

# Christ Preeminent

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[0:00] Colossians 1.9-23. 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.

[1:19] 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. 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.

[2:18] Through death. To present you holy. And unblamable. 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. Dear Lord. We thank you for your word. For Paul's prayer.

For the Colossians. Lord. Help us to. Take something in today. That we can. Take action on this message tonight.

Help us Lord to. Lift you high. And exalt your name. Lord. We pray you'd remove anything. That would. Take our attention away.

[3:13] From the word of God. That you would be. The centre of everything. That is said and done. That you would be.

Lifted high. And that you would draw all men unto yourself. Lord. We just lift you up. In Jesus name now. Amen.

Amen. Now. The church of Colossae. The people of Colossae. Had various false teachings. Circulating. In that time. In that location. Various false teachings. Were going on. Basically. Aimed at. Minimising. Jesus Christ. They were.

Degrading. Downplaying. Down. Grading. The Lord Jesus Christ. And this is one of the heresies.

[4:15] Of the day. That was going on. We'll give that a shot. We'll try it. So. We know that. In Colossae. This was a real issue.

And. The people of the church. At Colossae. Had given. Christ. A place in their lives. A place in their lives.

Without recognising. That he demands first place. That he demands first place. It's the same today. Isn't it? Where we see the different cults. And religions of today. They downplay.

They downgrade. The Lord Jesus Christ. They. They downscale him. In relation to. Things divine. Things of deity. That he is just. As we know. Jehovah's Witnesses. Call him. A God. And. Various others. Look to him. As a good teacher.

[5:14] A good prophet. A great man. Maybe the greatest man. But they. Deny his Godhead. And so this is a real issue. And we see. In Paul's. Prayer here.

That he. Uplifts Christ. For the Colossians though. Jesus was prominent to them. But he was not preeminent to them. Jesus was prominent.

But he wasn't preeminent. And. This is where we'll spend. Some of our time. Tonight. Particularly in verse 18. The preeminence of Christ.

This was what Paul was trying to drive home. This truth. That Christ. In all things. In all things. Might be preeminent. That he might have. The preeminence.

As one preacher described it. I've heard some very well meaning people. Make the statement. The Lord. Is a big part. Of my life. A big part. Of my life.

[6:11] And we could. Accept such a statement. To indicate. Well that's something commendable. That God is a big part. Of their life. That Jesus is important.

To them. But when you. Actually dig deep. Into that. Statement. Somewhat commendable. As it is. It's very literally.

True. In many Christians. Lives. That they. Tend to view Christ. As. Only a part. A part. Of their life. A part. Of the whole. He is only a part.

Of. Their life. And. Doesn't he want to be. All of our life. Our all. In all. The fact is. Christ. Christ does not wish. To be merely. A part.

Of our life. But to be the essence. Of it. To be our life. Christ. Is our life. We see that. In Colossians. Three. Verse four. When Christ.

[7:05] Who is. Our life. Shall appear. Then shall ye. Also. Appear with him. In glory. Paul says. Christ. Who is. Our life.

He is. Our life. His. Life. And life. More abundant. It's in his very person. To know Christ. Is to know life. He is life. In him was life. We have life.

In Christ. And so. When you. Look at the. Measure of the man. The man. Christ Jesus. The Lord. God manifest.

In the flesh. Christ Jesus. He is the. Most preeminent. Person. In world history. In human history. When you see. That they date. Time.

As to. Before. And after. Christ. That. His birth. Splits. Our recorded time. Into before. And after.

[8:02] His coming. So. Our Lord. Should be. First. And foremost. Supreme. In every aspect. Of our lives. He is. Our life.

Our life. Not just a part of it. When Christ. Who is our life. Shall appear. Then. Shall ye. Also. Appear with him. In glory. So. Paul. Erds.

The people. At Colossae. Verses. 18. In part. It says. That. In all things. He might have. The preeminence.

That. In all things. He might have. The preeminence. Now.

I was asking Julie. Some sermon ideas. On the way to church. Tonight. And. I was asking. How can we. How can we. Project that. How can we.

[8:56] Talk about that. The truth. Of Christ. Preeminence. And she says. Well. Firstly. Define what. Preeminence means. Because some people. Probably won't even know. What preeminence means.

Now. I'm sure. I'm not saying that. But any of you. Good people here tonight. But it could be. That that word. Preeminent. Could be a word. That we're not familiar with. It's not that we hear it. Every day. But what does.

Preeminence mean. It speaks of supremacy. It speaks of superiority. Consider his preeminence. His preeminence. The Lord Jesus. He's the central figure.

Of world history. Of the word of God. He is. Preeminent. He's the central. Subject. The central figure. In the Bible. Now.

I was talking with someone. This morning. And. Someone who's searching. For the truth. And it's really encouraging. We've had a number of. Newcomers. They've come. And have kept on coming.

[9:48] Some who are really searching. For God. And I shared with this. Man. A week or two ago. That scripture. In Jeremiah. 29. 13.

