

## Sermon Transcript from 6<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – All the “Cs”

### Reference – John 1:1-14

#### Sermon TLDR

This sermon explores the evolving **relationship between God and humanity** through a series of significant historical and **theological "Cs."** It begins with the **curtain** in the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple, symbolising the separation between a holy God and sinful people. The narrative then shifts to **Christ**, whose birth and life as Emmanuel ("God with us") bridged this divide, culminating in the **cross** where his death tore the temple **curtain**, removing the barrier of sin and opening direct access to God. This new relationship is **experienced today through an open door** for communication and the indwelling presence of God's spirit, fostering constant awareness of **"God with us."** Finally, the sermon looks to a future "C" – the **calendar** – promising a time when believers will see God face-to-face, experiencing his presence fully and eternally **without suffering or separation.**

#### Link to the Start of the Sermon (on YouTube)

Sermon Part 1 at <https://youtu.be/crK3zEGYo0M?t=2593>

Sermon Part 2 at <https://youtu.be/crK3zEGYo0M?t=3420>

#### Sermon Transcript

##### Sermon Part 1

I'm going to start off with some of the “Cs” and we're going to look at a bit of history.

So, we like history? No, we won't dwell on history. We'll look to the future.

God came to dwell amongst his people when they were living in the desert after Moses had led them out of Egypt. God told the Israelites to build a special tent called a tabernacle where he would come and be with them.

But because God was so holy and people were so sinful and bad they simply couldn't go just to meet God. They weren't allowed to see him face to face and it was thought if they saw him face to face they would have died, which is not ideal I guess.

So, God instructed them to build the tabernacle and he put a veil across the middle of the tabernacle. And for the sake of the “Cs”, I'm going to call that a curtain, and the curtain was to divide the area where the people were from where God was. A curtain's a bit thicker than a veil. But later on, although God's presence was with the people, the people were separated from him. And as I said, later on, they built a temple in Jerusalem. And in the temple, they were going to go and meet God. And that's where the curtain comes in because the curtain was probably purple and it was nice and thick.

*[Looking at a prop curtain]* That's almost the purple curtain and it's not as thick as the one would have been in the temple because that would have been really strong.

The curtain separated the presence of God from the priests who came to speak to God on behalf of the people. So, that's the first “C”. That was quick, wasn't it? The first “C” we're going to talk about is the curtain in the temple. The second one, we move on a bit, and God realized that he needed to get closer to us and we learned about 6 months ago or we were reminded about 6 months ago...

...we were reminded in the reading that Mina brought just now from the Gospel of John [*John 1:1-14*] that God actually became a human being and he came to earth in the form of Jesus and he was born as a baby in Bethlehem and he was laid in a crib. There's your second “C”. God came, he chose to come and live amongst us. And in some translations it says he pitched his tent among us. Years earlier the prophet Isaiah had said that God would come as a baby and would be called anybody know remember we heard about it six months ago. He was going to be called Emmanuel which means God with us.

Some of us [have] got memories haven't we? Now everybody could everybody in the world could see that God was actually what he was actually like and at that stage they could spend some time with him physically.

Jesus said to the followers uh in John 14:9 that anybody who has seen me has seen the father in heaven. Jesus living on the earth entered into all aspects of human life. He experienced joy. He experienced grief, hunger, thirst, betrayal, pain. Right at the beginning, homelessness, temptations and then right at the end death.

And the death came after false accusations or false trials, didn't it? Which brings me to the “C” sea. Do we know what the third “C” is? Third “C” this morning is going to be the cross.

So Jesus having died was at the time to give up. No, it's probably remarkable. I don't know whether you think that it's it would have been time to give up if you were killed. Your plan that was part of the plan, wasn't it?

God's greater plan of trying to get us back into relationship with him. We had to see, we had to understand what Jesus was all about. Something very significant happened when Jesus breathed breath breathed his last breath and died. Do we know what happened when he breathed the last breath?

This one...[*Paul rips the prop curtain in two*] ...the curtain ripped in two and that took the separation from God. And it was ripped from top to bottom. The ripping of the curtain showed that the barrier of sin that kept God and man apart had been dealt with by Jesus who had died on the cross. So the way was opened for all of us to draw near to God and enjoy his presence.

So how do we enjoy that presence? How do we experience the presence of God today?

The first thing is to say that we need to talk to him. We need to say sorry for the things we've done because he's already taken the punishment. And if we say sorry, we can receive that forgiveness and the door is then opened is our fourth one.

