Good morning, Shepherd Family. Let me read to you from the 4th Gospel:

22 “I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

24 “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

25 “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. 26 I have made you known to them and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.” (John 17:22-24)

This passage never gets old for me. I am always amazed that Jesus, the Son of God, prays for me and has--hundreds of years before I was born. I am amazed that He prays for me to be kept by Him, to know the Father who sent Him, and for His love may be in me! Is it not a wondrous blessing that Christ Jesus is our constant advocate, our intercessor, and our High Priest who knows everything we need. He prays for our protection, unity, and sanctification. He prays that we will be fulfilled with joy and love so that we can bear fruit.

 Church, we are only a couple of weeks away from our celebration of the day that Christ changed everything. Our journey this Lenten Season is a journey to experience Jesus. We are journeying to a person, moving beyond mere Christian morality and behavior to experience the fullness of the power of the Gospel in salvation and sanctification. This Easter Season we want to see Jesus as clearly and accurately as possible. 2 Timothy 2:20-22 gives us a healthy example of what our spiritual preparation looks like:

20 In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. 21 Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

22 Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

With the cleansing, we become sanctified and useful to the Master, firmly established in the wonder and awe of who Jesus is. I find myself that I am most spiritually healthy when I have a clear view of who Jesus is. In John 1, we see a thorough description of Jesus—His holiness, His character, the greatness of His glory, His deity, and His divine purpose and divine authority. Family, our sanctification is shaped inside a clear view of the Son of God. This clarity, once achieved, contributes to our awe and wonder, resulting I surrender and obedience. In the beginning chapter of his Gospel, John gives Jesus at least ten titles. Each of the titles helps us to discover more and more of Jesus; each helps us behold Him and testify of Him. Look in John 1:29-34:

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, *the Lamb of God*, *who takes away the sin of the world!* 30 This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ 31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

32 Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33 And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is *the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’* 34 I have seen, and I testify that this is *The Son of God*.”

See how John finishes his address and tribute with “Son of God,” a title given at His conception, given here at the start of His physical ministry, and declared by the centurion upon His death (\*Matthew 27:54). “Son of God” confirms the status of Jesus as the divine Sone of God the Father. It also confirms His status as God, the Son, the second person of the Godhead. And in this, it makes plain the Old Testament promise of Isaiah 9:6-7:

6 For to us a child is born,

 to us a son is given,

 and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called

 Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the greatness of his government and peace

 there will be no end.

He will reign on David’s throne

 and over his kingdom,

establishing and upholding it

 with justice and righteousness

 from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty

 will accomplish this.

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\*Matthew 27:54

54 When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”

Christ is the Son, He is the King, and, therefore, He is “the Almighty God.” Doesn’t that create in you a sense of awe? Honestly! Not just a momentary wonder but a transformative awe and wonder (\* Hebrews 4:14)! And this awe and wonder motivates faithfulness or should (\*\*Hebrews 7:25)! Family, this is our Jesus who suffered and bled and died for us. Our salvation is secure because Christ’s priesthood and deity are indestructible. God, help us see you fully and clearly as we journey to the empty tomb. Paul writes in Colossians 2:9, “In Him, the whole fullness of the deity dwells bodily.” The Apostle John writes, “The Son of God appeared to destroy the works of the Devil” (1 John 3:8). This is our Savior, the One who comes to us in our place of spiritual bankruptcy, the One who offers life in Himself, the gifts of repentance, redemption, and reconciliation. “Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God” (1 John 5:5). When we rightly see Jesus for who He is, high and lifted up as the resurrected King of all Kings, our posture changes. Seeing Him clearly and accurately changes us. Discovering the true Jesus transforms.

So, how is your awe and wonder? Take an honest assessment! J. L. Parker says, “Once you become aware that the main business that you are here for is to know God, most of life’s problems fall into place on their own accord.” Seeing Christ clearly and experiencing Him realigns our understanding of the earthly. We must keep seeking (\*Colossians 3:1). A.W. Tozer writes, “God is God in fact as well as in name. He is on the throne of the universe directing all things and working all things according to the counsel of His will.” We behold the Glory of God in the person of Jesus. How are you receiving the Son of God right now? In awe and wonder? In fellowship, in intimacy, or at a distance? An accurate view of Christ, shaped by scripture and experience, motivates renewed faithfulness.

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\*Hebrews 4:14

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,[a] Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

\*\*Hebrews 7:25

Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

\*\*\*Colossians 3:1

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

 Questions? Life is full of questions! Why is life so hard? Why do I feel this way? Why do we park in driveways and drive on parkways? Why can’t women put on mascara with their mouths closed? Why are residential buildings called apartments when they are all pushed together? Why are there interstate highways in Hawaii? Why does Jesus love me? For this last question there is an answer: Jesus loves you because that’s what you were designed for. That’s His Grace—for you to be loved, fully and completely by the one who made you. See Christ clearly! See His love for you!

Passages in support of this sermon:

John 1:29-34

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ 31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

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John 17:22-26

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24 “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

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