

"The King of Kings and Lord of Lords"

Colossians 1:15-20

Revelation 19:16 – *"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."*

INTRODUCTION:

***Christ is preeminent!**
(He holds first place over everything)

Six reasons why Jesus is preeminent:

I. He Is <u>God Manifested</u> In Visible Form (V. 15a)

II. He Is The "<u>First-Born</u>" Over All Creation (V. 15b)

III. He Is The <u>Creator</u> Of The Universe (V. 16)

IV. He Is The <u>Eternal Sustainer</u> Of Creation (V. 17)

V. He Is The <u>Head</u> Of The Church Body (V. 18-19)

VI. He Is The <u>Peace Maker</u> Between Sinful Man And A Holy God (V. 20)

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I. HE IS GOD MANIFESTED IN VISIBLE FORM (v. 15a)

"Image" - Gk. "eikon" meaning a manifestation, representation, or copy.

"In Greek thought, an image shares in reality what it represents." (Reinecker, p. 567)

"The invisible God" - the Father is invisible, being purely Spirit in essence (Jn. 4:24). The Son, however, is the manifestation (appearance) of Him who cannot be seen (Jn. 1:18).

NOTE: Since no one has ever seen God (the Father) at any time (Jn. 1:18), all references to man seeing God ("the LORD") must be references to man seeing Christ! (EX: Is. 6; Rev. 20:10ff).

John 1:18 - "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

"Declared" = to reveal or make known

John 12:45 - "And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me."

SEE: John 14:6-9

"...He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Such a statement could not be true if Jesus were no in essence God very God!

Cp. Col. 2:9 - "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

Christ in "bodily" form (in a visible form) contains (presently) all of the fullness of deity!

The KJV says: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16).

In Heb. 1:3, the Lord Jesus is called "the brightness of His glory" (Christ radiates the brilliant, splendid light of God"). . . the express image of his person" (Christ is the precise or exact representation of God's being, essence, or nature). A strong assertion of deity!

"Since no mere creature can perfectly reveal God, Jesus Christ must be God" (Wiersbe, p. 49).

II. HE IS THE "FIRST-BORN" OVER ALL CREATION (v. 15b)

"Firstborn" = (prototokos) - the term is a descriptive title not a verb that would imply birth; it is not a term of origin but of authority. In Hebrew thought the word referred to a title of preeminence or supremacy (cp. Col. 1:18).

"The word emphasizes the preexistence and uniqueness of Christ as well as His superiority over creation. The term does not indicate that Christ was a creation or a created being" (Reinecker, p. 567).

"Firstborn" simply means "of first importance, of first rank" (Wiersbe, p. 48).

Cp. the phrase: "Firstborn from the dead" (v. 18).

The Jewish title of "firstborn" refers to the one with the birthright (EX. Jacob over Esau although Esau was physically born first - Gen. 27).

The term inherently referred tot he one with the rights to property, authority, and rule.

Gen. 49:3 - "Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power."

Dt. 21:17 - "But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his."

Ex. 4:22 - "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn."

Num. 8:18 - "And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel."

The term is used by God of David, who is given a position of honor, privilege, and authority. (Ps. 89:27 - "And I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.")

This understanding of the term firstborn is the only valid interpretation in light of the context (Col. 1:16ff).

Christ as the firstborn has the authority over all and the preeminence over all (v. 18) because He created all! (v. 16ff).

If Christ were created, He could not have such authority over creation, for He Himself would be a mere finite creature. However, as Creator, He has the rights of the "firstborn" over all creation.

III. HE IS THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE (v. 16)

"For" - because - giving a reason why Christ is the preeminent "firstborn."

Jesus is Creator:

John 1:3 - "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."

Eph. 3:9 - "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."

Heb. 1:2 - "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

Jesus created everything.

1) All beings and things "in heavens and in earth"
2) All that is material and immaterial
3) All laws, governing authorities and powers

"In Heaven" - Jesus created the angelic realm (the host of angels including Michael and Gabriel; the cherubim and seraphim, etc.)

"In earth" - everything from the Swiss Alps to the Islands of Hawaii; every kind of plant, tree, fruit, vegetable; every animal, fish, reptile and insect. And the crown of His creation - mankind - was made by and for Jesus Christ.

No wonder the elements obeyed His voice; and the demons trembled in His presence and respected Him. He is LORD of all, Creator of all!

It does not matter where it is (location); or what it is (essence); or how it is ("the powers that be") -- Jesus made it all.

The powers that be are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1) particularly of Jesus Christ!

When Jesus became man, He worked as a carpenter. A fitting trade for the one who built the universe, and yet what a humble trade. What humiliation for the Creator who spoke the world into existence to work much of his 33 years on earth using the simple tools of man and the elements of His own creation, to construct with.