The door is then opened for us to deal to talk to Jesus direct.

The second thing we need to know about this, do you recognize some of the people there? We need to become aware of the truth that God is always with us wherever we are, when we go for a walk, are we fixated on where we're going to or do we look around and see the beauty of God around us?

Every morning I walk over the common and it's nice and quiet and peaceful and the phone doesn't work. There's no reception there and you can concentrate on what's going on in the world and you can you can talk to God in the quiet of his creation.

[A] bit tougher when we're at work at or at school, isn't it? So much hustle and bustle going on and I want to encourage you this week to be aware that God is with you when you're at work, when you're at MONDAYS or Oasis, he's there. Other things are going on, but God is with us there.

Maybe when you're walking up the street, you can imagine God is next to you. Maybe you can imagine that Jesus is sitting one of the one of the chairs near you. He will be encouraging. He will be blessing.

But also, he'll be challenging us. He'll be challenging us to say something to the people that walk past.

There will be an opportunity this week for you to tell somebody where you've been today. But I want to suggest that we can experience God's presence because he chooses to come in inside us and live within us. That means we are never alone. That means he's always with us wherever we go.

And he was certainly with me this morning. There were a couple of accidents on the way. We found out and I'd missed them because I'd left early enough and they were they were ahead of us. But then on the way in I got to Bagshot and the engine management light came on of the car just when Dave said, "Don't tell me the car's broken down." And not only that, all of the dashboard lights disappeared. So I had no speedo, no rev counter, no nothing. But I arrived safely, we could worry about the car later.

The important thing was just to carry on. And I believe that God kept that that old girl running. He was with me. But we need to draw close to God. He's there. We need to recognize that he is there.

## **Sermon Part 2**

For the fifth “C” we're going to move forward a little bit. And what's even more wonderful is what we have to look forward to. And our fifth “C” is a calendar.

In the last book of the Bible, and we know what the last book of the Bible is called, Revelation, it tells us that one day we will see God face to face when God lives with his people forever and there'll be no more bad rubbish of earth around. There won't be death, there won't be sickness, there won't be suffering, and God will be fully reigning. as our king.

And as we wait for that day, let's remember that God loves us. He wants a relationship with us and has promised that when we become followers, he will always be with us. *[Paul gets 2 volunteers to share candles with the congregation]*. I've got two people to help... there are some electric candles and some real [wax] candles. If the under 18s can take a battery one. So, grab a candle each.

On the outside of the candle is a reminder of the verse from Matthew that we looked at the beginning; “I am with you always”.

If I've counted correctly, there'll be enough for one each. Some of them you can light up now. Some of them we won't be able to. You got one each? We've got four electric candles left. Anybody wants to swap them?

So, those of you with electric candles, if you want to swap one of your wax candles for electric one, if you turn the electric candles on, That's so have a look at the candle, these are for you to take home. And as you look at the candle, I want you to remember that Jesus is the light of the world is with us. Those were Jesus' last words when he was on the earth. Surely I'm with you always to the very end of the age.

I've put that promise on the side of each of those candles.

In a few moments, we're going to listen to [the words in] a video. The words are the important thing, but there are some images that will come up that struck me as very relevant. And then during that, I want you to think when what points this week you will especially need to know that Jesus is with me.

*[Paul prays]*

So, with a candle Lord Jesus, help us this morning to be aware of your presence here. Help us to know that you're with us wherever we go, whatever's happening. Help us to spend time with you this week. Help get us ready, Lord, for the day when we will see you face. face to face. Question us now, Lord. Are we ready? Are we ready to see you face to face now? Are we ready to see you face to face this afternoon, tomorrow, whenever it comes? So help us as we move through this week,

Lord. Reveal yourself to us and help us to respond to you. We ask these things in your name.

Amen.

So, just a reminder that God wants a relationship with each one of us.

He doesn't pick and choose like Pip [and Grandma] did at the beginning.

He's here with us now.

He's waiting for our response.

Revelation 3:20 says, "Here I am. I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and I'll eat with that person and they with me."

He wants us to get to know him personally. He wants us to get to know him better. He wants us to get to know him more deeply. He is with us. His spirit's here.

We've been talking about over the last few weeks. And he wants us to be aware of him, during the day every day and he has promised never to leave us.

He will live in us and give us courage to face the world or whatever it throws at us.

*[omitted]*

I want to remind us... the important thing is that none of what's happening this week we do in our own strength. We will do it with Christ in us.