

The Preeminence of Christ

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[0:00] Please be seated. Colossians, if you've got your Bibles, Colossians. If you'd like a Bible to view, to take away,! We'd love to give Bibles away for people that need one as well.

Just let us know and we'll gladly get you one. I was saying this morning how someone was wanting me to go and bless their house and they wanted a priest to bless them with some holy water. And I said, I've got something much better, a holy Bible. I said, I can't give you any holy water, I can't give you any holy smoke, but I can give you a holy Bible. That is the most holy thing that you can have in your hands, isn't it?

The Word of God, a holy Bible. Praise the Lord. So Colossians, if you've got your Bibles there, Colossians from verse 1 of chapter 1, but we're going to spend a bit of time towards the middle of the chapter, but just to read together as the Lord leads, you might want to read along if you'd like to as we read.

I'm going to read from verse 1 through verse 23. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God and Timotheus our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colossae, grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[1:23] We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which he had to all the saints.

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come unto you as it is in all the world and bringeth forth fruit as it doth also in you since the day ye heard of it and knew the grace of God in truth.

As he also learnt of Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ, who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.

For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.

All things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence.

[3:27] For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven, and you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight.

If you continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye have heard and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I, Paul, am made a minister.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your word, that it is a word that speaks to every heart. We pray that the condition of the hearts tonight will be such that it is good soil, soil that is cultivated and receptive, that this word can be planted and be fruitful.

Lord, guide my words, let it be what you would have us to hear. Help me, Lord, despite my failings, be glorified in your church, Lord, we pray.

Amen. Paul's letter to the Colossians is especially about the centrality of Christ, about his supremacy, about his preeminence in all things.

[5:09] We're going to focus really on the middle here, verse 18. The context, as we've read, Paul was giving thanks for the Colossians, for their faith, for their love, for the fruit of the gospel that he saw in them, for the grace of God.

He was praying for them that they will be strengthened, that they'll walk worthy, that they'll give thanks. And he says, this is the central truth, that in all things he might have the preeminence. Verse 18. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence.

The Lord Jesus Christ, he is the supreme sovereign. He is the absolute ruler of the universe. And he is exalted. He is preeminent.

Philippians 2, verse 9, tells us that he has been given a name which is above every name.

Philippians 2, verse 9.

[6:33] I might just refer to that. Philippians 2, verse 9, the preceding book, wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name.

The word preeminence, it speaks of an elevated position. Of rank, of superiority, due to merit. He is exalted. Our Lord is exalted. He is preeminent.

It means he is superior. He is surpassing. He is excellent. He is distinct. Above all else, in quality, in rank. He has the highest place.

And we're here tonight to exalt him, to glorify him, to honour him, this one person, this one name, this name, his name, which is above every name.

We desire him, we delight in him. He is with us. He is preeminent. That in all things, he might have the preeminence. That must be our absolute yearning, our absolute priority, our focus, our longing, that he would have the preeminence.

[7:41] Of our Saviour, it says, that in all things, he might have the preeminence. He holds the highest authority. He is Lord of all.

Christ is preeminent. Verse 15, Christ is preeminent as deity. As deity, not just divinity, not just being spiritual, or a great prophet, or a great preacher, or some mighty man.

He is, verse 15, he is the image of the invisible God. He is God. He is deity. He is the perfect representation.

This word image is a perfect representation of God. He makes the unknowable God known. He makes the invisible God visible.

He is God clothed in human flesh. He is God manifest in the flesh. He is God with skin on. Our Lord Jesus Christ, he is preeminent as deity.

[8:47] He has the totality of the divine power and attributes of God. He is the image of God. His exact revelation of God.

He has the same nature, the same glory, the same purpose as the Father. And verse 19, it says, of fullness. Verse 19, for it pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell.

That in him should all fullness dwell. as likewise Colossians 2.19, for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

He is incarnate, the incarnation. He is flesh. He is incarnate. He is in flesh. The incarnation of God is Christ in the flesh.

God manifests in the flesh. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. All. There's completeness there. The full, the absolute, the perfect, the complete deity.

