



## **The Supremacy of Christ**

### **Message Notes, July 1, 2018**

Pastor Keith and Pastor Derrick revisit our corporate “theme” for the year 2013, when we focused our attention on the five-fold work of Christ: Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension and Return. This captures the heart of our faith as a church – that Jesus is supreme!

Supremacy vs. Centrality: Jesus is pretty central in our Bible Belt culture. Most believe about him. He is a generally accepted sentimental, religious figure. While he is central in our religious thinking, he is mostly tame and requires little of us. Supremacy, on the other hand, moves Jesus beyond cultural centrality to universal, eternal Lordship that beckons our worship and bids us “come, die, and follow.”

#### **1. Incarnation**

- We worship a God who comes to us, rather than us trying to toil and strain to reach up to Him.
- Genesis 3:8-9 – After their failure, Adam and Eve have hidden in the garden; the Lord comes walking there to find them. He calls out to them – “where are you?” (a loving, imploring, inviting call).
- John 1:14 – John captures well the essence of the incarnation: “And the Word [Jesus] took on flesh and moved into the neighborhood” (The Message paraphrase).
- God’s choice to pursue us “up close, in person” expresses several meaningful things:
  - The high value He places on us. (He made us. We are His. We are worth redeeming!)
  - The great depths to which He is willing to go to reach us.
  - The great lengths He is willing to go to demonstrate His love for us.
  - The great longing He has to reveal Himself to us.

#### **2. Crucifixion**

- The cross is the central symbol of the Christian faith, but it has become so beautified and familiar that society (and even the church) has become dull to the reality and meaning of the cross.
- The cross was a horrific means of execution, designed for excruciating, prolonged and humiliating suffering.
- The true nature of the cross reminds us of:
  - The gravity of sin. The horror of the cross reveals the ugliness and destructive impact of sin.
  - The costliness of redemption. Jesus gave his very life. He willingly suffered wrath, judgment, and the experience of Hell (separation and absolute aloneness). God surrendered His beloved son (pure and holy) to unimaginable suffering.
- Romans 5:8-10 – All for our sakes, our forgiveness, our reconciliation back to God.

#### **3. Resurrection**

- The cross was not the end – Jesus was raised to life on the third day!
- Resurrection not only brings Jesus back to life and vindicates His divinity; it also declares to us our hope for new life, beginning now and lasting forever. We are freed from sin to live!

- 1 Corinthians 15:3-9 – Here Paul tells of Jesus’ appearances to specific people after His resurrection, thereby expressing the resurrection life that comes to us through Christ:
  - Peter – forgiven from his denial of Jesus and empowered to be “the rock” of the church
  - Paul – forgiven of persecuting the church and called to be a missionary to the Gentiles
  - “The twelve” – who had hidden in fear but were empowered to proclaim Jesus “among the nations”
  - “500 of the brothers” who had scattered in despair but became the foundational members of the church.
- Colossians 2:12-13 expresses, through the experience of baptism, that “we are raised to walk in newness of life.”

#### 4. Ascension

- At its core, this “work” captures the authority of Jesus, who has ascended and “now sits at the right hand of God the Father” (Ephesians 1:18-21).
- His “sitting” conveys that Jesus has completed his work (of redemption) and now He reigns over all “rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given. ... All things are placed under His feet.” Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.
- We still have the freedom to live under His Lordship or not, but one day “every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Philippians 2:10). For those who have refused to honor him as Lord in their earthly life, this will be a terrifying day!
- One other aspect of this “ascension work” is that “we have been seated with Christ in the heavenlies” (Eph 2:6-7). We have been given His authority in this life to overcome our enemy, the devil, and his works of evil. In Jesus’ authority, we are victors, not victims. In His authority, we are overcomers, not ones overcome.

#### 5. His Return

- He has promised to return. Scripture echoes this as well. We look forward to it, and while we wait, there is work to do! There is a global field, “white with harvest.”
- There are scholars who study eschatology (the end times), and there is value in this, but no one knows the hour of His return – not the angels or even Jesus Himself. Only God the Father knows.
- What we do know is:
  - Our King is coming back.
  - There will be a judgment of all humanity.
  - Satan will be vanquished and banished.
  - God’s eternal kingdom will be established forever.

How do we respond to all this? Derrick told a parable of four demons debating the best way to undermine God’s kingdom in the world. Each offered a different strategy:

- We can lie that God is dead.
- We can tell them that the Bible is false.
- We can convince them that Jesus is not the Son of God.



- Satan rebuts each of these strategies as ineffective, but the fourth demon says, “We can simply tell people that they have all the time in the world.” “Ah yes,” Satan replies, “I believe this might do the trick.”

Jesus is supreme. He is Lord today. He offers forgiveness, redemption, new life, authority and an eternal hope *today!* Today is the day of salvation and new life. Don't wait!

We ended the message by reading together, as worship to our Savior King, the declaration of His Supremacy in Colossians 1:15-20.