

Understanding the Person of Jesus

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[0 : 00] Open your Bibles, if you would please, with me to Colossians chapter 1.! Colossians chapter 1 will be beginning in verse 15 and moving through the next 9 verses to verse 23.

This section of Scripture is predominantly about Jesus. I think it's safe for us to assume or to say that any world religion that you might think of has this doctrine about the Lord Jesus at kind of the center in that they either accept it or reject it.

Their posture towards their understanding of Jesus will either define them as a follower of Christ or will define them as one who is rejecting Christ.

It's about what you believe about Jesus. In our passage this morning, the Apostle Paul begins with, He is the image of the invisible God.

He wants this church to understand something about Jesus and it's going to run its way through this passage and kind of fill up our understanding of Christ to help lay a foundation for faith, for belief, and for life.

[1 : 19] We have said a number of times, and I want to continue to bring it to our attention. We have said, you are what you believe. You are what you believe.

And I'm not talking about the things that you say you believe. I'm not talking about the things that you can prove from the Bible. I'm not talking about the things that intellectually you know to be true. What I'm talking about is how that belief plays out in your life so that what you really believe is showing up in how you live.

That's what we're after today. That's what the Apostle Paul is after today. Laying a foundation for knowledge of God. And even in his prayer, we see that the Apostle Paul is, I'm always praying for you.

I've not ceased to pray for you. What are we doing? We're asking that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will. Why? It has a goal. That knowledge of God, faith in God, truth about God leads to something.

[2 : 25] And he says, what's the point of knowledge? Well, it's so as to have a walk that's worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Do you want that? I tell you, I want that. I want the kind of life that is so filled up with the knowledge of God and by God's grace applying that knowledge to life.

That wherever I go, whatever words I say, whatever people I'm interacting with, whether it's my family or coworkers or my neighbors or whoever it might be, that God is working, that His word is bearing fruit.

It's increasing. That I'm bearing fruit in every good work. Can you even begin to imagine what that would look like? Bearing fruit in every good work, wherever you go, whatever conversation you have, whatever thing that you apply yourself to, that God by His grace is making you fruitful.

It only happens one way. It only happens as we as God's people, and this is the next part of the Apostle Paul's prayer. May you be strengthened with power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy.

[3 : 51] That's how it happens. It happens as we yield ourselves to the power of God working through us to carry out that work that He desires to do in the world in which He's placed us.

I want that. And so I want my knowledge of God to match my life with God. And that's kind of the summary statement I have here, that doctrine drives spiritual life.

What we believe will drive the way we live. Doctrine drives spiritual life. And so there's no wonder why the Apostle Paul wants us to understand theology and doctrine because it has real life implications in the here and now.

The day by day. The Monday through Saturday kind of living out life. It shows up what we really believe about God. And one of the things that Jesus wanted people to understand about Him, Jesus wanted people to understand that He and the Father were one.

That when people saw God the Father, or excuse me, when people saw Jesus, they observed His life, they heard His words, they saw the outworking of His life, then what they were really seeing was a representation, the real, accurate representation of God who had come near to them.

[5 : 23] Jesus says this in John chapter 8 verse 42. He's talking to the Pharisees and He says this, Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love Me.

For I came from God and I am here. I came not of My own accord, but He sent Me. If you claim this morning to love Jesus, if you claim to love God and you claim that God belongs to you, your posture towards Jesus will bear out that truth, whether or not that's true.

Jesus, on the night before He was crucified, drove this point home. He talks to His disciples about the fact that He's going to leave them. And they're kind of confused. You're going to leave us?

Where are you going to go?

And that's what Thomas asks in John 14 5. Thomas says to Him, Lord, we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way? And Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. From now on, you do know Him and have seen Him.

[6 : 36] If you want to know who God is, just look at Me. If you want to know where I'm going, just follow Me. If you want to have a taste of what God cares for, if you want to know His heart, if you want to know His power, just look at Me.

