

[Colossians 1:15-20](#)

The Preeminent Supremacy of Christ

Introduction

Let me begin by saying that attempting to expound upon today's text ([Colossians 1:15-20](#)) has been difficult for me personally. That's because Jesus' supremacy and preeminence is so indescribably indescribable. As King David wrote in [Psalm 139](#), "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it" ([Psalm 139:6](#)).

When it comes to supremacy and preeminence, Jesus is in a class by Himself. There are no competitors. He is distinctively exclusive. Scripture says Jesus is the Great I Am, the Lord of lords and King of kings, the Good Shepherd, the Light of the world, the Living Water, and the Way, the Truth and the Life. There is no one or nothing in heaven or on earth that is greater than Him.

In the spirit of this preaching series on Colossians, the overarching theme is the supremacy of Christ - the fruit of gospel hope. Jesus is the gospel hope. He is our only Hope. He accomplished what no one else could do. He reconciled man with God by sacrificing His body and blood on the cross. Sin was paid for, or atoned, when He exchanged His righteousness for man's unrighteousness. That's the good news message of the cross, which is the gospel hope.

So, in this Scriptural gold mine of Colossians, there are three (3) main points in the text that will attempt to help us comprehend Jesus' supremacy and preeminence in His relation to:

- God
- Creation
- Church

Jesus' Supremacy - In His Relation to God

Right out of the gate, we're lavished with the truth that in His relation to God, Jesus is the image of the invisible God. He is the firstborn of all creation ([Colossians 1:15](#)). The word image implies an exactness. Not a resemblance. Not a replica. He is the real thing. He is God. The writer of the book of Hebrews, captured this description well in [Hebrews 1:3](#).

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

[Heb 1:3](#) (ESV)

And what about Jesus as the firstborn of all creation? What does that mean? The Greek word protokos, which is where we get our English word prototype, defines Jesus as first and foremost. He wasn't created. He was with the Father in the beginning. Jesus, who is the Word, existed before time and creation. Here's what the apostle John writes in [John 1:1-2](#).

¹ 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.

[John 1:1-2](#) (ESV)

According to Scripture, Philip, one of the twelve disciples, said to Jesus, "Lord show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ([John 14:8-9](#)). Jesus answered, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" In other words, if we want to see God, look to Jesus. Are we like Philip? All around us there are signatures of Jesus' supremacy and preeminence and we miss it. We can't see the forest for the trees.

For example, take the major events of year 2020, such as coronavirus (COVID-19), as well as the social, economic, and political chaos. Life has been turned upside-down. This has been a very hard time for all of us. Have we focused so intently on COVID-19, violent protests and Wall Street that we've missed God's grace and mercy? Have we been so preoccupied with questions like "Where is God in all of this mess?" that we've lost sight of God's sovereignty and His providence? I know I have. How about you?

The messiness of life is not an enemy of faith, but an opportunity to see the supremacy of Christ over all things. Yet, in all of His supremacy, Jesus came to be with us in our messy situations. He stoops down and ministers to people like us - the least, the lost, and the lonely. If you're trusting Jesus, His preeminence means casting our anxieties on Him because He cares. We don't have to face the enemies of death and disease on our own. If we're in Christ, we're His treasure; He is our treasure. We belong to Him. So, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's ([Romans 14:8](#)). No matter what, He's worthy of exaltation.

Exalting the supremacy of Christ bears the fruit of gospel hope. And the fruit of that hope, whether it be in hard times or good times, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

Consider the fact that Jesus exemplifies the fruit of the Spirit. Exalting Him as supreme and preeminent is a call to Christ-likeness. But there's a dangerous opposition to that call. It's more dangerous than COVID-19. It's called sin. And sin is anything that separates us from God.

As descendants of Adam and Eve, we are born as sinners, children of wrath like the rest of mankind ([Ephesians 2:3](#)). Our sinfulness causes all of us to exalt the supremacy of ourselves instead of Jesus. Self-supremacy bears bad fruit, which presents itself as the desires of the flesh. This is opposed to good fruit, which are the desires of the Spirit.

