

Christ & His Preeminence Over Creation (lesson #6)

Colossians 1:15-18

1. What is preeminence? And what act clearly gave preeminence to Christ? (Rom 1:4)

“Preeminence” (1:18) – proteuo (prote-yoo'-o); to be first (in rank or influence):

“Possessing the first place in & being chief over all the creation of God” (Clarke).

He also possesses preeminence in the church over which He is Head

His resurrection gave Him preeminence (1 Cor 15:20-23)

“Firstfruits” – First in order of time, & a guarantee of more to come. He was not the first to be raised from the dead, but the first to rise never to die. And because of His preeminence, His resurrection guarantees a resurrection of all men (Jn 5:28-29).

2. What man wanted preeminence & how did he try to accomplish this? What was in store for him instead of preeminence? (3 John 9-11)

“Diotrephes” – **He** did not receive the apostles. **He** prated (to be a babbler or trifler, i.e. (by implication) to berate idly or mischievously) against them with malicious (hurtful) words. **He** forbade others to receive them. **He** cast out of the church those who did support the apostles.

Today, that would be like someone saying, “I don’t care what the New Testament teaches. It was written a long time ago & it only deals with issues that were important to the time. I THINK God is capable of directing us today without the need for some ancient book.” I THINK we know what’s better for us than those men who wrote that book. So just don’t bring up what the Bible teaches anymore, unless it agrees with me.”

3. Read the following texts: John 1:1-3, 14; Heb 1:1-2; Gen 1; Psa 33:6-9, & discuss the Preeminence of Jesus Christ.

John 1:1-3 – In the beginning was the Word, & the Word was with God, & the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 *All things were made through Him*, & without Him nothing was made that was made.

John 1:14 – And the Word became flesh & dwelt among us, & *we beheld His glory*, the glory as of *the only begotten of the Father, full of grace & truth*.

Hebrews 1:1-4 – God, who at various times & in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by *His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory & the express image of His person, & upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they*.

Psalms 33:6-9 – By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, & all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. 7 He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. 8 *Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him*. 9 For He spoke, & it was done; He commanded, & it stood fast.

4. It is claimed that since Christ was “the firstborn over all creation” (1:15), this means He was the first part of God’s total creation (cf. Gen 1). How do the following passages refute that idea, & help to explain the true meaning of Christ as “firstborn”? (Exo 4:22; Psa 89:27)

This expression has been used to deny the deity of Jesus, claiming He was the first created being (Jehovah’s Witnesses).

In the OT the “firstborn” of any family had special privileges, but had to bear special responsibilities.

Jesus rightfully inherited all authority over created things because He fulfilled the responsibilities given Him by the Father.

“First-born” doesn’t always mean “first son.” David wasn’t the first son, & yet God called David firstborn (**Psa 89:27**).

Jesus is “the first-born of all creation” in that He has absolute preeminence over the creation.

a. How does Colossians 1:16-18 build on the fact of His preeminence?

Col 1 – He is preeminent as Creator of heaven, earth & authority (seen & unseen),

He is preeminent in power over His creation

He is preeminent over the church (not the ones ruled by men).

He is preeminent over death

He is preeminent over the church, which He built

16 – For *by Him all things were **created** that are in heaven & that are on earth*, visible & invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. *All things were created through Him & for Him.*



For his glory; for such purposes as he designed. Just as, when a man builds a house, it is with reference to some important purposes which he contemplates, pertaining to himself. The universe was built by the Greater to be his own property; to be the theater on which he would accomplish his purposes, & display his perfections (Barnes).

17 – And *He is **before** all things*, & *in Him all things **consist**.*



It is equivalent to saying that he was eternal – for he that had an existence before any thing was created, must be eternal. Thus, it is equivalent to the phrase (Barnes)

Or are sustained (**Heb 1:3**). The meaning is, that they are kept in the present state; their existence, order, & arrangement are continued by his power (Barnes).

18 – And *He is the head of the body, the church*, who *is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead*, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

[Head of the body, the church] – Eph 1:22; 5:23

[Who is the beginning] – He is the fountain of authority & power

Rev 3:14 – And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful & True Witness, *the Beginning of the creation of God*:



He holds the primacy over all, & is at the head of the universe (Barnes)

[The first-born from the dead] – He is at the head of those who rise from their graves. He has the pre-eminence among them all.

Rev 1:5 – from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, *the firstborn from the dead*, & the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us & washed us from our sins in His own blood

5. By what means will the creation be terminated? (2 Pet 3:5-7)

“By the same word...the word of God” that created all things, & which destroyed all things with water (except 8 souls).

6. Since Christ is to have preeminence in all things. Does He have preeminence over us, for our good, in the following areas? (Find verses)
- a. Our view of Him – (Matt 28:18; 1 Cor 15:25-27)
 - b. Our homes – (Eph 5:22 –6:4; Col 3:18-21)
 - c. Our time – (Eph 5:16 – 5:8-14; Col 4:5 – 4:2, 6)
 - d. Our jobs – (Eph 5:5-9; Col 3:22-25; 4:1; 1 Pet 2:18-19)
 - e. Our recreation – (Matt 5:14-16)
 - f. Our association with people in the world – (1 Pet 3:13-17)
 - g. Our actions toward faithful Christians – (Gal 5:6, 13; 1 Jn 4:7, 12)
 - h. Our actions toward unfaithful – (1 Thess 5:14; 2 Thess 3:15)
 - i. Our view of civil government – (Rom 13:1-5; 1 Pet 2:13-17)
 - j. Our use of money – (1 Tim 6:6-10, 17-19)