
Jesus Over Everything

Victory Life Church

Sunday, November 1, 2020 — Put On the New

Introduction

We are in a series looking at how Jesus is over everything, the major emphasis in the New Testament letter to the Colossians.

Jesus is supreme over everything. (Colossians 1:18)

Jesus is sufficient for everything we need. (Colossians 2:6-7)

If Jesus is the supreme Lord, then what do we do about it now?

1. The Church **lives** under Jesus as the supreme Lord
2. The Church **worships** Jesus as the supreme Lord

The Christian life begins with and is sustained by prayer. (Colossians 1:9-14)

The Christian life is sustained by prayer, and prayer fuels our worship.

We're called to be a worshiping and witnessing Church (Colossians 4:2-6)

Worshipping Jesus as Supreme

Worship is **reverential devotion**. It's orienting our whole lives around something. The Church, who is called to live *under* the supreme Lordship of Jesus, also lives in relationship *with* Jesus, and worship is to be the beating heart of the Christian life and the church. Our hearts are to remain bent toward adoration and love for Jesus.

By living under Jesus as the Supreme Lord, we are submitting to His lordship over our lives. He is in charge and gets the final say. But He is not a distant deity, He is a person, and is sufficient for all that we need. His sufficiency comes from us seeking Him. Our *worship* of Jesus is a way of describing our *seeking* Him in everything.

Colossians 3:1-4 (ESV) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Paul has no room for "Christian-ish." If Jesus is both supreme and sufficient, then there is no alternative or half-hearted acceptance. Paul (through both chapters leading up to this point) is calling the Colossians to total and complete surrender and devotion. If it's

true Jesus is the supreme Lord and is sufficient for our growth and maturity, then go *all in* on that truth. “Seek Him” with everything. Paul is not interested in winning people over to generic belief in God... but a total surrender and devotion (seeking) to the one Jesus Christ as Lord, the God who has a name and became human. For Paul, there is no room for “ambiguous spirituality” — being generic “God-people.”

“There is no neutral ground in the universe: every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan.”¹ C.S. Lewis

Jesus is not the first step to somewhere else in our “enlightenment” journey. A step away from Jesus is not progress. There is no life outside of Jesus. But your life is *in* Jesus. Just as He was raised from the dead, those who are in Christ have been raised with Him. We have a new life in Him.

We often think of this only in a future reality: those who have passed away, we look forward to a heavenly future with those we love. Paul nods to what *will* be true in the future, but is also stating that this is ALREADY true, what HAS happened, what IS HAPPENING right now. Yes, we have a new position (status) in Christ, but it must work its way into our lifestyle, and that does not happen automatically.

Exclusive Worship of Jesus

Worshipping Jesus: seeking, surrendering, setting, submitting

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“Seek the things that are above, where Christ is...”

Worship is about seeking Jesus. Not just in the gathered church during the music, but seeking Jesus in everything and about everything. Jesus does not just care about your afterlife or your spiritual life, but your whole life. Jesus is over everything and our worship acknowledges that we desire Him to be over everything in our lives. Our new, resurrected life is in Him and in seeking Him we are learning how to live out this new life.

“Seated at the right hand of God”

Worship is not just seeking Him, but also surrendering to Him. He is not a divine butler, or cosmic vending machine. He is the supreme Lord of the universe and worshipping Him means that we are surrendering our lives to Him constantly. Our hearts are to be postured in humility toward Jesus, honoring His authority over us and over everything in our lives.

¹ C.S. Lewis, “Christianity and Culture,” *Christian Reflections*, ed. W. Hooper (Bles, 1976), p. 33

“Set your minds on things above”

Worship is not a one-time deal, or a once-a-week activity. As we are seeking and surrendering, there are forces at work vying for your attention and your worship. It takes an intentional effort to get focused on Jesus and to stay there. We are to “set our minds”, our thoughts, decision-making processes, our emotions and intentions, entirely upon the supreme Lord, Jesus Christ.

“You have died”

Worship, being reverently devoted to Jesus, should remind us of an important reality: that we have been crucified with Christ (2:11-12, 20), and our old life is dead. This means that our will is not the primary driver of our lives, God’s will is. In setting our minds on Christ, we are also submitting to His will constantly and consistently within every facet of our lives.

Worshipping Jesus: seeking, surrendering, setting, submitting

Why does all of this matter? This leads into the fabric of our daily lives of identity and relationships. Because Jesus died, we can kill off the things that kill us.

