

The Supremacy of Christ

Key Verse: “*It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.*”
—Colossians 1:19

Selected Scripture:
Colossians 1:15-20

THE INFINITE NATURE OF

God is attested by the following declaration: “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” (Ps. 90:12) In considering the exalted position which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has attained, we are reminded that

he was a created being. Also, we recall the fact that he did not exist during the interval between his death on the cross and his subsequent resurrection by the power of God. By contrast, however, the Heavenly Father, as the Creator and Self-Existing One, is without beginning or end.—John 5:19-26; Rev. 3:14; I Cor. 8:4-6

In today's lesson, Paul's prayer is for believers in Colossae and, by extension, for all the saints throughout the Gospel Age. His desire is that we express gratitude for the privilege of being invited to joint heirship with Christ in his coming kingdom as a result of being delivered from the power of darkness. Such deliverance is based upon an acceptance of the meritorious sacrifice of Jesus and the transforming influence of the Holy Spirit, which activates the lives of God's spirit-begotten children.—Col. 1:12-14

As the only direct creation of the Heavenly Father, Paul elaborates further concerning the exalted position

Jesus Christ holds in the arrangements of God's plan. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 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: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 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." (vss. 15-18) Then, in our Key Verse, Paul asserts that as a result of Christ's having received such exaltation from the Father, he now has all power and authority to execute every aspect of God's eternal purpose.

A major aspect of God's plan is to have Christ Jesus effect a ministry of reconciliation that ultimately will bring all intelligent beings into harmony with the Heavenly Father's will. Over two thousand years ago a heavenly message was given which still awaits complete fulfillment concerning a Savior for mankind. (Luke 2:8-11) These good tidings were for all people, including past, present, and future generations. The Scriptures indicate that Jesus not only died as a satisfaction for the sins of those who already have accepted him as their Savior, but also for those who have not yet thus recognized him. (I John 2:1,2) The Bible teaches that a heavenly reward is offered to faithful followers of Jesus during this present Gospel Age. Human perfection on earth is set forth as the hope for the rest of mankind who lead righteous lives in God's kingdom and come into full heart-harmony with his laws.

In all of these undertakings, the supremacy of Christ is emphasized to such a degree that at the end of the kingdom, death itself will be destroyed. Mankind will have then come back into harmony with the divine purpose, at which time even Christ Jesus will be subject to the Heavenly Father, that God may be all in all.—I Cor. 15:24-28 ■