

Introduction

- Colossians 1:15-23
 - This passage is most likely an early _____ hymn.

Colossians 1:15-23

The Heart of This Passage

- Col. 1:18c – “So that in everything he [Christ] might have the _____.”
 - This is the heart of our passage because of two small words that come just before and just after our central affirmation of the supremacy of Christ.
 - Col. 1:18-19
 - Grammatical connectors like “_____” and “_____” are crucial for us to pay attention to as we seek to understand Paul’s thought.
 - The literary structure of this passage is like a mountain. Our key affirmation of the _____ of _____ in everything is like the peak of the mountain. And everything else, on both sides, looks up to the peak – the supremacy of Jesus Christ.
- **The key point for us tonight:**
 - Because of who Jesus Christ _____ and because of what he _____, it is the eternal _____ of God that in everything Jesus Christ might have the _____.

The Person of Jesus Christ – Who He Is

- Prior to the “Mountain Peak” – Col. 1:15
 - Col. 1:15 and Gen. 1:26-27 – In other words, all human beings are created by God to reflect him and to represent him in the world. We are all created to “image God” in the world.
 - But not all human beings reflect God equally _____ in their lives...
 - But Jesus Christ _____.
 - Jesus Christ makes the _____ God visible, because in him all the fullness of God dwells in bodily form.
 - John 14:9
 - This is who Jesus Christ is:
 - The _____ of the invisible God
 - The One in whom all the _____ of God dwells.
 - But Jesus Christ also images God in **what he does**.

The Word of Jesus Christ – What He Does

- *1 Cor. 1:15b* – Jesus Christ is “the firstborn over all creation” (NIV). Literally, “the firstborn **of** all creation.”
 - This passage does not mean that Jesus *was created* because:
 - 1) “of” here does not mean that the first idea (firstborn) is a **part of** or **beneath** the second idea (creation),

- 2) Paul would not contradict himself since he argued for Christ’s full deity, and
- 3) one verse later, Jesus is described as the **creator** of all things.
- So what does it mean that Jesus Christ is the “firstborn of all creation”?
 - When Paul says that with respect to all of creation, Christ occupies the position of the firstborn, he is speaking of the _____ and _____ that belong to Christ as a result of his position. As firstborn, Christ is the authoritative ruler, the Lord of all creation.
- 1 Cor. 1:16-17
 - He is the sovereign ruler because he is the _____ of all things and the _____ of all things.
- 1 Cor. 1:18
 - Paul is moving from God’s first creation to his new creation, the _____ of _____, the church.
 - Remember that this term “firstborn” indicates priority. Jesus Christ was the first to rise from the _____ and his resurrection is the guarantee of the subsequent resurrections of all who belong to him.

Jesus the Reconciler

- 1 Cor. 1:19-23
 - Paul begins to speak of our salvation in other terms – relational terms. Here, he begins to speak of _____.
 - **Reconciliation:** A formerly broken relationship that has been mended so that it is once again _____, free, _____, and intimate.
 - v. 21 – Our rebellion against God involves not only our _____ but it also occurs in our _____.
 - The means by which God’s reconciliation is accomplished: the death of _____ on the _____.
 - v. 22 – When God reconciles us to himself, he not only forgives all our sins through Christ, He also _____ us, making us more like Christ.
 - v. 23 – There is a role for us, and that is _____.
 - There is nothing we need to add to what Christ has done, but we can and must **receive** it by faith.
 - The faith that receives God’s gift of reconciliation is a faith that _____ in the ways of loving, faithful _____ to God.

Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing:

- The Supremacy of Christ in our lives:
 - _____ in the love of God in Christ
 - The Gospel and its _____.
 - _____ (Narrow and Broad)
 - Love for _____ and _____.
 - _____.