Philip picks up the question next in verse 8. He's like, Philip says, Lord, show us the Father. It's enough. And Jesus says, Have I been with you so long and you still do not know Me, Philip?

Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father. You look at My life and you see the Father. How can you say, show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me?

The words that I say to you, I do not speak on My own authority, but the Father who dwells in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me or else believe on account of the works themselves.

You want to know who God the Father is? Just look at My life. See the priorities that I have set.

Hear the words that I have communicated. See the compassion that I have conveyed to individuals.

[7 : 52] Look at the works that God has accomplished through Me. The totality of My work. The comprehensive nature of My work. Over diseases. Over death.

Over the natural world. The wind and the waves. The division of loaves. And the multiplying of the fish. I'm over everything.

Because God is over everything. Just look at my life. And of course, the crux of Christianity comes down to our view of God.

Our theology. Our doctrine, as it were. Doctrine matters. Knowledge of God matters. And this was the point that the Apostle Paul drives home with the church of Galatia when he says this in Galatians 3, 1-5.

Oh foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? And that's kind of like the word for who has cast a spell on you? Who has got your attention?

[8 : 53] Who has deceived you? That you should not obey the truth. Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified. This only I want to learn from you.

Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish having begun in the Spirit? Are you now being made perfect in the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain if indeed it was in vain?

Therefore, he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?

Let me try to pull that together and summarize what the Apostle Paul is saying. Doctrine matters. And here's why. Because this church that understood that salvation comes through faith in Christ alone because of the grace of God in forgiving us, somehow this church, they knew how salvation began, but for whatever reason they thought that salvation and their standing before God would grow as they continued to put on works of the law and this activity of life.

Somehow they're going to merit God's favor. theology was broken in their minds. If Christ was sufficient to save and he's the one who has declared us righteous not on our own merits but on the

merits of Christ's righteousness, then it's not our merits, it's not our good works that incline us to God so that he looks and is like, oh, hey, you did a lot of good stuff.

[10:34] Now I'm going to listen to your prayers. Oh, now I'm going to give you some good stuff. It's based upon the merits of Christ alone. It's not by the works of the law.

It's not by the, but it's by the hearing of faith that we continue to grow in our life with God. That's why it says, the righteous shall live by faith.

As we continue to know what God says, we continue to apply trust in the things that God has shared. You see, doctrine drives spiritual life.

Doctrine drives spiritual life. And it's not just what you know. It's how you apply that knowledge to every single day, every moment, moment by moment.

So it shouldn't be any surprise then that the Apostle Paul wants to help establish this foundation of doctrine for this church. And he begins with the most important person, Jesus Christ.

[11:35] We're called Christians after all because we're built on the foundation of Jesus, Jesus Christ. So notice this with me, okay? Right there at the beginning of this passage, I want you to see how the Apostle Paul drives attention to Christ.

and you have on the back of your outline kind of my feeble attempt at trying to describe this, okay? He begins with our identity in Jesus.

He talks about Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus in verse 1. That Paul is who he is because of what Jesus has called him to. Not because of his own charisma or giftedness, but because Jesus has done something in his life.

Then he talks about this church. They're saints. Not because they're got their act together. We're going to see in the rest of this book, they don't have their act together, but they're saints because of what Christ has done for them.

They're saints in Christ Jesus in verse 2. Then the beginning of their formation of this church happened because they placed their faith in Christ in verse 3.

[12:45] Epaphras, who was a faithful minister of Christ on their behalf. We see that in verse 7. And then in verse 15, you have been justified or transferred, excuse me, to the kingdom of his beloved son who is Jesus Christ.

You are those too who have been forgiven by Christ. In him, we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He moves on to who Christ is in that next section in verses 15 to 18.

He talks about Jesus who's the image of the invisible God. He talks about Jesus who's the creator of the universe in verse 16. He talks about Jesus who's the sustainer of all of life in the universe itself in verse 17.

Jesus who is the head of the church. Jesus who is the firstborn from the dead. that because of what Jesus has done and because of who Jesus is, we can enjoy the benefits of his work.

