

COLOSSIANS

Message One

Christ—the All-inclusive, Extensive, Preeminent One, the Centrality and Universality of God’s Economy

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:9, 15-18, 27; 2:8, 16-17; 3:4, 10-11

I. The Christ unveiled in Colossians is the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent One, the centrality and universality of God’s economy—1:15-18, 27; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11:

- A. Colossians reveals the all-inclusive Christ—the One who is God, man, and the reality of every positive thing in the universe—2:9, 16-17.
- B. For Christ to be the Firstborn of both the original creation and the new creation means that He is both all-inclusive and extensive—1:15, 18:
 - 1. The extensive Christ is the Christ who is more vast than the universe and who is everything to us—Eph. 3:18.
 - 2. Christ, the Savior in whom we believe, is limitless and inexhaustible; since He is without limitation, the revelation concerning Him must also be without limitation—vv. 2-5, 8.
- C. Christ is the preeminent One, the One who has the first place in everything—Col. 1:18:
 - 1. Both in the old creation and the new creation, both in the universe and in the church, Christ occupies the first place, the place of preeminence—vv. 15, 18.
 - 2. 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—cf. Rev. 2:4.
- D. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the centrality and universality, the center and circumference, of God’s economy—Col. 1:15-27; Eph. 1:10:
 - 1. In God’s economy Christ is everything; God wants Christ and Christ alone—the wonderful, preeminent, all-inclusive Christ, who is all and in all—Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:10-11.
 - 2. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the center of God’s economy; God’s dispensing is altogether related to Christ and focused on Him—Eph. 3:17a.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message One (continuation)

3. God's intention in His economy is to work the wonderful, all-inclusive, extensive Christ into our being as our life and our everything that we may become the corporate expression of the Triune God—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11.

II. The will of God is that the all-inclusive, extensive Christ be our portion—1:9, 12:

- A. In 1:9 God's will refers to Christ; the will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living the all-inclusive, extensive Christ.
- B. God's will is that we know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, be saturated with Christ, and have Christ become our life and person—3:4.

III. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ dwells in us as our hope of glory—1:27:

- 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—3:1; 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. The Christ who indwells us is not a small, limited Christ but the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—the One who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation, the Head of the Body, and the embodiment of the fullness of God—Col. 1:15-16, 18-19.

IV. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is our life—3:4:

- A. The expression *our life* is a strong indication that we are to experience the all-inclusive Christ, the One who is the reality of every positive thing—2:16-17.
- B. The extensive Christ has become our life; universally, He is extensive, but in our personal experience, He is our life, our being.
- C. Because Christ is our life, all He has and all He has attained and obtained become subjective to us—Rom. 8:34, 10.

V. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the unique constituent of the one new man—Col. 3:10-11:

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Message One (continuation)

- A. The content of the church as the new man is Christ alone; in the new man there is room only for Christ, for He is everyone and in everyone.
- B. In the church as the new man we are in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ, and we subsist together in Christ to be God's expression in Christ—1:16-17.
- C. God's ultimate goal in His economy is to gain the new man constituted with the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11.

VI. We should estimate and evaluate everything according to the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—2:8:

- A. Christ is the governing principle of all genuine wisdom and knowledge, the reality of all genuine teaching, and the only measure of all concepts acceptable to God.
- B. Only when we have a clear view of the place of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ in God's economy will we be able to see through delusion and deception.

VII. We need to be infused, saturated, and permeated with the all-inclusive, extensive Christ until in our experience He is everything to us—1:27; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11:

- A. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is in us, but we need to see Him, know Him, be filled with Him, be saturated with Him, and be absolutely one with Him.
- B. We should allow the all-inclusive, extensive Christ to fill our whole being and to replace our culture with Himself—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11:
 - 1. The more Christ replaces our natural life and culture with Himself, the more we will be able to declare, "To live is Christ"; to us to live will be the Christ who takes full possession of us, occupies us, and fills us with Himself—Phil. 1:21a.
 - 2. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ desires to replace every element of our natural life and culture with Himself so that we may be the one new man as His corporate expression; this is the message of the book of Colossians.