

The Supremacy of Jesus Christ (Psalm 8 & Colossians 1:15-23)

19-August-2018

So we're continuing our series on the NT book of the Apostle Paul's letter to the church in Colosse

If you could have your Bibles open to Colossians chapter 1 from verse 15-23

There's a sermon outline in your bulletin

Let me pray for God's help and guidance before we start...

Intro

[PowerPoint 1-Intro]

Just a quick reminder of what we learnt last week

- Paul is writing to Christians in Colosse - telling people to **stand firm** and telling them **he's praying for them** to stand firm
- There is a problem with **false teachers** - trying to **add to what Jesus has done** - false teachers trying to add deeper secret knowledge of God/Jesus - also some trying to add Judaism practices and pagan beliefs to what Jesus has already done on the cross
- Paul says **all they (and we) need is Jesus**
- So he prays for them to **know Jesus fully**

Now this week in chapter 1 - verses 15 to 23 - the Apostle Paul explains exactly who Jesus is and that Jesus has **supremacy**

So we'd better define - what supremacy means!

[PowerPoint 2-Supremacy]

The state or condition of being superior to all others in authority, power, or status.

And in case we don't understand what superior is

We'd better define that too:

[PowerPoint 2a-Superior]

Higher in rank, status or quality

So in these verses (v15-23) Paul describes **3 major qualities of Jesus Christ** so that there can be no doubt that Jesus is all we need - and so there's no doubt of Jesus' supremacy!

Jesus is God (v15)

First Paul says **Jesus is God**

See v15

[PowerPoint 3-V15]

The Son is the *image of the invisible God*

This means Jesus - God's son - is **exactly the same as God the Father**

Jesus Himself said - (In John 14:7) **If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him and (In John 14:9) anyone who has seen me has seen the Father**

Therefore

The Father = the Son

The Son = the Father

The Son and the Father = God

And God is unique - one of a kind!

That same verse (v15) says:

[PowerPoint 4-V15]

The Son is the *firstborn over all creation*

Let's explore what that means...

The Greek word used for firstborn here

Has the idea that Jesus is **priority in terms of time** - so Jesus existed before time began - and **priority in terms of rank** - Jesus is number one in rank - there is no one above Him

Now remember in the OT the firstborn son belonged to God (Exodus 13:2) - and the **firstborn got all the privileges** for being the first born and inherited the Father's place as head of the family, received the Father's blessing and a double portion of the inheritance (Deut 21:17) - and if you remember the OT story of the twins Jacob and Esau - Esau was the firstborn of the twins - and he had the firstborn birthright privileges - but Jacob dudded Esau - and conned Esau in to giving up his firstborn privileges for a bowl of lentil soup! So Jesus being the firstborn in that sense had all the privileges of being God's Son! Everything God has is also Jesus' too!

So this verse 15 - tells us Jesus is exactly the same as God, that He existed before time began and He is number one in rank and has all God's qualities - so we are left without doubt that **Jesus is God**

[PowerPoint 5-Omni's]

And being God - Jesus has **three qualities** we'll explain a bit about:

1. **Omnipotence** - All Powerful

2. **Omniscience** - All knowing (the only one who is truly a know it all)

3. **Omnipresence** - Ever present - He's everywhere

Let's explore each of these

First - Omnipotence

[Illustration - Professor and girl on an airplane - professor: 'if you can tell me something Jesus can do, I'll give you a chocolate' - girl: 'if you can tell something Jesus can't do, I'll give you a barrel of Lollies]

The point is Jesus can do everything - He is all powerful

[Actually there is something Jesus can't do - and that is - He can't sin - because He is perfect]

Second - omniscience

There is nothing Jesus doesn't know

Remember how he knew all about the Samaritan women's marriages (John 4)

And he knew what the Pharisees were thinking and plotting (Matt 12:25; Luke 5:21-23)

There's nothing Jesus doesn't know.

He even counts the number of hairs on our heads - they are all numbered (Luke 12:7)

And he knows the number of stars and calls them by name (Psalm 147:4)

Without a telescope you can only see about 3000 stars from any point on Earth.

Scientists have estimated that the universe contains at least 70 sextillion stars (70 thousand-million-million-million). That's 7 followed by 22 zeroes! And Jesus calls each star by name!