And then we see what Christ has done in the last part of this passage from verses 20 to 23. He's reconciled us to himself. We're going to talk about what that means.

[14:01] What does this fancy word reconcile mean? That he's made peace by the blood of his cross. That's part of the definition. And then in verse 22, again, he talks about being reconciled in the body of his death.

And that Jesus is the one who's making us holy and blameless. This is his goal. This is his aim. This is his purpose for his church in calling us to himself.

And so as you can imagine, these nine verses, here we are just dealing with nine verses, but they are loaded. They are loaded. This heavy concentration.

There is, we're not going to be able to scratch the surface this morning, but my desire is, as we walk through this passage, I want you to see how this doctrine begins to shape the understanding of this church and how that doctrine is meant to change the life of this church.

And it's meant to change your life. It's meant to change my life. That what we know about Jesus isn't meant to just be some mental, sophisticated, intellectual mindset, but it's meant to do something for us.

[15:15] So there's two parts of this theology. And I'm sure you're well aware of them. The first is that Jesus is fully God, right? And then the second is Jesus is fully man.

Man, you are superstars. Good job. The Apostle Paul wants to lay down this doctrine because there was a heresy that was taking place in and around Colossae and they were kind of inundated with this false teaching that wanted to kind of dismiss the preeminence of Christ, this doctrine of Christ

and try to have them aspire to know other things that would help to replace who Christ was and kind of fill it out for them.

But the Apostle Paul wants to kind of set in their mind and establish them once and for all that Jesus is supreme. Jesus is first. Jesus is preeminent.

Jesus is all that you need. So in this first section of Jesus being fully God, he starts here in verse 15. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Jesus is the exact image of God. Simple. Simple point, but so important. Essentially that Jesus is the embodiment of God.

[16:41] This word for image is the word for portrait or likeness. To have the same form, to have a representative pattern. It is the word essentially that Jesus is not just a symbol that helps to reference who God might be, but that this symbol actually came in the sense that it was God in person.

We're going to see that as we continue to work through this section. We're here in verse 16. We talk about, actually verse 15, the invisible God becomes visible.

The God who was spirit becomes material. He becomes physical and fleshly. And that's going to be really important as well in this Colossian heresy where they believe that those things that were physical and material were wicked, were evil.

And if God became flesh in the Colossian heresy, since Jesus was man in their minds, having this physical, material body meant that he couldn't possibly have been God.

And that's why the Apostle Paul begins here. Jesus is God. He is God in every single way. He is God in every single way. He is God in every single way. The writer of the Hebrews puts it this way in Hebrews 1, 3 when he says, He is the radiance of the glory of God.

[18:14] I love those words, the radiance of the glory of God. He was God in every way. The glorious God, the majestic God, the one that you might see or imagine somewhere like in Isaiah chapter 6 where Isaiah the prophet is standing before the throne and God is exalted and lifted up.

This is the God we're talking about. And by the way, we find in Jesus' ministry there in John chapter 12 that the image and the vision that Isaiah saw there in Isaiah chapter 6 was Jesus himself.

The glorious, radiant expression of God. And he goes on, the exact imprint of his nature. He upholds the universe by the word of his power after making purification for sin.

He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Jesus was God in every way. And that's why Jesus could say there in John chapter 14, verse 9, He who has seen me has seen the Father.

One commentator puts it this way, the symbol was more than a symbol here in this expression. The symbol brought with it the actual presence of the object.

[19:34] J.B. Phillips in his translation translates this visible expression. Jesus was the vivid expression of God in a very physical, bodily way.

Jesus makes the invisible visible as he has come to embrace flesh. So, Jesus is the exact image of God.

in verse 16, we see that Jesus is the creator of all things. He's the creator of all things. And this is going to be important especially in this Gnostic heresy that would call material things or physical things evil.

As Jesus is the creator of all things, he's creating physical and spiritual. And as the perfect holy God, he's creating what is good. Jesus.

