

## Colossians – The Preeminence of Christ Col. 1:13-18

Thesis: To see the greatness of Christ.

### Introduction:

Paul mentions at least seven reasons in this passage as to why Christ should have the preeminence among us. The things that Paul mentions are limited to Christ (none other could do any of these things). It is because of these reasons that Christ does have the preeminence among His people.

Notice the reasons that Christ has the preeminence.

### I. It is His kingdom (1:13).

- A. The kingdom of Christ is the church.
  - 1. Christ came to this earth to establish His kingdom.
    - a. Mt. 16:18 - And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
    - b. Mt. 16:28 - Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.
  - 2. It is that kingdom that we are a part of.
- B. It is in the kingdom of Christ that we find salvation.
  - 1. Acts 2:47 - And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.
  - 2. God has conveyed (or transferred) us into this kingdom.

### II. It is in Christ that we have redemption (1:14).

- A. This redemption (forgiveness) can come only through His blood.
  - 1. Eph. 1:7 - In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace
  - 2. Mt. 26:28 - For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
  - 3. Heb. 9:13-14 - For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, {14} how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
  - 4. Heb. 9:22 - And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.
  - 5. Rev. 1:5b - To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
- B. It took the blood of Christ to purchase our salvation.

### III. Christ is the image of the invisible God (1:15a).

- A. It is in Christ that we see God.
  - 1. Jn. 14:9 - Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”
  - 2. II Cor. 4:4 - whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, **who is the image of God**, should shine on them.
- B. No one has seen God at any time, but we did see Christ.
  - 1. Jn. 1:18 - No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.
  - 2. The love of God was manifested towards us in Christ.
    - a. I Jn. 4:9 - In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.
    - b. Christ is the image of the invisible God.

### IV. Christ is the firstborn over all creation (1:15b).

- A. The word “**firstborn**” in this passage does not mean that Christ was born before all creation.
  - 1. If this were the case, it would indicate that Christ was created and was not always with the Father.
  - 2. Therefore, it has to have a different meaning (and both the Greek and the English language allow for another meaning).
- B. To say that Christ is the firstborn over all creation is to say that He is supremely above all creation.
  - 1. This idea is also seen in 1:17, when Paul says that Christ “**is before all things.**”
  - 2. Also, it stands to reason that if Christ created all things (as Paul says immediately following this verse), then He is above all things.
    - a. Eph. 1:20-21 - which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, {21} far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.
    - b. Phil. 2:9-11 - Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, {10} that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, {11} and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
  - 5. As James Burton Coffman says (quoting from Donald Guthrie), “*Firstborn must be understood in the sense of supreme rather than in the temporal sense of born before*” (Commentary on Colossians – 357).

#### V. It was by Christ that all things were created (1:16-17).

- A. Christ was the Creator (1:16).
  - 1. Jn. 1:1-3 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. {2} He was in the beginning with God. {3} All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
  - 2. This leaves no room to doubt that Christ created this world.
- B. Not only did He create all things, but it is by Him that all things are sustained (1:17).
  - 1. Heb. 1:3 - who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and **upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
  - 2. It is Christ who sustains us in this world.

#### VI. Christ is the head of the body (1:18).

- A. To say that Christ is the head of the body is to say that He is the authority in the church.
  - 1. Eph. 1:22 - And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,
  - 2. He became the head and authority of the church because He died for her.
- B. The things that are done in the church should be done only by His authority.
  - 1. Col. 3:17 - And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
  - 2. Mt. 28:18 - And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”**
  - 3. This is also the reason that the church is named after Jesus.

#### VII. Christ is the firstborn from the dead (1:18).

- A. Jesus was not the first one to be raised from the dead.
  - 1. There have been several who were raised from the dead.
    - a. I Kgs. 17:17-24 – Elijah raises the son of the widow of Zarephath.
    - b. II Kgs. 4:8-37 – Elisha raises the son of the Shunammite.
    - c. II Kgs. 13:21 – A dead man is revived when he touches the bones of Elisha.
    - d. Acts 9:36-43 – Peter raises Dorcas (Tabitha).
  - 2. Jesus Himself had raised at least three people.
    - a. Mt. 9:18-26 – the daughter of Jairus.
    - b. Lk. 7:11-17 – the son of the widow of Nain.
    - c. Jn. 11 - Lazarus
- B. However, He was the first one to be raised from the dead that did not die again.
  - 1. To be **“the firstborn from the dead”** means that Jesus did not die again.

2. When He rose from the dead, He ascended back to the Father without dying a second time.
3. **Rev. 1:5** - and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, **the firstborn from the dead**, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

#### **Conclusion:**

- I. It is His kingdom (1:13).
- II. It is in Christ that we have redemption (1:14).
- III. Christ is the image of the invisible God (1:15a).
- IV. Christ is the firstborn over all creation (1:15b).
- V. It was by Christ that all things were created (1:16-17).
- VI. Christ is the head of the body (1:18).
- VII. Christ is the firstborn from the dead (1:18).