

Majesty of Jesus in Ones – Colossians 1

(Colossians 1:15-20)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Today I want to return to our study of the majesty of Jesus in ONES.
 - A. **Majesty – Thayer/BDAG** – superbness, as in glory or splendor, magnificence, mighty power, greatness, (figuratively) divinity.
 - i. Therefore, when the Bible speaks of the glory, power, and greatness of Jesus, we should be thinking of His majesty.
 - ii. That majesty is equal to that of the Father’s, meaning Jesus is God!
 - B. In the Bible majesty is used only of divinity—only of God:
 - i. God the Father (Jude 24-25 – “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,²⁵ to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, **majesty**, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”).
 - ii. Jesus (2 Pet. 1:16-18 – “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His **majesty**.¹⁷ For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”—¹⁸ and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”).
2. That Jesus’ majesty is presented in “ONES” refers specifically to the first chapters of the many N.T. books where Jesus’ majesty is the immediate focus of that book.
3. And that so many N.T. books begin with this focus should tell us how important it is to God that we know and appreciate Jesus’ majesty.
2. So today we are considering Colossians 1.
 - A. Here Paul begins this letter in the normal fashion, identifying himself/Timothy as the senders, the saints at Colossae” as the recipients, and their thankfulness for these brethren’s faithfulness.
 - B. Paul ends this greeting in verses **12-14** by mentioning his and Timothy’s prayers on their behalf which includes thankfulness to God because He “has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.¹³ For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of **His beloved Son**,¹⁴ **in whom** we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
 - C. In is that short, but powerful, expression of thanks where Paul moves the focus from the Father and His glory to the Son, Christ Jesus, and the majesty He possesses.
3. It is Jesus’ majesty addressed in Colossian 1:15-20 that I want to explore this morning in hopes of helping us grow in wonderment and reverence of Jesus as Lord, Messiah, and God.
 - A. Paul presents Jesus’ majesty in relationship to God, creation, the universe, and salvation.
 - B. It is these four relationships that I want to consider this morning.

BODY:

I. In relationship to God (1:15):

- A. This relationship is that “He is the **image** of the **invisible God**” (1:15).
 1. This means Jesus is the perfect *representation, resemblance, or manifestation* of God *who cannot be seen*.
 2. For, Jesus was God in the flesh (John 1:1, 14 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the **Word was God**...¹⁴ And the **Word became flesh**, and dwelt among us, and **we saw His glory**, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, **full of grace and truth**.”).
 - a. Jesus came and showed the world the glory of God in bodily form.
 - b. Through Jesus we have seen the fullness of God’s grace and truth!
- B. To see Jesus is to see God. To know Jesus is to know God! (John 14:8-9 – “Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’”).

1. That God would choose to do this is wonderful in so many ways.
2. But what strikes me the most is God's willingness to meet us on our level.
 - a. Humans has always been drawn toward what we can see, hear, and touch because that is how we interpret the world we live in. We struggle with the spiritual!
 - i. If you have ever wondered why most churches cater to the physical, drawing the world by food, entertainment, recreation, social programs, etc., *that is the reason!*
 - ii. It is far easier to give people something they can see, hear, taste, and touch than it is to get them to think about spiritual things.
 - b. Yet, God has always forbade His people from making images of Him, etc., and worshipping them (Ex. 20:3-5 – “You shall have **no other gods** before Me. ⁴ “You **shall not make for yourself an idol** [image], or **any likeness of what is in heaven** above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. ⁵ **You shall not worship them or serve them;**...”).
 - c. Through Jesus, who was *God in the flesh*, the invisible God could reveal Himself to us in a tangible form—a form we could see, hear, touch, and worship!
3. Thought to ponder: What does being made in the image of God mean to you and your life (Gen. 1:26-27; Jas. 3:9)?
 - a. An image on a coin, statue, picture, etc., is intended to represent the object it copies.
 - b. That is exactly what Jesus' image did for us—it showed us God!
 - c. Do people see Jesus in you/me, in the life you/I live in this world?

II. In relationship to creation (1:15b-16 – “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.”).

A. Christ is the firstborn of creation (1:15b-16).

1. Paul declares that Jesus holds the *supreme position* over all creation.
 - a. The Psalmist employed this meaning speaking of God's lovingkindness (Psalms 89:27 – “I also shall make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.”).
 - b. This did not mean God would cause him to be *born before* the highest kings of the earth, but that he was to be given a position of power and honor *above them*.
2. Christ is firstborn because “For by Him all things were created” (1:16a).
 - a. John speaks of Jesus this way (John 1:3 – “He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”).
 - i. Jesus is not a created being as some suppose.
 - ii. For, everything that *has been created* was *created by Him*.
 - b. All things were created **by/in (en) Him**, which here indicates that Jesus—**His creative power, wisdom, glory**—is the realm in which all things came to be.
 - i. So, God/Elohim (Gen. 1:1) used Jesus' creative power and wisdom to create all things.
 - ii. This is true whether it be things in the heavens, on earth, visible, invisible, thrones, dominions, rulers, or authorities.
 - iii. Everything high, low, good, or bad, owes its beginning to Christ. Because of this, all will answer for how they have used the life He has given them.

