

ROOTED IN CHRIST

Supremacy In Christ

Rooted in Christ, Part 2

September 16, 2018

Christ is Supreme because He is God (Colossians 1:15). Paul uses very intentional words: *the image of the invisible God*. See Hebrews 1:1-3. In the Incarnation of Christ, God becoming man, God the Son enters time, space, and dimension. He becomes the image of the invisible God. The term "image" was a representation, or reproduction with precise likeness (portrait, coin, etc). The word image also means manifestation. More than being in the likeness of God, as are all persons created, Jesus was God Himself in human incarnation. When you see Christ, you see God. Jesus shows us what God is; He also shows us what all persons are meant to be. See 1 John 2:5-6.

In Christ we see who God is – Creator and Redeemer; what God is like – a God of mercy and love; and what God does –one who sends his Son to rescue people from the dominion of darkness and brings about the reconciliation of all creation through his death on a cross.

Paul also describes Christ as *the Firstborn over all creation*. This does not mean that Jesus was created by God. He is eternal. So firstborn, in this context, isn't about the first to be created. This title is about status, not sequence (OT firstborn). The firstborn was the supreme authority of all siblings. So Paul's use of this word simply affirms, again, the supremacy of Christ over all creation.

Christ is Supreme because He is Creator (Colossians 1:16-17). Paul states that all things were created in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ. What does this mean? All of creation is sustained by Christ and finds its ultimate purpose in Christ. Paul affirms for us that the world is not a purposeless accident in the chemistry lab of the universe. But he also makes clear that we cannot understand God, creation, or God's purpose for creation apart from Christ. If creation has been created by Christ and exists for Christ, then it is never meaningless. See John 1:1-3. What does this mean of us today? It means that we are totally dependent on Christ. This dependence isn't just for our salvation. But it is so much bigger than that. Christ holds all things together. If Christ holds the universe together, then Christ can hold my life together.

Christ is Supreme because He is the Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18). The church cannot properly function without the head. The head is always Christ. Christ is the source of the church's life. The metaphor "head" designates him both as supreme over the church and as the source of the church's life. In the image of a living body, the head not only directs and

governs the body, it gives it life, strength, and purpose. The church does not exist to meet the needs of its members or to insure its institutional survival, but to fulfill the redemptive purposes of Christ, its head.

Christ is Supreme because He is our only Savior (Colossians 1:19-20). As the Creator, Christ watched as his perfect creation was corrupted by sin. In that one act of disobedience, a chasm was formed separating man from the intimate relationship with his Creator. Man cannot bridge the chasm of sin on his own. He is completely powerless to do anything to restore the relationship with God. Sin brings hopelessness and helplessness.

But the Creator wasn't done with His creation – He has not given up. (He won't give up on you now, either.) This is the most awe-inspiring demonstration of love, grace, and mercy of all time. Rather than scrapping His work and starting over somewhere else, the Creator has a plan to set all things right. He places himself into our story. He clothes himself with humanity. The image of the invisible God became visible and entered the plane of human experience in order to reconcile all things in heaven and on earth by means of his humiliating death.

See Colossians 1:21-22. **Christ is not just Lord of the Universe, He is Lord of You.** Paul reminds us of our need of a personal Savior and Lord in this passage. He reminds us of what we all once were: alienated from God; enemies because of our evil behavior.

BUT NOW...reconciled to God, holy in his sight, without blemish, free from accusation. Paul emphasizes that Christ has accomplished this perfection for us; it does not come from our own striving. But God's goal of making us a holy and blameless people in Christ is still a work in progress, and it requires some response on our part. Christians need to recognize that they have been reconciled to God to live a life that God approves.

In the beginning, God created all things through Christ; in the end, God will reconcile all things through Christ. What is more, the life, death, and resurrection of Christ did not simply rectify the Fall but created in a human being the image that God had always intended to be in humankind. If we understand that through Christ we gain a new relationship with God, we also recognize that relationships can never remain static. They either grow or die. See Colossians 1:23.

What are you doing to see that your relationship with Christ grows?