

Col. 1:15-20 (WCF 8:2-5) "The Perfections of Christ"

For the Children: Have you ever wondered what it would be like if your dad were the Prime Minister of NZ, or held some other powerful position? Perhaps, you think, we would never have any problems again. Dad could sort out anything, because of his Vem. They have their own problems, too. It is great to know that we have a Head of our Christian family – of the church – who is more powerful than any world leader. He is the Head of everything! And He can do something no one else can do: He can deal with our sin. **Questions:** Why is Jesus called the "Firstborn"? How does this enable Him to save us? What does it mean to call Him "Lord"?

Introduction:

First Point: The Head of Creation

- 1) **The Firstborn of All Creation:** Christ is the "image" – the representation and manifestation – of the invisible God by being the "Firstborn of all creation." This term does not mean He was born or created at a particular time – though it is taken from the OT rule that gave the largest part of the inheritance and the clan headship to the oldest son. The term does not mean that Christ is a mere creature, but that He is greater than any mere creature, pre-eminent in dignity, authority and power. It means He is the Head of all creation and the Heir of all. It shows also His unique relationship with His Father, as the Only-Begotten Son. This "images" God, for He is the Ruler and Owner of all
- 2) **Where Creation Stands in Relation to Christ:** The prepositions also show Christ's centrality and pre-eminence in creation. Creation is "in," "through," and "for" Him; and He is "before" it. He is the basis, agent, centre and goal of creation. He is not just our Mediator, but creation's Mediator as well
- 3) **The Background:** Paul draws attention to these truths in answer to the heresies disturbing the Colossians. Some think the problem was Jewish speculation about angels, drawing attention away from Christ. Others think a Gnostic heresy was teaching that an impersonal force (the "Logos") was put forward as the mediator between God and creation
- 4) **Implications for Salvation:** Only Christ is equipped to be our Mediator and save us from sin. Only One with all the fullness of deity dwelling in Him could do so. See WCF 8. Only the heir of all could guarantee us an everlasting inheritance. We must look nowhere else for a Saviour
- 5) **Implications for Life:** Since He is Head of all creation, we should accept and obey Him as Lord of our lives. We should also accept that this Lord is able to deliver what He promises, even when the future seems uncertain to us. For He is the Lord of all nations, of time and history

Second Point: The Head of the Church

- 1) **Head and beginning of the Body:** Christ also rules and redeems His church, as a head governs the actions of a body. He is the "Beginning," the foundation and source of life for the church
- 2) **Firstborn from the Dead:** Again, "Firstborn" does not deny Christ's divinity. It means He is pre-eminent over death. He defeated death, rose from the grave and shares His resurrection-life with all the elect
- 3) **First Place in Everything:** This was necessary for Him to be seen to be Lord of all, both the living and the dead. In this He also images God, who has first place in everything. We see how far this equality goes in v. 19, where "all the fullness" – of deity – is said to dwell in Christ. It was God's purpose to send His Son with that fullness, as well as with a human nature, reconcile all things to Himself (v. 20). His Headship over creation and over the church are thus tied together. But then God's purpose was not just the redemption of the church, but also the restoration of a cursed creation (Rom. 8:18f)
- 4) **Concern for the Church:** His Headship answers our concerns for the church. See 2 Cor. 11:28. The church is ruled and protected by a Head who is also the Head of creation. As we come to know Him more, we come to know God more (1:10). That knowledge strengthens the believer for service to the Lord, and thus strengthens the church. That is part of the way the Lord preserves His people

Conclusion: