

Sermon Notes Col 1:15 to 23

1/5/2022

Summary: The exalted Christ. Jesus is the true human and the true Image of God. God, humankind and the world are to be understood through Jesus Christ. He makes the invisible God visible; he fulfils God's reconciling purposes on the cross, he is God's agent in creation and redemption (NT Wright, TNTC, p 80).

V. 15. 'First born' – OT – Israel Ex. 4:22; Jer. 31:9 and coming Davidic Messiah Ps. 89:27. Idea of priority in time and rank v. 16. Humanity was the climax of the first creation (Gen. 1:26-27), the humanity of Jesus brings the first creation to a climax and inaugurates the new creation. In Jesus Christ we discover true divinity and true humanity.

V. 16-17. The Son's pre-existence is stated 'he is before all things' as well as through him all things in heaven and earth were created. As the second Person of the Trinity the Son is, along with the Father and the Spirit, one God, the original creator of all. The Son is the goal of creation, and the One who continues to sustain it.

V. 18. The Son is the head of the Church, which is His body (1 Cor. 12:12-27) - united with its head. In rising from the dead, the Son is the first of the new creation. By conquering death Christ has shown that he has dealt with human sin. The Son, as God's agent of redemption on the cross, inaugurates the new creation.

V. 19. The man, Jesus Christ, is also truly divine having all the fullness of God dwelling in him. Jesus Christ is the means by which God reconciled 'all things' to Himself. This is achieved through the blood (the death) of Jesus Christ shed on the cross. 'All things' emphasises the scope of God's reconciliation. Humankind's reconciliation occurs through faith and baptism (Gal. 3:26-27; Col. 2:9-12).

V. 22. God has reconciled us 'by Christ's physical body' (Jesus Christ shares our bodily existence). – 'through death' (Christ's atoning death for us on the cross). Being reconciled to God is a present reality for believers, but they are to live as new people.

V. 23 *'If you continue in your faith... and do not move from the hope set out in the Gospel'*. This is the gospel – Jesus Christ is the good news. The gospel is about who he is and what he has achieved for us. In and through the Son, God has dealt with sin and death and has brought reconciliation. The church (Christian community) is made up of those who have put their trust in God's reconciling work in Christ, continue to have faith in Christ's atoning work and hold firm to the hope of the gospel – peace with God now and forever (eternal life in God's new creation).

Reflection/Response. List all the things that the Son has achieved and the statements about who he is. How do we live as reconciled people? BB