

WORSHIP SERVICE - 6.25.2023

THE EPIC SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

I. INTRODUCTION

Colossians 1:15-20

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.

II. THE SUPREMACY OF JESUS

- Supremacy is defined as “the state or condition of being superior to all others in authority, power, or status.”
- We know Jesus has authority, power, and status. To what extent?
- In order for Jesus to be supreme, a comparison is necessary.
- The supremacy of Jesus was being called into question in Colossae.
- His authority was being called into question through false teachings.
- His power was being called into question through legalism and ascetic practices that were being taught.
- His status was being called into question to which Paul gives a resounding declaration of the deity of Jesus in Colossians 2:9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.
- The supremacy of Jesus is still being called into question today.
- Our world doesn't look favorably on exclusive claims. Most people will agree that Jesus was a good man, that he taught good principles.
- But when you declare that Jesus is Lord over all, the one to whom every knee will bow and who is the only way to heaven, the only truth - that is offensive in our world.
- Paul lays out in this passage, an epic, Christological breakdown of the supremacy of Jesus.
- He gives 10 exclusive reasons why Jesus alone is supreme.
- As we go through all 10, may we marvel as we consider each of these reasons showing why Jesus is supreme.

III. TEN EXCLUSIVE REASONS FOR CHRIST'S SUPREMACY

1. Jesus is Supreme Because He is the Very Image of God

- “He is the image of the invisible God”
- God is invisible. It's one of his attributes. His total essence, all of His spiritual being, will never be able to be seen by us.
- John 1:18 says No one has ever seen God; he is invisible.
- 1 Timothy 6:15–16 describes him as he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, [16] who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see.
- We know he exists because we see the visible evidence of creation which points to an invisible maker.
- And yet, Paul says Jesus is the very image of God. When we see Jesus, we see the Father.
- John 14:8–9 Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” 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.
- And when we say Jesus is the image of God, it's not to say he physically looks like him, because God is invisible, but rather he is the exact image of the Father's divine nature, his deity, his character, his will, his power.

- Hebrews 1:3 tells us that Jesus is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,
- The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit share the same nature, they are one God.
- And Jesus is supreme, because as John says, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And men could finally see God in the incarnation.
- When John saw Jesus coming towards him by the Sea of Galilee, all he could say was, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"
- Because Jesus is the very image of God, when we see the love of Jesus in the Gospels, his kindness, his compassion, his goodness, these are also true of God.
- Want to know what the God of the universe, the Lord of heaven and earth is like? Look at Jesus.
- Want to know how to please God? Look at Jesus' example.
- Want to come to God and have a relationship with him? It's only through Jesus. There is no other way.
- Jesus is supreme because he is the very image of God.

2. Jesus is Supreme Because He has Authority Over all Creation

- He is "the firstborn of all creation"
- Is this saying that Jesus was created first before everything?
- In the analysis of the supremacy of Jesus, either he is God, and therefore he cannot have been created, or he was created and therefore isn't God.
- We know that Jesus is God. We serve a triune God - God the father, God the Son - Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit. All sharing the same divine nature, yet three distinct persons, but one God.
- So if Paul isn't saying that Jesus was created, what does it mean that he is the firstborn of all creation?
- The word "firstborn" is generally used in the bible to speak of 'status', 'rank', 'power', or 'priority.'
- It is not referring to birth order.
- Psalm 89:27 says of the Messiah, "And I will make him (Christ) the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth."
- The term "firstborn" is a declaration of the authority of Christ.
- In fact 6 times in the New Testament, Jesus is described as the firstborn.
- As the firstborn over all creation, Jesus ranks higher than all of creation. He is supreme over all creation. He has authority over all creation.
- Paul is saying that Jesus is sovereign over all of creation. He existed before anything that exists, and he is greater than anything that exists.
- After Jesus rose from the dead and was about to ascend into heaven, remember what he said?
- Matthew 28:18 "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."
- Jesus is supreme because he has authority over everything that exists, over everything that was created.
- Do you recognize that authority over your life? Over the world we live in?
- Are we submitted in every single area of our lives, our thoughts, our hearts, to that authority?
- Jesus is supreme because he has authority over all creation.

