

*Dedicated to the generation about to inherit  
a reformation of the Church for our times:  
a nationwide and worldwide  
Christ Awakening movement*



**Christ Is NOW!**

## Also by David Bryant

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*What It Means to Be a World Christian*

*With Concerts of Prayer:*

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*The Hope at Hand:*

*National and World Revival for the 21st Century*

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*A Joyful Manifesto on the Supremacy of Christ*

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*7 Groundbreaking Keys to Help You Explore and Experience  
the Spectacular Supremacy of God's Son Today*

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MEET HIM AGAIN  
FOR THE FIRST TIME

# Christ Is **NOW!**

**7** Groundbreaking Keys  
to Help You Explore and Experience  
the Spectacular Supremacy of God's Son Today



NEW  
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DAVID BRYANT

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# *Preface*

## **Meet Him Again for the First Time**

***The Whole Church (Including You) Wholly Alive  
to the Whole Vision of the Whole Christ***

Does either of these experiences feel familiar to you?

At a tenth-year class reunion, you get into conversation with an old girlfriend who used to join you at sports and parties. Now as the two of you talk a decade later, you realize she is far more interesting, more personable, more talented, more inspiring than she ever appeared to be back then. In a sense, you meet her again for the first time.

As an avid NBA fan, you end up in the locker room with some of your hometown team heroes after a game, asking them for autographs. As they sign your program, allowing you to interact with them up close and personal, it's apparent they are far warmer, more down-to-earth, and more open-hearted than you had assumed based on how fiercely they battle out on the court. You see them in a new light. In other words, you meet them again for the first time.

Now imagine this: What if similarly striking encounters happened to you practically *every day*? In addition, what if these amazing discoveries were always about *the very same person*?

Most importantly, what if that person happened to be the single most consequential individual in all creation, throughout all history and for all eternity? I'm talking about Jesus, the Son of God.

And what if you started seeing that many previous reports about him were flawed, at best, diminishing him by misguided opinions and misleading claims? What if you found him to be so much greater than his popular reputation—much more alive and active, much more astonishing but also more appealing, much more awesome but also more approachable?

What if you kept on meeting him over and over, day after day, in such unexpectedly fresh and surprising ways that it were almost *as if* with each new encounter you were meeting your Lord and Savior for the first time?

### **That's How This Book Took Shape**

For over forty years I've been caught up in an extraordinary journey with Jesus precisely like this. To be sure, at times it has run hot and cold, fearful then bold, with ups and downs, in the light plus through the night.

Yet for me, this Spirit-guided course has remained a steady trek in the same direction—toward an ever more astonishing wealth of disclosures about who our Lord is today in the fullness of his spectacular supremacy.

**And that brings me to you.**



Finally, after decades of writing parallel books that actually foreshadow this volume, I offer you my *magnum opus* (chief work). *Christ Is NOW!* shares with you my distillation of exciting insights about our Redeemer King — uncovered while I was “meeting him again for the first time” — over and over and over.

In these pages I hand you keys that will unlock doors into the wide-open spaces of a renewed vision of and involvement with God’s Son in all of his greatness and goodness and glory. You’ll find these insights to be simple but also comprehensive, practical but also radical, breathtaking but also life-giving. Rooted in God’s Word, they will *reintroduce* you to the Lord Jesus Christ to help you see him for *all* he is right now.

In its approach lies a way for you to move into deeper intimacy with your Savior, not just in terms of who he was or who he will be, *but in terms of who he is today*. I think you’ll find this approach truly is groundbreaking. Long before you finish reading *Christ Is Now!* you will begin undergoing a genuine “Christ Awakening” — which is my great hope not only for you but for the entire Body of Christ.

## **The Hope at Hand: The Reformation That *Must* Come**

Unfolding in answer to decades of concerted prayer globally, a nationwide and worldwide Christ Awakening movement, many believe, is at hand.

This is urgently needed because far too many of this generation of Christians are slumbering concerning the full extent of the supremacy of Christ now. J. I. Packer says most believers only have pieces of him. John Stott calls us pigmy Christians because we worship a pigmy Christ. The late Chuck Colson suggested evangelicals have made him a “product” to meet our needs as consumers. Kendra Creasy Dean’s research reports that many Christian youth have lost true passion for Jesus. William Willimon concludes that the reigning Christ is essentially “missing” for us in the thick of all we try to do for him.

We need a grander exaltation of God’s Son that is able to breathe new passion into God’s people to advance his kingdom purposes at this moment of history; yet we remain asleep. Here’s how American theologian Kevin

Vanhoozer puts it (emphasis added): “Present-day Christians need to awaken to the glory of the transfigured, risen Christ in our midst, and we need to *stay awake* so that we, like the disciples, see ‘no one but Jesus only’ (Matt. 17:8).”

