

St. Timothy's Lutheran Church
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Colossians 1:15-23

Supremacy of Christ

Introduction:

Good morning! It's always great to be here. Today I am going to continue our sermon series through the book of Colossians. Pastor Brian started this series out last week with his message, *Living In, Through, and For Christ*, based on Colossians 1:1-13. He said that it is only when we live in, through, and for Christ that we find our God-given calling and purpose in life. Today, I am going to keep moving through the Colossians with verses 15-23. And as I do, I want you to keep two words in mind- Throne & Cross. The Throne and the Cross are the two places that Jesus holds in our lives and over all of creation.

Pictures of Jesus:

So before we get too far in to this today, I want us to think about the place Jesus has in your life. It doesn't matter whether or not you are a Christian- everyone who has heard something about Jesus has a picture in your mind, not just what he looks like but what he *was* like. We even have conclusions regarding the significance of his life. You know every single one of us has a picture of Jesus in their mind. So I want you to try something- close your eyes and picture Jesus. (put up first slide)



There is a big problem with the way we tend to view Jesus! But the problem that I think we often have is that the picture that we have of Jesus is too small. Non-Biblical concepts mingle with Biblical ones and we can lose the reality of the radical, revolutionary person of Jesus and the transformative and redeeming work, and the supreme and exalted place he hold over all of creation.

My hope for this message is that we could let the Holy Spirit work through our reading in Colossians give Jesus his rightful place in our lives, as King on the Throne and Savior on the Cross.

1) Jesus on the Throne (vs. 15-18)

This passage in Colossians makes some giant claims about Jesus. It gives Jesus his rightful place on the throne. Paul goes to great lengths to show the importance of Jesus. That contrast particularly striking when we consider how in our reading from the book of Acts, Paul was a fierce persecutor of those who held the very views that he is now risking his life to proclaim! Verses 15-19 says...

Let's take those briefly one at a time. Jesus is:

1) The full representation of God in this world.

As fully God he could show us the Father. As fully man he is our perfect example of Godly character, Godly relationships, and Godly actions.

2) The one through whom God created all things and in him all things hold together.

He holds together God's plan, not ours. When we realize that God's plan is not for our material success, that blessings and possessions are not the same thing, and that God's plan is not to give us money, a good job, a good reputation, or good grades, but to give us himself and to redeem not just individuals but all of creation, we can see how Christ holds all things together.

3) Head of the Body, the church

Everyone who believes in him is connected to him. This building isn't the church. The building next door isn't the church. All who believe in their hearts and confess with their mouths that Jesus is Lord are the church. There is only one church, and it is the church of Jesus Christ, and he is the head of it.

5) He *is* the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead.

Jesus has supremacy over all things! Jesus is the King, the throne in all of creation belongs to Him and he desires more than anything the throne that is in your heart.

*Don't settle for a small version of Jesus! Embrace the Jesus of Scripture, who is supreme over all- who is fully God! Bow down in surrender before the throne of God Almighty and let him lift you up.

2) Jesus on the Cross

And all of that makes it so unbelievable, and so incredible that the one who is Lord of all would take up a cross for our sake.

The passage says, in verses 19-22 that *“God was pleased to have His fullness dwell in him and, 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. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your mind because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.”*

Jesus took up the cross so that he could be our savior. *This* is the heart of the Gospel. That at just the right time, while we were still enemies of God, kings in our own lives, the one true king would empty himself of his power and enter this world as a humble baby, face every trial and temptation we would, and ultimately wash clean our sin with his sacrifice and give us new life through his resurrection. He overcame evil with good. He took on our sin, our brokenness and our imperfection so that we could be holy, blameless and without accusation.

And it seems so perfect to me. Honestly, it is the only plan that I have heard in this world that makes any sense to fix the brokenness we live in. Humans have tried in so many different ways to set things right, but it seems that for every step forward there is at least one step back- which is why God himself stepped towards us. It reminds me of the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15. How, while he was a long way off, his father was already running towards him!

We are a broken people, we are a long way off. And, like Romans 7 says, we so often know the right thing to do but don’t do it. But while we were a long way off, enemies of God set up as king and savior of our own lives, Christ gave his life on a cross so that all who would bow down before his throne and lay our sin down at his cross would be given new life through the Holy Spirit. Before we even thought to return to him, he was already running towards us.

We have a savior who does not conquer the way this world conquers. His plan was not to overthrow evil by a show of force, but by sacrifice. It takes a savior like Jesus. It takes someone who doesn’t kill their enemies but dies for them to reconcile us with God. It takes God himself, King and Savior, the fullness of the almighty Creator of the Universe, the one who spoke this world into existence to say to us, “Receive the Holy Spirit” and “Your sin are forgiven.”

How does Jesus take the throne and the cross in my life?

So in wrapping things up today, I want to give you 3 practical ways to give Jesus the throne and the cross in your life.

- 1) It starts with your heart: it starts in **prayer**. Ask God to reveal His son to you! Confess those things that you put before God and ask him to transform your desires so that you seek Christ first.
- 2) **Read Scripture!** Look in the 4 Gospels- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John- at the stories of Jesus' life, and ask God to let you see them with fresh eyes- see the Holy Spirit bring it to life.
- 3) Is there someone in your life whose faith you admire and look up to? Ask them out for a cup of coffee, share a meal, or a walk in the park and ask them about Jesus. I promise they would love to talk about it. Meet together regularly and when you do, make sure there is an open Bible between the two of you!

God does not share the throne. He doesn't share it with anyone or anything. He doesn't want your Sunday mornings- he wants your heart! He doesn't desire a spot on your calendar, he wants the first place in your life. Jesus does not care if you *go* to church. He wants you to *be* the church. The supreme place over all of creation is His- he wants you to give him the supreme place in your heart.

In Christ we have our King, and in Christ we have our savior: the Throne and the Cross.