Third - omnipresence

As far as I know - none of us have worked out - how to be in 2 places at once - let alone - being everywhere.

It's pretty hard for us to wrap our heads around this quality of God's character. We can see how God can be all powerful and how He can know everything - but to be everywhere - that's hard for us to get.

God describes Himself this way in Jeremiah 23:22-23

²³ "Am I only a God nearby,"

declares the LORD,

"and not a God far away?"

²⁴ Who can hide in secret places

so that I cannot see them?"

declares the LORD.

"Do not I fill heaven and earth?"

declares the LORD.

Jesus is the Creator (vv16-17)

Second Paul says - **Jesus is the Creator**

See verses 16 and 17

[PowerPoint 6-Jesus Creator]

Paul's reasoning is that if Jesus is firstborn - in terms of time and rank

Then Jesus was there at the time of Creation - when everything was created

As Paul says in v17 - **Jesus is before all things** - He **preexisted** before creation

That makes Jesus **eternal!** He has always existed.

He's not some afterthought God the Father had - Jesus the Son - is God's
plan from the beginning

And so v16 says that *all things were created in Him*

Jesus is the creator of all things!

In Heaven and on Earth

Remember John describes Jesus as the Word of God - and that the Word is
 God and the Word was with God in the beginning

And how did God create everything?

Through His Word! Through Him. Through Jesus!

Remember God spoke...Let there be light, land, animals, people - He spoke and
 created!

Our OT passage from Psalm 8 - says how majestic the Lord is in creating
 everything!

And Paul says in v16 - everything was created through Jesus and for Jesus

For His pleasure

For His Glory

So that the Father would be glorified by and through the Son - Jesus!

And when everything was created - Jesus the Creator did not just walk away
 No!

In v17 - Paul says that *in Him all things hold together*

In a **physical sense** - they hold together

The world - although broken and fallen - holds together - it doesn't spin out of
 orbit - the sun rises each morning - and sets each evening - the moon still
 controls the tides

Our human bodies hold together - and heart beats - our lungs breathe

We only have to see the miracle of a newborn baby - to see God's handiwork

Jesus holds everything together

And he does this in a **spiritual sense** too

God knew that humankind would fall

He knew Adam and Eve would sin

He knew we would sin

Yet He loves us and wants us to be in a proper loving obedient relationship with Him

So to hold all things together spiritually

In God the Father's grace - God's undeserved favour -

He gifted us - His Son - Jesus - The Word of God

And as John describes it

The Word - Jesus - became flesh (John 1:14) and lived on this Earth

Why?

Because of His Love for His creatures

Because He holds all things together

SO he came to this Earth to save people lost from God

Jesus is our Saviour (vv18-22)

So third - Paul says **Jesus is our Saviour**

See verses 18 to 22

[PowerPoint 7-Saviour v18-19]

V18 tells us why Jesus came

Because He is **head of His church**

Church = the **body** of believers of Jesus - not a building - not a denomination

He came to establish His church

And to teach and love His church

The relationship between Jesus and His church is like a faithful marriage

Jesus is the bridegroom

The church is His bride

And Jesus loves the church sacrificially

And models that love to us

That sacrificial love finds its fulfilment

In His cruel death on a Roman cross

So that our sin and punishment can be taken upon Him - and we can have our sin washed away and be forgiven

But Jesus' didn't stay dead

As Paul says in v18 - Jesus is the ***firstborn from among the dead***

Now remember we said firstborn can be in terms of time and rank

We know Lazarus rose from the dead before Jesus

But Lazarus (like all of us) is a sinful human being - so he is not firstborn in rank - like Jesus is

Not only that Lazarus eventually died again - even though he was raised by Jesus

Jesus resurrection - was not followed by Him dying again - but by a glorious ascension into Heaven - where He is **alive** forever!

And He is perfect in every way and offers everyone who chooses to believe in Him - eternal life

So Jesus is firstborn from among the dead because He has defeated death and gives life! Life eternal!

Jesus has **supremacy** in that He is the only one who can defeat the 2 things in this world that no-one else can

Jesus has conquered sin and death - no one else can do that!

