

Memory Verse

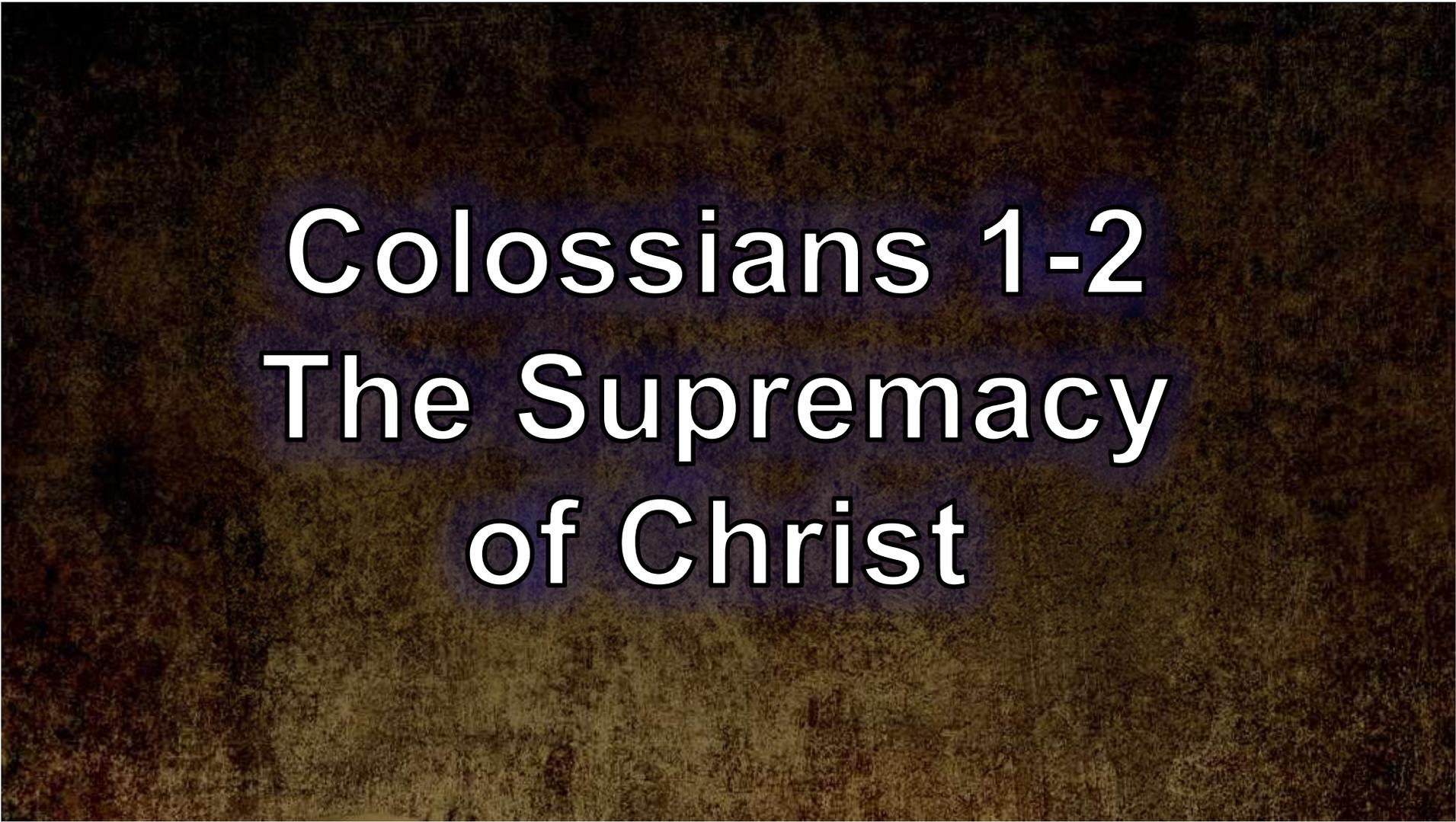
Colossians 1:16-17

For 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. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

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Colossians 1-2
The Supremacy
of Christ

A. Context of Colossians





A. Context of Colossians

Why was it written?

There was **heresy** within this church.

Paul wrote to *exalt Christ* and *confront errors*, which were like a bag of mixed colored jellybeans.

A. Context of Colossians

“The Christians in this letter were struggling with a Greek-influenced form of Jewish philosophy that viewed Christians as still vulnerable to spiritual forces. It was thought that these forces needed to be placated (appeased) through veneration, through some sort of

A. Context of Colossians

asceticism of food and drink, and by honoring certain days prescribed in Old Testament ceremonial law. The epistle is designed to help Christians understand that in order for them to gain acceptance before God, they need *Christ only.*” *The Reformation Study Bible*, p. 1883.

A. Context of Colossians

Paul wrote this while in house arrest in Rome: *Acts 28:11-31*. Colossians is *similar* to Ephesians. This gives you a *basic background* of the letter. We will study **3 areas** where *Jesus Christ is supreme*.

Colossians 1:15-23

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For 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. And he is

Colossians 1:15-23

before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to

Colossians 1:15-23

reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and

Colossians 1:15-23

above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation (to every creature) under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

B. 1:15-17 – The Supremacy of Christ in Creation

1. *1:15* - Image of God

Greek is “*eikon*.” This word means “*copy or likeness*.”