Said another way, we need a “Christological reformation”—one in which God’s people wake up to meet God’s Son all over again, as if it were for the first time, thus *re-forming* their whole vision of all he is.

On November 1, 1517, citizens of Wittenberg, Germany, found nailed to their church doors an extensive, militant document that spread rapidly throughout Europe due to a recently invented “social media” called the printing press. The Protestant Reformation, which had been brewing for decades, was unleashed!

On the exact date 500 years later, something similar happened: The release of another lengthy treatise was announced on — “nailed” to — current forms of social media: websites, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. It presented a similarly radical call for a reformation — a magnification — of the Church’s vision of who Christ is today.

Like Luther’s famous “95 Theses,” this contemporary declaration seeks to be revolutionary. It gathers together years of teaching presented around the world regarding the breadth and depth of Christ’s spectacular supremacy. A timely volume, it captures the heartbeat of a grassroots insurgency already underway — soon to flourish as a “Christ Awakening movement” in which the whole Church becomes wholly alive to the whole Christ.

You are holding that book. Handle with prayer.

# You Absolutely Must Read This First!



How You Can Get the Most  
Out of a Truly Unconventional Book



## Over Six Hundred Pages Long! *Why?*

History tells us, as I reported in my book *Christ Is ALL!*, that while trying to complete his own work on the supremacy of Christ, the 13th-century Christian leader Thomas Aquinas experienced a literal vision of Jesus, which caused him to exclaim:

I've just seen the Lord Christ!  
Now I know that all I have written is straw.

The same could be said for everything I've placed inside these two covers. By comparison to who our Lord Jesus is at this very moment, the whole book is nothing but straw — just 600 pages of straw!

So why did I feel compelled to produce it?

Without a doubt, as Paul observes in Ephesians 3, there's far more of the "height, width, length and depth" of the magisterial love of Christ that all of us need to explore and experience because there's so much more of his fullness for all of us to receive!

Yet at the same time, we're pursuing a vision of God's Son, as Ephesians 3 reminds us, that ultimately "surpasses knowledge" — meaning there will never be sufficient words (or pages) to mine the magnitudes of our Master. In the final words of his gospel, the Apostle John attests to this:

Jesus also did many other things. What if every one of them were written down? *I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written* (John 21, emphasis added).

In other words, never mind six hundred pages. Six *trillion* would never be sufficient!

Still, we must not stop trying to describe him. Doing so honors him. So, I've dared to record here my perspectives on the wonders of Christ and his supremacy, gleaned over decades, to be shared with the Body of Christ.

I confess what you hold here merely skims the surface of who Christ is. Still, despite what little I comprehend even now of the glory of God's Son, I find myself compelled to pass along what I *have* uncovered — which, surprisingly, necessitated these 600 pages.

I do so without apology.

Consider *Christ Is NOW!* a treasure chest jammed with "jewels" of truths about Jesus, each one of which deserves — *he* deserves — our careful reflection. These pages offer readers a matchless opportunity to awaken to Christ in whole new ways — to discover afresh *so much more of who he is today*.

So, take your time. Don't try to unpack it all at once. Enjoy the *expedition* ahead. In many ways it is also your *destination*. That's because for all eternity we'll never come to the end of the adventure of growing to know Christ better.

I suggest you begin the process by reviewing the secrets and suggestions outlined below. Plan on making regular use of them.

Simply plunge into these 600 pages of a truly unconventional book and see what happens to you. I believe you'll find it to be a most fascinating way to enter more fully into the kind of dynamic, life-changing relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ all of us were meant to have — that born-again hearts *long* to have.



## Begin with a Quick Overview of the Contents

To get the most out of this book, start by reading through the annotated “Contents” — just as you would study a map or your GPS mobile app before setting off on a hopeful mission. As you do, you’ll be introduced to these major “stopovers” on the road ahead:

**Meditations on His Majesty.** Here you’re given a series of nine brief, wide-ranging reflections on the splendor of Christ. Don’t bypass them. They set the stage for the major chapters at the center of the book. Try reading them devotionally, not more than two or three meditations a day perhaps, to prepare yourself *spiritually* to feast on the main meal of the book. Read them with your mind *and* your heart. Let them soak into your spirit and take you to the feet of Jesus before you set out to “meet him again for the first time.”

