

CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL FOR THE CHURCH AS THE NEW MAN

Message One

The Centrality and Universality of Christ

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:15-17, 19, 27; 2:9; 3:4, 11 Eph. 1:10, 22-23

I. The centrality and universality of Christ refers to Christ being the center and being everything:

- A. As in a great wheel, Christ is the hub, the center, and Christ is the rim, the circumference—cf. Ezek. 1:15.
- B. God's intention is that Christ would be everything.

II. Five items concerning Christ as everything in God's intention:

- A. Christ in the Godhead:
 - 1. Among the three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, Christ is the center.
 - 2. All that the Father has planned and purposed is in the Son, for the Son, and through the Son.
 - 3. All that the Spirit is doing also is for the Son in order to witness for the Son, to glorify the Son, and to make the Son real to us—John 16:13-15.
 - 4. All the fullness of the Godhead is pleased to dwell in Christ bodily—Col. 1:19; 2:9.
 - 5. Christ is the image of God and the impress of God's substance—1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4b; Heb. 1:3a.
- B. Christ in God's plan:
 - 1. In God's plan, Christ is the Head to head up all things—Eph. 1:10.
 - 2. The phrase *to head up all things in Christ* in Ephesians 1:10 indicates the divine economy.
- C. Christ in God's creation:
 - 1. In God's creation Christ is the first, the One who has preeminence among all creatures—Col. 1:15b.
 - 2. In the old creation all things were created in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ—v. 16.
 - 3. Furthermore, all things cohere, subsist together, and are compacted as one in Christ—v. 17b.
- D. Christ in the new creation:
 - 1. The new creation is something of the old creation that has died and resurrected into life to have a fresh beginning in newness.
 - 2. The new creation is the church.
 - 3. Christ is the Firstborn of the new creation and the Head of the church, the Body—Col. 1:18.
 - 4. He is also the constituent of the Body—He is all the members and in all the members of the Body—Col. 3:11.
 - 5. The Body itself is Christ—1 Cor. 12:12.
- E. Christ in the Christian life:
 - 1. The Christian life must be a life that is Christ Himself expressed through us.
 - 2. The real humility and loveliness of a Christian must be Christ Himself.

III. The enemy's subtlety in bringing in distractions and substitutions:

- A. Religion with its forms and regulations.

- B. Doctrines, knowledge, teachings, and theology.
- C. Gifts, miracles, and power.

IV. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the centrality and universality, the center and circumference, of God's economy—Col. 1:15-27; Eph. 1:10:

- A. In God's economy Christ is everything; God wants Christ and Christ alone—the wonderful, preeminent, all-inclusive Christ, who is all and in all—Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:10-11.
- B. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the center of God's economy; God's dispensing is altogether related to Christ and focused on Him—Eph. 3:17a.
- C. God's intention in His economy is to work the wonderful, all-inclusive, extensive Christ into our being as our life and our everything that we may become the corporate expression of the Triune God—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11:
 - 1. Christ is the center of God and all things; all things are ours for the church; the church is for Christ to be His Body, and Christ is for God to be His expression—Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 3:21b-23.
 - 2. The all-inclusive Christ is God's center, God's centrality and universality, in the church as Christ's fullness for His expression—Eph. 1:22-23:
 - a. Christ is the centrality and universality of God and of His move in the divine economy.
 - b. Christ is the center and circumference of God's economy for the producing of His fullness for His expression—3:8, 17, 19b.
 - c. Our heart must be touched by God's center, the centrality and universality of Christ, regarding God's economy—Col. 1:15-19; 2:2, 9; 3:4, 10-11.