

Colossians 1v15-20

“Jesus is Lord” is the most basic profession of Christian faith. **Do we believe it?** I am serious in asking that question because that is the question the apostle Paul was addressing here as he wrote to the church at Colossae. Have these Christian believers really fully grasped that Jesus is Lord, in all that that entails.

Generally the people in the church at Colossae were good Christian believers but Chapter 2 v 8 suggests that they were mingling the truth about Christ with what is described as, *“hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world.”* - so we get a sort of Christian faith / other way of thinking mix.

Reading through Colossians we get the impression of a church that says, Jesus is sort of Lord but the idea is growing that there is something else needed. They just had not fully grasped who Christ is, and therefore they were vulnerable to error when false teachers arrived

So in our passage Paul takes the Colossian believer right back to creation itself. In our passage he basically says two things:

1. Christ is Supreme 2. Christ is sufficient:

V 15-17, *“The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,...He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”*
Christ is supreme in creation → we too easily have too small a view of Christ – a wrong view of the trinity. Taking “firstborn” in its context here, it does not mean a created being but ‘supreme’/the means of creation.

Many people get confused about the idea that God created. The Bible is very clear that God is the creator. Where the confusion usually comes in is when people try to specifically say “how he created”. The sort of YouTube video where somebody is standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon and saying this shows that God did this...pointing out various bible verses. The bible is not, and does not claim to be, a scientific description of how. It simply declares that it is God who brought it about.

Then V 18 *“And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.”* **Christ is supreme in the Church, the New Creation**

And because Christ is Supreme. He is also sufficient:

V 19 Christ is sufficient in his person. *“All the fullness of God is pleased to dwell in Christ”*. If we miss that we are in danger of falling into the trap the Colossians fell into and think, well, yes, we have Christ but we might need something else.

V20 *“through him to reconcile to himself **all things**, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”* Christ is sufficient in his work. There is clearly considerable disharmony in the old creation. Consequently, there is a need for reconciliation. That is not stated it is just assumed. What is stated is that Christ is the exclusive agent of

reconciliation, and that is through “His blood shed on the cross”. It is a completed work that takes in all things. Therefore, there is nothing outside the scope of Christ’s reconciliation. That does not mean that all are saved. Christ himself gave too many warnings for that to be the case, But there is nothing beyond the scope of Christ’s reconciliation.

The critical thing about this passage is that Paul puts Christ’s supremacy and his sufficiency together.

When it comes to our basic Christian profession that “Jesus is Lord” Paul emphasises that Jesus is the supreme Lord of **all** . The implication of this is that he must be sufficient.

This passage knocks on the head some major errors: some of the early heresies that still persist today. Now a heresy is not a term I use lightly. I reserve it for 3 things: Different God; Different Gospel; Different Word (because with a different Word we inevitably end up with a different God and a different gospel).

When it comes to Salvation this passage knocks on the head any idea that to come fully to God we need the help of some other intermediary: Someone or something else to help us to God. The fullness of God dwells within Christ himself. Christ is over all. Being over all means he does not need any help. Over all means over all. Supremacy means sufficiency. We can know God fully in Christ.

And today, when our service focuses on “Creation Care” it helps us, as Christian believers, avoid a number of unhelpful ideas that seem to come in when we consider our right and proper duty to care for the created world.

1. It knocks on the head any idea of Pantheism. That is the idea that God and the universe are one, which implies that we can find God by exploring creation. It is an idea that underlies a number of current religious and spiritual beliefs. No Christ is the creator, in whom the fullness of God is revealed. He is separate from creation!
2. It knocks on the head Stoicism. The idea that the highest state a person can reach is to align them self with the universe, in the idea that a person is happy when they reach a point where they don’t want things different than they are. – No the highest state a person can reach is to be reconciled to God in Christ. We won’t find God through Creation Care.
3. And it knocks on the head Syncretism. The popular view that calls on people of all faiths to join together in opposing the common enemies of atheism and materialism. The gospel is unique! We are not really all about the same thing. Jesus always claimed to be unique.

For us, as a church, it is essential to recognise that **if** Jesus is Lord, he must be central to the whole of our lives. **Paul puts together Christ’s supremacy in creation with his supremacy in redemption.** If we don’t recognise that we tend to separate things to do with redemption from things to do with creation. The result of that is that we focus on the spiritual and neglect the secular. We look on what we see as religious things as being more important than the material things of everyday life. So we separate work we do in the church from our other responsibilities. Like how our choices damage the environment and, over time ruin the lives of many in the world today and even more in future generations. Today, as we think about Creation Care, lets ensure that Jesus is indeed, Lord of ALL of our lives.