

Christ is the supreme King.

Text: Colossians 1:13-20 for 11/24/2019 by Pastor Bolwerk

13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. 15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 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 and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

There is good. There is better. And then there is ... best! But using the word “best” to describe Jesus seems a little lacking, doesn’t it? That is why the Apostle Paul uses a different word: Supreme. Supreme is more than just the best. Supreme means to be of the highest quality. It is someone who is of the highest authority. Supreme is something so great, and so complete, that nothing more can be added to it. When you are supreme that means you are at the top and everyone else is underneath you. When you have supremacy you are superior to all others.

On this Christ the King Sunday the Apostle Paul wants us to see Jesus as more than just a king. Paul wants us to see Jesus as someone greater. Yet it is God speaking to us through these words from Paul’s letter to the Colossians he is helping us to understand how ...

Theme: Christ is the supreme King.

I. The supreme King over creation

II. The supreme King over his Church

Paul is writing this letter out of concern for the people in the church at Colossae. Colossae was a city in what today is the country of Turkey. False teachings were being brought into that church. False teachers were undermining the truth about Jesus by telling people they should worship angels as a way of obtaining a fuller knowledge of God. Some were even promoting Old Testament laws and rituals as a way of getting more from the work that Jesus had already completed. These people claimed to have a more complete gospel than the simple gospel message Paul had preached. These false teachers were taking away the glory and honor that rightly belonged to Jesus. But instead of trying to disprove each individual false teaching, Paul simply points the people to Jesus Christ. Paul proclaims the power and supremacy of Jesus as a way of refuting all those false teachings.

Paul says of Jesus that **“The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together”** (vs. 15-17). Paul is making it clear: Jesus is God. If we want to see and know the invisible God, we need to know Jesus as he is revealed on the pages of Scripture. What do we learn about Jesus from the Bible? We learn that as true God Jesus created all things, and he has power over all things. Christ displayed his supreme power over creation even

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while he lived humbly here on earth. Jesus walked on water, calmed a storm, turned some bread and fish into a feast, and had the power to heal every physical problem or disease. Jesus also displayed his power over the angels he created when he cast out demons. So if Jesus has power over all angels why would people worship angels instead of Jesus? Christ is the supreme King over all creation. He created all things, he sustains all things, and he rules over all things. There is no higher authority. What does this mean for us? It means Jesus deserves all worship and honor as true God.

We need to ask ourselves: Do we ever worship or honor anything more than Jesus? Do we ever trust more in the created things of this world than in the One who has power over this entire creation? Let's face it, when it comes to things we put our trust in, isn't money at the top of our list. Sure, Jesus provides us with the things we need, but money gets us the things we want. So if we want something (even if it's something we don't need) then we need to get more money. That may mean sacrificing time with Jesus so we can work more. Or perhaps not giving as much to Jesus in our offerings. And right along with money, when it comes to things we honor and trust, people are usually second on that list. We trust doctors and scientists to help keep us alive as long as possible. We put family, and sometimes even friends above Jesus, especially when they become a convenient reason not to come to worship or to not study God's word. This can especially be a temptation when family visits for the holiday and they don't want to go to church with us. Or maybe it's a "special person," someone who makes us feel so good we are willing to set aside our King and his providing power in our lives so that we can be with that person. And the list goes on: possessions, popularity, reputation, social status. How many times have we dishonored our supreme King by putting created things ahead of him? When we do these things, we are rebelling against the Almighty Ruler who created this universe and who continues holding it all together. We are standing opposed to the King who created us.

Thankfully, Jesus is more than our supreme King. He is also our supreme Savior. **"For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross"** (vs. 13,14,19,20). Our supreme King knew there was no peace between the people of this world and God. Death and darkness ruled over this world. But instead of sending others to battle against that dominion of darkness, our God and King came to fight that battle himself. Jesus came and battled Satan, willingly shedding his blood on the cross of Calvary to defeat death and the devil. Our King poured out his own blood to wash away all those times we willingly honored his creation above him. His death erased our debt of sin. Then Jesus, our supreme King, rose triumphant from the grave to proclaim his victory over death and Satan. Christ rose to bring us peace and forgiveness.

God brought us out from under the control of the devil, and brought us into his kingdom by bringing us to faith in the Son he loves. By faith we belong to Jesus. He has redeemed us. He has won the forgiveness of our sins. He gives us peace, reuniting us with his holy Father. It's only by our God given faith that we live in the kingdom of our supreme King. In this kingdom we have freedom. We have been set free from our sins. This means

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we are free from the ultimate consequence of sin: eternal death. We are free to live forever in the kingdom of heaven. In this kingdom Christ is the supreme King. He is King over all creation.

As if being supreme over all creation was not enough, there is another place where Christ is the supreme King. The Apostle Paul goes on to tell us about that place. Paul says of Jesus: **“And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy”** (v. 18). Christ is the supreme head of his Church. The Holy Christian Church does not exist and grow and do its work because of man-made teachings. It does not prosper because of the wisdom and knowledge of pastors and teachers. The existence of the Holy Christian Church does not depend upon the hard work of the people in it. The Church depends on Jesus. Without Jesus the Church wouldn't exist. Without Christ the Church could not function. Jesus is the head of his Church and the firstborn from among the dead. Christ's resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice for sins. Jesus resurrection makes him the first of many who will rise from the dead to eternal life. Because Jesus lives everyone who believe in him will also live forever. It is his kingdom and his church that we now live in.

Yet living in the kingdom of the supreme King does not mean our lives in this world will be perfect. We still live among people who are members of the dominion of darkness. The people who live in that kingdom hate us. Oh, they may seem like nice people, yet their lives and their lifestyles make it clear that they are enemies of Christ and his kingdom. That means they are more than willing to take out their anger and hatred for Christ on us. When we live our lives for our supreme King the world is going to hate us. The world is going to cause us to suffer.

But that doesn't mean we have to be afraid. We don't have to go into hiding because of our faith, we simply have to remember who we are and who we serve. We are servants of the supreme King. We serve the almighty God who controls all things. He is our head. He is our leader. Our King uses his power and authority to work out everything in this world for the good of his Church; his kingdom. Think about it: Jesus did everything in his power to save you from your sins. Now he uses that same almighty power to keep you in his kingdom here on earth until you are with him in his eternal kingdom.

Knowing how our King serves us gives us the desire to serve him. We serve Jesus by living our lives in such a way that it draws people to Christ. We live to display those fruits of faith that Paul talks about in his letter to the Galatians, the fruits of **“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”** (Galatians 5:22-23). Do you know people who display these things in their lives? Those are the kind of people we like to be around. They are kind and caring, gentle and joyful. They are people who make us feel good and feel loved. This is how our supreme King lived his life in this world. This is how our King wants us to live our lives. Not so that we can be more popular, but so that we can have more opportunities to share our Savior with others. The more we share Jesus with others the more opportunities Jesus has to lead people out of the dominion of darkness and into his eternal kingdom. We have the power to live this way as long as we are living under the power and authority of our supreme King.

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Christ is our supreme Creator and Ruler and King. In love, our King gave up his heavenly throne to come into this world be our supreme Savior. Now, Jesus rules over everything for the good of his kingdom here on earth. Let us praise and honor our supreme King for his goodness to us as we wait for the day when we will join him in the eternal paradise of his heavenly kingdom. Amen.