"By ("dia") Him and for ("eis") him" - Christ is the beginner and benefactor of creation; He is its source and goal. He did it, and is to be glorified by it. He is Creation's author and finisher. He is the architect and owner!

You were created by Jesus and for Jesus.

He made you for Himself; to glorify Him, to live for Him.

"Were created" - perfect tense, meaning that everything that Jesus created in the past, still exists in the present for Him; for His glory and purpose.

IV. HE IS THE ETERNAL SUSTAINER OF CREATION (v. 17)

"He" is emphatic. He Himself is before all things.

"Before" - a word referring to time.

He exists prior to all things. Christ is pre-existent.

John 1:1 - "In the beginning was the Word."

John 8:58 - "Before Abraham was I am."

NOTE: The word "before" ("pro") used with the present tense verb ("is") expresses the idea of Christ's immutability of existence (Reinecker, p. 568).

He not only was (in the past) before all things but he remains in the present before all things. He is the eternal "I am"; not the "I was."

"Consist" ("sunistami") - lit. to stand together; to hold together; to cohere.

Jesus is the "principle of cohesion in the universe" (Lightfoot).

Jesus Christ Himself is the "unifying band which encompasses everything and holds it together" (Lohse).

"A guide took a group of people through an atomic laboratory and explained how matter was composed of rapidly moving electric particles. The tourists studied models of molecules and were amazed to learn that matter is made up primarily of space. During the question period, one visitor asked, "If this is the way matter works, what holds it all together?" For that, the guide had no answer." (Wiersbe, p. 50).

Who keeps the planets each in place? -- Jesus

Who keeps the orbit of the earth around the sun consistent? -- Jesus

Who keeps the seasons (of spring, summer, winter, and fall) regular? -- Jesus

Who keeps the Laws that govern life on earth (EX: gravity, etc.) in tact? -- Jesus

Who keeps nations from becoming totally unglued and civilizations from destroying each other? -- Jesus

Who, then, will interrupt the present order of all things in the Day of the LORD? (Rev. 5:12-17; 15-17) -- Jesus!

Who alone can keep your life and family from erupting and exploding and becoming unglued? -- Jesus!

V. HE IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH BODY (v. 18-19)

Christ as "Head" of the church body does that which the head of a physical body does.

The Head controls and directs the impulses and actions of the Body. (the body is submissive to the Head and responsive to the Head).

Without the Head, the body would be dead. Without Christ, there would be no church Body.

No man on earth is the Head of the church. Popery is a great abomination because it robs Christ of Headship. Perhaps the reason the Pope is the head of the RCC is because Jesus isn't! That system is in no way connected to the Head - Christ!

"The beginning" - lit. the beginner; the originator; the premiere initiator. Christ began the Church, He gave it its beginning.

"Firstborn from the dead" - Christ as the head is preeminent over those Christians who will come back alive again from the dead. he has full authority over death and the grave (Rev. 1:18 - "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.")

Paul is not saying that Jesus was the first person to be raised from the dead, for he was not (EX: Lazarus - Jn. 11). But He is the most important of all who have been raised from the dead (Wiersbe, p. 52).

Preeminence = first place

The phrase "the Father" (KJV) is italicized. The reference could just as easily be to the entire Godhead (2:9). The Triune Godhead was pleased to allow the Son to receive all of the honor and glory of the Church Body.

The reference to fullness is not of divine attributes for Jesus always had these, but of the fullness of the Church. The Trinity was pleased to allow the fullness of the Church to abide in Christ.

See the "fullness" in relation to the Church in Eph. 1:23; 4:13 - "Which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph. 4:13 - "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"

"Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11).

"The Father is pleased when His Son, Jesus Christ, is honored and given preeminence" (Wiersbe, p. 57) (cp. John 5:23-24).

The cults, therefore, do not please God at all!

VI. HE IS THE PEACE MAKER BETWEEN SINFUL MAN AND A HOLY GOD (v. 20)

"Reconcile" - to restore a relationship. To bring back friendship where there is hostility and animosity.

Jesus dying as both God and man, could thereby reconcile both God and man.

II Cor. 5:19 - "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

"Things in earth, or things in heaven" = "Those upon earth (who are saved) and those in Heaven (who also have been redeemed - dead saints in glory)."

"Inanimate things" don't get reconciled; people do.

CONCLUSION:

Is Christ in first place in your life?

He is first (whether or not men regard Him as such); but the question is, Is He first in your life?

To answer that, answer this:

Is He first in your time?

Is He first in your thoughts?

Is He first on your lips? (witness)

Is He first with your talents?

Is He first in your recreation?

Is He first in your work?

ILLUS: Hymn - "Give of Your Best to the Master"