

The Supremacy of Jesus Christ

Introduction:

Biographies and autobiographies can be very interesting. We can get to know what makes people tick.

When it comes to Jesus, we know a lot about him. Much of the Old Testament looks forward to him. The Book of Acts and the Epistles are a good source for information about him too. Sadly, some people dismiss Jesus without so much as exploring these reliable documents.

Our reading from Colossians today gives some thought-provoking statements about Jesus which add to our knowledge of him. It is vital to have accurate information about him so that we are not lead astray by 'fake news' about him from well-meaning but ignorant false teachers who undermine and distort the Bible's truth. Such teachers are in every Christian denomination as well as Christian-look-alike religions such as the JW's and the Mormons. The main theme of this passage is the greatness of Jesus:

1. THE GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST: Colossians 1:15-19

These verses tell us five important things about the greatness of Jesus. The first one is that Jesus is God:

When we look in a mirror, we see a reflection or image of ourselves. *Jesus is the image of the invisible God.* In Colossians 2:9 we read: *For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.* In his Gospel, John writes: *Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.* The writer to the Hebrews writes: *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.* The overwhelming testimony of the Bible is that Jesus is God come in human form.

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The next important evidence about Jesus is that he has always existed. Paul writes: *He is before all things.* John writes in his Gospel: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.* Jesus didn't begin to exist in Bethlehem; he has always existed.

What's next? Jesus created everything! We read in Colossians 1:16: *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible...all things were created by him and for him.* John makes a similar statement in John 1:1-3.

Paul goes on to say that Jesus is the head of the church: *and he is the head of the body (of believers), the church.* While the church has leaders, Jesus is our head.

Finally we see that Jesus is alive: *he is the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.* The constant testimony by eye-witnesses in the New Testament is that Jesus was raised from the dead.

These five truths about Jesus underline his greatness.

2. THE GREATNESS OF JESUS' WORK: Colossians 1:20-23

There are two vital things which Paul mentions here about the greatness of Jesus' work:

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Firstly, we read of our hopeless plight needing a saviour. Verse 21 reads: *Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour.* The Bible makes clear that all of us except Jesus have inherited sin and commit actual sins. We are sinners, separated from God and under God's judgement.

Secondly, through Jesus' death and resurrection, God made peace between human kind and himself. In verse 20 we read: *God was pleased...to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.* Then in verse 22 he adds: *But now he has reconciled you by Christ's death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.*

God has taken the initiative in providing the way of escape from hell and being made right with him (reconciled) by Jesus' blood poured out on the cross. There Jesus, who had no sin, took our sin upon him and made us clean and free from any accusation that we are sinners! Jesus is our sin-bearer and peace-maker. He ransomed us back to God.

3. THE GREAT RESPONSE WHICH IS NECESSARY

People respond to all sorts of things like a marriage proposal, a TV advertisement, a job offer, a punch on the nose!

Paul was writing to Christians. For Jesus' death to count for us as individuals, he says in verse 23: *if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope of the Gospel.* Perseverance in the faith is evidence that a person is a genuine Christian.

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For Jesus' death to count for us every person needs to respond personally in repentance and faith. If people don't do this then Jesus' death does not count for them and they will face God's judgement. Giving mental ascent is not enough. It must be a whole-hearted allegiance to Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

4. THE GREATNESS OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY:

Colossians 1:24-28

The Apostle Paul was a great servant of Jesus. He worked hard to make God's truth known, mainly to Gentiles.

We too have the great privilege and responsibility of making Jesus known in our own generation. Paul's words in verse 28 are as relevant now as they were when they were first written. Speaking about Jesus he wrote: *Him we proclaim, admonishing everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.*

Writing to the Church in Corinth, Paul put it this way: *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.* Christians are ambassadors, representing God and his message of reconciliation. We are either good or bad ambassadors. We have a great responsibility.

Conclusion:

This is a great passage of the Bible. It speaks of:

The greatness of Jesus Christ.

The greatness of Jesus' work.

The great response which is necessary...and....

The greatness of our responsibility.

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May God help us to value our salvation bought at such great cost on the cross and may he help us as his ambassadors to make his message known.