And we find the totality of his work here in verse 16. By him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

[20:35] All things were created through him and for him. You see this totality, this comprehensive nature of Christ's work, both the heaven and earth, visible and invisible, material and physical and spiritual, all things were created by him.

This truth demonstrates that Jesus not only is God but demonstrates that Jesus is first in priority. The Colossian false teachers viewed matter as evil and they argued that neither a good God nor a good expression of God could have created it but here the apostle Paul wants to establish the fact that Jesus who is God himself in the flesh did create a physical world and of course it was a collaborative work of the Godhead with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit all working in the process and as we see in Genesis chapter 1 we see day after day after day as Jesus is creating the world the water and the dry land and the vegetation and the animals and the sea creatures all of these things that Jesus created and the declaration over those things was it was

good.

It was good. And what Jesus created was not just good but it demonstrates the infinite power the glorious might of Jesus as God as we consider the immense nature of creation itself.

Just again kind of help you understand just a glimpse of this just consider the sun for example the sun has a diameter of 864,000 miles it's 100 times the diameter of the earth and can hold 1.3 million earths in its volume inside okay just imagine the immensity of that the star Betelgeuse which I think is the biggest star has a diameter at least the biggest known star has a diameter of 100 million miles 100 million miles and those of you who have taken science or are taking science what is the distance from the earth to the sun 93 million miles so the earth's orbit around the sun can fit within the diameter of this star

Betelgeuse I mean just can you even begin to imagine that how immense God's power is through Jesus and that's the whole point that the apostle Paul is trying to demonstrate and then just think about this the speed of light it takes a ray of light from the sun to get to the earth in about eight and a half minutes yet that same light would take four years to reach our closest star Alpha Centauri it's it's it's beyond comprehension we can't even begin to fathom how immense and that is just the the beginning of the galaxies and the other galaxies that are so far away Jesus created it and it was created through him which means it was by his power and it was created through his agency that he is the he's the the one that put it all in place but but but this really important piece it was created through him but also for him and by him

[24 : 31] I heard that too it's created by him but also for him do you realize that what what encouragement that all things that were created have a purpose all things that were created have a function they have a design they have a goal and the goal of creation is Christ the glory of Christ the wonder of Christ the majesty of Christ it was all created for him he created it for himself to put himself on display to set himself as the the preeminent one over all creation and so that in Philippians chapter 2 verses 9 to 11 we understand that everything is moving in that direction that God highly exalted Jesus bestowed on him the name that is above every name why so that the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue will confess that Jesus

Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father everything was created for him created for his benefit and then we find in verse 17 that Jesus is the sustainer of all things he's the sustainer of all things notice this and he is before all things and in him all things hold together they hold together the fact that Jesus is before things it relates to chronology that he stands before creation in terms of time that he was there at the beginning all things were created by him and for him and we find that there in John chapter 1 the word was from the beginning and all things were made by him there wasn't anything made that was not made by him Jesus is before those things he's preeminent he's supreme he's obviously then the most glorious and the fact that all things hold together by his power has so many so many important correlations for us we could talk about laws of thermodynamics the first and second law of thermodynamics we could talk about entropy and essentially entropy is kind of the downgrade of energy we know that energy can't be created or destroyed but entropy would say that even when energy is not destroyed it kind of moves to more disorder it turns to heat it's not as usable as it once was and so as the course of history will go by less and less energy is usable but even in this we understand that God is holding things together Jesus submitted to the Father he depended upon the Spirit he sustains the natural order of things that Jesus is holding things together so that even though the world might want to tell you that things are coming apart that the truth and the doctrine of Christ help us know he's holding it together he sustains it let me give you an example Genesis chapter 8 verse 22 this is Noah comes right off the ark there's a flood that's taking place God has destroyed the world and judged the world because of their sin and God wants Noah to understand not only is he not going to destroy the world the same way but the world is going to be preserved he says while the earth remains seed time in harvest cold and heat summer and winter day and night shall not cease

