

The Supremacy of Christ — Colossians 1:15-20

Basil Howlett - Carey Baptist Church – 27 July 2008

Many think that in these verses Paul is quoting a hymn or song about the glory of Christ. It was a very apt hymn to quote. False teachers were spreading a heresy in the city of Colossae which belittled Christ and Paul wrote this letter to remind the people there of how great Christ is and to urge them not to turn against him. Many people in our society denigrate the Lord Jesus Christ. The key statement in the song is at the end of verse 18 which says that it is God's plan that Christ should have the supremacy in every realm: in heaven, on earth, in the church and throughout eternity. That being so, it follows that he should have the chief place in our lives.

1. We must give the Lord Jesus Christ the chief place in our lives because of who he is.

- **He is a divine person.** He is the Son of God, equal with the Father (v15, v19, Colossians 2:9. See also 2 Corinthians 4:4, Hebrews 1:3)
- **He is an eternal Person** (v17). The arch-heretic Arius (circa 320) stated there was a time when Christ did not exist. Many cults today are really disciples of Arius, but Athanasius, a great and godly man stood against him and won the day.
- **He is the creator** (15-16). The term 'firstborn of all creation' does not mean that he was a created being. In a Jewish family 'the firstborn' had a prominent position and Christ has a high position over all creation.
- **He's the owner of all things (v16).** The whole universe was created to be a possession for Christ,
- **He is the sustainer of all things (17).** *'In him all things hold together.'*

2. We should give Christ the supreme place because of what he has done for us.

- **He has redeemed us** (v14). We mentioned this last week as a reason why we should give thanks in our prayers, but it's also a reason why Christ should have the supreme place in our lives. The word 'redeemed' means to set a prisoner free by the payment of a price. Jesus has freed us from the slavery of sin by paying a great price on the cross.
- **He has also forgiven us.**

3. We should give Christ the supreme place in our lives because of what he is doing for us now (v16).

- God has appointed him to be head over the church and as such he cares for us, protects us, guides us, guides us and helps us to grow,

4. We should give him supreme place because of what he is going to do (v20).

- One day, He is going to restore everything in heaven and earth to its original perfection. That doesn't mean that everyone will be saved in the end. This 20th verse says nothing about the inhabitants of hell being reconciled to God. Paul is telling us that one day Christ will restore the whole creation to total harmony with God. When God the Father, together with his Son, first created the universe everything was perfect and in harmony with God. When sin came into the world there was a terrible upheaval. The whole of God's creation got out of synch with the perfections of God. When Christ comes again he will bring everything back into harmony with God again. Our souls have already been saved but when he comes he will make our bodies perfect again.(v18). Jesus was the first one to rise from the dead, never to die again, but there will be many more. When he returns he will raise the bodies of all those who have died trusting in Christ, and they will be perfect. He will create a new heavens and a new earth. Ever since sin ruined God's creation, men and women have been trying to rebuild paradise. They've been trying to banish disease and disaster but they haven't succeeded. One day however, Christ will bring in the perfect realm. He will be the head of that new realm. He will have total supremacy. He will be on the throne. Everyone will worship him as the Lamb who shed his blood on the Cross to make all this possible

Are we putting him first? Does he have the supremacy in every department of our lives?

www.careybaptistchurch.org.uk