[9:53] He is preeminent as deity. Others would denigrate Christ. Other philosophies and religions would demean him and denigrate him.

But the Bible gives him preeminence as deity. That in him dwells deity. Deity. It dwells in him. It abides permanently within him.

It resides in him. It supremely is in Christ. Deity. And not only is all the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily, he is our fullness.

Without him we are incomplete. You know, it's sad when our fellow human beings don't know this saviour. They are incomplete.

There's a big chunk missing. That they're missing the whole point of why they have been made. And what the whole point of existence on this planet is. It's to know him. Him to know his life eternal.

[10:51] And he is our fullness. Verse 14. It tells us we have redemption through his blood. Even the forgiveness of sins. And it's noteworthy that in some modern Bibles they take out his blood.

Through his blood. It's the most pivotal part of this verse. It's the most critical piece of information.

That we have redemption through his blood. Through his precious blood.

Even the forgiveness of sins. And Colossians 2 verse 3 it tells us that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We're missing out if we don't have Christ.

All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him. And we have redemption. We have the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Through his blood we have forgiveness of sins.

Think of it. Redemption. We're redeemed through his blood. What it's saying is in Christ we've been rescued. We've been rescued. We've been set free. He's taken us from danger to safety.

[11:55] You know you think of those choppers chop chop chop chop whirling over the flood and people standing on rooftops. You know we were talking about flooding this morning we haven't seen that yet.

But you know you see this it's serious isn't it in some countries right now where massive and major flooding is going on and you've got people stranded in floodwaters and that chopper comes over and the rope comes down and the man comes down and winches them up to safety.

We've been rescued. It's glory isn't it to know his rescue to know his salvation that he's taken us from danger to safety to safe keeping. He's taken us from one power from one kingdom from one destiny to another.

He's taken us and he's transformed us from darkness to light. He's given us such blessing and grace. I was hearing this morning actually my mother-in-law Julie's mum was saying that one day she had a knock on her door.

And she answered and it was some Mormons and the man said I'm lost. Can you tell me where to go? And she said oh I used to be lost now I'm found.

[13:05] That's the glory of God isn't it? That's the glory of salvation. These Mormons got lost and Julie's mum told them how they could be found. We've got the message of salvation haven't we?

That we've been rescued once we were lost and now we've found. Once we were blind now we can see. Once we were in that danger and we've been rescued we've winched up and kept him in his safe keeping in his grace he saved us.

We have redemption through his blood. That should make us want to sing and shout shouldn't it?

That should make us want to smile and be crazy you know for the Lord because we've got redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins.

As it's been said the search for forgiveness ends when you find Christ. Doesn't it? The search for forgiveness ends when you find Christ.

That's the glory of God that we can find forgiveness for our sins. I know we touched on this morning as one of our number talked about David's sin the grossness the darkness of it the abomination of what he did the vileness of his sin was taken and God created in him a clean heart.

[14:17] He restored the joy of his salvation and we are complete in him. Colossians 2 verse 10 says we are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power.

In Christ we have everything God ever designed us to be and our Lord Jesus is the perfect essence of God the personal imprint of God in time and space.

Christ is preeminent as deity as the God the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him. Christ is preeminent as deity as God.

We see further that Christ is preeminent as creator and sustainer. Verse 16 Our Lord Jesus is preeminent as creator and sustainer.

Verse 16 For by him were all things created by him and for him. verse 17 in part and by him all things consist.

[15:22] All things were created by him by him for him and by him all things consist. Now again the King James has got got it right here.

It says it's by him. Some modern versions kind of water it down and say through him as if he was some kind of intermediary. No. It was by him.

It was by his hand. It was by his creative power. It was by that divine Godhead power that is in Christ as the creator. It was by him. Not through him.

By him. Jesus Christ is before all things it tells us. It tells us that he was before all things. That's verse 17.