This is only possible because God's plan from the beginning - Paul says in v19 - was for all of God's **complete power and authority (that's the fullness of God)** to be placed in Jesus - the Son - the Word of God

[PowerPoint 8-Saviour-v20-22]

God's plan was a rescue mission

To send Jesus - the Saviour

See v20

The plan was to **reconcile Heaven and Earth**

Reconcile - means to restore a broken relationship

Our sin - breaks our good and proper relationship with God

Because Jesus is perfect - and not sinful

He is able to fulfil all of God's commandments and keep them perfectly

And He is able to be our sacrificial lamb - remember in the OT - a lamb was sacrificed by the priest - instead of the people being punished for their sins - the animal was punished instead. But this sacrifice had to be repeated over and over - because the priest and the people making the sacrifice were sinful

But Jesus became the once and for all sacrifice for sin - because he was sinless - the sacrifice was perfect and didn't have to be repeated - His sacrifice was so we don't get punished

It meant His blood shed on the cross?

Why did He have to die and have His Bloodshed?

Because the punishment for sin is death - and blood represents life - we are only alive when our heart pumps blood - once our heart stops beating - no blood gets pumped around our body -

So blood represents life - life's blood

The result of Jesus' death - ***was reconciliation and peace made between God and humankind!***

All we have to do is believe Jesus did this for us - personally - for our sin and our rebellion against God

Paul then goes onto describe the condition of a person

Before they believe in Jesus - in v21

And after they believe in Jesus - in v22

So Paul says before a person believes in Jesus

They are ***alienated from God***

An alien is a foreigner - someone who is not a citizen of the country they live in

They don't have the privileges of being a citizen

And in some ways they are outcasts

That's what Paul means by alienated - they are outcasts - and ***enemies of God-caused by their evil behaviour*** - in other words caused by their sin

God doesn't want anyone to be an alienated from Him

He wants everyone to be a citizen of Heaven

But He does give us freedom to make a choice to choose to believe in Jesus

So in v22 - Paul describes what a person is like after they believe in Jesus' death and resurrection

They are **reconciled** - and so they can now become a citizen of Heaven

And so when God looks at a believer in Jesus - he doesn't see a sinful alien - he sees someone who is **holy** (set apart for God) - **without blemish** (cleansed of their sins) and **free from accusation** (not guilty of their sins) - so no one can point the finger at a believer in Jesus for any of their past sins - because Jesus has washed that person clean - and removed their sins as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12)

This is only possible because when God looks at us as a believer - He sees the holiness and perfection of Jesus standing in front of the believer!

What a Saviour, Jesus is!

Response/Challenge (v23)

So what should our response be today - to who Jesus is?

Well - Paul gives us our response in v23 and with it comes challenges:

[PowerPoint 9-Response/Challenge]

Paul tells us to:

- **Continue in our faith** - a faith that believes in Jesus' death (to fix sin) and believes in Jesus resurrection (to fix death) - a faith that allows us

to be citizens of Heaven. When things get tough - when doubts creep in - when people laugh at our faith - we must stand firm - knowing that Jesus is supreme!

- Paul tells us - **not to move from our certain hope of Heaven** - a place in Heaven is guaranteed to those who believe in Jesus - that's what the Gospel message [The Good News] says. Don't let anyone tell you that there are other ways to get to Heaven other than through Jesus. Even if you're going through a tough time - with work, or family, or money, or depression or grief or loneliness - Jesus is supreme - He's purchased your ticket to Heaven - Just simply say thank you Jesus and hang on to the hope of Heaven!
- The people of Colosse **heard the Gospel** initially from Epaphras and then from Paul in this letter - and they believed the Gospel - a Gospel that Paul says is being proclaimed to every creature under Heaven. Paul says he is a **servant of this Gospel**. Will we join Paul today - and be servants of the Gospel - and ensure this Gospel - Good News - is proclaimed to every creature in Toukley and the surrounding areas. Being a servant of the Gospel - means we accept Jesus is our Lord and Master - and is supreme!

Why should we respond this way?

Well because - Paul has just told us:

Jesus is God!

Jesus is the Creator!

Jesus is our Saviour!

Jesus has supremacy in all things!

Let's pray...