

Supremacy and Sufficiency

Colossians 1:15-23

July 23, 2017

DAY 1: Christ supreme in creation: (Colossians 1:15-17)

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

1. Paul begins a section of scripture that is a magnificent description of Christ.
2. Ever since the resurrection of Christ, the divinity of Christ has been the essence of His identity.
3. Paul says that Christ is the “image” of the invisible God. “Image” is the Greek word “eikon.” “Eikon has two usages. The first means an exact likeness.

John 14:9 (Jesus said) “He that has seen Me has seen the Father.”

4. The second usage of “eikon” is a manifestation of what was hidden. No one can see God, but through Jesus, that which can be known about God is seen in Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

5. The claim of both John 1 and this passage is that Jesus was also the agent in creation! This is another picture of His deity. Not only is He the agent in creation, but He is actively involved in holding the universe together

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

6. Because He is the supreme Lord He must be a sufficient Savior.

DAY 2: Christ supreme in the church (Colossians 1:18)

Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

1. One of Paul's illustrations and explanations for the church is "the body."
2. The creator of the world is also the head of the church!
3. Christ is the head of the church. In the same way that a human head (brain) runs the operation of the physical body, so Christ is needed to run the operation of the church.
4. He is also the "beginning," meaning the beginning of the church.
5. His role is "supremacy" in the church. This is also translated "pre-eminence."
6. The effect of this teaching of the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ was to root the Colossians in Christ. The deity of Christ is clearly taught, and the lordship of Christ in our lives is insinuated.
7. Does He have pre-eminence in your heart and life?

DAY 3: Christ sufficient in His person; God with us (Colossians 1:19)

Colossians 1:19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,

1. “Fullness” is a common word in Colossians. It has several usages. Here, “fullness” means “the full complement,” as in a luxury cruise ship having a full complement of working staff.

2. Paul is saying that when you consider the attributes of God, you will find them all in Christ.

3. That Jesus Christ was both fully human and fully God was important for a number of reasons.
 - a. One of the most important is that it made Jesus the perfect mediator between God and fallen man.

 - b. It also made Him the perfect sinless sacrifice for the sinfulness of man.

 - c. Christ gave us the clearest picture of what divinity looks like, the revelation of the nature of God.

4. This “is striking enough as a description of a unique and unrepeatable act of divine condescension, but it is only by seeing this verse in its context that the full implications of what Paul is saying become clear. It is the fullness of the almighty God who is Maker of heaven and earth that was pleased to dwell in Christ.” – Richard Lucas

DAY 4: Christ supreme in His work; God for us (Colossians 1:20)

Colossians 1:20 ... and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

1. While verse 19 reminded us that nothing of the fullness of God is lacking in Christ, verse 20 tells us that nothing in the universe is outside the ability of God's reconciling work.

2. All of the created order was thrown into dissonance when Adam and Eve sinned. The world changed dramatically from an idealistic utopian garden to a place where evil and suffering occur, where relationships become broken and may seem irreparably damaged.

3. All of the mess around us is of interest to God. He sets about at every moment to redeem and reconcile people to Himself.

4. Human beings occasionally bring about peace, particularly after wars. But notice that God makes peace through Christ's shedding of His blood!

5. Rebellious people can be reconciled back to God! He has made a way, through the death of His only Son.

6. Let's draw four conclusions from this verse:
 - a. Reconciliation, ultimately, is God's work.

 - b. What's needed for man to be reconciled to God has already been done!

 - c. The location for reconciliation was the cross of Christ.

 - d. Nothing lies outside the scope of God's reconciliation work.

DAY 5: Stable and steadfast (Colossians 1:21-23)

1. We finish with three great truths of our past, present and future!

Colossians 1:21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

2. What does Paul say about our past?

Colossians 1:22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

3. What does Paul say about our present?

Colossians 1:23... if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

4. What does Paul say about our future?