He is before all things. and the scriptures that tell us that there's numbers I could I don't have them all written down in front of me but of course we know that familiar one John 1 verse 1 in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God the same was in the beginning with God all things were made again by him by him and without him was not anything made that was made because Micah 5 verse 2 says that he's from everlasting he's always been he's before all things before all things he told in John 8 58 there's that that one who was he talking to at that time John 8 58 who's he addressing now I'm just not sure on that point one of the Pharisees John 8 58 he says verily verily I say unto you before

[17:10] Abraham was I am I am and I know it's a critical verse that again it tells of his deity and when Yahweh Jehovah the Lord the Lord God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and Moses asked him who are you who do I tell who do I tell them who you are and he says I am that I am and it's interesting not that we major on Greek because it's kind of irrelevant really but the Greek the Septuagint of that Exodus 3 is it where the burning bush incident and I am that I am is ego I me in the Greek and it's the same word here in John 8 58!

ego I me it's the exact same phrase of I am that I am when Jesus said before Abraham was I am ego I me not that I again I don't really major on Greek but it is another telling evidence it's telling confirmation that we can cite to people who might question the deity of Christ he is the creator and he is the sustainer of all things he created all things and as someone has put it all things what does that mean it means everything everything in heaven and on earth and I'm quoting someone here think of that of everything everything the massive galaxies in outer space far far out of sight beyond our human sight capacity to see it all the dust particles beneath your feet the all things it's all encompassing isn't it what you can see and can't see the things you need a microscope to see and things that microscopes can't even see he's made all things all things and someone has written it here includes what you can see and can't see whether visible but intangible like a mirage or a beam of light he's created that whether invisible but tangible like the summer breeze you feel it on your skin but it's still you can't see the heat of the sun the wind blowing on you it's invisible but tangible you can feel it you know it's there he's created things whether visible and tangible like an oak tree like a piece of wood like a tree like a book or a baseball it's visible and tangible you can see it and you can touch it and things invisible and intangible like a proton or gravity or a feeling or a dream that he has created all things all things are it's it's mind boggling isn't it visible but tangible invisible but tangible visible and tangible invisible and intangible all things have been created everything that we have around us all things were created by him all things were created for him all things are held together by him he is preeminent amen he is preeminent all created matter in the universe exists because of him as

John 1 3 says all things were made by him without him was not anything made that was made so that's everything he made and we see as Colossians 1 17 says by him all things consist so in other words not only he's the creator of the universe he's the sustainer of it he sustains this universe it's like some have reckoned even just gravity the fact that we're not flying off into outer space that we kept safe that the universe and the solar system is all very orderly and is controlled again it's because of his sustaining power he upholds all things by the word of his power without him everything would collapse all things were created for him so here's the reason all things were created it's our meaning of life isn't it

I feel very sorry for atheists because they've got no meaning for life really they've got no meaning no purpose there's no sense to it you're just a cosmic accident and you're just as valuable as the

ant that you just trot on you're just another another living thing that's just evolved out of nothing and you've got no purpose or meaning to life but the bible tells us different doesn't it he is the reason he is the reason we've been created because all things were created for him for him that's why we're here that he might be praised that our lives might be lived to his glory and honour he existed before all things he is eternal he always has been always is and always will be he's the cause of creation and he's the bond the glue that holds it together by him all things consist it's in him that all things hold together the universe and its order and arrangement you know scientists still can't grapple with the complexity in Darwin's day they're only a tiny bit of information and now what science knows today it's just mind boggling and you know every time

I see sometimes like a video clip of some nature videos and you see the abundance of creation of all the massive variety and of different life forms and the beauty of God's creation you cannot but realise there must be a creator that makes this all work and the delicate balance that's necessary for life's existence just the fact that we've got a living breathing machine that we walk around in we just don't always reckon wow we're an amazing complex creation just our very human form and Christ gives creation that unity that solidarity that makes it work it's like someone has said that's why because he holds all things together we've got a cosmos an ordered system instead of chaos an unformed mass an ordered system cosmos not an unformed mass chaos without

