

Introduction: Welcome, Teaching Practice.

>>> A. Purpose Of The Letter Is To Address Serious Problems Regarding Spiritual Beliefs Especially About Jesus And Salvation.

>>> B. Diminishing The Jesus Supremacy And His Sufficiency.

- Supremacy: Supreme In Identity. Supreme In Priority In Life.
- Sufficiency: Salvation. Jesus + Contributions From Someone Else Or Something Else.

(Religious Activities. Moral Success. Good Works. Mystical Experiences. Intercession Of Another Person. Etc.)

>>> C. Verses 15-23 Address This Issue But Our Focus Today Will Be Primarily Verses 15-19. Next Week We Will Continue In The Following Verses.

Main Idea Of This Passage: Jesus Should Be Honored As Supreme Over All And Trusted As Sufficient For All.

- Note The Use Of "All" "Everything."

Colossians 1:15-20. ⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

>>> A. Theologically Deep With Broad Implications. Try To Keep Simple And Applicable To Life.

>>> B. Before Verse By Verse Explanation, Note That Same Problems Being Addressed Exist Today.

>>> C. Many Today Diminish The Supremacy Of Jesus:

- Secularism And Liberal Christianity: Something Lesser. Teacher. Prophet. Like Others. A Son Of God Rather Than The Son Of God.
- Cults And World Religions: Mormonism. Jehovah Witnesses. Islam. Hinduism. Etc.
- Evangelicals: Right Beliefs About Supremacy Of Jesus, But Not Matched By Right Behavior. Jesus Not Truly Honored As Supreme In Life.

>>> D. Many Today Diminish Sufficiency Of Jesus. Salvation And Right Relationship With God That Does Not Depend Entirely On Jesus.

- Cultural Thinking: Personal Contributions Like Good Works, Religious Ascetism, Moral Success.
- Catholicism: Intercession Of Saints, Participation In Sacraments, Mary As Co-Redeemer, Need For Good Works.
- World Religions: Works, Temple Ceremonies, Martyrdom, Karma/Reincarnation, Reach Enlightenment.
- Evangelicals: Rightly Stated Belief But Still: Uncertainty, Fear, And Stress Based On Failure In Living Out Godly, Loving Life.

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

>>> A. Two Phrases To Express Greatness, Uniqueness, And Supremacy Of Jesus.

>>> B. Phrase #1: "He Is The Image Of The Invisible God."

- Image = Resembling, Like Something. Used In Generic Fashion For Humanity. (Likely Referring To Role As Rulers And Call To Represent God's Love And Righteousness. Some Limited Correlation.)
- The Word "Image" Is Used In Far Greater Sense Regarding Jesus. Bible Teaches That Jesus Is Completely And Fully Like God The Father.
- Vs. 19. For In Him All The Fullness Of God Was Pleased To Dwell,

Imperfect Analogy. Child's Basic Drawing Of Their Father Vs Full Size HD Photo.

>>> C. **“Image Of The Invisible God” Means That Jesus Reflects And Reveals God's Nature Perfectly Because He Is God The Son.**

- What Is God Like? Correct Answers Are Unattainable By Our Own Senses Or Reasoning. "Invisible God."
- In Creation, We Can Know God's Existence But Only By Revelation Can We Know God's Essence.
- God's Ultimate Revelation Is Jesus!

John 1:18. No one has ever seen God; the only God (Jesus), who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Hebrews 1:3a. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature

John 14:9. Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

>>> D. Jesus Reveals God's Very Nature Perfectly:

- God’s Power: Stilled Storms. Eradicated Demons. Defeated Death.
- God’s Love: Protected And Restored Adulterous Woman. Forgave And Restored Denying Peter.
- God’s Sympathy: Weeping At Lazarus’ Grave. Encouragement To Sorrowful Disciples, “Good Cheer.”

- God's Hatred: Rebukes Towards The Hypocrisy, Harshness, And Haughtiness Of The Pharisees. His Making A Whip And Driving Out Money Changers In The Temple.
- God's Faithfulness To Unfaithful: Prayed For Disciples Who Forsook Him. Resolutely Going Toward Jerusalem To Die For Those Who Hated Him.

Main Idea: Jesus Should Be Honored As Supreme Over All And Trusted As Sufficient For All.

>>> E. Phrase #2: "Firstborn Of All Creation."

- Misunderstood By Cults As Being The First Creation Of God.

Modern Phrases III. Quarterback Of This Business. No Team. No Football. Captain Of This Ship. No Ship. Expresses Supremacy Of Position.

Exodus 4:22. Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son,

- Israel Preeminent/Favored Among Nations. Jesus Is Firstborn Of All Creation.

>>> F. Jesus Is Supreme Over All! Life Application?

- Reflected In Theological Beliefs Certainly.
- Practiced In Decisions And Priorities.

>>> G. Someone Else As Supreme? Their Desire, Will, Good Take Precedence Over Jesus.

- Self.
- Romantic Partner.

- Public Opinion.
- Spiritual Leader.
- Political Leader, Party.
- Family Member.
- Congregation.
- Boss At Work.

Jewish Man Desire To Be A Secret Christian III. Concern For Family's Approval. Ultimately Did What They Wanted Rather Than What Jesus Wanted.

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

>>> A. More Emphasis On Jesus' Supremacy Over All.

>>> B. “By Him All Things Were Created...” Compare To Genesis Chapter 1. Equating Jesus With The Creator, God The Father.

- Divine Nature Also Emphasized In Gospels: “Lord Of The Sabbath.” Forgive Sins. Matthew 24:35. Heaven And Earth Will Pass Away, But My Words Will Not Pass Away.

