

Message Three

The All-inclusive, Extensive Christ Having the Preeminence in All Things

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:15, 18; 3:4, 10-11, 17; Rev. 2:4; Dan. 7:9-10

I. God's intention in His administration is to give Christ the preeminence in all things, to cause Christ to have the first place in everything—Col. 1:15, 18:

- A. The entire world situation is under the rule of the heavens by the God of the heavens to match His intention in His economy, of which Christ is the center—Dan. 7:9-10; 4:34-35; Eph. 1:10.
- B. For Christ to have the preeminence in all things, God needs a people; apart from God's having a people, there is no way for Christ to be made preeminent—Col. 1:18; 3:10-11.
- C. Under His heavenly rule God is using the environment to make Christ the centrality (the first) and the universality (everything) to us—Rom. 8:28; Col. 1:18, 27; 3:4, 10-11.

II. Christ has the first place, the preeminence, in God's economy—1:18; Eph. 1:10:

- A. Christ is the preeminent One, the One who has the first place in everything—Col. 1:18.
- B. Christ is preeminent in the triune Godhead; the first, the Father, exalts the Son, and the third, the Spirit, always testifies concerning the Son—2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:9; John 15:26.
- C. Christ is preeminent in God's exaltation of Him—Acts 2:33a; Eph. 1:22:
 - 1. Christ has been exalted to the right hand of God in the third heaven—Acts 2:33a.
 - 2. In God's exaltation of Christ, He has been given to be the Head over all things—Eph. 1:22.
- D. Both in the old creation and in the new creation, both in the universe and in the church, Christ occupies the first place, the place of preeminence—Col. 1:15, 18.
- E. For Christ to be the first means that He is all; since Christ is the first both in the universe and in the church, He must be all things in the universe and in the church—3:10-11.

III. Christ should have the preeminence in our personal universe—v. 17; 1 Cor. 10:31:

- A. As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for Christ's preeminence, we are under His heavenly rule—Dan. 4:26; Matt. 5:3.
- B. Christ, the preeminent One, must be the centrality and universality in our church life, family life, and daily life—Col. 3:17; 1 Cor. 10:31.
- C. Under God's heavenly rule everything is working together for our good; this is especially true of the things in our personal universe—Rom. 8:28:
 - 1. Our personal universe includes ourselves, our families, and the church.
 - 2. In our personal universe many things happen day by day for the purpose of making Christ preeminent; we need to realize this and be submissive to God's heavenly rule—Eph. 1:11; Rev. 4:11.
- D. In order to give Christ the preeminence in all things, we must be willing to be adjusted, to be broken, and to be made nothing so that the Lord can have a way in us, through us, and among us for the building up of His organic Body—Eph. 3:17; 4:16.
- E. If we have a vision of the preeminence of Christ, our living and our church life will be revolutionized, for we will realize that in all things Christ must have the first place—Col. 1:18.

IV. Christ should have the preeminence in our love—Rev. 2:4:

- A. To give the Lord the first place in all things is to love Him with the first love; we need to maintain and develop our first love toward the Lord—v. 4.
- B. Whatever one loves, his whole heart, even his whole being, is set on and occupied and possessed by—1 Tim. 6:10; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; 4:8, 10a; Titus 1:8.

- C. Whether there would be a day of glory in the church's victory or grievous days of the church's decline depends on what kind of love we have—Rev. 2:4; 2 Tim. 3:2-4.
- D. Our love for the Lord must be absolute; we should not love anyone or anything above Him—Matt. 10:37-39.
- E. We love the Lord because He first loved us, infusing His loving essence into us and generating within us the love with which we love Him—1 John 4:19, 8, 16.
- F. We love the Lord according to the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity as love—Rom. 5:5; 8:35, 39; 15:30.

V. Christ should have the preeminence in our tripartite being—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11, 15-16:

- A. We worship the enthroned Christ in the heavens, but we experience, enjoy, and partake of the indwelling Christ in our spirit; we are one with Him in a very subjective way—v. 1; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 3:17:
 - 1. The Christ who indwells us is not a small, limited Christ but the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent Christ—Col. 1:15-16, 18-19.
 - 2. We need to be infused, saturated, and permeated with the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent Christ until in our experience He is everything to us—2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11.
- B. Because Christ is our life, all He has and all He has attained and obtained become subjective to us; universally, Christ is extensive, but in our experience, He is our life, our being—v. 4; Rom. 8:34, 10.
- C. The content and constituent should only be the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—Col. 3:10-11.
- D. We should allow Christ to fill our entire being and replace every aspect of our natural life with Himself—Eph. 3:17; Col. 3:10-11.

VI. Christ should have the preeminence in our spiritual experiences—1:18, 27; 2:9-13, 20; 3:1-4:

- A. The history of Christ is the experience of the Christian, and the experience of Christ is the history of the Christian—1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5-6:
 - 1. The history of Christ becomes our experience and our spiritual history—John 14:19b; Gal. 2:20.
 - 2. In the organic union with Christ, whatever Christ passed through has become our history—John 15:1, 4-5.
- B. In Colossians a number of phrases point to our experience of Christ; these expressions give us a complete picture of the proper experience of Christ—1:27-28; 2:6, 8, 13, 19-20.

VII. Christ should have the preeminence in our human living—3:18—4:1:

- A. God desires that Christ be expressed through human life—Phil. 1:19-21a.
- B. The living of the believers must be in union with Christ; this means that in our living we need to be one with Him—1 Cor. 6:17; John 15:4-5:
 - 1. We need to be one with the Lord Jesus just as He is one with the Father—10:30; 14:10; 6:57.
 - 2. We and Christ should now have one life and one living; the Son's life becomes our life, and our living becomes the Son's living—Gal. 2:20.
 - 3. The living of the believers in union with Christ results in the expression of Christ in their human living—Col. 3:18—4:1.
- C. We should do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus—3:17:
 - 1. The name denotes the person, and the Lord's person is the Spirit—2 Cor. 3:17a.
 - 2. To do things in the name of the Lord is to act in the Spirit; this is to live Christ and to give Him the preeminence in our human living—Col. 1:18.