[24:00] Christ holding things together the world would just be it wouldn't be it couldn't be as someone has said every heartbeat every flutter of an eyelid every rustle of every blade of grass every breath you breathe is sustained by the son of God is sustained by him as Paul said in Acts 17 in him we live and move and have our being he is our life life is Christ to die is gain and in the closing chapters of earthly time God will dissolve the force that holds all things together and it tells us the heaven and the earth will pass away they'll be have to be transformed and remade they'll be passed away and they'll be created in you and won't that be glory his hands meantime uphold all things he upholds all things by the word of his power he upholds his own people in times of conflict and sorrow in every trial he holds you he holds you dear he holds you close he holds you safe

Christ is preeminent as deity Christ is preeminent as the creator and sustainer thirdly Christ is preeminent as the head verse 18 verse 18 he is the head of the body the church he is the head of the body the church now I've had some people say when I walk in the in the church oh the boss is here no sir I am the servant I am your servant I am not the boss absolutely not I'm not I'm not in that setting that work setting I am the servant he is the head he is the head he is the head of the body the church not some pope in Rome not some president of the headquarters of the denomination he is the head of the church his church is a living organism and through our

Lord exercises authority and leadership rulership guidance and direction he is the head the Lord Jesus is over the church he has all authority in heaven and on earth he is its builder he has purchased it with his own precious blood he controls his church he gives it life and direction he controls its destiny now we think of the head of our body is the part that sets the direction that makes things move and operate Christ is the head of the church and verse 3 of 1 Corinthians 11 verse 3 says the head of every man is Christ he is the head of every man he is the head of every man Colossians 2 verse 10 tells us he is the head of all principality and power all principality and power bows down to him ultimately he has the say so over all principality and power

Colossians 2 verse 10 Ephesians 1 22 says that he hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church the father has put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church Christ is preeminent as the head Christ is preeminent as deity as creator and sustainer as the head of the church and fourthly Christ is preeminent as the saviour the saviour the one and only saviour i know there's one saviour one saviour one and one only there's no saviour in these pretense of religions that have some profession of some hope of a hope so kind of salvation we can have a no so salvation we can know for sure because we can know our saviour and our lord as the preeminent saviour as the one and only saviour verse 19 it tells us we are saved through the blood of his cross through the blood of his cross through Christ we have peace with God through the blood of his cross the blood of his cross the precious blood the precious blood of our lord he is the reconciler god reconciles sinful people to himself isn't

that wonderful he's the reconciler we were once alienated strangers cut off from God and the blood of Jesus has reconciled us to the father colossians 1 18 says Christ is preeminent he has authority over nature he has authority over nature as we know when he came to the stormy seas and the disciples were worried and fearful as the waves threatened the vessel and it was filling up and they thought they were doomed and Christ said peace be still peace be still he has authority he's preeminent he has authority over heavenly powers it says in 1

[29:22] Peter 3 verse 22 angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him he is our king we are his royal subjects and also I like to say this really that I'm really privileged to be in your presence here tonight to be in the presence of the royal family wow that's precious isn't it that's fellowship isn't it your royal family your royalty here tonight royalty and I'm so blessed to be in your presence

