

Colossians 1:15-18 - Christ the Creator

Introduction

Paul, as he did with the Ephesians, prays for the Believers in Colossae, that they would know God and the will of God, but also prayed for specific outcomes . . .

- That they would be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding . . .
- That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him . . .
- Being fruitful in every good work . . .
- Increasing in the knowledge of God . . .
- And to be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy . . .
- A model prayer for us and those we love . . .

Paul then gives thanks to the Father, why?

- Who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light . . .
 - God has made us right with Himself, qualified us, so that we could have and enjoy all the benefits of what it means to belong to Him . . .
 - In this case an 'inheritance' with the people of God, but we know there is so much more than that . . .

"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins."

- God, doing what we could not do, doing what we did not want to do . . .
 - Breaking through the darkness and bringing us into His most marvelous light . . .
 - Rescuing us and translating us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.
 - There is no more beautiful place to be . . .
- Only made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ . . .
 - We are qualified by the blood of Jesus . . .

Colossians 1:15-18

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

16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

The Deity of Christ

(V15) – “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”

Paul is making two incredible and very definitive statements here, one speaking of the deity of Jesus Christ, and the other speaking to His preeminence and supremacy over all things.

We have said this frequently, but the doctrine of Jesus Christ being God incarnate is maybe the most essential of all Christian doctrines. Looking at most, if not all of, false teachings and religions, the deity of Jesus Christ is inevitably the most significant point of departure.

Here is the primary reason Paul is writing this Epistle, to declare the deity and supremacy of Christ over all things. The world will always attempt to diminish the person of Jesus Christ, make Him less than He is.

I think it is a safe statement to say that for anyone who does not believe that Jesus is God, then that person is probably not a Christian. It may be possible, but highly unlikely . . .

I do have a Christian friend who had a Mormon background and struggled with the deity of Christ. I would send him Scriptures speaking of the deity of Christ to no avail, but there is a Scripture speaking to the believer that says this . . .

Philippians 3:15 – “Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.”

When he read **Revelation 22:13** – “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”, he became convinced.

The preeminence and supremacy of Christ is that of God, because He is God.

- He is the image of the invisible God . . .
 - Image – likeness
 - **II Corinthians 4:4** – “Christ, who is the image of God . . .”
 - **Hebrews 1:3** – “Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person . . .”
 - **Philippians 2:6** – “Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.”
 - Invisible – unseen
 - **John 4:24a** – “God is Spirit . . .”
 - **I Timothy 1:17** – “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”
 - **John 1:18** – “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”
 - Jesus in speaking of Himself . . .
 - **John 14:9-11** – “He who has seen Me has seen the Father . . .”
 - **Revelation 22:13** – “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

- The firstborn over all creation . . .
 - This is not a statement of birth, but that of preeminence and supremacy.
 - Jesus was never born, but is firstborn as a matter of position . . .
 - The Creator cannot be created . . .
 - He is Alpha and the Omega, infinite in His being . . .
 - The descriptive of ‘firstborn’ speaks to . . .
 - His sonship, the relationship of the Son to the Father . . .
 - His authority and supremacy over all things . . .
 - His inheritance . . .

- J.B.Phillips – “Now Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God.”

The Creator

(V16) – “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”

Paul declares that Jesus is God the Creator, more evidence speaking of His deity, because only God is the Creator.

- Scriptures that substantiate Jesus as Creator God . . .
 - **Genesis 1:26** – “Then God said, “Let Us make mankind in Our image, in Our likeness . . .”
 - Reflective of the Triune God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit . . .
 - **John 1:3** – “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”
 - **I Corinthians 8:6** – “Yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.”
 - **John 1:10** – “He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.”
- For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.
 - Jesus has created everything that exists . . .
 - Everything that exists in the celestial realm, everything we can see and can know . . .
 - Everything that exists in the spiritual realm, everything we cannot see and cannot know . . .
 - Including the earthly and spiritual powers that be . . .
 - They all owe their existence, their positions, their powers, to Jesus . . .

