

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES

“. . . to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8)

100 Facets to the Diamond of Jesus Christ

1. He is inexhaustible. Unsearchably rich (Eph 3:8). Bottomless. We receive him, thinking he’s a pond, only to discover over time he’s an ocean. In him there is surprise after surprise. Endless discovery. Startling wonders around each bend.
2. He’s ruling and reigning over the entire cosmos such that the top headline of both FoxNews and CNN and everything in between should read, every day, in all caps: GOOD NEWS: JESUS CHRIST STILL ON THRONE: EVERYONE FREE TO CALM DOWN.
3. His rule extends to every atom, every molecule, the exact angle of the flutter of a leaf as it falls gently to the ground.
4. He is a genius. His teaching reflects the deepest genius of any teacher, ever. Read Pete Williams’ new book *The Surprising Genius of Jesus*, on the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15, and see just one example of Jesus Christ’s genius.
5. When we talk about him, we say “He *is* a genius,” not “was.” He is living today.
6. The same One who caused John to fall down as if dead in Revelation 1 swept up little kids in his arms in Mark 10.
7. His life gives us a rich and noble picture of what true human flourishing, real wisdom, perfect love, looks like.
8. Far better, after giving us that perfect example, he went to a cross to suffer and die for anyone who admits they don’t follow it.
9. His forgiveness gets down underneath not just our conscious, willful sins, but everything that is broken within us.
10. The Son of God’s lunch appointments were with prostitutes and tax collectors—in modern terms, adult entertainers and the mafia. In other words, sinners like you and me.
11. He said, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me” (Rev 3). He ate with sinners 2,000 yrs ago. He offers that friendship and fellowship to you and me today.
12. Discipleship to him does not involve attaining a minimum level of competency. No resume is needed. The one thing that qualifies you is knowing you don’t qualify.
13. As Hebrews teaches us, he never, ever asks his friends to walk through a trial that he has not himself, in an even more profound way, gone through himself.
14. His sinlessness does not encourage him to be aloof from us sinners, holding us at arms’ length, but makes him the perfect substitute for us—and he substitutes himself for us willingly, eagerly.

15. Unlike the laws of ritual cleanliness in Leviticus, Jesus Christ's touch of messy humans like me does not contaminate him. It cleanses me. In the OT, clean + unclean = unclean. With Jesus, clean + unclean = clean (Mark 1:41).
16. His mercy to sinners is not calculating, scale-weighting, cautious. It is lavish, outrageous, unfettered.
17. His atoning death means he is free not to scrutinize. He needs not. All has been wiped clean. Faults remain, not just in our past but in our present. But the whole atmosphere in which we live has been transformed from one of scrutiny into one of welcome. "Welcome one another *as X has welcomed you*" (Rom 15:7).
18. He no longer calls us servants, but friends, and he is the friend of sinners. He has not only atoned for our sins; he has befriended us sinners.
19. He is not an idea or a force or a philosophy or a theory or a framework or even a doctrine. He's a Person. He can be related to, talked to. He delights in that.
20. He said he came "not to call the righteous but sinners" (Mark 2:17). The admissions committee for heaven has declared by unanimous decision all moral resumes inadmissible.
21. He said "Whoever believes in me, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). If you have Jesus, you are carrying around inside you a nuclear powerplant, spiritually speaking.
22. He said, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you" (John 15:9). Consider the perfect, overflowing love of God the Father for God the Son; that's God the Son's love for you.
23. He said, "Take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). If you have Jesus, the looming darkness in your life is not going to overwhelm you; He is going to overwhelm it. *He says he already has.*
24. He said to Zacchaeus (Luke 19:10), "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." He is a seeker, a hunter—and the thing he's hunting for is "the lost." Not the best; the lost.
25. Jesus was the fulfillment of Isaiah's Servant of the Lord, who operates like this: "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench" (Matt 12:20 quoting Isa 42:3). When you're low, he doesn't pile on. He deals tenderly.
26. He cried. He cried over Jerusalem. He cried when his friend Lazarus died. That he is perfect, doesn't make him unfeeling. That he is perfect, means he is perfectly feeling.
27. He doesn't resent me (or you), though we've given him many reasons to. He welcomes us again, and again, and again.
28. In all our stumbling and failing, he has not yet said, 'Enough is enough. I'm out.'
29. His life and death means that if we have Jesus, our sin can only accelerate his grace. Where sin abounds, grace hyper-abounds (Rom 5:20).
30. He is incapable of disgust over his sisters and brothers, even his sinning sisters and brothers.
31. He gives rest. As Hebrews 3-4 teach, He is that of which the sabbath is a shadow; Jesus is the shadow-caster. He doesn't just forgive our sins; he lets the frenetic