**Introducing the Groundbreaking Keys.** In this chapter, seven keys — the seven prepositions that unlock a grander vision of Christ’s supremacy — are briefly defined. In addition, you’ll learn the story behind how, over a period of decades, *Christ Is NOW!* came together. And you’ll find out how a comprehensive biblical Christology found itself expressed in these seven simple prepositions. Most of all, this chapter will prepare you for all that awaits you in the ensuing seven.

**Seven Chapters on the Seven Keys.** The seven major chapters come next — the heart and soul of the book — designed to help you explore and experience the greatness and goodness and glory of God’s Son. Each one provides a panoramic view of Christ most followers have never encountered before. To understand some of the creative ways each chapter equips you to engage directly with Christ himself, be sure to read below about the “Snapshots and Starter Thoughts,” “Selahs,” and “Tributes.”

**Fervency for His Supremacy.** *Christ Is NOW!* is about being changed — changed in how we perceive Jesus and changed in how we pursue Jesus. Therefore, this concluding section provides practical ways to think and act, designed to make what you encounter in the book have a lasting impact on you. First, you’re given two essays focused on applications and lifestyles. Then you’re introduced to a trove of free online resources to keep you

exploring and experiencing the spectacular supremacy of God's Son for years to come.



## **Enjoy Working Your Way Through the *Snapshots and Starter Thoughts***

Imagine this: Using your smartphone, you share with some friends some pictures from a recent family vacation. As you scroll through your photos, you pause at several to tell the story behind what they see. Of course, each image captures only one moment, but still it triggers a delightful conversation that expands on the person or event portrayed, making the snapshot come alive for everyone around you.

That's the idea behind the sections called "Snapshots and Starter Thoughts." Throughout the seven central chapters that unpack the spectacular supremacy of Christ, you'll come across this special subtitle, followed by a series of bullet points that serve the same purpose as your photos — to present specific dimensions of who Jesus is for further reflection and discussion.

Though the pattern varies from chapter to chapter, wherever this subtitle appears each bullet point that follows provides you with one distinctive insight into God's Son — a "snapshot" of him designed to spark "starter thoughts" about him.

As the "snapshot" insights multiply, they will begin to create for you a whole "photo album" about Jesus, a parade of pictures displaying some of the glory of his sovereignty.

Just like you can enlarge on the details behind any photo to help explain to someone what it's all about, behind each particular truth captured in these "snapshots" of Christ there is much more to uncover — more that could be said and should be said than what's contained in one paragraph.

That is why the title of each of these subsections includes the additional phrase "Starter Thoughts." This suggests that every bullet point is not only designed to give you a distinct nugget of truth about Christ but also to ignite in you fresh ideas about the wonders of Jesus, moving you to ponder wider implications of what is summed up in a few sentences.

In other words, each insight (Snapshot) is meant to launch you or your “Christ Group” (study group) into new ways of thinking and talking (Starter Thoughts) about Christ and his supremacy. Each bullet point is designed to set in motion a joyful exploration and experience of the marvelous riches found in Christ.

Please notice that each bullet point under “Snapshots and Starter Thoughts” opens with a succinct statement in **bold lettering**, usually followed by three or four sentences that amplify that initial statement.

One suggestion: First, read through *all* of the bold statements under a section, one point after another. Doing this gives you an immediate *overview* of the main teachings on that particular facet of Christ’s supreme majesty. Then, go back through the section a second time to read and reflect, or as a group to discuss, the entire bullet point. Let that Snapshot serve to inspire Starter Thoughts that lead to meaningful reflection, application, and even prayer.

One other suggestion: Whether alone or with a group you also may find it more meaningful to read each bullet point *out loud*. Try this with the *bold* statements first. Since most of these insights present a “concentrated truth” about Jesus, they often deliver a more lasting impression when they are not only read but also *heard*.



## Discover the Power of the Prompts

Finally, whenever you or those in your Christ Group decide to focus more thoroughly on a particular bullet point, employ these five prompts to stimulate fruitful interaction with the material. The Holy Spirit will use them to surprise you time after time with wonderful truths about who Jesus is now.

- (1) **Explore:** What is the main insight this “snapshot” emphasizes regarding who Christ is today in his spectacular supremacy? How would you describe that insight in your own words?
- (2) **Expand:** What are one or two other Scripture verses that would help expand our understanding of this important truth?

- (3) **Experience:** Can you name one or two ways this truth about Jesus should directly impact our relationship to him? Or, our ministry for him? Can you give any personal examples of how this would work in your life?
- (4) **Express:** In what ways could you pass along this important truth about Jesus to another believer so as to help enrich their vision of him and their passion for him?
- (5) **Exalt:** Conclude with a prayer expressing to the Father your praise for what the theme of this insight means to you. Declare your desire to know his Son better and to glorify him more based on what you've learned or what your group has discussed. Finally, pray that many of the believers around you would awaken to Christ in terms of how his spectacular supremacy is revealed through this Snapshot and Starter Thought.



