

Bragging on Jesus

(Colossians 1:12-23)

Introduction

Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning? Today we're going to do something we like to do a lot around here – as you can see from the title, it's to brag on Jesus. Of course, this isn't going to come from my opinions on Jesus or what historians, philosophers or scholars thought about the person of Jesus and all the possibilities. This is going to be straight from what the Word of God says who Jesus is and about Him. Bragging is typically viewed in negative light. It's hard to admire or appreciate someone who continuously brags about himself even if there is plenty to back it all up. However, not all forms of bragging is wrong.

[Proverbs 27:2](#) “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.”

In case anyone has not noticed, but I do often brag about my wife, my baby boy, I even brag about Lighthouse Baptist Church. Today, there will be plenty of bragging, but not about me or anyone of you, but about the one we should brag about the most and is worthy of all bragging, Jesus. This brings us to our text today, Colossians 1:12-23.

Background

Before diving into the text, I wanted to provide background regarding Colossians to better understand where our text fits in the overall purpose and theme of the letter. This letter was written by the Apostle Paul during his imprisonment in Rome, it is categorized as one the prison Epistles along with Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon. The Colossian church was special to Paul in its own unique way. Paul himself did not start this church, neither has he ever visited or met these people, but was started by man he led to the Lord, disciplined and sent out,

Epaphras. This church consisted primarily of Gentiles but had Jewish members as well. False teaching from various kinds of beliefs began to enter the church. False teachings including an inferior view of Jesus, worshipping angels, circumcision, and observing traditions. It seemed to be Jewish legalism combined with Hellenistic traditions. Paul called them philosophy, vain deceit, traditions of men, and rudiments of the world. (2:8). Paul here establishes Jesus' preeminence and supremacy – meaning He is superior and surpasses everything.

Reading of the text

Colossians 1:12-23

(12) Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

(13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

(14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

(15) Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

(16) For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

(17) And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

(18) And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

(19) For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

(20) And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

(21) And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

(22) In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight:

(23) If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Outline

Question: Why should we brag about Jesus?

Answer: We should brag about Jesus because:

I. Jesus is the supreme and preeminent being of the universe, vv. 12-19.

A. Paul's thankfulness to God, vv. 12-14

1. He thanks God the Father because He "made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:"

a. The phrase here "hath made us meet" is a single word in the original language, *ικανόω*. This means to "qualify or enable."

b. In the OT, Canaan was the physical inheritance for God's people.

Believers today have a spiritual inheritance in Christ. We thank God for the blessings day by day and the ones yet to come.

c. Because it is an inheritance, this implies it was not earned or worked for, but freely given.

2. There are four things expressed here in these two verses of Jesus's saving action on our behalf. First, God the Father has delivered us from the power of darkness.

a. The word "delivered" here means to rescue from danger.

b. The danger here was the power of darkness, Satan's rule and domain.

c. In addition to Christ delivering us from the penalty of our sin, God's righteous judgment on guilty sinners, He delivered us from the power of darkness.

- d. We were once called children of disobedience, under Satan's power, but now there is no power he has over us. He tempts us and may deceive, but he no longer holds authority of your life. We have a new master, we serve sin and Satan no more, we serve Jesus.
 - e. We brag on Jesus because He is the deliverer.
3. Second, He translated us into His dear Son's kingdom.
- a. The word here for translated was to describe deportation of a population to land into another. When one empire conquered another, the custom was to take the population of the defeated empire and transfer it completely to the conqueror's land.
 - b. It is in this sense that Paul says we have been placed into God's Kingdom as citizens. Everything we have and everything we are now belongs to Him.
 - c. "His dear Son" reminds us of the price the Father paid when He gave His only begotten Son.
 - d. Christ did not release us from bondage to wonder aimlessly, He moved into His own Kingdom. Earthly rulers transferred the defeated people, but Jesus transferred the victorious ones.
 - e. We brag on Jesus because He is the King of Kings who transferred us out of darkness into His Kingdom.
4. Third, He redeemed us. This word redemption means "to pay a ransom in full."
- a. The ransom was the holy demands of God's law.

b. His blood shed for us and His resurrection sets us free when we put our trust in Him to save us.

c. We brag on Jesus because He is redeemer.

5. Fourth, He has forgiven us.

a. Redemption and forgiveness go together. It means to cancel the debt owed.

b. It was through His precious blood shed for us.

c. Christ has canceled every debt owed so that we cannot be enslaved again.

e. He is the one who delivers, He transfers us into His kingdom, He is redeemer and the one alone to have authority to forgive sins. That's a bunch to be thankful for and brag about. He is preeminent in all these things, He alone is the only one who can do these things.

B. Jesus is both creator and sustainer of the universe, vv. 15-17.

1. He is the image of the invisible God.

a. This word "image" comes from the word εἰκών. It has two aspects.

First, likeness, as the reflection in a mirror. Second, Manifestation, with the sense that God is fully revealed in Jesus.

b. Note the difference, first chapter, we see that mankind starting with

Adam is *created* in the image of God – Jesus is the image of God, not created.

c. The word used here proves that Paul knew that Jesus is God just as God the Father is God. It means that Jesus is the very stamp of God the Father.

