah 3:9, Behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of Hosts. Compared with Revelation 5:6, In the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

(2) The eyes of the angels are drawn after Him as a most wonderful sight. The faces of the cherubim were therefore made looking towards the mercy-seat, Exodus 25:20, to teach us that Christ the Mediator, reconciling God and sinners, is the object of the angel's wonder. I Peter 1:12, which things the angels desire to look into.

(3) The eyes of all the saints are drawn after Him as the object of their admiration and affection. No sooner are the eyes of the blind soul opened, but they fix on Him. John 4:10, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water. Therefore faith is called "looking unto Christ." Isaiah 45:22, Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. And it is not a looking after a wonder of a few days, but it must remain all along their

course through the world. And when they come to glory, they will fix their eyes on Him forever, never weary, but always refreshed with the sight.

And that the eyes of all men are not upon Him is because they know Him not, and are not capable of discerning His glory. Psalm 9:10, And they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee.

Whosoever truly discerns what Christ is cannot choose but to love Him above all persons and things, and choose Him for their portion being offered to them. His matchless excellencies make Him such a lovely one that the discovery of them commands the surrender of the heart to Him and captivates the affections. It sinks the value of all created things in competition with Him and enthrones Him in the heart. Hence, true believers can neither be boasted nor bribed, frightened nor flattered from His love.

Believers' love to Christ must be lasting and everlasting, for His excellencies are infinite and incomprehensible. When we meet with an object among the creatures that commands our admiration and love, we are taken with it; but some defect comes afterwards to be perceived in it, and then the admiration ceases or turns into contempt. At least the perfections of the object are all seen through and they become familiar, and the admiration dwindles into nothing. And what was at first sight admired as new ceases to be so when it affords nothing more new. But no defect or blemish can ever be spied in Him, who is fairer than the sun; and there being an incomprehensible depth of excellencies in Him, there is ever a place for new discoveries, so the admiration must be kept up forever.

Those whose greatest admiration and supreme love Christ is not the object of are yet certainly in the midnight darkness of their natural state. Whosoever of you admire and love any created person or thing as much or more than Christ, you have never yet seen nor known Him. The predominant love of the world, prizing and esteeming the things thereof above Him, is a concluding evidence that you are walking in the dark, that the scales are yet on your eyes, and that Christ is a veiled Christ to you.

Christ is God and man in one person. Here is a wonderful person indeed whom we cannot comprehend; true God, yet man; true man, yet God. The uniting of a soul to an earthly body, forming one person called man was a work of wonder; but what is the putting together of two pieces of clay in comparison of the Potter's uniting with His own clay? Should we behold an angel assuming to himself and appearing in a crawling worm as if it were his own body, we would cease to wonder at it, beholding this surpassing wonder, an incarnate God! Here eternity and a being of yesterday meet together in one person, a child, and yet the everlasting Father. Here infinite and finite meet in one; God and His own creature!

He is wonderful in His perfections and qualifications. Psalm 45:2, Thou art fairer than the children of men. Grace is poured into Thy lips. All qualities that render one desirable and lovely meet together in Him, and all those are in Him to a miraculous pitch. So His Father is well-pleased in Him, Matthew 3:17, and the Spirit rested upon Him, verse 16. And every soul beholding Him with an eye of faith will take up its eternal rest in Him.

Particularly He is wonderful in His spotless and unchangeable holiness and purity. The fulness of the Spirit of holiness is in Him. The brightest of the saints here below do not lack their spots; at best they are but fair as the moon, but there is no darkness in Him at all.

He is wonderful in the centering of all perfections in Him, each in its perfection. Song of Solomon 5:16, his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely.

He is wonderful along in His duration. Some are wonderful in one part of their life, some in another, but He is miracle all over His duration.

He is wonderful in His love. His love will appear wonderful if you consider the subject of it, the party loving us. He is the eternal Son of God, the Prince of the kings of the earth. That the Father's delight should have made the sons of men His delight may cause us to cry out, Psalm 8:4, Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him? Or the son of man that Thou makest account of him? Consider the effect, force, and energy of this love. It is absolutely matchless. Never did any love work so powerfully as His, and it does not rest until He has His own with Himself in the highest heavens forever.

The qualities of it are wonderful. It is free love, Hosea 14:4. It is sovereign love. Christ's love had nothing from us to kindle it. It is tender love. It is unchangeable love. It is everlasting love.

And thus Christ appears to be all over wonderful. See then,

1. The greatness of the Father's love in giving to us such a wonderful one for our Prince. The love of God appears here to a wonder. O what honor is put upon man by making such a gift to him, that which heaven could not give a greater! O what happiness appears to be designed for man by this gift!

2. The reasonableness of the believer's superlative love to Christ. Every believing soul loves Christ above all persons and all things. They will love Him more than all the world and all that is therein, and more than their own life, Luke 14:26.

And good reason for it, because there is no object so lovely. If we look to confessors parting with their goods, their liberty, and their worldly comforts for Christ, to the martyrs parting with their lives, embracing fires, gibbets, and the most cruel deaths for Christ, we will cease to wonder at their so doing when we consider what a wonderful One He is for whom they undergo the loss of all.

Gaining Christ, they are the greatest gainers, whatever they lose, Philipians 3:7-8.

3. The reasonableness of the gospel-demand to all to receive and submit to Christ as their Prince and Governor. His transcendent excellency entitles Him to the principality and government over the sons of men. His merit requires our absolute resignation to Him.

Lastly, see the dreadful sin and danger of slighting this Christ. The more wonderful and excellent He is, the deeper will be the guilt of refusing Him. The deeper the guilt, the more fearful will be the vengeance for rejecting Him.

Hebrews 2:3, How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Be exhorted, then, to give this wonderful One your heart. Proverbs 23:26, My son, give my thine heart.

Make Him the choice of your soul. Take Him for your portion as One who is the

best of portions. Let your souls solemnly consent to the gospel offer. Part with all for Him, as the wise merchant who sold all that he had and bought the one pearl of great price, Matthew 13:44-45. Give up your lusts and your idols; renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, resting on Christ for all for time and eternity.

Dwell in the contemplation of His matchless excellencies. Let it be the substance of your religion to love Him, to admire Him, to be swallowed up in His love. And let love to Him set your souls moving in all holy obedience.

MOTIVE 1. You can never bestow your hearts so well. What is all the world in comparison to Christ but loss and dung? Alas! That shadows should have our hearts while the most substantial good courts it.

MOTIVE 2. Consider that it is for this end Christ is commended to you. We preach Christ that you may fall in love with Him.

MOTIVE 3. Lastly, consider how you will answer for it to Him before the tribunal, that you have preferred others lovely to the lovely One.