3. Jesus is Supreme Because He is the Maker of all Creation

- "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities"
- Jesus doesn't just have authority over creation, he is also the maker of it.
- There is nothing that exists that wasn't made by Him. And he is sovereign, he is Lord, over them all.
- John 1:3 declares that All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.
- Do you find comfort in this? We exist in a world where every single thing, every single being, was created by Jesus and He has complete and utter authority over each and every one of them.
- Jesus is supreme because he is the maker of all things.

4. Jesus is Supreme Because He is the Primary Benefactor of Creation

- "all things were created through him and for him."
- Jesus created all things and all things were created for him!
- He is the primary benefactor of his creation! Creation exists for his good pleasure, for his glory, to the praise and honor of him!
- When we view our world, our default is to put ourselves at the center.
- He created us for his good pleasure, not because he needed us, but because all of creation is for him, created by him, and ultimately brings him glory!
- Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
- If anything existed by the creation of any other, then Jesus wouldn't be the Creator of all things, and then he wouldn't be supreme or sovereign. He wouldn't be God.

- Genesis tells us that what he created was good. In the Psalms we see all creation praising their maker. The mountains, the heavens, the animals, all praising their maker in joyful praise. They are doing what they were created to do, having been created through him, and for him.
- It's good to stop and just ponder this and marvel at this. Our lives, the world around us, all things, exist for him.
- This should draw our heart into worship and amazement church.
- Jesus is supreme because all things were created through him and for him.

5. Jesus is Supreme Because He is Eternally Before all Creation

- "And he is before all things,"
- Jesus is eternal. He has always existed. At no point in the entire scope of eternity past, present, or future will Jesus not exist. This is an attribute of God.
- We were created. We have a beginning. The same cannot be said about Jesus.
- John 1:1–2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.
- Jesus was there in the beginning. He existed before the beginning, and he always has.
- If he had a beginning, he wouldn't be eternal. He wouldn't be God. He wouldn't be supreme because He would have required a greater being to exist before him, to bring him into existence.
- In John 8:58 Jesus responds to the Jews with the epic statement for which they tried to stone him:
- John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."
- This was a declaration by Jesus of being eternal. Just like God the father is eternal.
- This should comfort us knowing that in every moment, Jesus is there. He has always been there. He will always be there. Each and every moment in time He is there.
- And when we live in light of that, it brings an eternal perspective.
- Jesus is supreme because only he is before all things.

6. Jesus is Supreme Because He Upholds all Things

- "and in him all things hold together."
- What things does Jesus hold together? All things!
- Jesus didn't just create this world in the beginning, he is continuing to sustain it now! He is actively holding all things together!
- Hebrews 1:3 he upholds the universe by the word of his power.
- In God's providence, he is continually involved with all created things in such a way that he keeps them existing and maintains the properties with which he created them.
- This is his providential work of preservation. He keeps everything existing. He maintains their properties. He holds all things together.
- Jesus is supreme because he upholds all things.

7. Jesus is Supreme Because He is the Head of the Church

- "And he is the head of the body, the church."
- Do you find it surprising that evidence of the supremacy of Jesus comes from the church?
- He is the Ruler of the church. He is the authority of the church. He instituted the church.
- Matthew 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- He is building his church. Protecting her. Leading her. And the very gates of hell itself shall not prevail against it.
- Ephesians 1:22–23 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
- He is the head of the body. It belongs to him. And he loves the church dearly.
- He gave himself up for the church in his death on the cross.
- We saw in vv15-17 that Jesus is supreme over all creation, and here, he is also supreme over the new creation.
- Don't ever give up on the church. Jesus is the one protecting and sustaining her. And nothing can change that. Don't minimize the church. She is precious in the sight of God.
- And ultimately, the rulership of Jesus over his church, his preservation of her, his faithful loving care for her, the authority he has over her, is yet another reason why only Jesus is supreme.
- Jesus is supreme because he is the Head of the Church.

8. Jesus is Supreme Because He is Resurrected

- "He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent."
- Jesus is the beginning, the predecessor of a people who are no longer dead in sin and trespass, no longer lost without hope, because Jesus, having died on the cross, paying for all our sins, didn't stay dead.
- He was resurrected! Death could not hold him! He is the firstborn of the dead, the first to rise from the dead.