I'm highly honoured to be with you tonight we're the royal family amen and much more royal much more esteemed than the prince of Wales the Wales family or whatever it be we are the king of kings and the lord of lords family we're brothers and sisters in Christ we're the king our king is the king of glory and what a glory that is Hebrews 1 verse 8 it says but unto the son he saith thy throne oh god is forever and ever a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom I was privileged as a boy to go into Buckingham well not Buckingham Palace but the Tower of London and near Buckingham Palace and all the treasures were there the kings and queens crowns and tiaras and they had a scepter there a gold scepter but the scepter of our king this kind of this staff this golden staff of a sign of authority it says the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom he will rule the world with righteousness won't he he'll have the crown will be upon his head and we'll crown him king of kings and lord of lords crown him king of your life of your heart and it says unto the son he saith thy throne oh god is forever and ever a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom so what it's telling us there and in other verses tells us that our lord Jesus Christ who is preeminent possesses God's power he occupies God's throne he's the saviour of humanity he is preeminent there's no one like him no one compares and like was referred to this morning again there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved he occupies a throne and in his hands rests all power you know at the end of Matthew 28 he says that all authority all power has been given unto me so that's that's all encompassing isn't it all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth he is preeminent and you know sometimes we don't always stop and think that he is totally in control he's given some temporary measure to the small g God of this world who's having a bit of a last dash a last effort the last gasp of his efforts to hurt and hinder humanity's searching for God but ultimately and absolutely and truly our God has all power all authority and he has the say so about what happens and while earthly thrones may crumble into dust while everything is shaken and testing times come upon man and man's government as never before as we're seeing all kinds of scaremongering and worries about this and that and fears for the future amongst the media even and broadly in some nations more so we see that ultimately there is a throne and his throne is how long forever and ever thy throne oh God is forever and ever this throne cannot be shaken and this throne this authority cannot be affected by what is going down on down here and ultimately the rightful ruler of planet earth will take up residence in his throne again won't he and he is not a dead hero he's not some dead prophet he's not a past founder of some religion some belief system but he's a living presence he says wherever you gather I'm with you hell couldn't hold him the grave couldn't hold him his throne is an everlasting throne of righteousness and ultimately righteousness will be victorious question is what will you do with him crown him king crown him king I like there's an old kind of symbolic pictures of people before Christ and in Christ and some have pictured it as just one representation it's probably got some not necessarily exact as to how he could conceive such things but nevertheless it's a picture of how someone outside of Christ has got like as it were a picture of a heart and a throne and on that throne is self ego I me seated as the throne on the throne as the master of my own destiny and me is on the throne and then you see a Christian where actually self gets deposed from the throne and Christ is seated on the throne Christ rules in our hearts it says Christ rules in our hearts by faith and we want Christ to rule in our heart to crown him king let him be king because he wants to have the preeminence he deserves the preeminence he has the preeminence in government he upholds and sustains creation all things he

upholds all things by the word of his power and think of it child of God but he is our Lord our Lord that's precious isn't it and again I like to reflect not to use that word flippantly or carelessly or unthinkingly because we can use Lord very flippantly and just rolls off our tongue and we can sound like those that say Lord Lord as if it's just some or some you know demean him by just saying Jesus Jesus my mate Jesus but Lord master master what it really means is I'm your servant master tell me what to do our Lord has preeminence and our Lord Jesus someone has said it's not only mysterious in his person majestic in his passion but miraculous in his power mysterious in his person majestic in his passion miraculous in his power he is Lord he is the Lord Colossians 2 verse 9 for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily he possesses full deity fullness of the Godhead friends tonight just to quickly cover where we've traveled here tonight here's the head of the body the church who is the beginning the firstborn from the dead first one to rise from the dead that in all things he might have the preeminence and friends his preeminent as deity is the image of the invisible God he's the creator and sustainer for by him were all things created for by him for him by him all things consist he is the preeminent one as the head of the church he is the head he is the authority over every man and he is the saviour of those that will trust him he is the king of glory put your trust in him put your trust in him when we think and realize that theological doctrinal truth that he is preeminent it puts everything else into perspective doesn't it just everything else just falls into place as far as we don't have to be worrying or concerned or distrusting of him we can have complete confidence but he is in charge is he in charge

[38:36] I pray that you'll be encouraged to realize that yes he is he's my master and I'm ready to do his bidding to work and serve him to love him and not only that you're his son his daughter by faith royalty here tonight bless you let's pray Lord we thank you that your word encourages our hearts to find that grace that you give each day we pray Lord for every soul here tonight we know Lord that some have got crosses to carry there's burdens that are breaking hearts there's wounds and bruises there's pain there's loss there's tragedy Lord yeah even in this fallen world we can still know that you are seated on the throne and one day all will be made well and for the meantime we just have to trust you we have to trust you are the preeminent one as the as God almighty as our saviour and Lord as the one who sustains us and for the reason we've been made is to know you to follow you

Lord help us to depose self from the throne of our hearts and even as believers Lord we need to keep our self off that throne as it were and make sure Lord that we enthrone you in our hearts throne room as it were Lord that you will rule in our hearts that you'll reign over us in every decision of life in every step we take that will seek your face and your will your glory to be done we pray in Jesus name amen amen