

**Ephesians 1: 22 & 23a; “Head over All Things”, Message # 9 in a series entitled – “The Exceeding Greatness of His Power”, a Bible Study prepared by Pastor Paul Rendall on May 29, 2019, for those gathered at his home.**

The last time we were together, I spoke to you about Christ’s dominion being established by God the Father because He has placed all things under Christ’s feet. Christ is presently reigning over all the earth; over all nations and kingdoms and people and all created things in heaven and earth. God the Father has exalted Him to His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named; in this present Church age. I said to you that He has been set over all the works of God’s hands, even though many do not now presently acknowledge Him to be their Lord or King. All things are subject to Him, and He is presently reigning over all things, but they are not yet subjected to Him in the ultimate or greatest sense of His church having dominion and spiritually reigning upon the earth. (This we saw from Hebrews 2: 5-9.) This I termed, the progressively successful aspect of Christ’s dominion, being established. Christ is reigning but His kingdom, His Church, is not reigning now, but she shall come to spiritually reign over all the earth as this age progresses. And so, we are here told here that this victorious dominion which is given to Christ by the Father directly relates to His Headship over the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fill all in all.

So, this evening we want to think about what the Father’s giving Christ to be head of all things to the church involves. It involves, 1<sup>st</sup> of all – The Father’s giving Christ to be Head to rule over all things in the Church. It means 2<sup>nd</sup> – The Father’s giving Christ to be Head to love, nurture and cherish her. And 3<sup>rd</sup> – It means that He has given Him to defend her and cause her spiritually to reign with Him. It was His purpose from the beginning, even from before the foundation of the world, to give His only-begotten Son to be her Head, and then, through Him, to promote her to all the different advancing stages of glory that He would have her to come to. All of this is the Father’s express intention, as set forth in the word of God.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – The Father’s giving Christ to be Head to rule over all things in the Church.**

“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church.” We see here that it was the Father’s purpose to sum up all things in Christ as it says in Ephesians 1: 10, in the American Standard and the New American Standard translations. In the ESV it says – “As a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.” But the greatest and most central focus of the Father’s purpose was, has been, and is, to give Christ to be head over all things to the church. In the Father’s appointment He gave Christ to be the only head of the Church to rule over her. No mere man like a pope, no earthly king with any sin could righteously rule in the way that is being described here. Christ was given as the Church’s only Head to rule over her in righteousness. Isaiah 32: 1-4 – “Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, And princes will rule with justice.” “A man will be as a hiding place from the wind, And a cover from the tempest, As rivers of water in a dry place, As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” “The eyes of those who see will not be dim, And the ears of those who hear will listen.” “Also the heart of the rash will understand knowledge, And the tongue of the stammerers will be ready to speak plainly.”

Now, who is this speaking of? Who is the king who will reign in righteousness, and who are the princes who will rule with justice? Certainly not Hezekiah of that day, and the princes who ruled with him; they fall so short of God’s glory, even the righteous among them. No, this is speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles as His princes. He who gave them His word, would rule His Church by His word which He would give to them. He would righteously rule over this spiritual kingdom and people, the church, composed of Jews and Gentiles according to God’s calling them to Himself. And we know that this is true, by the description of the King Himself. No mere man can be a hiding place from the wind and a cover from the tempest. But our righteous Head can be this, because He is both God and Man; two natures in one blessed Person. The Lord Jesus Christ, even

from the days of His earthly ministry, would come to be seen as a Man who would be a hiding place from the wind of the Father's anger and wrath against sin. He would be seen as a cover from the tempest of Satan's attacks and the spiritual oppression brought to the soul of a person by their being persecuted for righteousness sake. He would endure the storm of God's wrath on the cross, and He has overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil, on behalf of all who will trust in Him.

Christ's right to rule as Head over all things to the Church, both Old Testament and New, was determined by the Father establishing Him as a King ruling over a Mediatorial Kingdom in His people's hearts. There is a Kingdom over which God has always ruled; His essential and eternal Kingdom and rule over all men and all things. And then there is the Mediatorial Kingdom which the Father has given to the Son. If you want to turn over to 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 20-28 we will see this. "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead." "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." "But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming." "Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power." "For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet." "The last enemy that will be destroyed is death." "For "HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET." "But when He says 'all things are put under Him,' it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted." "Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

Now notice that these verses are set in the context of the resurrection. Christ is the first fruits of the certainty of the resurrection that will come. He is the first fruits of the great harvest of all people being raised from the dead on the last day. Each one in his own order; first Christ, then those who are Christ's at His Coming. Then comes the end. Notice this: One Coming of Jesus Christ, and then comes the end. Not Christ's Coming and then the Millennium as the Premillennialists would have us believe. But Christ comes and then the end. And when the end comes, that's when it says here that He will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and authority and power; that is, all those national authorities that have ruled upon the earth. For He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. And the last enemy that will be destroyed is death, and that will take place at Christ's Second Coming. When Christ comes back, then death will be destroyed. That's the logical conclusion here.