- Because he rose, in glorious triumph over the grave, we have an awesome hope that lies before us: that first resurrection of Jesus secured our resurrection in the glory to come!
- John 11:25–27 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."
- Jesus is the beginning of a people that by virtue of their faith in Him, even though their earthly bodies die and decay, they will live. Because their faith is in the one, the only one, who is the resurrection and the life.
- Jesus' profound statement to Martha is followed by a question: "Do you believe this?"
- Do you find hope in this? Do you trust fully and completely in the one who swallowed up death in victory by being the firstborn from the dead?
- This should fill us with supreme comfort in the face of loss of loved ones and an eternal perspective because of the hope we have that awaits us.
- That hope is a resurrection to eternal life that is secured by the resurrection of our Savior.
- He is supreme and he is preeminent because there is none like him in this. No one else rose from the dead paying the penalty for our sins. No one else could triumph over death. No one else loved us enough to die on our behalf. He is supreme!

9. Jesus is Supreme Because He is Both God and Man

- "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,"
- When God sent his son to earth, the Son didn't leave his divine nature behind.
- Jesus, divine in nature, became a man, and yet maintained his divinity.
- The doctrine of the Trinity: there is one God, consisting of three persons. Each person is distinct, and each is fully God, fully having the divine nature.
- And Jesus, in coming to earth and taking on human form, it says in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.
- That is a marvelous statement. Jesus never stopped being fully God, even while taking the form of a man.
- Jesus wasn't part man, part God. Jesus didn't stop being God so he could briefly be a "good man." He didn't switch back and forth between being God and man while he was on earth.
- In him all the fullness of God, was pleased to dwell.
- Paul tells us in Philippians chapter 2, was in the "form of God." But he didn't grasp hold of the rightful prerogatives he held in glory. He set them aside, He submitted to the will of the Father, and he emptied himself. Not of his deity. But of the prerogatives that come with being God, he accepted the limitations of human flesh. Taking the form of a humble lowly servant.
- Being fully God, and fully man, he went to the cross. And the King of glory, the one through whom the universe was made, the one in whom all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, suffered, and died, bearing the penalty which was rightfully due for us.
- Jesus is supreme because he is fully God and fully man.

10. Jesus is Supreme Because He is our Redeemer

- "and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."
 - Through Jesus, God has reconciled all things to himself.
 - What reconciliation was needed? The relationship between a holy, righteous, God and sinful man.
 - That relationship between God and man was obstructed, broken by sin.
 - We couldn't restore that relationship ourselves, we couldn't come to God in our sin.
 - So God reconciled us to himself. And not just us, it says he reconciled all things, whether on earth or in heaven.
 - We know from Genesis that he made all things good. A perfect God created a complex, beautiful, and wonderful universe. But then the Fall happened, and his creation was irreparably marred by sin. A perfect creation now corrupted by evil, damaged and broken.
 - Christ's reconciliation of all things extends to this broken world.
 - This does not mean that all mankind will be saved.
 - The bible teaches that all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved and that it is by grace we are saved through faith and not through our own doing but by the gift of God.
 - So what is the reconciliation of all things?
 - First we need to ask, what is the purpose of reconciliation?
- Restoration.
- That's what Jesus secured by bringing peace to all things which are at enmity with God, by his blood.
 - All his enemies, Satan and the fallen angels, are defeated by the blood of the cross.
 - All people who repent and turn to Christ have salvation through the blood of the cross.
 - All unrepentant people and enemies of God will be served the just judgment for their sin and wickedness.
 - This peace was the peace of glorious victory over sin, death, hell, and the enemies of God. All things are now subject to Christ, the victory has

been won!

- The final judgment and sentencing of the enemies of God is yet to come, but the peace has been secured.

- All of creation, all things, are subjected to the One whom God has highly exalted, and given the name above every other name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord!
- He has brought peace to a world broken by sin and inhabited by those in rebellion.

- He came as a lowly servant, a man whose appearance was plain, but having no sin, being fully God and he achieved complete and total victory across heaven and earth and no one can compare in this!

- No one else is Lord over all!
- No one else has become man while being the very image of God!
- No one else is the Creator, Maker, and Sustainer of all things!
- No one else is the Head of the Church!
- No one else was first in the resurrection and thus in everything preeminent!

- Why then should we ever fear? Why should we ever be discouraged? Why would we ever lose hope?

- Our lives are hidden in Christ, the One who is triumphant now and forever over all things.

- Ephesians 1:19–23 ... according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 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. 22 And he put all things under his feet

- That mighty work of God through Christ's death and resurrection was completed.

- Now Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion.

- He is above every other name. All things are under his feet. His reign is complete both in this age and the age to come!

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?