

Colossians Ch1v15-20 - Jesus - Sovereign Saviour

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Preacher: Jonny Grant

[0 : 00] Thank you.

And as always, look forward to catching up over tea and coffee with you afterwards. Please turn in your Bibles to Colossians.

This is the series we're in at the minute. Colossians chapter 1. So, if you would like notes to be able to take, there's pens at the table as you came in and a little A5 sheet as well.

Thank you, Jonathan. So feel free to go and get that if you need to. Thank you. We're going to read this morning from chapter 1, verse 15 down to verse 20.

Let's hear God's word to us. Colossians 1, starting at verse 15. The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

[1 : 47] For in him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities.

All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

Well, please keep your Bibles open there. I'm going to pray, and then we're going to get stuck in to God's word. Let's pray. Father, thank you that you have not left us alone in the dark.

[3 : 11] We're not grappling to figure out or understand who we are and who you are. But we thank you that as we read the words of Scripture, as we open up our Bibles today, so you reveal yourself to us, who you are and what you are like and what you have done.

And so we pray that you would help us to engage with this word, a word that has power to change, power to give life, power to give hope, and how we need that today.

And so we thank you that as we come, all that we read and all that we think about together is going to be good for us.

So help us now by your Spirit, we pray. Amen. Amen. So, why should I follow Jesus?

Of all the different religions there are in the world, and all the different philosophies that are being taught, why Jesus? You see, Johnny, the people that I hang out with, the people in my sports teams, the people I work with, they don't follow Jesus.

[4 : 55] So why should I? Maybe they're the ones that are actually right, and I've got it completely wrong. What makes Jesus so unique that I should follow him?

Why Jesus? Now that's a really important question to ask, and thankfully Colossians provides the answer.

Colossians is all about a new church, new believers in Christ, who are facing the why Jesus question. Of all the different teachings and beliefs, and we'll get to this in chapter 2, that are being thrown at them, why follow Jesus?

So a letter is written to this church to remind them, and to teach us today, why Jesus is the one we should follow. And together we're going to look at two big reasons.

First, Jesus is the sovereign son over the first creation, and then second we're going to look at Jesus is the supreme saviour over the new creation.

[6 : 11] So two answers, or two reasons, as to why we need to follow Jesus. Because he's the sovereign son, and he's the supreme saviour.

So let's look at these two big ideas together. Here's reason number one. Jesus is the sovereign son over the first creation.

You see, Jesus isn't like any other person. He is unique, one of a kind. And four things tell us about who Jesus is.

First, Jesus is God. Look at verse 15. The son, the son of God, that's Jesus, is the image of the invisible God.

Now, we can't see God. We can't touch him. God is spirit. He doesn't have a human body like ours. But Jesus, the son, makes what is invisible, visible.

[7 : 20] You see, Jesus is the true image of God. As another writer in the New Testament put it like this in Hebrews, the son, Jesus, is the exact representation of God's being.

The exact representation. So if you were alive in the first century, and you went down to the local shop to get your bread, and you saw Jesus in there buying his bread, you were seeing God in human form.

Incredible, isn't it? And so for us today, as we read Scripture, as we look at God's Word, God is revealed to us.

As we think about who Jesus is in Scripture, so God is revealed to us. Not his physical attributes, what colour hair he had.

No, this is all about his character. It reveals God to us. Jesus is God. And that means you and I are not God.

[8 : 32] only Jesus can rightfully claim to be God. Second, Jesus is the owner. Again, let's look at verse 15.

Jesus is the image of the invisible God and the firstborn over all creation. Now, firstborn sounds like that Jesus was the first person that was ever to be born.

But that's not quite what it means. it's talking about inheritance or ownership. You see, in the past, the firstborn inherited everything that belonged to his Father.

And that's what the focus is here. Jesus has inherited all creation from the Father. Everything belongs to him.

There is nothing that does not belong to him. Jesus is the owner. that means that Jesus also owns you and me. We belong to Jesus.

[9 : 40] Not only is he the owner, it makes sense then to say that Jesus is also the creator. You might remember that in your Bibles, Genesis 1, verse 1, it says, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

God created the heavens and the earth. Now we're told, look at verse 16, for in him, in Jesus, all things were created.