B. Not only did Christ create everything, *all things were created through Him and for Him* (1:16b).

1. God's plan involves Christ not only being the source and agent of creation, but also the goal of creation—creation is *for Him*.
2. Creation's divine purpose is to glorify Jesus.
 - a. That purpose was lost due to sin.
 - b. Yet, God plan is that *through* and *in* Christ His creation's purpose would be restored and fulfilled, resulting in infinite glory/majesty to the Son.

- c. That day is coming when everything comes to its completion at Christ's return in glory and all are resurrected and will bow before Jesus in His glory and power!

III. In relationship to the universe (1:17 – “He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”)

A. Not only is Jesus' majesty seen in relationship to the creation by rank, but He is also preeminent in the universe by *priority of time*.

1. That He is before all things means Christ is eternal. His presence was before there was anything, before time began.
2. There has never been a time when Christ was not (Jn. 1:1 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”).
 - a. Note Jesus *was* in the beginning, not that He *became*, or *was created* in the beginning.
 - b. Jesus has always been with God and always been God! He is eternal and divine!

B. Jesus' majesty is not only seen in being the agent, sphere, and goal of creation, **it is seen in that He sustains the universe**, that “in Him all things hold together.”

1. The universe is preserved and has cohesion in Jesus! He is the reason we call the universe a cosmos, not a chaos!
2. We need to ponder the power, knowledge, and wisdom this necessarily implies!
 - a. All the intricate workings of time, space, matter, energy, etc., are being directed by Jesus!
 - b. Jesus is the unifying principle of the universe, including our lives!

IV. In relationship to salvation (1:18-20 – “He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.”¹⁹ For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven”).

A. “He is also head of the body, the church” (1:18). The Spirit's use of this metaphor very important implications.

1. The body, the church, is a living organism, functioning in complete connection with the head.
 - a. The body lives because of the head.
 - b. When a body part is disconnected from the head it dies, it is useless, just as Jesus said (Jn. 15:5 – “for apart from Me you can do nothing.”).
 - c. How much do we appreciate this connection and what it means?
2. Jesus rules and controls His body, the church!
 - a. That He is qualified to do so as God, as the firstborn of all creation,” as the One by whom “all things were created,” etc., is undeniable!
 - b. Jesus is the Lord of His people' lives. He is in charge, not you or me.
3. Honoring the majesty of Jesus means acknowledging that I am totally dependent on Him for life—that I cannot function as a member of His church without His life-giving grace, power, and direction!

B. Jesus is the resurrection so that He will have first place in everything (1:18 – “and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.”).

1. Jesus is said to be the beginning, the firstborn from the dead.
 - a. Though Jesus was not the first to be raised from the dead, he is the beginning of the resurrection, of *life from the dead*, and ranks as firstborn, or *supreme*, from the dead.
 - b. Why, because He alone has been raised to live forever, to never die again.
 - c. His resurrection has opened the door for the rest of us to live in hope of our own resurrection to eternal life.
2. The purpose? So that Christ will come to have first place in everything!
 - a. Up until now Christ has been shown to be the source of, and to have supremacy over, the material creation.
 - b. He has also been shown to be the source of, and to have supremacy over, the spiritual world, which includes the body, the church.

- c. Now, by Christ's resurrection, God has shown that Jesus has preeminence in all things.
 - i. Nothing is left out concerning our life and hope of eternal glory. All is found in Him.
 - ii. Therefore, to honor His majesty He is to be first in our lives, affections, priorities, worship, family, marriage, job, relationships, etc. He is first in everything!
- C. The source of reconciliation (1:19-20 – “For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.”).
 - 1. The fullness of God dwelt in Christ incarnate.
 - a. God sent God to this earth to live in the form of human flesh (Col. 2:9 – “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form”)!
 - b. Everything that makes God to be God dwelt in Jesus on earth in bodily form!
 - 2. God did this that He might reconcile all things to Himself, whether one *earth* or in *heaven*!
 - a. Whether it be the physical creation or the spiritual realm, Christ is the means of reconciling it all to God.
 - b. This is so very important because the creation has gone wrong and stands separated from God and in opposition to His purposes through sin.
 - c. But through Christ’s sacrificial work all things will be reconciled to God, which has already included sinners like us (2 Cor. 5:18-19 – “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”)!
 - d. We should see the majesty of Jesus and glorify God because:
 - a. The separation, the enmity, created by our sin has been taken away in Christ and peace offered to all who will come to God in him!
 - b. In the end God’s glory through Christ will finally be known and expressed by all creation.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Paul affirms Jesus’ majesty in His relationship to:
 - A. The invisible God—being the very image of God
 - B. The creation—being the creator of all things
 - C. The universe—being its sustainer.
 - D. Salvation—being the head of the living body/church, being the beginning and source of eternal life, and by being the source of reconciliation of all things to God!
- 2. Do you appreciate and honor the majesty of Christ in your life?
- 3. Will you make the decision to do that today by returning to Christ in repentance, or by coming to Him as your Savior in F-R-C-Bp?