



## **Colossians: Jesus Over Everything**

August 6 – Colossians 1:15-20

### **Section 1: Introduction**

As has already been mentioned, the book of Colossians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to Christians in the ancient city of Colossae around 60 AD.

The letter addresses issues related to the supremacy of Christ and the danger of false teachings. Specifically, Paul will be addressing a general syncretism on the part of his audience. "Syncretism" is simply the merging or the attempted merging of different religions, cultures, worldviews, ideas, or schools of thought. In the case of Colossians, many scholars believe that in this letter Paul is having to confront a Colossian church community who were being influenced by Greco-Roman pagan philosophical ideas (see Colossians 2:8), Jewish mysticism (like the worship of angels in Colossians 2:18), and Jewish legalism (like the Jewish admonition to beware certain foods in Colossians 2:16).

To confront the Colossian temptation to merge their Christian belief with either pagan or Jewish influences, Paul throughout the letter encourages the Colossians to see the unique identity of the Lord Jesus Christ, to affirm supreme authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to uphold the complete sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ. He then, in the back half of this letter encourages the Colossians to live out their beliefs about Christ in practical ways that affect their ethical and moral choices, how they worship, how they operate in the home, how they should function missionally, and more.

In our text this week, we'll see just how high a view of Christ Paul has as he showcases the supremacy of Jesus.

Read Colossians 1:15-20.

## Section 2: Walk slowly through your passage

- Verse 15: What two designations does Paul make of Jesus in this passage? Write them in the space below.
- Verse 16: What are the three main prepositions that Paul uses in this passage to describe Jesus' relationship to all that has been created? What does that tell you about Jesus?
- Verse 17: How does this verse expound on what Paul declares in verse 16?
- Verse 18: In this verse, Paul labels Jesus as (1) The head of the body, the church; (2) The beginning; and (3) the firstborn from the dead. What do each of these designations mean?

(1) Jesus is the "head of the body, the church" means (see Ephesians 4:15-16; 5:23-32)...

(2) Jesus is "the beginning" means (see John 1:1-3)...

(3) Jesus is the "firstborn from the dead" means (see 1 Corinthians 15:20-24)...

What reason does Paul give at the end of this verse as to why Jesus is all these things?

- Verse 19: What does Paul tell us about Jesus' relationship to divinity in this verse?

- Read Hebrews 1:1-4. How does this passage develop what Paul says here in Colossians 1:19?
- Verse 20: Reflect on how this verse illumines the nature of Christ's work on the cross.

### Section 3: Reflection questions

- What is the significance of Christ having supremacy over all creation? That he is the "head" of the church? That he is reconciling all things to himself through his work on the cross? Write out 3-5 sentences in response.
- How does the understanding of Christ's supremacy impact your view of Him and your relationship with Him?
- In what ways does this passage challenge your understanding and perception of Christ? Ask yourself questions like: How can I practically acknowledge Christ's supremacy in my daily life? In what areas of my life do I need to surrender to His lordship? How can I actively participate in the work of reconciliation? Write out 3-5 sentences in response to these questions.

### Section 4: Pray the Scriptures

Using Colossians 1:15-20, write out a prayer in response to what you've read OR use the prayer already constructed below to pray this passage.

## [Sample prayer]

Gracious and Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the profound truths revealed in this passage You are the God who has made known to us the supremacy and majesty of Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Thank you.

Lord, thank You that Jesus is image of the invisible God that Christ embodies. You have made Yourself known to us through Him, and we are humbled by the revelation of Your character and nature. Help us to see You more clearly as we fix our eyes on Jesus.

We acknowledge that Jesus is the firstborn over all creation, the One through whom all things were created. You have crafted and formed everything through Him. Help me to recognize Your handiwork in the world around me and marvel at Your power and wisdom.

Lord, thank You for Christ's role as the sustainer of all things. In Him, all things hold together, and nothing exists apart from His authority. Help me to trust in His sovereignty and to rely on His unfailing strength in every aspect of my life.

Lord, thank You for Jesus as the head of the body, the church. Help me to submit to His lordship and to walk in unity and love with my brothers and sisters in You. fellow believers.

Lord, thank You for the fullness of Your nature dwelling in Christ. Through Him, You have chosen to reconcile all things to Yourself, making peace through His blood shed on the cross. Thank You for the gift of salvation and for the hope we have in Him. Empower me to proclaim this message of reconciliation to others and to live as an agent of peace in a broken world.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

## Section 5: Memorize Scripture

Throughout this series, we want to be memorizing Scripture. Use the prompts below to help you get Colossians 1:15-20 into your heart and mind.

1. Write out the passage: Write down Colossians 1:15-20 in your journal or on a notecard.
2. Memorize Colossians 1:15-16. Using various techniques to memorize the passage, such as repeating it out loud, creating visual associations, or setting it to a melody or rhythm, take time to commit these verses to memory.
3. Review and practice: Regularly review the passage throughout the week. Recite it from memory and reflect on its meaning and significance.