And then the last line of verse 16, all things have been created through him and for him. So who created the world?

Was it God or was it Jesus? No, it's not a contradiction, it's not a trick question. Because Jesus is God, it is true to say that Jesus created, verse 16, things in heaven and on earth.

He made the birds that fly in the sky. And the fish that swim deep in the oceans. The visible things around us in creation, like cats and dogs.

[10 : 55] And the invisible things that we cannot see, like bacteria and cells. Jesus made the powers and the thrones and those who sit on them, the kings and presidents of nations.

Jesus also made the rulers, we're told, or the authorities. That is, he made the supernatural powers, Satan and his minions.

Yes, God created all. Of course, he didn't make them wicked, they became wicked, but Jesus is creator of all. And that means, wonderfully, that Jesus created you.

You are his design. So, Jesus is God, he's the owner, he's the creator, and he is also the sustainer. Verse 17, he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Jesus, in his greatness, holds everything together.

[12 : 07] He controls the tides, the seasons of the year, the rain that falls, and the sun that shines. He controls the movement of the planets and the galaxies, the forces of the moon, so that we all don't just go floating off into space.

He gives breath to every living creature, water to quench, and food to nourish. Jesus is sustainer.

And that means that Jesus is sustaining you right now if you sit in your seat. He's making your heart beat right now.

You see, Jesus isn't like anyone else, is he? He is unique. Nobody else can claim these credentials that he is God, the owner, the creator, and the sustainer.

Not of some things, but of all things. Did you notice all the alls?

[13:18] Have a look at verse 15. Count how many alls there are. He is the firstborn over all creation. End of verse 16.

all things have been created through him and for him. Verse 17. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Jesus, who is God, is over everything. He is sovereign. That simply means that Jesus has absolute authority and complete control over all.

As one writer put it, I think I have it here on screen, there is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, mine.

It's all his. Every single detail. Jesus is the sovereign son over the first creation.

[14:32] He rules over everything and everyone and he has power over everything and everyone. Nothing happens without his say-so. Nothing. And everything happens at his say-so.

He is the sovereign son. And that has implications for us. Because Jesus is the sustainer, I am dependent on him.

The very breath that I breathe right now comes from him. The food that I eat, the water I drink, is all from him.

My heartbeat, my blood flowing through my veins right now is all dependent on him. Without him I would cease to exist.

And because Jesus is the creator, I am under him. I'm not above him, telling him what to do, or giving him my plan and saying you should follow my ideas.

[15:48] I'm not equal with him, that we're best chums, no, I am under him. He is the creator, I am the created.

And because Jesus is the owner, I obey him. I don't argue with him and say, I think you've got that wrong.

No, I obey him, I listen, he does the speaking, he does the commanding, he does the demanding, and I obey him.

And because Jesus is God, I owe my life to him. He demands and deserves my honour, my life, my all, my worship.

You see, the reason why I should follow Jesus is because Jesus is the sovereign son over the first creation.

[17:01] That's the reason, that's the answer. Now, the problem is, we don't naturally follow Jesus, which has led to disastrous consequences.

you see, our natural inclination is to reject the sovereign son. We defy his rule and his authority and we live as if we are God and the results have been disastrous.

We've gone from beauty into brokenness. Think of it like this with me, the sun, that is the S-U-N kind, the big fiery ball that we never see because there's always clouds in the way, is actually at the centre of our galaxy, the universe.

Everything revolves around the sun, doesn't it? The world makes a full rotation around the sun over the course of one year, 365 days, and we orbit the sun.

That's what keeps everything in its place. Everything has its order. Now, suppose with me just for a minute, that planet Earth decided to be at the centre, and everything else should revolve around it.

[18:23] Well, the very foundations of the universe would collapse, change the order and design, and you get order or disorder and chaos.

Now, that's exactly what it is like in terms of our response to the sun, the S-O-N sun, the sovereign sun, God the owner, the creator and sustainer is at the centre.

He's the one who owns all things, controls all things, and we were made to revolve around him, to live our life in response to him.

That is how we flourish and how we thrive as human beings. but replace the sun, the S-O-N with self and put ourselves at the centre and expect everything to revolve around us, that is everybody else, and God himself should revolve around me, well, chaos reigns.