Here's a question for all of us. What's vying for supremacy in your life and mine? Among other things, it's ourselves. That's true in our relationships, our jobs and in the church. We'd rather call the shots. Be God. Be famous. Self-supremacy feels good. But only one can be supreme. And our flesh, the world and Satan fuels our desire for supremacy. Our thoughts, actions and words reveal a prideful, self-centered heart that attempts to raise ourselves above everyone else, including God. The bad fruit of self-supremacy makes us unloving, impatient, irritable, resentful, boastful, arrogant and rude. I can relate to that. Can you? If you say no, you're deceiving yourself.

When Christ is exalted for His supremacy and preeminence, the Holy Spirit is working. He transforms people from the inside-out. Following the leading of the Holy Spirit is always the right thing to do. He is the very Spirit of Jesus. He is God. He is in control. No matter what the situation, the Holy Spirit exalts the supremacy of Christ in all things. And all of that is the fruit of gospel hope, which can only be found in Jesus. Because through Him, by Him and for Him, all things in creation were made. He holds all things together ([Colossians 1:17](#)).

Jesus' Supremacy - In His Relation to Creation

In His being the firstborn of all creation and the image of the invisible God, nothing or no one is more preeminent or supreme than Jesus. He wasn't just there when everything was created; He was, is and always will be the Creator. All things were created for Christ; He holds all things together ([Colossians 1:16-17](#)). No one can make that claim except the Lord Jesus.

Visible things are under His supremacy - galaxies, stars, planets and the Earth. Invisible things are under His supremacy - the bliss of heaven and the horror of hell. He holds all of it. So it is with presidents, kings, pharaohs, as well as you and me. He is over angels, including fallen angels, such as Satan and his demons. And He doesn't just hold together every molecule in all of His creation. The salvation of every believer is held together through the Lord Jesus now and for eternity. Every breath and every step for those who've placed their trust in Christ is held together by His love, grace and mercy.

Here's a thought-provoking question - "Why would the God who created and holds all things together care about you and me?" Did you ever think about that? In the scheme of space and time, we are so insignificant. Here we are miniscule human beings on a miniscule planet amidst the vastness of the universe. We're like a speck on a speck. Why would God take note of us? Here's [Psalm 8:3-4](#).

³ When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? [Psalms 8:3-4](#) (ESV)

God cares about His creation. He owns it; He is over everything - heaven, hell, galaxies, planets, people and viruses. All things belong to Him. He holds all things together. And according to God's Word, all things were created *for* Christ. Let's ask ourselves, "Why was I created for Christ?" How would you answer? Here's the Bible's answer: to bring Him glory ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#) and [Colossians 3:17](#)).

This spring a robin built a nest just above our backdoor in a rain gutter of all places. Literally within a few feet of our eyes, my wife, Julie and I, enjoyed watching "mother robin" tending to her nest. After a few weeks, we could see two little heads bobbing up and down as she fed her two babies. Then one day after a heavy rain, we didn't see the mama bird or her babies. We're not sure what happened. Maybe the babies drowned. Maybe they were able to leave the nest. We don't know, but God does.

A robin and her babies are so insignificant. And yes, all of us are insignificant too. Less than dust on the scales, and Jesus loves us anyway! Because of Jesus we now have significance. Just as

birds, flowers and galaxies were created for Christ to bring Him glory, so we are too. It reminds me that Christ's supremacy is over all things. Not one sparrow falls to the ground apart from God's will ([Matthew 10:29](#)). Nothing happens apart from His authority. Every person, regardless of skin color, whether unborn, young or old, rich or poor, weak or strong, will bow and confess Jesus' preeminence as Lord to the glory of God. Whether plants, animals or humans, all things were created for Christ and to exalt His supremacy and preeminence.

As human beings, we were created in the image of God. Exalting the supremacy of Christ is a call to Christ-likeness. It's a call to live and own gospel hope in a world of chaos and despair. What does that look like? Love your neighbor as yourself. Forgive others as God in Christ forgave you. Outdo one another in showing honor. Encourage others to drink deeply from the fountain of the Water of Life. This is a description of those who love Jesus; these are people who are a new creation in Christ. This is a description of the church.

Jesus' Supremacy - In His Relation To The Church

Jesus is the Head of the body, the church. He is the firstborn from the dead. That is, as the Head of the church, His resurrection from the dead means that the church, His followers, will also be resurrected from the dead. This great hope of resurrection is only found in Him. As the God-Man, Jesus is the only Person who brings about reconciliation between God and man through His blood shed on the cross ([Colossians 1:18-20](#)).