John 1:3. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

>>> C. "In Heaven And On Earth, Visible And Invisible, Whether Thrones Or Dominions Or Rulers Or Authorities..."

- Jesus Made It All, Owens It All, Rules At All. (Earthly And Spiritual. Human Authorities And Powers Spiritual Authorities And Powers.)

>>> D. Truth Should Alleviate Two Fears Held By Many:

- Fear Of Earthly Powers: Abusive, Hostile. Harmful. (Hostile Boss, Antagonistic Government, Mother Nature.)
- Fears Of Evil Spiritual Powers: Entities Like Demons. Satan. Etc.

Colossians 2:15. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Ephesians 1:21. (Jesus is) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

>>> E. Jesus Created All And Is Therefore Is Above All: Life Application?

- Our Ultimate Allegiance Is To Jesus: Not The Supreme Court Or Any Earthly Authority.

- Our Ultimate Peace Is Through Jesus: No Power In Heaven And Earth Can Remove Me From His Hand. He Rules Over All.
- Not: Satan. Storms. Sickness. Struggle. Sin. Shame.

Romans 8:34. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

>>> F. "Created Through Him And For Him..."

- Everything Exists For His Purposes And His Glory (Honor His Name And Display His Greatness.)
- When My Life Honors Jesus As Foremost: All The Pieces Fit. Who I Am Supposed To Be. This Is My Place.

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

>>> A. Third Verse Emphasizing Jesus' Supremacy.

- “He Is Before All Things.” In Time And In Status.
- “Before Abraham Was, I Am.”
- Takes Priority In Time And In Rank.

>>> B. The Son Of God Is Eternal. He Has Always Existed But Became Flesh In History. Name “Jesus.”

>>> C. “In Him All Things Hold Together...”

- Past Tense Emphasis On Supremacy Of Jesus: “Creator Of All Things.”

- Future Tense Emphasis On Supremacy Of Jesus: Created "For Him."
- Present Tense Emphasis On Supremacy Of Jesus: "All Things Hold Together."
- Life And Matter Would Cease To Exist Without Jesus's Power.

>>> D. If Jesus Holds The Universe Together, He Can Certainly Keep Your World From Falling Apart.

Colossians 1:18-19. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

>>> A. These Two Verses Also Emphasize The Supremacy Of Jesus.

>>> B. "He Is The Head Of The Body-The Church."

- This Verse Should Be Displayed At All These Church Gatherings And Governing Bodies Where They Are Deciding Whether To Follow God's Word.
- Issues Like: Sexuality. Other Religions. Abortion. Salvation. Etc.
- You Are Not In Charge!

>>> C. Jesus Is The Head. He Rules His Church: No Pope. No Pastor. No Prophet. No Organization. No Group Of Delegates.

Imagine Me Deciding Issues For The Miami Dolphins III. Team Rules. Player Pay. Ticket Prices. Starting Lineup.

>>> C. "He Is The Beginning." Beginning = Author, Originator, Creator. In Reference To The Church.

- Church = New Creation. New Humanity. Last Adam. Restored Mandate To Represent God's As His Image Bearers In The World.
- Note Previous Creation Language In Vs 9-14: Bearing Fruit, Increasing, Pleasing (Good.)

My Artwork Creation III. I Am The Author, Originator. I Could Destroy It. I Could Display It. My Authority. I Created It. Church = Jesus' Masterpiece On Display.

Ephesians 2:7, 10 (NLT.) So God can point to us (the church) in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.....¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

>>> D. "The Firstborn From The Dead." Phrase Again Emphasizes His Priority, Role As Supreme.

- First Complete Resurrection: Never To Die Again.

>>> **E. Jesus Is Supreme In Life And Supreme Over Death. He Is Supreme Is Original Creation And New Creation. He Is Supreme In Heaven And On Earth.**

>>> **F. Why This Repeated Emphasis On Jesus' Supremacy?**

- Verse 18c. "That In Everything He Might Be Preeminent."

Da Vinci Illustration. Likely Legend. Davinci Sought Fellow Artist's Opinion Of Last Supper Painting. Response "The Cup In Jesus' Hand Is Particularly Beautiful." Davinci Immediately Began To Vigorously Paint Out Cup While Saying, "Nothing Must Distract From Christ!"

>>> **G. Anything That Distracts Us Or Comes Before Jesus Is Wrong..**

- Examples: Work. Family. Money. Ministry. Use Of Time. Goals In Life. Children. Reputation. Self-Desires. Etc.

- Anything That Competes With Jesus Is Wrong.

>>> H. Verse 19. "All The Fullness Of God Dwells In Him."

- Fullness Comes From A Greek Word That Means "All The Attributes."
- All That God Is-Jesus Is. (Always Has Been And Always Will Be That Way. They Dwell Permanently.)
- Not Enough To Give Jesus A Prominent Place But Must Be Preeminent.
- Not Enough For Jesus To Have A Special Place But Must Be The Supreme Place.

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

Main Idea Of This Passage: Jesus Should Be Honored As Supreme Over All And Trusted As Sufficient For All.

- Sufficiency As Savior Is Emphasized In Vs 20-23 (Next Week.)

>>> A. Verse 20. Jesus Is Ruler And Also The Restorer Or The Reconciler.

Reconcile A Checking Account Or Marriage III. Make It Right.

- Jesus Ultimately Makes Everything Right: Relationship With God.
Brokenness In World.

Acts 3:21. Jesus, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.

- More On This Idea Of Jesus As Restorer And Reconciler Next Week.