And then Paul goes on to explain here that the Father has put all things under Christ's feet. But when He says that all things are put under Him, it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted; that means the Father. Now when all things are made subject to Him, (implying that they are not presently all subject to Him), then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. I think that this couples with the verses in John which says that the Father has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father. (John 5: 22, 23) I think that we should think of it in this way. It is not as though the Father is not co-equal with the Son, or the Son with the Father, but in terms of the Mediatorial Kingdom, the Kingdom given by the Father to the Son, the Son is the Head over all things to the Church. You and I need to see that connection. It's good for us in terms of our salvation, and it's good for us in terms of our eschatology; to learn about last things, like Paul talks about here, and to understand them correctly.

Christ has a right to rule as Head over all things to the Church, in both Old Testament and New. And this was determined by God the Father's establishing Him as a King ruling over a Mediatorial spiritual kingdom in people's hearts. Those who believe in Him, as it says back there in Isaiah 32, would not have dim spiritual eyesight; they would see the truth about the kingdom of God being entered by faith in Christ. Their ears would listen and hear because they would be born again, and they would come to understand knowledge; that is, the knowledge of the gospel; that it would not be by works of righteousness which they had done, but according to His mercy He would save

them, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3: 5) This all would come about for all of the elect, for all believers, by the Father's sending the Son into the world as the only Mediator between God and men. He came into this world as a King, and He went to the cross as a King.

Turn with me over to John 18, verses 33-37. Here we find Jesus before Pilate, and it says – “Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, ‘Are You the King of the Jews?’ “Jesus answered him, ‘Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?’” “Pilate answered, ‘Am I a Jew?’” “Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me.” “What have You done?” “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world.” “If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.” “Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then’” “Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king.’” “For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.” “Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” You see, the Lord Jesus was ruling as a King even in His state of humiliation and suffering for righteousness and truth so that we could be saved. His kingdom was not from this world but was, and is, a spiritual kingdom which was inherently in His righteous Person, and He brought that kingdom down to earth in His Person so that we might be saved, and that we would then acknowledge God's righteous rule over us.

You see, when the God of heaven set up Christ's Mediatorial kingdom, (Daniel 2: 44) He knew that it could not be anyone else except His Son who would rule over it. He knew that it must be a perfectly righteous Ruler, who must be appointed to rule over Christ's Church. This Ruler would have to perfectly fulfill all of His holy law on behalf of all of all of the people who would be called by His name. The first man Adam had been a Representative Head; he stood in the place of all men who would descend from him. If he stood, they also would stand in him, and be confirmed forever in their original righteousness. If he fell, they all would fall in Him. Well, we know that he did not stand. And so God, knowing all things, knew that in His gift of His Son, He must needs give us, who are fallen in Adam, another Representative Head, One who would stand and be confirmed in righteousness on our behalf.

Now Christ always was righteous, but what He did was that He worked out a righteousness for us, by His obedience to God's law as a Man. We need to see that because it is a part of the Mediatorial work of our Lord Jesus Christ. And Christ has always savingly ruled over God's true people in a Mediatorial kingdom, a kingdom of grace, ever since the foundation of the world, in one sense, because of the promise of Genesis 3: 15, and what He would do to purchase salvation for all of the elect. And this saving grace, that which He had purchased, would be conveyed to all of His people in relation to their faith in Him, and what He would come to do for them; fulfill all righteousness in their place, and suffer in their place as their surety; the One who would pay their sin-debt so that their sins could be remitted. What is to remit something financially? It means that you pay the entire bill or debt. And that is what Christ did for us who believe in Him.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> – Let's consider the Father's giving Christ to be Head to love and nurture the Church.**

“He gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body...” So we have the metaphors of the head and the body given to us here in reference to Christ and His Church. This shows us that there is a loving spiritual interaction between Christ and the Church which is well pictured in an earthly sense by marriage. Ephesians chapter 5, verses 22-32 – “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” “Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.” “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” “So husbands

ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.” “For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.” “For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.” “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.” “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

So the apostle Paul delineates for us that in a marital relationship that the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the Church; and He is the Savior of the body. The body is a spiritual word picture for all of God’s elect people who are spiritually “in” Him and who are united to Him in their spirit by faith. So the body is all elect persons, all believers in Christ in Old Testament and New Testament times. But since Christ’s resurrection, this truth is so much more apparent because Christ came in the flesh and accomplished redemption and has given us all of the New Testament Scriptures to tell us more about our relationship with Christ, both as individual believers and as the Church Universal which is composed of churches of believers, each one individually is considered as a body with members, spiritually speaking. In the Universal Church Christ is the head of the body and the body is composed of those elect persons both in heaven and earth; the whole family of God. The church on earth is composed of visible saints who hopefully belong to an individual local church of believers; they becoming a member of that body of believers. But Paul is speaking in these verses of the bigger picture of the Universal Church. The Universal Church of visible saints here on earth is seen in those believers who become members of a local church.

