

# The Preeminence of Christ

Scripture Reading: Colossians 1:1-23

Paul's writings are often deep thoughts interwoven with other deep thoughts. Sometimes you can look at a single verse and get a wealth of ideas. Sometimes it is hard to isolate a statement and study it without having to look at the context in which Paul's thought is interwoven. Such is the case with Colossians 1:18. It is full of profound ideas about the preeminence of Christ, but you sense you are in the middle of something being said which is more complex. Let's look at the context first.

## Faith, Love & Hope – Colossians 1:3-8

- Greatly needed in Christ's Kingdom – **Colossians 1:3-5** cp. I Corinthians 13:13.
- Given to us through the truth of the Gospel – **Colossians 1:5-6** cp. I Peter 1:22 – 2:3.
- Guarded by prayer – **Colossians 1:3-4, 9** cp. Ephesians 6:18; Romans 15:30; James 5:16.

## Focused Prayer – Colossians 1:9-12

- Pray thankfully for people of faith, hope & love cp. **Colossians 1:12, 3** cp. Philippians 1:3-5; 4:6.
- Pray for their knowledge to be fruitful – **Colossians 1:9-10** cp. Colossians 1:5-6; II Peter 1:2-8.
- Pray for their walk to be worthy of the Lord – **Colossians 1:10** cp. Ephesians 4:1-3; 5:1-2, 8, 15.
- Pray for their strength, endurance & joy – **Colossians 1:11** cp. Ephesians 3:14-19; Philippians 4:4; Psalm 89:15; Nehemiah 8:10; Psalm 100.

## Finding Completeness in Christ / The Preeminence of Christ – Colossians 1:13-23; 2:6-15

Christ's Preeminence means that Christ is supreme. We should direct all attention to Him. He is first-place in our lives and deserves our full devotion.

- **Christ: the King of His Kingdom.** He rules with grace and righteousness – **Colossians 1:13** cp. Romans 5:17-21; 14:17-19.
- **Christ: The Redeemer.** He obtains our forgiveness through His blood. He has purchased us back from sin, so that we are His own - **Colossians 1:14** cp. Romans 3:23-24; I Corinthians 6:20; Titus 2:13-14; Revelation 5:8-10.
- **Christ: The Image (*Perfect Reflection*) of the Invisible God.** He is the exact expression of God's essence in bodily form – **Colossians 1:15; 2:9** cp. John 1:1, 14; 14:9; Hebrews 1:3 ("*express image*" or "*exact representation*" / "*exact imprint*").

- **Christ: The Firstborn of (“over”) Every Creature.** He is supreme judge over all creation. He is the first to rise from the dead, preceding the rest of us who shall be resurrected – **Colossians 1:15, 18** cp. I Corinthians 15:21-23; Matthew 19:27-29; 24:29-31; 25:31-46; 28:18; John 5:21-23; Acts 17:30-31; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:9-11; 3:20-21; I Peter 3:22; Revelation 1:5-6, 17-18; 17:14; 19:11-16.
- **Christ: Creator & Sustainer.** Eternal and omnipotent, He created all things. By Him all things are held together (*“all things consist”*). He rules the universe. Our lives are utterly dependent on Him – **Colossians 1:16-17; 2:6-10** cp. John 1:1-17; 15:1-8; Hebrews 1:8-12 (See Psalm 45:1-7; 102:25-27); Revelation 1:17-18; 4:11; 5:11-13.
- **Christ: The Head of the Church.** He has purchased us and washed us. He leads us and provides for us. He is coming for us to glorify us – **Colossians 1:8-23; 2:10-15** cp. Ephesians 1:15-23; 5:23-32; John 14:1-17. See also Revelation chapters 2 & 3.