

Monday Night Bible Study

“COLOSSIANS” [1:15-2:1]

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A High View of Jesus Christ

- I. All of us go through times of crisis, pain, trial, or loss. We may face an unwanted divorce, a health issue, a financial struggle, or even personal attacks. But the good news is, we have a savior who understands what we face. He, Himself, faced persecution, pain, and betrayal. And in this truth, we can see the face of a God who empathizes with our trials. We can often feel as though God is distant, far away from our grief or our trials. But the very nature of who God is reveals His solidarity with us. His union with us.

- II. Take, for instance, the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians chapter 2:
 - Phil. 2:7-8 - ...but (Jesus) emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.And the words of Peter in 1 Peter 2
 - 1 Peter 2:23 - People insulted Christ, but he did not insult them in return. Christ suffered, but he did not threaten. He let God, the One who judges rightly, take care of him.

- III. This is what it means for Jesus Christ to be Emmanuel. He is “God with us.”
 - a. Because of His death and resurrection, Jesus has defeated and stripped DEATH of its power. Now all of us who have put our faith in Jesus will, in the same way, be glorified like Jesus in the end. When He returns, we will be just like Him. We will be Perfect.
 - b. Explain glorification. [Lazarus] → would have died again.
 - c. But JESUS never died again. His body was glorified forever.

JESUS has all the power over the world, including even the world’s enemies. And the greatest enemy of the world is death. He is over all kings and Lords, rulers and authorities. He is all-powerful.

And this brings us to our passage for tonight... Colossians Chapter 1:

Colossae was a city in what is modern day southern Turkey. The ancient kingdom name was ‘Phrygia,’ otherwise known as Asia Minor.



What is the Apostle Paul trying to Impart to the Church in Colossae?

He's communicating the same thing as the author of the sermon to the Hebrews:

- Jesus Christ is divine, and He is the supreme Creator of the universe who holds all things together.

Colossians 1:15-2:1 [To Gentiles]

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the *firstborn* over all creation.

Prōtōtokos (from *prōtos*, "first, pre-eminent" and *tíktō*, "bring forth") – properly, *first in time* (Mt 1:25; Lk 2:7); *pre-eminent* (Col 1:15; Rev 1:5).

- o *prōtōtokos* ("firstly") specifically refers to *Christ as the first to experience glorification*, i.e. at His resurrection (see Heb 12:23; Rev 1:5). Revelation 1:5 - ...and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, For this (and countless other reasons) Jesus is "*preeminent*" (*prōtōtokos*) – the *unequivocal Sovereign over all creation* (Col. 1:16). (*prōtōtokos*) refers to "the first among others (who follow)" – as with the *preeminent, glorified Christ*, the eternal *Logos* who possesses *self-existent* life (Jn 5:26).]

*HE IS SUPREME.

¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

[*He is the co-eternal, second person of the Trinity, the word made flesh; John 1/Philippians 2*]

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.

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,

²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things [2 Corinthians 5], whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

²² 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— [*You're NOT guilty;*

1 Thessalonians 5:9 - For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.]

²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and **do not move from the hope** held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

²⁴ Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.

²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— [*Logos; This is Jesus*]

²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations but is now disclosed to the Lord's people.

²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles [in Colossae] the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁸ He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom [*Seeing everything through the lens of the cross & resurrection*], so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.

²⁹ To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

2:1 I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally.

To Laodicea → A church in Asia minor being persecuted for their Faith.

- The book of Revelation is focused on seven churches in Asia Minor who were being persecuted for their faith in Jesus. Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.
- The author, John, gave them a revelation he had of Jesus Christ as an encouragement

Revelation 3:14; 21-22

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation... ²¹ To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²² Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

What does this mean for US?

1. We ALL face trial & tribulation. We ALL face hardships.
 - a. What is our view of Jesus during those times?
 - i. Do we view Him as the one who sustains us?
 - ii. ... as the one who comforts us?
 - iii. ... as the one who protects us?
 - iv. ... as the one who restores us?
 - v. ... as the one who saves us?
 - vi. Do we believe he cares?

The churches in the First Century had the task of being the first ones to put their faith in Jesus' resurrection. We have the advantage of centuries of Christian faith, writing, and reassurance. They had a few years. It was paramount that Paul encourage them and write a reassuring letter to the believers to stand their ground. He said, "**Do not move from your hope.**"

The author of Hebrews is writing to Jewish believers in Jesus who are facing trials of many kinds. Mostly persecution, but many other things as well. We know this because, the Preacher(author), preaches to the hearers about persevering through their troubles and holding fast to their confession of faith in Jesus.

- d. Hebrews: Chapter 1 → This answers a couple of questions for us.

Hebrews 1:1-14 [To Jews]

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? [*Psalm 2:7// 2 Samuel 7:14// 1 Chronicles 17:13*]

⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." [*Deuteronomy 32:43*]

⁷ In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire." [*Psalm 107:7*]

⁸ But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy." [*Psalm 45:6,7*]

¹⁰ He also says, "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

¹¹ They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment.

¹² You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end." [*Psalm 102:25-27*]

¹³ To which of the angels did God ever say, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? [*Psalm 110:1*]

¹⁴ Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

- e. What is the early Church's view of Jesus Christ?

- f. What did they believe about divine beings (angels)?

- i. As well-taught Jews, they would have understood divine beings. They would have a frame of reference for the spiritual world. Because of this, the author of Hebrews feels the need to address something important.

1. Psalm 8:4,5 - ...what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.
- ii. BUT, the issue of angels doesn't appear anywhere else in the book. After the first chapter, the author of any Biblical book would have returned to a topic he thought was essential to the hearing audience.
- iii. So... WHAT is the author of Hebrews trying to say to the audience? What was the author trying to address?
 1. The audience had a A LOW VIEW of Jesus.

“Do not move from your hope.” THIS is your GOD!!