## Spend Some Time With the *Selahs!*

“Selah” is a Hebrew word incorporated into a number of the Psalms. Most Bible students translate it to mean: “You’ve reached a spot in this hymn where you should pause, reflect, worship, and pray before moving on.”

For those same reasons, you’ll find Selahs showing up at the end of most major sections all through the seven central chapters.

The Selahs encourage you to take a moment to catch your breath after exploring a selection of perspectives on Christ that, most likely, will be grander, more profound, and more challenging than you’ve encountered before.

But even if some bullet points are simply reminders of what you already know about Jesus, it’s important to pause a minute or two to reflect on the insights you’ve just encountered — to pray over them, to praise the Lord for those particular truths of who he is, or to sit quietly and let them feed you.

Each Selah provides a valuable opportunity to enter into the “experience” dimension of the study by giving you time to engage directly with the Person you are exploring, as you delight in him and in what his supremacy



means to you. Don't rush past these breaks. They will prove to be time well spent, helping you become more intimately connected with Jesus.

Additionally, if you're studying the book with a Christ Group, the Selahs offer a logical juncture to pause for further discussion on that section or to engage in group prayer and worship based on what you've uncovered together. The group might also choose to carve out a period of silence for personal reflection before moving to the next section.



## Let the *Tributes* Ring Out With Joy!

Each of the seven central chapters, built around the seven prepositions (keys), concludes with a segment titled "A Tribute."

Essentially each Tribute forms a response of praise to the Father about the glory of the Son related to the theme of the chapter it closes. It provides the reader a liturgy of worship, confession, adoration, as well as proclamation — all mingled together.

The Tributes allow you to continue exploring and experiencing more of Christ through a dynamic approach you may have never expressed like this. As the subheading of each one notes, it paraphrases and personalizes a selection of Scriptures that interrelates with each chapter's specific focus on the spectacular supremacy of God's Son.

Note that each Tribute is built on phrases and verses from God's Word with these two objectives:

**To Explore.** To summarize the major insights gleaned from its chapter, each one weaves a bundle of biblical texts into a liturgy that highlights who Christ is now, in terms of who he is TO us, or FOR us, or BEFORE us, etc. It provides a rich distillation of what you uncovered in the previous pages.

**To Experience.** But each Tribute also doubles as a prayerful celebration. It allows you to personally declare to the Father what the insights of that chapter have meant to you, how they have increased your vision of and passion for his Son. The words of praise help you express your growing heart of passion for Christ based on your discoveries.

The prophet Hosea said, “Take words with you and return to the Lord” (Hosea 14, NIV). In the same vein, you are encouraged to invest this time at the end of each chapter to take with you the words of the Tribute and pray them — not silently but *out loud*.

If you are by yourself, you might want to recite the Tribute on your knees. In a group setting you might read it responsively — sentence by sentence or paragraph by paragraph — as an act of corporate worship.



## Why Not Form a *Christ Group*?

One of the most effective missionary outreaches in the 21st century is planting hundreds of thousands of brand new “Christ Groups,” as they call them, across Asia and the Middle East.

But *all* local congregations on planet Earth should be known as CHRIST GROUPS! Our ultimate identity should be defined as a group of people gathered together under the lordship of Christ, for the glory of Christ, to discover more about Christ, and to pursue growth in Christ. We already know for sure we’re gathered *around* Christ — even as he promised, he himself is present with even two or three who are meeting in his name (Matthew 18).

Since that’s true of every church, it’s clearly true of any small group who studies and discusses their way through *Christ Is NOW!*

So if you form such a group to study this book together, you might consider calling yourselves a Christ Group. Then, collectively practice the guidelines outlined under “Snapshot and Starter Thoughts” and “Discover the Power of the Prompts.” Also, enjoy implementing the Tributes and Selahs at a group level.



## You Are About to Learn a New Language!

Have you ever had to learn a foreign language? As they say, it is difficult to navigate Paris if you don't know French.

In many ways, *Christ Is NOW!* encourages readers to acquire a new language when talking about Jesus. The in-depth, multidimensional portrait of God's Son introduced here, especially as the seven keys unleash a much larger vision of Christ, requires a brand new, refreshingly practical way of thinking and talking about who Jesus is. It helps you develop a much more colorful *vocabulary* for sharing him with others.