I don't know what your view of global warming is I don't know what your view on all of these things might be that our world is running out but here is the truth of God no sorry Christ is sustaining it all by the power of his hand now it doesn't mean that we shouldn't steward the world it doesn't mean that we don't care about how we take care and this delegated authority that Christ has given to us the stewardship over this world but we don't have to be afraid that seasons are going to go away that cold is going to go away because seed time and harvest cold and heat summer and winter it's

going to stay around and not because we're doing anything about it but because Christ has committed himself to sustain the world he holds it together and then this is fascinating and I'm sorry for all the science lessons I want to put this little graphic up here and deal with it as briefly as I can this is for free okay and maybe some of you students can tell your parents so you got your science lesson on

Sunday so then you don't have to do homework this week in science I don't know it's worth a try so this is just a model right of an atom right and you see in the center of that model there's a nucleus the nucleus has protons and neutrons it has positively charged particles and those that are not charged at all and then spinning around in kind of this cloud of electrons these negatively charged particles that are driving around this thing kind of help forcing all this stuff together and scientists still can't understand how an atom stays together they have some theories but then what blows it apart is when you only have a proton and a neutron and not electrons they just can't figure it out they're like the world should be blowing up right now but guess what it's not and there's a reason it's not because Christ is holding it together now here's something that's also really fascinating there is so much space between electrons and the nucleus that there's not like any real good reason why we shouldn't just fall why you shouldn't fall through your pew right now because of all the space in the atoms that are in the structure of your pew and the atoms that are making up your physical body and I want to just kind of make this really relevant as you're thinking about this imagine

[31 : 22] Mount Everest for a moment okay Mount Everest stands at 29,000 feet that's five and a half miles tall now it's volume the volume of Mount Everest is between 1.3 and 1.5 cubic meters hold that to one side it's 20 times the height of the Empire State Building you can stack 20 Empire State Buildings from bottom to top 20 times within Mount Everest to get the whole height and there's 1 million cubic meters of volume in an Empire State Building which means you can fit 1.3 to 1.4 million Empire State Buildings within the volume of Mount Everest okay you got that that's like that's big that's a big number

I can't even wrap my head around that number but if you were to collapse protons and neutrons and electrons all of the atoms all of the molecules of Mount Everest so that there wasn't any space between them what you would be left with could fit in an 8 ounce cup in front of you Mount Everest in an 8 ounce cup collapsing all the space between electrons neutrons and protons collapse together no space left and you wouldn't be able to hold it obviously it could be contained in the space of an 8 ounce cup Jesus is holding the universe together alright moving forward and I need to do this more quickly verse 18 he is the head of the church he's the head of the church and what's amazing about this is the church as you know is made up of people and people are made up of both a physical peace and a spiritual peace and so

God is over Jesus is over the physical material world and also the spiritual world even as it relates to the church and as one who is head he is the one from whom we get our identity he is the one from whom we follow instructions he's the one who calls the shots we're going to talk more about Jesus as the head of the church as we continue to move our way through this letter but Paul wants this church to understand Jesus is first Jesus is supreme Jesus is head follow Jesus you get your identity from him and then in verses 19 and 20 Jesus is the fullness of God the fullness of God this word this Greek word pleroma was a term that was used by the Gnostics to refer to divine powers and attributes which they believed were disseminated and divided among various emanations of God so all of the different revelations of God wherever they might be the power of God is kind of divided among them and the apostle

Paul says no it is not disseminated it's not distributed it's a power that is fully contained in Jesus and in Jesus alone he has the composite power of all of God contained within himself the totality the full measure of deity the measure of that glorious power is resident in Jesus alone everything that God is Jesus is Jesus isn't an incomplete version of God Jesus is the representation of God and through his power we find that he reconciled all things to himself we see that verse 18 he is the head of the body the church he is the beginning the firstborn from the dead that in everything he might be preeminent for in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things whether on earth or in heaven making peace by the blood of his cross that Jesus in his power and for his purpose that all things exist for him