- RPMs of the heart slow down into calmness, serenity, sanity, whatever is happening all around us circumstantially.
32. The one place in all four Gospels where he opens up to tell us about his own heart—the only place—he says he is “gentle and lowly in heart” (Matt 11:29). Burrow down into the very core of what makes the God-Man tick, the one who wove his own whip to drive the enterprising capitalists from the temple (John 2:15), and you find: gentleness.
 33. At the same time, he’s not, as Lewis put it, a tame lion. He is not domesticate-able, predictable, boring, vanilla. He cannot be caged or controlled. Who would want to try?
 34. And yet as Revelation 5 shows us, he is not only a lion (Rev. 5:5) but also a lamb (Rev 5:6). Magnificent ferocity; supreme, approachable tenderness, even to the point of fatal sacrifice—just like a lamb.
 35. He withdrew to pray and be alone at times. Communion with the Father is more important than sleep. And through his own work on the cross Jesus has opened wide the door for this communion.
 36. His brilliant resplendence will, one day soon, make every impenitent Hollywood star and ESPN-headlining athlete, every president and prime minister, look small and silly—as the glory of overlooked, ordinary Christians erupts in beauty for all the universe to see.
 37. His death and resurrection means that if I trust him, I am justified. By faith alone, I am clothed in the perfect righteousness of Jesus himself. He takes *all* my sin, and he gives me *all* his righteousness, never to be taken away.
 38. He not only justifies me, he reconciles me to God. A state of friendliness, of restored relationship, is given to me, purely of his gracious will.
 39. He not only provides for my justification and my reconciliation but also my adoption. Legal acquittal; restored friendship; familial love and inheritance.
 40. His grace is both outside me and inside me. Freely accounted righteousness-grace, through the Son, is credited to me from the outside; freely given godliness-grace, through the Spirit, is worked in me on the inside.
 41. At the same time, he does not give us grace. He gives us himself. He is grace. He is the life, the light, the vitality, that we desperately, even hauntingly, long for.
 42. He is not averse to messy, complicated, up-and-down, failures. He is averse to messy, complicated, up-and-down, failures who deny they are messy, complicated, up-and-down, failures.
 43. He found you. He found me. As a mentor said to me once, “Remember, Dane, you’ve already been discovered.” We don’t need to be noticed by anyone else, ever again. If we have his attention, we need no one else’s.
 44. When the religious leaders “saw the boldness of Peter and John” in Acts 4:13, “they recognized that they had been with Jesus.” Simply spending time with Jesus Christ creates a boldness, a brightness, a distinguishable trait visible to others.
 45. His coming into this diseased world means that, as Gandalf told Sam, “everything sad is going to come untrue.”