Though they may appear unfamiliar or intriguing, or even thrilling, the reconstituted words, terms, phrases, and concepts you're about to meet can help believers chat with one another about the vastness of their ruling Redeemer more confidently, more purposefully, more enthusiastically, more freely, and — best of all — more *frequently*.

What's more, whole congregations can become spiritually revitalized as we reshape how Christians talk together about our matchless King, enthroned and active today. What would happen if, as a way of life, Christians started *hearing* a lot more about Jesus because we were *talking* a lot more about Jesus, the *real* Jesus, with each other?

The secret vitality for every congregation in the world has already been discovered:

Let the message about Christ, *in all its richness, fill your lives*. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives" (Colossians 3, NLT, emphasis added).

To say it differently: Hearing more about Christ requires talking more about Christ. *But talking more about Christ requires expanding our vocabulary about Christ* — so that all Christians will not only know *what* to say about their Savior but also know *how* to say it with clarity and conviction and joy.

It's like learning enough French so you can navigate Paris!



## Consider This Modest Thesaurus to Get You Started

Here are a few of the most valuable terms you'll encounter throughout the book. Some may be new to you; familiar ones may be given an unexpected slant; all are deeply relevant to seeing Jesus for who he is today.

These are not dictionary-style definitions for these terms but rather a series of word associations that give color and texture to each. As you work through the book, each of these terms will take on deeper meaning for you, even as additional terms will come into focus!

**Christ (anointed one)** = Messiah, exalted, authority, royal Son, fulfiller, consummator

**All (Christ is)** = entirety, in totality, comprehensive, undiminished, all inclusive

**Now (Christ is)** = immediate, direct, present, engaged, invasive, decisive, fully alive, today

**Glorify (of Christ)** = self-revelation, divine distinctions, grandeur, majesty, victories, renown

**Centrality (of Christ)** = essential, pivotal, necessary, focal point, intermediary

**Supremacy (of Christ)** = primacy, preeminence, sovereignty, dominance, superior, over all

**Spectacular (supremacy)** = breathtaking, stunning, magnificent, unparalleled, unfading

**Ascension (of Christ)** = exaltation, coronation, enthronement, authorization, active reign

**Consummation (in Christ)** = culmination, fulfillment, recapitulation, triumph, apex, climax

**Approximations (of Consummation)** = Spirit-infused, foretastes, miracles, victories, hope

**Christology (study of Christ)** = envision, investigate, contemplate, define, teach, worship

**Crisis (of Christology)** = crossroads, emergency, shortfall, blinding, crippling, defrauding

**Awakening (to Christ)** = aroused, aware, alert, revived, rising, energized, re-engaged

**Reintroduce (to Christ)** = recall, re-present, reawaken, reconvert, reconnect, re-engage

**Keys** = clues, insights, guides, blueprints, approaches, revelations, practical tools

**Groundbreaking (keys)** = foundational, innovative, trailblazing, revolutionary, exciting

**Explore (Christ)** = search out, delve into, seek more of, probe, pursue, discover, adventure

**Experience (Christ)** = encounter, embrace, enjoy, incorporate, apply, intimacy

**Fervency (for Christ)** = passion, enthusiasm, zeal, consumed with, devoted to, invested in

**Messenger (of Hope)** = harbinger, pacesetter, herald, change agent, mobilizer, servant



## Why the Use of So Many Graphics?

The images embedded throughout the book are not placed there only as a means for embellishing the page to make it more interesting. They do that, but they also serve these two additional purposes:

- (1) **To Enrich.** They help you capture the central “feel” for a particular section. They give to the reader a visual experience of the truths explored, often pointing them toward an experience with Christ.
- (2) **To Identify.** They provide you “hooks” on which to hang your discoveries. At some later date when you thumb back through the book, the graphics themselves can help you recall some of the most important ways you were able to “meet Jesus again for the first time.”



## **Green Light! Now You Can Proceed!**

Next, your adventure with Christ continues with “Meditations on His Majesty.” But before we head off, let me pray over us a prayer based on Jesus’ promise in John 16:

Father, our Lord assured us that after he ascended to the throne, the Spirit of truth would come upon his followers to guide us into wonderful truths about who Jesus is right now. So, as we travel this journey ahead may the Spirit unleash that within each one of us. Reveal more of Jesus to us so as to bring even greater glory to Jesus in us. Your Son is supreme because everything that belongs to you has been given over to him. Therefore, as we navigate these pages, empower us to explore and experience in whole new ways what his spectacular supremacy today is all about. Because he is worthy! Because he is our life! Because he is now! Amen!

**Meet Him Again for the First Time**

The Whole Church (Including You) Wholly Alive  
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