Jesus was the one who through the power of God reconciled all of broken humanity and all of fallen creation he reconciled it back to himself this word reconcile is to is to make friends that the hostility the enmity the the the division that we experience with God because of our sin has been corrected

and resolved in Jesus of course we know Romans chapter five verse one where it says therefore since we have been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ Jesus is the one who made peace with God possible he paid the debt of sin that we deserved he's made peace with God available through his penalty of sin the sacrifice that he made and inviting us into faith in

[36 : 59] Christ and forgiveness if we had time we would talk about how all things doesn't just relate to humanity but that all things also relates to creation that just as the fall severed relationship between man and God and the fall had implications on humanity we know as we look back to Genesis chapter 2 and Genesis chapter 3 it had implications across creation in totality right we know that in the animal kingdom the serpent was forced to crawl on his belly we know that in the kingdom of the earth the thorns and the thistles would grow and we know that pain would come to Eve in her childbearing it would come to Adam and his working it affected the totality of creation described for us in Romans chapter 8 verse 19 it says for the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God for the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God there's a lot there but just in summary that when

Jesus died on the cross he made it possible for humanity to be reconciled to him and also to creation to be restored once again to its rightful condition possible because of what Jesus accomplished I want to just pause for a moment to consider we have the truth of Jesus being preeminent we have the truth of Jesus being God what does that mean for us tomorrow when we say that Jesus is preeminent we can ascribe that truth we can see that truth what does it mean how does that play out what does that do for you tomorrow when you think about Jesus is preeminent I want to just begin with this it begins with your posture towards Jesus Christ do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ have you come to a place of recognizing that you are out of bounds because of sin and by the way all of us are in the same boat all have sinned all have come short of the glory of God and so we're all broken we're all separated because of sin and the first step to enjoying the preeminence of Christ is bowing the knee to him in forgiveness asking forgiveness for our sin and committing our life to following after him for those of you for those of us who have done that what does the preeminence of God mean as it relates to your mornings

I mean like I like my sleep I like hitting the snooze button and by the way don't misunderstand me how do our comforts get in the way of making Jesus preeminent not only in the sleep that we that we need to get in the friendships that we have in the priorities that we set in the money that we spend in the aspirations that we have in the ministries that we take part in all of these things have implications to is Jesus preeminent is he supreme you might ask the question a little differently maybe like this Jesus can be supreme over everything in my life except fill in the blank do you have one of those Jesus you can have everything in my life except my wife you can have everything in my life except my kids you can have everything in my life

Lord except my job I really love my job please don't take that away you can have everything in my life except my health I kind of need that that's kind of important don't you see how important that is for me to be healthy so I can do all of these great things for you you can have everything in my life except my stuff whatever that stuff is God I like my stuff don't take my stuff away maybe it begins with saying Lord you're supreme over everything it belongs to you it was created you created it for you I give it to you it's yours it belongs to you I want whatever it takes make yourself preeminent in my life and what does that mean in terms of just a stepping towards stepping towards that maybe another question you would ask and I need to do this more quickly another question you might ask yourself as you review your week what was one time this past week where you found your heart complaining you found your heart being critical you found your heart being a little anxious you found your heart being a little unsettled you were a little frustrated and I'll give you an example okay so I had a car that was stuck in Cedarville because of a flat tire and initially I handled that pretty well okay no problem we'll go to Cedarville we'll take care of this I knew that it had an issue with a lug nut that was broken so I bought the tools I knew about what I need to make sure that that worked and so we went to Cedarville and I started working on this I thought it was going to be quick it wasn't quick it wasn't quick and I found myself I'm so frustrated this is not working and so I got started twisting the nut and it broke the broken nut broke some more so there was only the sleeve inside and I'll try to speed this up you kind of get the idea so one frustration was compounded by

another frustration which just was not ending and finally over the course of what I thought was going to be 15 minutes turned into an hour and a half