2. He is the firstborn of every creature.

a. This word “firstborn” here has been abused from this verse by cults such as Jehovah’s witness, Mormons and other positions that lessen the deity of Jesus.

b. They teach this idea that Jesus was created and God’s oldest son.

c. However, the word here used is not applying first born as in my baby Elias is my first child, this usage is to speak first rank.

d. Notice the OT usage regarding David in Psalm 89:27 “Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.” David was the youngest of eight yet called the first born of Israel. It was matter of ranking. This verse is also a foreshadow of the Messiah, to be the first rank among all kings.

e. Skipping down to verse 18, Paul writes Jesus is the “firstborn from the dead.” Jesus was not the first to come back to life after dying, but first in rank.

3. He is creator of the universe and everything in it.

a. If Jesus is creator, then implication is He is apart of creation.

b. Through interesting discussions I’ve had in my life, a response to this claim was “well, that was just Paul’s opinion, Jesus Himself did not agree.”

c. As I said, interesting. Let's evaluate this claim. John 1:1-3; 14

(1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

(2) The same was in the beginning with God.

(3) All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

(14) . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

d. This is what Jesus claimed himself: John 8:56-58

(56) Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

(57) Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

(58) Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

e. There are plenty of other passages this same truth: Jesus Christ is God.

f. Not only are only things created by Him, but they are for Him.

g. The same reason we exist, the verse we have in written on the wall back here. It is for His glory. He is the Sphere in which all things exist, the Agent through which they came into being, and the One for whom they were made. He planned it, produced it and for His pleasure.

4. He is before all things.

a. There is not a time where Christ did not exist.

b. Revelation 1:8:

(8) I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

5. By Him all things consist.

a. This is the continuation of all things in the universe.

b. Many Scientists out there do their best to explain how the world works or what it consists of, however there is something that remains a mystery to them or cannot explain, what holds it all together? For the believer, we have that answer. It's Jesus.

C. Jesus is head of the Church, v. 18.

1. Not only is the origin of the church in Him, but He is also the operator.
2. Pastors and elders are typically the ones seen in charge, but in a real church, Jesus is the one who is in charge!

D. He has preeminence in all things vv. 18-19.

1. This sums up the verses prior, He is superior to everything, and He is above all things.
2. It pleased the Father that Him should all fulness dwell.
 - a. This word fulness here means the sum total of all divine power and attributes.
 - b. To dwell here is no mere temporary stay, it's to remain permanently.
3. The bragging on Jesus just keeps piling up; we can see just how exalted He is and His character, it goes beyond that considering His character.

II. Jesus has done for us far and above what we deserve, vv. 20-23.

A. His work on the cross, v. 20

1. He made peace through the blood of His cross.
 - a. A not so peaceful event that brought us into peace with God.
 - b. It was not us who made peace with God, but Jesus who made it.
2. He reconciled all things to himself.

a. This means to restore relations, we were once enemies, now we are called friends of God.

b. The penalty of sin is solved once and for all by the cross – where His blood for sinners like me. Those who trust Him to be saved are no longer enemies with God.

B. His work inspite of the way we were vv. 21-23.

1. We were once alienated – separated from God because of our sin and hostility towards Him.

2. Once alienated means that in Jesus we are no longer alienated. The difference between a believer and a non-believer isn't merely forgiveness; there is a complete change of status.

3. Though Paul has never met these Colossian believers, that status of lost people and how saved people used to be is universal.

4. In the work of reconciliation, God didn't meet us halfway. God meets us all the way and offers it.

5. We can see two aspects of human need and God's salvation.

a. We can see God as the judge, and we are guilty before Him. Therefore, we need forgiveness and justification.

b. We can see God as our friend, and we have damaged our relationship with Him. Therefore, we need reconciliation.

6. By Jesus' death, as a result of reconciliation, we are presented holy, unblameable and unproveable in His sight. Set apart, unblemished and without accusation before Him.

7. A lot happens when a person is born again by putting their trust in Christ!
8. Paul then ends it with urging these believers to continue be grounded in the truths of the Gospel. The same Gospel by which we are saved.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Jesus is worth bragging on. If we wanted to tackle every detail about Jesus to add to bragging rights, we would be here awhile. He is creator, sustainer, almighty, savior, the self-existing one and transcends everything. Yet, the same one who is all of things mighty things loves people like us. He willingly gave His life for us. To brag on Him some more, He did not stay dead, He rose again three days later conquering death and sin once and for all and proving exactly who He said He was. That same person is also judge of the universe, if there has never been a time where you made the decision to put your trust in Jesus, all those things we read about in past tense are still present for you. He will judge righteously. If you would put your trust in Him, the Bible says with the heart man believes unto righteousness. If you would put your trust in Him to save you from your sin you will have eternal life. The trust is not to help you live a good life or take care of you, but to save you from your penalty sin has brought you. This decision changed my life forever 10 years ago. I've never met anyone who regretted trusting Jesus. If you want something to brag about, brag on Jesus.