46. There was nothing physically attractive about him (Isa 53:2). He would never have appeared on the cover of Men's Health. He came as a normal man to comfort normal people.
47. This normal man was sinless, but he was a sinless *man*, not a sinless *Superman*. He woke up with bed-head. He went through puberty. Maybe he was a snorer. He's not Zeus.
48. Taking on our humanity meant taking on all our human limitations. He has a specific fingerprint. A certain blood-type.
49. Speaking of his blood—he let it all out, while suffocating to death, naked, on a Roman cross, when I was the criminal deserving it. That sure was nice of him.
50. He didn't come to give a pep talk. He's not a coach. He came to do, in our place, what every pep talk is trying to get us impossibly unmotivated people to do.
51. His family thought he was nuts (Mark 3:21). Maybe your family thinks you are too. He doesn't. He cherishes you (Eph 5:29).
52. He not only cherishes you, he nourishes you (Eph 5:29). He is feeding life into you by the Spirit moment by moment, sustaining you, preserving you, protecting you.
53. He knows what it is to be alone, thirsty, hungry, hated, rejected, taunted, shamed, abandoned, stabbed, tortured, killed. *Your* pain is not lost on him.
54. He lost every earthly friend he had while he lived, so that we can have him whatever earthly friends we lose.
55. We cannot get underneath his mercy. We can dig and dig and dig with our shovel of sin. But no matter how deep we go, we never hit rock bottom on his mercy.
56. We can never outrun his love, any more than we can outrun our shadow. No matter how fast Wily Coyote ran, the Roadrunner just ran faster. "Goodness and mercy shall *pursue* me all the days of my life" (Ps 23). Jesus *is* that goodness and mercy.
57. Thinking of Ps 23... that psalm says the Lord is a Shepherd who makes us lie down in green pastures. Jesus said "I *am* the Good Shepherd" (John 10). It is in Jesus that we lie down in green pastures. Jesus leads us beside still waters. Jesus restores our soul. Our weary, discouraged souls.
58. And not only Psalm 23. Jesus fulfills every psalm (Luke 24:44). Every agony, anguish, loneliness, the full range of human pain expressed in the Psalms—he experienced it more deeply than we do, and he bears us up now as we experiences these pains. And the guilt and sins confessed in the Psalms, Jesus never personally experienced, but he bore the penalty for them all upon that cross. The whole Psalter is an arrow pointing to Jesus.
59. He never misunderstands you. Never misjudges your motives. He knows us better than we know ourselves.
60. He likes you. Not just loves. Likes. That's not a compromise of the depth of our wretched sinfulness. Whatever else "friend" means, doesn't it at least mean that?
61. He not only teaches, and not only atones, and not only befriends—he brings us into *union* with himself. We cannot get any closer to him. We're closer to him, now, than John was, when he was "leaning on Jesus" (John 13).

62. And that union cannot be threatened, even by ongoing failures. It was God, not me, who united me to him in the first place. It is God, not me, who is alone capable of un-uniting me from him. And because justice has been satisfied, God never will. Jesus would have to be pulled down out of heaven and put back in the tomb in order for me to be dis-united from him.
63. Those in union with him are promised that the more darkness and hell we experience in this life, to that degree we will enjoy resplendence and radiance in the next (Rom 8:17–18). All the haunted brokenness that infects everything—every relationship, every conversation, every family, every email, every job, every vacation—everything—will one day be rewound and reversed.
64. He makes me human again. He didn't come to make us a superspiritual being who only prays and praises in a disembodied state. He has angels for that. He came to give me back my humanity. He's not disappointed that I need sleep, food, and the bathroom. He himself experienced all the same things.
65. He does not bring pain into my life to coldly punish but to graciously help. He brings pain to clear away the static in my communion with him. He was punished so that all my pain is not punishing but brotherly.
66. When I am prayerless, he is not. He intercedes for me. McCheyne: "If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies."
67. And his prayers are answered. Since in Gethsemane his prayer went unanswered ("Remove this cup"), every prayer he makes now on my behalf is answered.
68. I cannot experience a temptation he has not (Heb. 2:18).
69. The whole Bible is his, and about him (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39, 46). The Bible is not a manual for life, not a guidebook, not a rulebook, not sage suggestions. At its heart, and cover to cover, the Bible is the Word of God about the grace of God in the Son of God for the people of God to the glory of God. When I open the Book, I get *him*.
70. He is the final answer to the OT. Jesus gathers up all the various threads of promise and hope and rescue and longing that cover the landscape of the Old Testament and snowball down through the centuries. The virtue of every OT saint is filled out in him, and the failure of every OT saint heightens the longing for him.
71. Not only Scripture, either: Every heart-stabbing poem, every story of redemption, every novel or film that evokes longings and makes the tears flow—it all points to him. He is the *closure* for every human longing.
72. He is the perfect and final Priest, representing the people to God.
73. He is the perfect and final King, representing God to the people.
74. He is the perfect and final Prophet, speaking truth with laser-like accuracy.
75. He is the perfect and final Sage, or wise man, depicting wisdom in both his life and his words. He is the book of Proverbs walking around on two legs.
76. He is the perfect and final Judge—utterly fair, and all-knowing. Every verdict will be just right. We do not need to take justice into our own hands.
77. His promised second coming means that I will give an account for every word spoken against others, and others will give an account for every word spoken against me. All will be put right.