And that's what we've done personally and collectively. The human race has said no to Jesus.

We've pushed out the sovereign son and replaced him with self.

[19 : 44] We've claimed an independence from our creator. The created world has become a suffering world and the consequences are there for us to see it.

Wars, disasters, tragedies, everything around us has become disjointed. It's ripping apart, it's pulling apart, leaving a gaping wound that we cannot fix.

But worse than all of this, our rejection of the creator means we have become separated from our creator. Instead of union with God who made us, there's now division.

Instead of peace, there's enmity. Instead of flourishing, there's now brokenness. And tragically, it has put us all under the just and fair judgment of God.

We're heading to an eternal existence without the Son, without Jesus and all his good gifts. The existence is what the Bible calls hell.

[20 : 55] We're at a loss. And the only one who can do anything about it we have rejected. Well, thankfully, God has not rejected us.

Which leads us to the second big reason as to why we should follow Jesus. Because Jesus is the supreme saviour over a new creation.

You see, as saviour, Jesus is bringing about a new creation. He will renew this broken world and restore our disordered lives.

And three things are going to show us how Jesus the saviour brings about this new creation. Three things we're to look at. First of all, he says, I want you to look at the church.

Look at the church. verse 18. And he, that is Jesus, is the head of the body, the church.

[22 : 06] He's the owner of the church. He's the boss, the one in authority. He is the beginning, that is, he is the founder and the firstborn from among the dead.

You see, just as Jesus created the world, so Jesus is the one who creates the church. You see, the church is the beginnings of God's new creation.

Verse 18, we're told he is the firstborn from among the dead. Jesus was the first to die and rise again, never to die again.

He is champion over death. And so all who put their trust in Jesus, we're told will also rise. They will be raised from death to new life.

And as the firstborn from among the dead, that means the same idea that we saw in verse 15, he inherits. All those who trust in Jesus are given to Jesus as his inheritance.

[23 : 18] They become his people who belong to him, they become his new creation. So when we look at the church, and you can do that right now, take a good look at each other.

We're thinking about the church people. When we look at each other, we are looking at God's new creation. A people who no longer have self at the center, but have Jesus at the center.

You see, the church is a dead people who have become a renewed people. We're a broken people who have become a restored people. Have a look at chapter 3, verse 10.

It tells us something of what he is doing in regards to the new creation. He says, have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator.

The church, God's people, as we are being made new, are becoming more like Christ and one day we will be like him. You see, the church, and here we are in a ratty old building, as we often say, with the roof about to blow off and the rain coming down, we're not much, are we?

[24 : 46] But yes, we are. We are God's display piece to the world of what he is doing through Jesus.

We're not nobodies, we're a new creation, God's display model to the world of what he is doing. That means that if you are in Jesus, you are a new creation.

So, reason number one, why Jesus is the supreme saviour, we're to look at the church. Second, look at the sun, the S-O-N, verse 19, for God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.

This big idea is repeated for us in chapter 2, verse 9. Chapter 2, verse 9. Where it says, For in Christ all the fullness of the deity lives.

All of God is in Christ. And he lives in bodily form. You see, Jesus not only makes God visible, it's telling us here, in verse 19, that God becomes like one of us.

[26 : 12] He comes in bodily form. A human being, just like us, with arms and legs and nose and eyes and ears. He becomes a person.

You see, the only way to save this broken world, the only way to put right our disordered lives, is if God would come as a person.

That would be the only way. God himself must come to this world. And so in Jesus, we have both God and man.

Jesus is fully God and fully man. 100% God, 100% man. Now why is that important?

Because that's the qualification for Jesus to be our saviour. As man, Jesus fully represents humanity to God.

[27 : 09] And as God, Jesus represents God fully to humanity. You see, if Jesus is not man, then we have nobody to represent us to God.

And if Jesus isn't God, then we have no one to represent God to us. In the sun, we see both God and man, which makes Jesus uniquely qualified, as we'll see in a minute, to be our saviour. There's no one like him. That means if you trust in this Jesus, he is your saviour. So we look at the church, we look at the sun, and third, we look at the cross.

Let's read verse 19 and 20. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Jesus, and through Jesus to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

See that word reconcile there? Verse 20. Reconciliation implies that there is a separation between us and God. That there is a division between us and our creator.