Hebrews 1:3

John 1:18

John 14:9

B. 1:15-17 – The Supremacy of Christ in Creation

2. 1:16 - Creator

Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1-5.

Jesus is the Creator!

The phrase “*thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities*” refers to the **angelic host** and their *different ranks*.

B. 1:15-17 – The Supremacy of Christ in Creation

3. 1:17 - Sustainer

Christ sustains the universe! The words “*hold together*” or “*consist*” carry the idea that **Jesus puts together the parts of creation into a unified whole.**

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

1. 1:18 - Head of the Church

“*Head*” can also be “*chief*” or “*ruler*.”

While pastors, elders and deacons help direct a church, ***Jesus is the Head. He is the Leader!*** He is to be **supreme** in the church!

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

2. 1:18 - “Firstborn”

The Greek for *firstborn* is “*prototokos*” – **preeminent**. In Jewish culture, the **firstborn son** had special rights, based on *Deuteronomy 21:17*. He was ***preeminent***.

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

2. 1:18 - “Firstborn”

He had a *special place* of **honor** and **dignity** and got a double portion of inheritance. He was to be the next leader of the family and take care of the family after the father’s death. *Genesis 49:1-4.*

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

2. 1:18 - “Firstborn”

Jesus was **not** a created being, but is *preeminent*, as the “*firstborn from the dead*,” or *first to rise from the dead*.

He’s the **heir** of everything as *Hebrews 1:2* says.

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

3. *1:19-20, 2:9* - God and Man

One of the **core doctrines** of Christianity is Jesus is 100% God and 100% Man: the *God-Man*. **Only God** is perfect and *sinless*. **Only man** can *die for mankind*.

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

4. *1:20-22 (2:13-15)* - Reconciler

Reconciliation is change in attitude and relationship from war to peace, or the ceasing of hostility. In Jesus, *God reconciled us to Himself. See Romans 5:1.*

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

a. 1:13-14, 20 - Forgiveness of Sin
He has *taken all of your sin* and says *you are not guilty*. He does **not** hold your sin against you! It is not a license to sin, but to thank Him, praise Him and rejoice in **His great grace!**

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

b. 1:14, 20-21 - Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:19. Jesus didn't come just to save sinners. He came to *reclaim what Adam lost in the Garden of Eden*, when he **disobeyed God** and *gave over power and authority to satan*. Jesus took it back!
Romans 8:18-23.

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

c. 1:20, 22 - By the Blood of His Cross

When it talks about the *blood of Jesus*, it is a reference to His **death**. This is *not a magic formula* to **say** or **plead**.
Hebrews 9:22.

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

5. 1:27, 29 - Indweller

a. 27 - Christ in You - *John 14:17*,
Romans 8:10

This was a *mystery*. Biblically, a mystery is something God always had planned, but did not reveal that part of His plan until a specific time.

C. 1:18-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Redemption

5. 1:27, 29 - Indweller

b. 29 - Power in You

Because He is in us, He can give us His power! He gives us strength for life, and for those things He calls us to do. *We belong to Him and cannot lose what He gives us.*

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

1. 2:3, 10 - Knowledge and Wisdom in Christ

...contrasted with worldly words or secret knowledge: 2:4, 8, 20. In Colosse, false teachers said you had to know what they said, rather than about Christ.

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

1. 2:3, 10 - Knowledge and Wisdom in Christ

They *added to the sufficiency of Jesus!* In verse 8, Paul warns the Colossians not to let anyone take them captive by *(human) philosophy and empty deceit* and not according to Christ.

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

1. 2:3, 10 - Knowledge and Wisdom in Christ

This is a *contrast* between *what the world* says and *what the word* says!

Paul is not against true wisdom in Christ (1:28, 2:4, 4:5).

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

2. 2:9-15 - Adequacy of Christ

Christ is contrasted with *warnings against man-made traditions, or legalism!* False teachers there told people there needed to be something added to Jesus, also done today.

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

3. *2:16-19* - Reality of Christ

The *reality of Christ and worship of Him* is contrasted with warnings against worshipping angels in verses 18-19.

This was a *major problem* in Colosse.

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

3. *2:16-19* - Reality of Christ

Some worshipped angels, participated in worshipping them or used them as a “mediator” to receive special insight, or protection. This was an occultic practice common in the ancient world.

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

4. 2:20-23 - Life in Christ

Earthly religion looks good on the outside, promises victory over sin and more, but it has *no value in changing someone's heart*. Paul warns against *secret knowledge* and *strict self-denial* (asceticism), in verses 21-22.

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

4. 2:20-23 - Life in Christ

While a religious belief called **Gnosticism** came *later*, parts of it were already in place in the pagan world. *Gnosticism* said you needed secret knowledge, only they possessed, along with the *worship of angels and demi-gods*.

D. 2:1-23 – The Supremacy of Christ in Religion

4. 2:20-23 - Life in Christ

There were also *Mystery Religions*, purely *perverse* and *pagan* to the core. They had their practices, teachings, ecstatic utterances, and mystical experiences.

Our life is in Christ. He changes us by His truth and grace.

Prayer

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6

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