[43 : 37] I don't know an hour and a half well we got it working but guess what I left the key in Columbus so we couldn't bring the car back and in my heart I I wasn't terrible but I wasn't rejoicing Jesus wasn't preeminent I mean if I really was so full of the fact that I belong to Jesus he's forgiven me he's delivered me from the kingdom of darkness he's transferred me into the kingdom of his beloved son I have redemption in him I have forgiveness in him I don't care what's happened if those things are in place my life is good if Jesus is preeminent review your week how does your gratitude reflect that Jesus is really not first alright so Jesus is over the physical world and we see that he is he is fully

God but just briefly we also know that Jesus is fully man and it's it's significant that the apostle Paul works through this and wants the church to understand the world in relationship to Jesus they want he wants the church to recognize that not only is Jesus God but but Jesus is so invested so intertwined his activities are so interlayered that it's inseparable with this material world and so the material world that we enjoy is a world that that Jesus made it's meant to celebrate it's meant to reflect the wonder of who God is verse 18 he's the head of the body of the church the beginning the firstborn from the dead that in everything he might be preeminent for in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell he is the head of the church and he is the fullness of God we see this in his power to reconcile the world to himself and as man we come to recognize in verse 15 that his relationship to the physical world is so intertwined he is the image of the invisible

God we see in verse 15 the firstborn of creation and the fact that he's an image means that he took on a physical material body he became man we know that from John chapter 1 the word became flesh John 1 14 he dwell among us we have seen his glory the glory as of the only son from the father full of grace and truth that Jesus became physical and also in verse 15 he's the firstborn of creation means that that we understand him in relation to the creation that he made in verse 16 he is the creator he made all the stuff the visible invisible the thrones or dominions the things in heaven and things on earth Jesus made it all it's made for him and through him in verse 16 through him all things hold together he's the one who sustains this material physical world we come to appreciate that this material world matters it matters because Jesus made it verse 18 we see his relationship to the church he's the head of the body of the church and so Paul uses this to describe not only the headship of Christ that he is supreme over the church but the church is owing to Jesus and we see how his work was accomplished it was accomplished through physicality it was accomplished through death on a cross it was accomplished by a body and by blood that was spilled!

that was spilled! that was spilled on the cross for us reconciled by his body of his flesh and those of us who were alienated now get to enjoy the benefits of being part of the commonwealth of Israel he says we have God we're with him we're in fellowship with him let me just try to wrap this up what why does this matter why does it matter then that Jesus came in human flesh why does it matter that this essential doctrine of Jesus becoming flesh what was something that the apostle John made kind of essential for the church I think there are a number of reasons let me just draw attention to a couple first is in 1 Corinthians 10 13 1 Corinthians 10 13 says this no temptation is overtaking you that is not common to man God is faithful he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it

Jesus set the example the example of knowing God's will and the example of of being empowered by the spirit's strength to put that will to work and as we follow the pattern the example of Christ we understand that that God will not allow temptation to come into our orbit that he hasn't also given us direction from his word in power from his spirit to overcome we can trust God when we face temptation and finally Hebrews chapter 4 15 says this we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace in time of need

[50 : 06] Jesus understands your struggle Jesus understands my struggle not only the temptations that we experience but the trials that we encounter in life and Jesus is not separated from that Jesus as our sympathetic high priest can identify with that because he suffered and experienced that himself and so when we come to Jesus and we bring those struggles to him our heart our raw emotion of how we feel we have a high priest who can sympathize with us and who delights in

helping us oh may the Lord help us to recognize and put into practice these truths Jesus is fully God so he's preeminent Jesus is fully man so he can identify with our struggles and has made a way for us to overcome them through his power may we trust him oh Lord we thank you for your word we thank you for these truths we pray that you would help us to represent you faithfully in the world around us thank you for sending your son thank you for accomplishing what was required so we can enjoy peace with God through

Christ we pray these things in Jesus name amen God bless you have a great week