
Jesus Over Everything

Themes in Colossians — Victory Life Church

Sunday, October 4, 2020 — Jesus is Supreme

Introduction

Life's biggest questions: Who am I? Why am I here? (Identity and Purpose)

Life's most essential question: Who is Jesus?¹

False teachings (two main ones) that Paul is confronting:

1. Jesus is less than God
2. A secret knowledge only a few can attain to (Gnosticism)

Supremacy of Jesus, A Hymn

Colossians 1:15-20 (ESV)

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation.

¹⁶For by him all things were created,
in heaven and on earth,

visible and invisible,
whether thrones or dominions
or rulers or authorities—

all things were created through him and for him.

¹⁷And he is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.

^{18a}And he is the head
of the body, the church.

^{18b}He is the beginning,
the firstborn from the dead,
that in everything he might be preeminent.

¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
making peace by the blood of his cross.

¹ Book Recommendation: *Who Is This Man?*, by John Ortberg; Link: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Jesus is Supreme

Colossians 1:18b (ESV)

^{18b}He is the beginning,
the firstborn from the dead,
that in everything he might be **preeminent**.

“**Preeminent**” (1:18) — having paramount rank, dignity, or importance²; to be first, hold the first place³; **supreme**, have the supremacy

“**Supreme**” — highest in rank or authority; highest in degree or quality⁴; ultimate, final

Jesus is Supreme means that “Jesus is over Everything”

Supreme Over...

Colossians 1:15 (ESV)

¹⁵He is the **image** of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation.

“Image” (*eikōn*⁵) — Jesus must shape our understanding of who God is

- **Representation** — To see what God is like, we must look at Jesus. He perfectly represents God to men and women in a form which we can see and know and understand.
- **Manifestation** — a perfect representation becomes a *manifestation* — God dwells with us in Jesus (John 1:14, 18; Hebrews 1:3)
- Humans were made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27), but sin distorted and corrupted us, making us unable to fulfill our destiny as God’s image-bearers.

Jesus not only shows us what God is like; Jesus also shows us what *we were meant to be*. Jesus is the perfect manifestation of God and the perfect manifestation of what it is to be human.

Jesus is Supreme over: Our understanding of God and Humanity

Colossians 1:15 (ESV)

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God,
the **firstborn** of all creation.

“**Firstborn**” (*prōtotokos*⁶) — Jesus has *primacy* in all of creation

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/preeminent>

³ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4409&t=KJV>

⁴ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/supreme>

⁵ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G1504&t=KJV>

⁶ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4416&t=KJV>

- “first” and “primacy” — place of special honor

Jesus has the highest honor in all of creation (*Israel* is firstborn - Exodus 4:22, *Messiah* is firstborn - Psalm 89:27). Jesus has **primacy** in all of creation.

Jesus is Supreme over: All of Creation

Colossians 1:16 (ESV)

¹⁶For **by him all things were created**,
in heaven and on earth,
visible and invisible,
whether thrones or dominions
or rulers or authorities—
all things were created **through him and for him**.

You cannot think of anything in creation and miss Jesus’ role in creating is. Jesus is not just any other human being: He is not just another Teacher, He is not just some being in a large hierarchy of angels. Everything that came into being, came in, by, through, and for Jesus. Yes, the Father is the Creator of all, but the “agency” by which He created is the Son. Jesus has both **primacy** and **agency** in Creation.

Colossians 1:17 (ESV)

¹⁷And he is before all things,
and in him **all things hold together**.

Jesus prevents the world from falling into chaos. Jesus is both **Creator** and **Sustainer**. All the laws of the universe which govern and sustain order and not chaos are an expression of the mind of Jesus.

Colossians 1:18b (ESV)

^{18b}He is the **beginning**,
the firstborn from the dead,
that in everything he might be preeminent.

“**Beginning**” (*archē*⁷)— Jesus is the start of something **new**.

- “Head waters” of a river, “source” from which something comes, the moving power which sets something in operation; beginning, origin, the person or thing that commences, the first person or thing in a series, the leader, that by which anything begins to be, the origin, the active cause
- “**Firstborn**” — “prototype”, “first principle”, “creative initiative”

The risen Jesus is the “**source**” and “**prototype**” of new creation. He is both the “**means**” and the “**model**” of new creation. (1 Corinthians 15:47-49; 2 Peter 3:13)

⁷ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G746&t=KJV>

Jesus is Supreme over: Sin and Death (our final, great enemies)

Jesus is victorious over sin and death. Jesus is the first out of the grave and He brings us out with Him (Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 2:6; Romans 6:4, 8:11). Jesus has **primacy** in the New Creation. This whole story is moving in a specific direction: New Creation.

The flow of the poem: Creation —to— New Creation

Jesus is Supreme over: New Creation

Colossians 1:19-20 (ESV)

¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
²⁰and through him to **reconcile to himself all things**,
whether on earth or in heaven,
making **peace** by the blood of his cross.

Jesus is the reason (not just the start) that we have New Creation at all. All of God was pleased to dwell — Jesus is not just a rough sketch of God, He is fully divine (yet fully human). The one who *created* us is the one who was pleased to *redeem* us. This is what gives Him *primacy* (Acts 4:12).

It's because of the death of Jesus that brings broken relationships back together, between us and God, and us with each other — it's because of Jesus' blood that was shed on our behalf. Reconciliation does not happen automatically — it must be a *mutual* relationship; one must be "in Christ" to be reconciled and made a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Jesus is Supreme over: Reconciliation

Jesus has not just *primacy*, but also *agency* in the New Creation — Jesus is the one doing it. It's because of this that Jesus has *supremacy* over all of creation and new creation. This is all about Jesus... Everything.

Our Place

Colossians 1:16c (ESV)

¹⁶all things were created **through him** and **for him**.

Our Identity and Purpose: who am I? Why am I here? You were created intentionally **by** Jesus (Psalm 139:13-14). You were created **for** Jesus — for the purpose of knowing Him and bringing Him glory.

Jesus is Supreme over: Our Identity and Purpose

Colossians 1:17 (ESV)

¹⁷And he is before all things,

and in him all things hold together.

Only in Jesus can we have a **healthy identity** and **divine purpose**.

Colossians 1:18a (ESV)

^{18a}And he is the head
of the body, the church.

Our place in all of this is in “the Church” (universal and local). “I like Jesus, but not the church” is not a Christian value or virtue. The organism by which he speaks and acts and which shares all His experiences. The *world* is the creation of Christ; and the *church* is the new creation of Christ.

Jesus is Supreme over: The Church

The Body is the servant of the head (1 Corinthians 6:17, 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:15-16). The church exists in the space between creation and new creation. We are still in “creation” — where we are tempted and struggle and have immaturities and make big mistakes and hurt one another. But we are also already in “new creation” — where we have received the down payment of the resurrection, the Holy Spirit.

Warning: The neglect and abuse of our bodies results in them being unfit to be servants of a greater purpose; so, by undisciplined and careless living, the church can make itself unfit to be the instrument of Christ, who is its head.

Conclusion

Colossians 1:18a-20 (MSG) ^{18b}He was supreme in the beginning and—leading the resurrection parade—he is supreme in the end. From beginning to end he’s there, towering far above everything, everyone. ¹⁹So spacious is he, so roomy, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding. ²⁰Not only that, but all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe—people and things, animals and atoms—get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the cross.