78. His blazing wrath upon the impenitent is matched by his gentle embrace of the penitent. Neither dilutes the other. He is not a one-dimensional Christ.
79. He was born in Bethlehem. Out of the way, backwoods Bethlehem. We are freed to live and serve in obscurity. We don't need the spotlight. *He* didn't.
80. The incarnation of God among us means that ultimate reality is not cold, dark, space, but love. The Son of God came to us as the overflow of intratrinitarian love.
81. He said, on the cross, with nail-pierced arms outstretched, "It is finished." We exhausted sinners are free to rest in his exhaustive work.
82. He has put that nail-scarred arm around us as we stumble toward heaven, and he will never loosen his grip.
83. His first miracle in Jn 2 (John makes point of calling it his "chief/beginning" miracle) is turning water to wine at a wedding party. Then at the end of Rev we see a wedding party between Jesus and his bride, you and me. Every wedding is a pointer to THE Wedding that will explode onto the scene of world history very soon, and last forever.
84. 'And they all left him and fled' (Mark 14:50). Had he lived today, every last Twitter follower would have un-followed him. The maximum number of friends you can have on FB is 5,000. Well, he *fed* 5,000. I bet all 5,000 would have accepted his FB friend request. And all 5,000 would have eventually un-friended and blocked him. So that he could be your and my ever-present friend, saying (Heb 13:5): 'I will never leave you nor forsake you' (Heb. 13:5).
85. Not only forsaken by his friends, but by God. He knows what it is to *feel* forsaken by God, because he knows what it is to be forsaken by God ("My God, my God..."). So that you and I are never *actually* forsaken, even when we feel forsaken.
86. He loves weakness. He works with weakness. That qualifies me for his grace. You feel the same way.
87. That grace is (2 Cor 12) sufficient. It needs no me-generated supplement. All he requires is need. Nothing more, nothing less. The bar of divine grace is low, so low that the proud cannot get under it.
88. He will never disappoint us or overwhelm us. As much as we leverage our longings onto him, he will fulfill them, and more than fulfill them.
89. His death means our death is a beginning, not an end. A door, not a wall. An entrance, not an exit.
90. His resurrection means my body will one day be restored to me and this time will not run down. We will be ageless. Both youthful immaturities, and geriatric wrinkles/balding/stiffness/aches, will be gone forever.
91. He is the "firstfruits" of a single harvest (1 Cor 15:20, 23). The final resurrection of the dead has already begun. The first instance is already among us.
92. And that body that he had, and that we will get, was both fully physical (he told Thomas to touch his scarred hands) and invincibly different from our current bodies (he appeared in locked rooms more than once and was hard to recognize more than once). When we look at Christ's risen body, we are looking at our future.

93. When he walked out of the grave, Eden 2.0 dawned. Against OT expectation, the old age continued steamrolling right alongside the dawning new age. This is why this world can feel like heaven one day and hell the next. But our basic citizenship is now in that new Eden that has begun.
94. This overlap of the two ages also means there is still time, still a chance, for any who recognizes he has been born into the old, hellish age to lay down his arms and be swept up into the dawning sunrise of the new age.
95. He has so deeply identified with us that when he ascended to heaven, he didn't leave his body behind. He took his body. He'll always have a body. He is now one of us, while remaining divine.
96. And while in heaven, he is our advocate (1 John 2:1). He is speaking up on our behalf. We don't need to self-advocate. He's doing it for us.
97. He's coming back some day, not in disguise as the first time, but without disguise, thundering with the armies of heaven (Rev 19), with a robe dipped in blood, his eyes like a flame of fire, with a tattoo on his thigh that says "King of Kings and Lord of Lords", and he will "tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty"—and every unbelieving person will be perfectly brought to account.
98. We will see him face to face" (Rev 22:4). You and I, one day, are going to look into the eyes of a risen Galilean carpenter. What a moment that will be. And all will be well.
99. When we look upon him, we will know: We are home. As God said in Zechariah 10:10, "I will bring them home." We will pass through the wardrobe into Narnia. We will weep with relief.
100. All because he refused the glory he rightly deserved to enter the hell and mud of our world to grab us and pull us into the new order, the new world of shalom and flourishing and sun and calm and uproarious laughter. All of sheer grace. All to be simply received. Available to anyone who refuses to pay for it.