The Alpha & The Omega

(V17) – “And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”

Paul gives us two more thoughts that speak to His deity . . .

- And He is before all things . . .
 - As Jesus described Himself, He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End . . .
 - He is infinite in His being . . .

- In Him all things consist . . .
 - Consist – to set, to put together
 - And it is not just that He set and puts things together, it is that He holds all things together . . .
 - As RC Sproul said, “There is not one maverick molecule . . .”
 - ‘He holds the whole world in His hand . . .’
 - He is not just the Creator, He is the Sustainer . . .
 - Look at the skin on your hands and then extend your vision as far as the eye can, as far as the James Webb Space can see, and beyond its capabilities . . .
 - God sustains it all, every planet, every star, solar system and every molecule and atom in its appointed place . . .
 - What is amazing is that He still keeps a sin marred creation . . .
 - He keeps sin and wickedness at bay, because left unchecked it is hard to imagine the havoc Satan and man would wreck . . .

The Head of the Church

(V18) – “And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.”

Paul continues the expression of the deity of Christ to include the Body of Christ.

- And He is the head of the body, the church . . .
 - Jesus is the head of the Body of Christ, His Church . . .

Ephesians 1:22-23 – “And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

- The Church
 - The church is never mentioned in the Old Testament . . .
 - The closest we see in regards to ‘church’ in the OT would be the Tabernacle or the Synagogue, but these are places of worship.
 - Israel is never referred to the ‘Church’, because Israel was a nation.
 - Church – ekklesia
 - Is the word chosen by the early Christians and the Scriptures to make a statement about community and the corporate identity of the people of God, in Christ.
 - Jesus first speaks of the Church in his engagement with Peter . . .

Matthew 16:16-20 – “Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.”

- Note how Jesus personalizes the church, “I will build my church . . .”
 - Not only that it is His church, but that He is the one who will build it . . .
 - So what is this church?
 - Church in this context is a supernatural entity that is comprised of the people of God . . .
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- The Body
 - The Body is both physical and spiritual expression of the head, Christ . . .
 - Each member of the Body having a role and a purpose in the edification and support of the Body.

Romans 12:4-6 – “For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us . . .”

I Corinthians 12:12-14 - For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many.”

It seems a little odd that Paul would go from Jesus the Creator God, the Alpha and the Omega to the head of the body, the church, but a closer examination will show that His creative, eternal and sovereign attributes are directly applicable to the church, and that the church does not exist without them . . .

- Who is the beginning . . .
 - Again speaking to His eternity, the Alpha and the Omega . . .
 - (V17) – “And he is before all things . . .”
 - But the context is the church, you and me, which were chosen before the foundation of the world . . .

Ephesians 1:3-6 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”

- It is thought that the Church had it’s beginning in Acts at the Pentecost, some think it began at introduction of the New Covenant . . .
- From our perspective, we think our salvation began the day we received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, both being true . . .
- But from God’s perspective, the Church and our salvation has it’s origin in the beginning, before the foundation of the world . . .

- The firstborn from the dead . . .
 - Firstborn in this case also speaks to His position, but it also speaks to what He has done, the resurrection . . .

I Corinthians 15:19-26 - “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”

- We see Christ the risen, firstborn from the dead, where do we see Christ the Creator?

II Corinthians 5:14-17 – “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

- We see Christ the Creator in the Believer, because of the resurrection we have become a new creation . . .
- That in all things He may have the preeminence . . .
 - Preeminence – to be first – supremacy
 - With His final victory over death, He declares supremacy and sovereignty over all things . . .

Final Thoughts

If there is any Scripture that truly aligns with Colossians 1:15-18 and encapsulates that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, that He is the firstborn over all creation and that He is the Creator of all things and that in Him all things consist, that Jesus is the Creator God it is . . .

Hebrews 1:1-5 – “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"?"

“Through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power . . .”

And by extension . . .

Christ as the head of the Body, the Church, and expresses Himself as both the Creator God and Eternal in His nature . . .