[28 : 47] You see, our rejection of the sun has put us outside of God, and it's resulted in chaos. But all of that is undone and reversed through Jesus' death on the cross.

It is through the cross that reconciliation takes place. So verse 20. He reconciles to himself all things by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

On the cross, as Jesus dies, we see Jesus, the God-man, our true representative.

Jesus, as fully human, becomes our substitute. You see, humanity must pay for sin and rebellion.

And if I stand before God, well, I am going to be condemned for all eternity. That is what I deserve for the mess and brokenness and rebellion of my life.

[29 : 57] And if I'm going to be condemned, how could I possibly stand in for you or anybody else stand in for me and pay for my rebellion?

That's why we need Jesus, the perfect human, to stand in for me. The one who is right, but yet takes my sin, my self-centred independence, and dies for me.

And as Jesus dies, the sword of judgment falls on Jesus and his blood is spilt instead of me. Jesus, as fully human, becomes our substitute.

And Jesus, as fully God, forgives my sin. You see, my sin and my rebellion, yes, we do harm to one another with the words we say, but ultimately, it's against God.

So it's only God who can truly forgive my sin. But here's the problem. He can only forgive once justice has been done.

[31 : 09] So how do you condemn someone and forgive someone at the same time? Well, it must be God who does it. It must be God who comes in the person of his son, Jesus.

God must die. He must pay the penalty. He must pay the price. And because he has paid the price, he is now able to forgive me fully and completely.

We can actually be reconciled. Jesus has done it. He has reconciled to him all things through his blood shed on the cross.

He brings peace. Where there was separation and division, there is now a grand reconciliation of humanity with God.

God. That means if you are trusting in the cross, you no longer have to fear God, you can enjoy God.

[32 : 20] You see, Jesus is not like anyone else, is he? No one else can claim these credentials that we're looking at. Look at the church, look at the sun, look at the cross, Jesus is completely unique.

In fact, let's go back to verse 18, the end of verse 18. He does all of this so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

Supremacy simply means that what Jesus has done can't be equaled or bettered. Did you notice the all in verse 20? And through him to reconcile to himself all things.

All things. Not some things, but all things. Now this has two major implications for us which we're going to look at.

First, because Jesus is the supreme saviour, Jesus saves sufficiently. what Jesus has done on the cross for us is enough.

[33 : 33] That's why when he was on the cross he cried out, it is finished. There's nothing for us to add to what Jesus has done. There's nothing we need to do to change what Jesus has done.

It is sufficient to save anyone and everyone who comes to Jesus. we just stand and watch in amazement that he saves sufficiently.

And because he is the supreme saviour, Jesus saves extensively. He not only reconciles us to God, he is reconciling all of creation to God.

Look at verse 20 again. And through Jesus to reconcile to himself all things whether things on earth or things in heaven.

This is nothing less than a universal reconciliation. One day the sovereign son, the supreme saviour is going to come again and he's going to undo all that is broken and restore all that is destroyed.

[34 : 46] And on that day the church, God's people, will be united with Christ. We will receive our brand new bodies and we will live forever in his new creation.

The kingdom of the son he loves. It's an extensive salvation. It restores everything and it's a sufficient salvation.

It is enough. we don't need to add to it. So rest in the security of what Jesus has done.

Look forward in hope to all that is to come. So why should I follow Jesus? Why should you follow Jesus?

Well, first, because Jesus is the sovereign son over the first creation and second, because Jesus is the supreme savior over the new creation.

[35 : 51] Follow him. He is unique. There is no one else like him. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we are amazed at who you are and what you have done.

We thank you that you are God. the owner, the creator, the sustainer of all things.

Thank you that through Jesus you are reconciling all things to yourself. Thank you that as we come to Jesus, we can be reconciled to him.

And not only that, but we can know that you are reconciling the whole universe to God, undoing what is broken and putting right what has been wronged.

How amazing, how awesome you are. Help us that we will not follow anyone else or anything else, but only trust in Jesus.

[37 : 23] Help us, we pray. Amen. Amen. We're going to sing together. If you're of a certain age, you'll know this one.

If you're not, you won't. But we will all know the same tune. So the church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord.

she is his new creation by water and the word. So let's