Where it says. People probably recite it. And I know it. Largely. But I wanted to get it right. 29. 13. And you shall seek me.

And find me. When you shall search for me. With all your heart. Jeremiah. 29. Verse 13. So I really encourage this man. To keep searching. Search the scriptures.

Search for God. And he was asking the question. Well. In the Old Testament times. Because as much as he sees. The message that we proclaim. Is Christ as the saviour.

What about the people in the Old Testament. Before he came. The back. That's it. I try to explain. How they actually kind of. Foreseen him. Before the cross. That. In tight forming.

[10:42] In picture. In prophecy. He was foretold to come. And everything was pointing to the cross. Whereas now we look back. And the cross is. In past history for us.

But the point is. The cross is. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[12:55] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[15:25] God is invisible, yet Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

Now this word image, icon in the Greek, some people still use the word icon to reflect a representation.

In the Greek, not that we have a representation.

So well-meaning Christians are the image of the Holocaust. So well-meaning Christians, as much as they might try to portray Christ in some picture frame on their wall, the Bible says not to do such a thing.

but we know that Christ is the exact revelation of God in his person. In John 14 verse 9 he said, Jesus saith unto him, speaking to Philip, Hath I been so long with you?

And yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. And how sayest thou then, show us the Father? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.

[16:50] To see Christ is to see the Father. And elsewhere it says, to know me is to know the Father. Basically Paul is saying here, Jesus is the portrait of God.

In him you see the personal characteristics, the distinguishing marks of God. If you want to see what God is like, look at Jesus. There was a little boy that was talking to his mum, and they were talking about God is up in heaven, and the little boy said, I wonder if he could just poke his head out and show us what he looks like.

Well he's done that. When Christ came, he showed us what he looks like. He is Jesus. He is Jesus. It tells us further in Colossians here, he is the firstborn.

The firstborn. In other words, this phrase, the firstborn, it's got the sense of the first in position, the first in importance, the first in rank.

It means he is before all creation. He is supreme. Again, it's talking of his preeminence. In other words, he is the creator. He is the creator.

[17:58] John 1. If you've got your Bibles, John 1. Of course we know that. Blessed scripture that tells us of the word made flesh.

The word was with God, the word was God. And we see that verse 14, the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.

And we see in verse 3, all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. Again, I know I've referred to new Bibles, new translations before in this message, but there's another example where such Bibles can downgrade Christ here.

They say all things were made through him. But no, the word says by him. By him. By him. Not through him as an intermediary, but by him.

By Christ. All things were made by him. And without him was not anything made that was made. He was the creator. He actively took that creative role, that role of creator.

[19:14] And he is sovereign. He is supreme over all creation. He is the king of kings and the lord of lords. He is preeminent, supreme over all creation.

We go back to Colossians and continue there. Colossians 1 verse 16. I like to John 1 verse 3. And again, that gets downgraded in some translations, which is a very sad thing.

It's not through him. It's by him. Verse 16. For by him were all things created that are in heaven, 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. It's telling us that he is preeminent.

Christ is preeminent. He is eternal. He is before all things. Christ is not a created being. Some would downgrade him. As in cults today, in many philosophies today, they downgrade him.

[20:23] But the Bible tells us he is before all things. By him all things were made. By his hand. He is eternal.

And he has always eternally existed as part of the Godhead. As God. He is preeminent. He is the sustainer of creation.

He is the controller of his creation. It says, In him all things consist. All things consist. They hold together. He not only has created his creation, but he maintains it.

He sustains it. He controls it. In him all things consist. It's like to Hebrews 1.3. Where it says, 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 on the right hand of the majesty on high.

Upholding all things by the word of his power. Let there be light. And there was light. The word.

[21:38] By him. All things were created. And he upholds all things by the word of his power. Now, he speaks, and the creation responds.

He upholds all things. Or in him all things consist. He is preeminent. It goes on, verse 18. He is not only the creator, the sustainer.

He is the head of the church. There's an imposter in Rome who claims to be the head of the church. Now, there's people that claim to be the head of the such and such church, male or female these days, heads of the churches.

But no. We are nothing. He is the head. He is the head. It's not some human in charge. He is in charge. He is the head of his church.

And not only is he creator of the universe, he is the creator of his spiritual creation, creation, the church. It's a spiritual creation. Verse 18.

[22:47] He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in him all things might have, that he, in all things he might have the preeminence.

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. So he is the head of the church. He sets the direction. He is the brains, as it were.

He is the wisdom. He is the one that controls the body, which is us. He is our foundation, Jesus Christ.

No other foundation than Jesus Christ. He is the central focus of our worship, of our fellowship, of all that we have and are as a church.

Everything that we do should be subject to this key aspect, as we do all in awe of him and to his glory. He is the head of the church. And let us all come under his leading, his guiding, his authority.

[23:53] He is preeminent. He is the firstborn from the dead, it says. That means, it speaks of his glorious resurrection. It shouts out again, he is preeminent, the glory of the resurrection.

It shouts out, the resurrection power of God, his great power and glory. He is preeminent. And Christ is sufficient in his saving work. Verse 20, we see again the preeminence of Christ in his saving work that brings our peace.

