

Subject: *The Preeminent Christ*

Scripture: *Colossians 1:9-20*

In the Father's plan, Jesus was chosen to be our Lord and Savior. He is called "Christ" (the Anointed One). The OT Hebrew word is Messiah, and the NT equivalent is Christ.

Preeminence means a position and rank above all others. It means surpassing all others. It means Christ is first place, number one, in a class by Himself. According to Webster, preeminent means "superior, surpassing, peerless, supreme." On one occasion Jesus took Peter, James, and John up on a mountain, where they got a glimpse of Christ in all His glory. At the same time Moses and Elijah also appeared. Peter was so excited.

Matthew 17:4-8 ⁴ Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. ⁵ While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. ⁶ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. ⁷ And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. ⁸ And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

We speak of a person who is preeminent in his profession or preeminent in a chosen field or preeminent in a particular sport. Some of us remember when Nike aired a commercial featuring Bo Jackson. It showed this great athlete doing different sports and making the claim that Bo knows football, Bo knows baseball, and so forth. Well, obviously Bo doesn't excel in everything.

Christ is preeminent in everything (vs. 18), a verse that was chosen to be on the official seal of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis. We are going to focus our attention on verses 13-20, which reveal several ways in which Christ is preeminent.

1. Christ is preeminent in salvation (vs. 13-14)

A. He provides redemption

We are redeemed *from something*: the bondage of sin. We are redeemed *by something*: the payment of a ransom. We are bought with a price. We have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot and without blemish. And we are redeemed *for something*: to serve Christ. Jesus delivered us from the bondage of sin with the payment of His own blood. He set us free to serve Him. We are not free to do as we please, but we're free to do as He pleases. He is our new owner and new master.

B. He provides forgiveness

Jesus takes our sins from us. The Bible says that He removes them as far as the east is from the west. Christ did something *for us* (died on the cross) so He could do something *to us* (set us free and forgive our sins) so He could do something *through us* (use us to serve and glorify Him).

2. Christ is preeminent in revelation (vs. 15)

God chose to reveal Himself. He reveals Himself partially in the world. ***Psalms 19:1*** *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.* But He reveals Himself fully in Jesus Christ.

A. He is the visible image of the invisible God

John 1:18 *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

John 14:7-9 *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time 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?*

B. He is not like God—He is God

Colossians 2:9 *For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*

The Colossian church had to deal with false teaching of Gnosticism. The Gnostics believed only spirit was good and matter was evil. In their false teaching Christ was one of a series of emanations or intermediate beings between God and man. He was more than man, but less than God. That is heresy.

3. Christ is preeminent in creation (vs. 16-17)

All things were made by Him and for Him, and all things continue to exist because of Him.

A. He is the Creator of all things

John 1:1-3 *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 by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

B. He is the Sustainer of all things

Look through a telescope into the far reaches of the universe. Who holds it all together and keeps it running? Christ does. “By Him all things consist (hold together). Look through a microscope into the depths of the cell, the molecule, or the atom. Who holds it all together and keeps it going? Christ does. He is the glue of the galaxies. He is the cement of the cells. Scientists have discovered a type of protein that holds the basic building blocks of life together in human cells. It is called “laminin.” If you look at it under a high-powered microscope it looks like a cross.

4. Christ is preeminent in resurrection (vs. 18)

A. Christ is the Head of the church

This has to do with His authority and direction over the church. The head tells the body what to do. Guidance comes from the head. Right now your body is doing what your head tells it to do. This also has to do with His unity with the church. The head and the

body are one. Since believers are in Christ and the body of Christ is united forever with the Head. We know our resurrection is guaranteed. God describes us as already being raised and exalted with our Head, Jesus Christ.

B. Christ is the firstborn from the dead

Others like Lazarus were raised from the dead only to die again. But Jesus was the first to rise from dead and never die again.

5. Christ is preeminent in reconciliation (vs. 20)

To reconcile is to bring into harmony or set things right. Jesus will put everything its rightful place. This is not teaching universalism or that everyone will be saved, but this refers to time of Christ's reign on earth for 1,000 years. Right now, the world is a mess, and things are out of order, but one day Christ will put everything in place as it should be:

The Lord will be in His rightful place on His throne in Jerusalem.
The church will be in her rightful place with Christ the bridegroom.
Satan his demons will be in their rightful place in the bottomless pit awaiting final doom.
All nations will be in their rightful place in submission to Christ the King.

Christ is preeminent in salvation.
Christ is preeminent in revelation.
Christ is preeminent in creation.
Christ is preeminent in resurrection.
Christ is preeminent in reconciliation.

It is one thing to know about Christ's preeminence, but it is another thing to accept it and submit to it. We can say Christ is preeminent, but is He truly preeminent in our lives, our homes, and our church?

If you ask me how long it took to prepare this sermon, I would say several hours. But if you ask me how long it has taken me to apply this sermon, I would say all my life.