

Worthy of Worship

(Colossians 1:12-23)

Introduction

Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning? Today we're going to be examining some characteristics of the one we worship. In case you didn't know His name is Jesus. With no doubt, the most important figure in all the world. If you were to approach people on the streets and just ask them a few things of what they know about Jesus Christ of the Bible. You will most likely hear things like: He is the Son of God; He is the Savior of the world, the Messiah; He was born of a virgin in a manger to Joseph and Mary. These are all true and great, but what if I said there's much more than that to know about Jesus? Something makes His title as Savior and Messiah more significant. Jesus is in the business of soul saving and changing lives for quite a while and He has quite the resume. Let me show you this morning just a few things about Jesus from God's Word. We'll be in Colossians 1:12-23 – one of my favorite texts.

Background

This letter was written by the Apostle Paul during his imprisonment in Rome, it is categorized as one of 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 Epaphras. This was someone Paul led to the Lord, disciplined, and sent out. It was a church that consisted primarily of Gentiles. Of course, a church consisting of Gentiles there was bound to have some issues slip in. False teaching from various kinds of beliefs began to enter the church. These consisted of false views of Jesus such as Him not really having a physical body, worshipping angels, circumcision,

and observing traditions. It seemed to be Jewish legalism combined with Hellenistic Pagan 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 unproveable 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

I. Jesus' resume, vv. 12-19.

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

(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:

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.” He qualified us as partakers in the saint’s inheritance.
 - b. In the OT, Canaan was the physical inheritance for God’s people. Believers today have a spiritual inheritance in Christ. Like Paul, us too can have that attitude of thankfulness. Being thankful for the wonderful things you have in Christ goes a long way rather than focusing on the things you don’t have.
 - c. Because it is an inheritance, it implies it wasn’t something earned.
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.
 - b. Rescued from the power of darkness - Satan’s rule and domain.
 - c. Something humanity would not like to acknowledge is the position everyone is in before knowing Jesus as Savior is a servant and child of the devil. Not literally of course, it’s the spiritual position you were in and what some you today may be in.

d. I've heard the words uttered "I don't even believe in Satan, so how can he be my master?" Satan is perfectly fine with that. Whether you believe he is out there or not, it doesn't negate this spiritual truth. This is what Jesus had told the lost pharisees.

(44) Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

d. 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. You're either a good one or a sorry one.

e. He is the deliverer. He rescues those who trust in Him.

3. Second, He translated us into His dear Son's kingdom.

a. The word here for "translated" was to describe deporting a population from one country into another.

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" shows us the value by the Father.

d. From darkness into His kingdom. We have a heavenly citizenship.

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. He is Redeemer.
5. Fourth, He has forgiven us.
 - a. Redemption and forgiveness go together. It means to cancel the debt owed. Through His precious blood shed for us, Christ has canceled an immeasurable debt that we owed.
 - 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. It is no wonder Paul says “Giving thanks unto the Father.”
 - f. He is preeminent in all these things, He alone is the only one who can do these things. He is worthy of worship.

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

(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.

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. The God-man.

- 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 in the way we use it today. Between my two kids, Elias is my first-born and Naomi is not. Why? He was simply born first. He also was physically born into this world having parents. First-born used in Scripture doesn’t mean this. It means first in rank.
- d. We’ll look at some examples. This is regarding King David.

Psalm 89:27 “Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.”

David was the youngest of eight from Jesse 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. He is the King of 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 He is not a part of creation.

b. Some have said “well, that was just Paul’s opinion.”

c. This way of thinking is starting to become more popular these days. To separate Jesus’ teachings from his Apostles as if they come to different conclusions from each other.

d. 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.

e. Some of taken the denial ever further to say regarding this: That’s what John said about Jesus.

f. If that still doesn’t convince someone, then we’ll simply see 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.

g. There are plenty of other passages this same truth: Jesus Christ is God. Don’t let anyone tell you that Jesus never claimed to be God and that only the apostles thought that. John 8 isn’t the only place.

- h. Not only are only things created by Him, but they are for Him. It is for His glory for whom they were made. He planned it, produced it and for His pleasure.

Proverbs 16:4 (4) The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

4. He is before all things.

- a. There is not a time where Christ did not exist.
- b. Revelation 1:8: A verse the Jehovah's witness new world translation forgot to corrupt.

(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?

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

(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.

- 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. Jesus has preeminence in all things vv. 18-19.

...that in all things he might have the preeminence. (19) For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

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 of all divine power and attributes.
 - b. To dwell here is not temporal, it is permanent.

II. Jesus' significant work with mankind vv. 20-23.

A. His work on the cross, v. 20.

(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.

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.

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 (18) And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

- a. This means to restore relations, we were enemies, now we are called friends of God. Christ was treated as if He had lived my life, and I was treated as if I lived His.

- b. The penalty of sin is solved once and for all by the cross – where His blood for sinners like me and you This is available not for us only, but for the world.

1 John 2:2 (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

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

(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 unproveable 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.

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 just one is forgiven; there is a complete change in identity.
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. We need to be justified and forgiven.

b. We can see God as our friend, and we have damaged our relationship with Him. We need to be reconciled.

6. By Jesus' death, because of being reconciled, we are presented holy, blameless, and unproveable in His sight.

7. Paul then ends his paragraph with urging these believers to continue be grounded in the truths of the Gospel. The same Gospel by which we are saved.

8. Paul had such a strong heart and burden for others to know this Gospel and to know who Jesus is. What about you?

Conclusion

Don't let these phony teachings sway you, Jesus is far better than all. He is worthy of worship 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. Not only did He give His life for unworthy sinners He conquered death and sin by rising from the grave. 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.

So, who is Jesus? – He is the Creator and Sustainer of the world. The Savior of the World, the Messiah foretold many years before He came, The Redeemer of the lost, the Restorer of the broken, the one in charge here at Lighthouse Baptist Church and every real church out there, and the Lord of all. Everything was made by Him and for Him. The one to whom we can entrust our lives and eternity. That is the kind of God I will choose to worship.