Verse 20, 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, he is preeminent.

Whether things in earth or things in heaven, he made peace through the blood of his cross, by him, to reconcile all things to himself.

it's getting a bit more down to you and me now. We're in here. Amen. He's reconciled us.

[25:02] You, sister, brother, you, reconciled unto himself. You know, it brings it right down to it, doesn't it?

The supremacy of Christ, the glory, the wonder, the preeminence of Christ. And it comes down to us fully, personally acknowledging his absolute supremacy over us, his absolute authority, his absolute rightly deserved rule over us as we put our trust in him.

Supremacy, the preeminence, it speaks of a position of authority. Christ has authority. All other authorities are under his authority.

He is preeminent. Not only is Jesus important, he is essential. Essential. That's how preeminent he is. He is essential for your journey to heaven.

There's no other man that can say, there's no other name. We see none other name will do. Acts 4 verse 12. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

[26:16] There is none other name under heaven. That's everything, isn't it? None other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

None other name will do. That's how preeminent Christ is. Not only is he important, he is essential. Essential. That's how preeminent he is. There was a British preacher and this was just a few years ago in 1835 and he was in his 76th year so he was a bit of a youngster compared to my dad and he stood in the pulpit at some church in Cambridge and he cited Colossians 1 verse 18 that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Then he added he must have it. He will have it and he shall have it. He is preeminent, isn't he? He must have it. He deserves it. He rightfully warrants that preeminence in our lives, in our thinking, in our living.

He will have it. He will have his way with man and he shall have it. In glory we'll see the preeminence of Christ.

[27:37] He is preeminent in his work of reconciliation and what a wonder it is. What a glory it is.

It's all to his glory, isn't it? When you think I know I had some words this morning talking about some immorality in the world today.

We see the darkness, gross darkness. We see the evil of our world today and it's beyond comprehension how corrupt it is and how more increasingly corrupt it is.

But yet, but for the grace of God, but for the grace of God, we can't point at one or the other and say they're more sinful than me.

Really and truly, we're all equally wretched. And verse 21 it says, and you to the Colossians he says, Paul to the saints at Colossae he says, and you that were alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.

[28:54] Glory to God. He is preeminent, isn't he? When I was alienated, when I was an enemy in my mind by my wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.

You know, the ground is level at the cross, isn't it? There's not one more sinful than another at the end of the day. We're all equally needful of his preeminence.

We all equally need his grace to save us and to reconcile us to himself. In verse 22, in the body of his flesh through death and you that were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, now he will present you.

He will present you, sister. He will present you, brother. He will present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight.

The one with x-ray vision who can search the reins of the heart, the one who sees the core of us, the very fibre of our soul, he will present you holy and unblameable, no blame, no reproof, no need for correction there in his sight.

[30:22] And it's all because of his preeminence, isn't it? May he be exalted in your life and mind as we magnify the Lord. And there's that grounding, that settling of faith, the hope of the gospel.

It's all his preeminence, isn't it? From go to woe, from beginning to end, it's all that he will have the preeminence in all things. Let us pray. Our Lord and God, we bless your worthy, majestic name, Lord Jesus Christ, our saviour, our master.

Lord, we cannot warrant any claim of righteousness of our own. It must be all to your glory. It must be all from your hand that you can present us holy, unblameable, you can present us unreprouvable in your sight.

Lord, that every wicked stain, every failing and fault can be erased and we can be declared holy in your sight.

Lord, we thank you for your grace. We thank you, Lord, that Christ, our Lord, you must be, you are, and you will be preeminent.

[31:43] And we pray most especially for each one here tonight, that Lord, it won't be just words or some concept, some theory, some truth, but it will be truth applied today, that we will reflect on these facts of scripture, these challenges of your word, Lord, that as we reflect on the words that I've just read earlier, Lord, as I just recollect some of those words just now, you want us to be walking worthy of the Lord, fruitful in every good work, increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, in all patience, long suffering, joyfulness, giving thanks, Lord, you've made us partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, you've translated us, into your kingdom, you've delivered us from the power of darkness,

Lord, we've got redemption through your blood, even the forgiveness of sins, and Lord, your preeminence is such that you are the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, the first in rank, by you, Lord, you've created all things, you're before all things, and by you, all things consist, and you are the head of the church, the glory of your resurrection marks you as preeminent, the fullness marks you as preeminent, the blood of your cross marks you as preeminent, the saving grace you've shown to aliens and enemies in their works, yet you've reconciled and made holy.

Lord, we cannot put into human words what you mean to us, and Lord, help us not to have the thinking that you are just a part, maybe a big part of our lives, but you are our life.

We do not have life except it be from you, and Lord, in you we live and move and have our being.

Pray for every believer here tonight, that we will have that fruitfulness in our good works, that we will have that mindset that puts you first and foremost, that seeks first the kingdom of God, and your righteousness, Lord, in all things, that you will have the preeminence, we pray, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Praise the Lord.