Out with the Old, In with the New

Clothing example: Functional approach to clothing (I wear what I need that is appropriate to the activity); my girls’ relationship to clothing is more transformational (princess dress makes them become a princess; superhero costumes, etc.). Clothing shaping identity.

This new life in Christ is something we are already connected with and grow in our understanding of.

Colossians 3:5-9 (ESV) Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must **put them all away**: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have **put off** the old self with its practices

In these references, Paul says we are to “put to death, put away, put off” certain practices. These are firm statements that have no wiggle room. He has two lists of practices we are to get rid of. The first list are **sins of desire**, the second are **sins of discord**.

In the first list (**sins of desire**) are sins **borne out of lust**. This list is a short-hand list of the larger scope of a high sexual ethic (originating in the Torah). In the Roman world, most Gentiles had a procreational sexual relationship with their spouse, but a recreational sexual relationship with others. These sins corrupt our minds and hearts, and destroy relationships. But Paul ends the list with a sin borne out of

curbed desire, though not sexual: greed. Even our relationship to the material world and wealth is transformed by our relationship with Jesus.

In the second list (**sins of discord**) are sins **borne out of anger**. Anger is an emotion we feel, but what we do with it matters deeply. Paul is encouraging us on how we are to be dealing with it the right way. We're no longer justified in expressing it in whatever way we want; we name the emotion so that we can deal with it in a healthy way in our relationship with Jesus. The emotion of anger that we often allow to explode out of us can ruin relationships. He ends with lying needing to be done away with in our relationships. Lying destroys the trust in a relationship; these things corrupt our minds and kill community/relationships, so kill them, as they have been killed in Christ's death. IT IS NOT WHO YOU ARE!!!!!! The Holy Spirit is at work in us enabling us to put off these practices.

We don't just take something off, but Paul says we are to put something on! The church tends to focus on the first and ignore the second. But the church must give ample attention to both. We are to teach, encourage, and challenge each other to turn *from* the things that kill us and relationships, and turn *to* the One who gives life.

Jesus was raised, we were raised with him, so put on what ***lives***.

Colossians 3:10-14 (ESV) and **have put on** the new self, which is **being renewed** in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. **Put on** then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Put on who we *already are*. We are people who have been conformed to the image of Jesus. Jesus is the image of God (1:15), Jesus is the true human, the fully alive one. That is who we are, and Paul is inviting us to see ourselves this way, the new humanity, dead to sin and what brings death, and alive to God and one another. It is who we already are, and we mature into this revelation. How?

Put on our new mind (refer back to vs 1-4) — when Paul talks about transformation, he deals with the mind. Live in the reality of Jesus as the supreme Lord. Live like the world is being made new. Jesus will do it completely one day, we anticipate that by living in the reality. We put it on, like clothes.

Put on our new practices — Instead of the old ways of treating one another, we treat each other newly. We move toward one another (v. 12). Forgiveness is an emphasis. Though we have been made new, new takes time. Putting on the new takes time to live into, we are made new and becoming new.

Put on our new allegiance (vs 11) — these differences aren't ceasing to exist, but become irrelevant in our worth, value, significance, love and relationship — these things have diminished and Christ has been raised.

“...in Christ the old is passé. That old is ethnic disunity, ritual disunity, socioeconomic hierarchies, cultural disunities, and gender domination—all shaping one's honor and sense of worth (in society and before God). Belonging to that old regime are sins of desire and disunity...Paul's ecclesial vision is a breathtaking reach for a kind of unity not known in a Roman Empire strapped up by constant reminders of hierarchy and status. In its place Paul envisions a new fictive kinship, the family of Jesus, in which Christ brings together what had always been separate.”² ~ Scot McKnight

In the new family of God, everyone bears God's image. Jesus is in all of us and is creating a new family. When we look at each other, we are to see Jesus, and are to treat each other accordingly.

Colossians 3:11 (KNT) In this new humanity there is no question of “Greek and Jew,” or “circumcised and uncircumcised,” of “barbarian, Scythian,” or “slave and free.” The king is everything and in everything!

Conclusion

In all of this, Paul continually is emphasizing Jesus. It's all Jesus!!!!

He died, and through his death he has removed the old nature: he killed what kills us, so we can take off that which brings us death. He rose again, and through his resurrection, he put new clothes on us: those new clothes reveal our true identity, sons and daughters of God, the new family of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:1-4 (MSG) So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective. Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ.

² Scot McKnight, *The Letter to the Colossians* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament, pg. 314