You've heard the saying - "Here's the church; here's the steeple; look inside and see the people." The church refers to more than a place for people to meet. The church is people. The church are those who are a new creation in Christ. Here's [2 Corinthians 5:17](#).

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

[2 Cor 5:17](#) (ESV)

Several years ago, a man named Tom Kumbier placed his trust in Jesus at an LEFC men's ministry meeting. He was born again. He experienced a spiritual rebirth; he became a new creation in Christ. Tom trusted the Lord Jesus through faith alone as a result of God's grace alone. Tom is a member of the church, not because he filled out an application and was affirmed by a congregational vote. No, Tom is a member of the church, the body of Christ, because Jesus loved him and gave Himself for him ([Galatians 2:20](#)).

That's true for anyone who has received Christ through faith alone by God's grace alone. Jesus loved you and gave Himself for you. And as the head of the body, the church, Jesus is your Husband and you are His Bride. This is a beautiful picture of marriage. This is a wonderful picture exemplifying God's covenant-keeping hesed love. Hesed is a Hebrew word, which is defined as the ever-faithful, never-ending love of God.

My parents, who are in Christ, were married for 73 years. My dad recently passed away, so Father's Day is bittersweet this year. In spite of his mistakes and failures, dad lived out that hesed-type of love for my mom for a little over seven decades. Dad treasured Jesus' relation to the church, as he attempted to live out the gospel command: "Husbands, love your wives, as

Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her ([Ephesians 5:25](#)).” Come what may - persecution, calamities and hardships, like COVID-19 or social unrest, Christ will always love His church and never give up on His Bride. Otherwise, none of us have any hope.

But there is hope. Gospel hope. And hope is a Person. His name is Jesus. God in Christ made the only way to be reconciled to Himself. Only through Christ, by the work of the Holy Spirit, will a person be justified, or made right, with God. Since there's justification through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, people like Tom Kumbier, as well as you and me, can have the assurance of peace with God ([Romans 5:1](#)). Now, that's real hope. Here's [Colossians 1:19-20](#).

¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
[Col 1:19-20](#) (ESV)

How about you? Where's your hope? Is it in Christ? Have you made peace with God through trusting that the blood of Jesus availed for you? If you haven't, now is the time; today is the day. Repent and believe. God desires that no one perish, but that all should come to repentance ([2 Peter 3:9](#)). By the way, repentance applies to both unbelievers and believers. We've all sinned and fall short of God's glory ([Romans 3:23](#)).

In his book, *Coronavirus and Christ*, John Piper, author, pastor and founder of Desiring God Ministries says "This is what it means to repent: to experience a change of heart and mind that treasures God in Christ more than life." That's also what it means to exalt Jesus' supremacy and preeminence. That's also what it means to know Jesus as the Supreme Treasure.

If you've not already done so, come – believe – see. Receive the Lord Jesus through faith by God's grace. His supremacy and preeminence is more than factual information. It's a powerful testimony to His life-transforming power. As the old hymn echoes the good news of the cross - "There is power, power, wonder-working power, in the precious blood of the Lamb."

If you have put your faith in Christ, remember His supremacy and preeminence is over all things, including you. Jesus is the greatest Friend, the Supreme Treasure, in this life and for eternity. What a privilege, a blessing and an assurance to know Jesus as Lord and Savior, yet as good Friend. In Him, there is comfort knowing that He will never leave us. Through Him, there is peace with God. By Him, there is security knowing that He cares. Otherwise, why would He bear our sins and sorrows, past, present and future, on the cross?

Conclusion

Remember, Jesus' preeminent supremacy means that in relation to God, He is not a replica of God. He is God. In relation to creation, all things were created through Him, by Him and for Him. All things are held together by Him. In relation to the church, He is the Head of the body. The body are those trusting Jesus through faith alone by God's grace alone, all of whom are a new creation in Christ. Sons and daughters of the living God from every nation, tribe and tongue. Brothers and sisters in Christ, whose gospel hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

In conclusion, I'd like to share a profound quote with you from someone at LEFC who wishes to remain anonymous. "The celebration of who Christ is for me should be greater than the condemnation of who I'm not." In other words, celebrate the preeminent supremacy of Christ. Instead of elevating ourselves in sinful pride or wallowing in the mire of our sins, look up to Jesus. Trust, savor and revel in Him as the Supreme Treasure. Because only in Him will there be gospel hope for yesterday, today and forever. Amen.