The Church on earth is to be subject to Christ as her risen, living Head, even as earthly wives should be to their husbands. Husbands should love their wives in a Christ-like way, by giving themselves for them, even as Christ laid down His life for the Church. When Christ laid down His life for the Church, He did so out of His great love for her. He gave Himself for her so that He might sanctify her, (set her apart to Himself to give her His grace which will enable her to love Him and serve Him in the way of holiness and righteousness in accordance with the truth of the word. He sanctifies her and cleanses her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy. But in order that she might attain to this goal, it says in verse 29, that Christ nourishes her and cherishes her. He gives his church the spiritual food of His word, and by the influences of His Holy Spirit, He conveys His love to all the members of His spiritual body the Church; conveying life and light to them, helping them experientially to have close fellowship with Himself in prayer and meditation upon His word. He draws near to them to encourage and strengthen them; oftentimes when they least expect it.

Song of Solomon 5: 1 and 2 – “I have come to my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk.” Eat, O friends! Drink, yes, drink deeply, O beloved ones!” “I sleep, but my heart is awake; It is the voice of my beloved!” “He knocks, saying, ‘Open for me, my sister, my love, My dove, my perfect one; For my head is covered with dew, My locks with the drops of the night.” In these verses you can behold a picture of Christ as the Head of the Church coming to have close and intimate fellowship with His Beloved. He is pictured as coming to the garden of your heart, dear believer, having gathered His myrrh with His spice. The gathering of Christ’s myrrh with His spices is His gathering, His collecting to His own mind, all of the sufferings and service which you have gone through on His behalf, all of the tears and perplexity of mind, that He so clearly sees. After this gathering, He then becomes your Advocate with the Father and He intercedes on your behalf before the Father, so that your prayers can be heard.

The honey and the honeycomb being gathered by Christ is His noticing and remembering everything sweet in relation to your love to Him; your inward feelings of love for Him and what He has done for you, and the outward manifestation of your love to Him in devotion and good works;

like the honey and the honeycomb. He drinks in the wine of your love for Him in your reading of the Bible and committing it to your heart. He recalls all of your prayers to Him that you might keep His commandments. He drinks in the milk of your real obedience to the simple truths of His Word; when you are a younger Christian, and your holding fast to those truths when you are an older Christian. And He becomes a partaker of these spiritual realities in your heart and in your conduct every day. He takes notice of all your prayers in all of these things. All of this, is His nourishing and cherishing you individually, as a spiritual Husband does His wife, and His being a Head over all things to His Church.

**3<sup>rd</sup> – The Father’s giving Christ to be Head over all things to the Church means that He has given Him to defend her and cause her spiritually to reign with Him.**

Just a couple of sections of verses to stimulate your thinking in this regard. First Daniel chapter 7, verses 23-27. “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces.’” “The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom.” “And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings.” “He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law.” “Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.” “But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever.” “Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.” “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

Here we see the fourth beast which is Rome purposes to become the main persecuting power, under Satan’s hand, of the Church of Jesus Christ. This has been proven throughout the history of the Church since its foundation was laid by the apostles and prophets. Pagan Rome first, through 10 successive Roman emperors until 325 A.D when Constantine came to power and the Empire became generally Christian. And then Papal Rome through the 1260 years or time, times, and a half a time prophetic fulfillment; which years are still fulfilling. But, it says in verse 26, the court of the Lord’s judgment shall sit, and Antichrist’s dominion will be taken away, to consume and destroy it over this time period that we are presently in, in this Church age. When it comes to an end, then the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven; that is in all the nations of the world, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High; that is, to the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. And all dominions shall serve and obey Christ. This time period, within this Church age, is yet to come and shall come, at a certain point of God’s the Father’s determining of when it should come.

Look with me also at Revelation 20, verses 1-4. “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.” “He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished.” “But after these things he must be released for a little while.” “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them.” “Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”

We see here the fulfillment of the verses that we looked at in the book of Daniel. The way that the saints finally triumph over Satan’s greatest deceptions; His great systematic schemes and deceptions, like Mohammedanism and Roman Catholicism and all the false religions and isms in the world today, is when he will be bound by an angel who comes down from heaven. This angel has the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. This, in my opinion, can be none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. He lays hold of Satan and binds him for a thousand years; a

particular time within this present Church age, not the whole Church age. And you can see here, that he must be released for a little time at the end of the thousand years. And then, you see thrones and those who sat upon them, and judgment was committed to them. The martyrs come to life, spiritually, in these people of the thousand years; the souls, it talks about there, not the bodies. It is not a literal resurrection. These generations of saints, during the time of the Millennium, will experience this tremendous pouring out of the Spirit and the Binding of Satan, for however long it will be. (I believe that the 1000 years are literal.) And they live and reign spiritually upon the earth, the gospel and the word of God prevailing during that time exceedingly. This is what I believe it means when it says that He, our Lord Jesus Christ has had all things put under His feet, and the Father giving Him to be head over all things to the church; to be her defender and the One who will cause His Church to reign with Him; His Church reigning because His is the Kingdom and the glory forever, and He would have us His Church share in it.