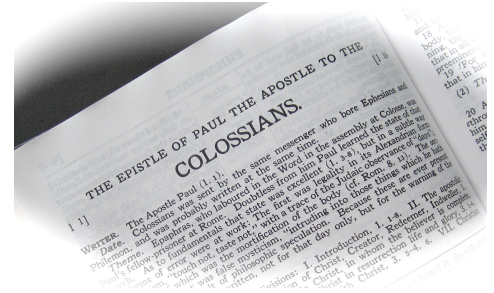


# Christ in All The Scriptures

## Colossians

### Introduction

There are those tightly packed passages of Scripture which are divine declarations of the transcendent glories of the person, passion, power, and preeminence of Christ such as Phil. 2:6-11; Heb. 1:1-3; and Col. 1:12-22; 2:9-15. All these, and in many more, the Lord is shown in every work and way to be unequalled and without peer. Like all other Christological passages, those we are considering on Colossians are too vast and profound for any mind, human, angelic, or demonic, to comprehend. Such is the fulness of the Lord that only the Father can comprehend Him (Matt. 11:27). He is the incomparable Christ.



There was always a reason the Holy Spirit gave an enriching description of Christ, and the reason in Colossia was because the saints were facing very dark doctrinal and practical storms. There was infiltrating among them, false teachers who were proclaiming that salvation depended, to some degree, on works because of the insufficiency of the work of Christ who was not fully God but the lowest manifestation of Him, and that He was not Deity. Some of the teachings were Judaist. For instance, the observance of Sabbaths, etc., others were the mixture of Judaism and paganism, the philosophies of men, human rationale, and still others were of asceticism. This was very serious for it degraded Christ, belittled His work, and made man in part responsible for his own salvation. This was an evil satanic teaching which is still prevalent today and has been accepted by the masses since the time of Cain. It is the teaching that Christ is not God, His work is not sufficient, and man must do something to earn salvation. Such teachings are degrading Christ and His work. It is against this background that the Holy Spirit has Paul write Colossians.

Another observation is had they understood the truths of Romans and Ephesians this satanic teaching would never have gotten a foothold. The gospel of Romans and Ephesians is that salvation is by faith alone. Faith is not a work, and those who are saved and justified by faith are kept by the Lord and God. While many knew these truths intellectually, deceptive talking had them swaying. To solidify the saints Paul writes Colossians and these great presentations of Christ as incomparable.

### The Incomparable Christ

The first observation is the repeated word “is”. Just as John repeats the expression “I AM,” at times indicating the deity of the Lord by the words which follow, or declares the Lord’s actuality and permanence by the word “WAS” (Jn. 1:1-4) so Paul now uses the word “IS” of Christ. By its use the Spirit is stressing the unshakable unbestowed and untransferable permanency of the person, power, and preeminence of Christ. In Col. 2:10 it is stated: “Which is the Head”. Since the context is dealing with the person of Christ and as in chapter 1:15, 18, the word ought to be “who”. Christ is not a thing, therefore, chapter 2:10 will be under the expression, “Who is”, which follows.

#### a) Who is.

- i) “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1:15)
- ii) “And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:10)
- iii) “When Christ, (who is) our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:4)

#### b) He is

- i) “And He is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:17)
- ii) “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” (Col. 1:18)

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- c) What a delightful meditation it is to muse on He who “was” (Jn. 1:1-4); who “is” (Col. 1:15); and who “being” (Phil. 2:6; Heb. 1:3). Then adding to them John’s rich comment: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Rev. 1:8). Gloriously rich beyond all comprehension.

#### The Three Christological Statements of Colossians

Colossians declares three of the greatest statements concerning Christ in all the New Testament. They are:

- a) “For it pleased *the Father* that in Him should all fulness dwell” (Col. 1:19)
- b) “For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God head bodily” (Col. 2:9)
- c) “Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:11)

I am not concerned at the moment on the reasons for these expressions but on some of the magnificent truths contained in them.

- a) “For it pleased *the Father* that in Him should all fulness dwell” (Col. 1:19).
  - i) So often this verse is taken to teach the deity of the Lord, and while it does that, it is only in a secondary level. Just as Phil. 2:6-8 is not primarily teaching the incarnation, but the attitude of Christ toward others as seen in his condescension and suffering for them. Likewise, Colossians declares the fulness of Christ in being all that is needed for creation and redemption, and He could only be that if He is God.
    - 1. Only by Christ and His work can:
      - (a) God make of us “meet (made us fit spiritually and ultimately morally to be part of such an illustrious gathering) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12).
      - (b) God deliver us from the power of darkness and translate us into the kingdom of his dear Son (Col. 1:13).
    - 2. Only Christ can:
      - (a) Redeem and provide the foundation for forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14)
      - (b) Be the Creator of all things and governmental positions (Col. 1:16)
      - (c) Be the Maintainer by whom all things consist, that is hold together (Col. 1:17)
      - (d) Have the qualifications to be the Head for the Body (Col. 1:18)
      - (e) He has broken the power of Satan and death by being the firstborn from the dead (Col. 1:18)
      - (f) Does all fulness dwell, and this was pleasing to the Father, everything connected with Christ is pleasing to the Father. Consider God’s comment on Christ after the thirty years of silence: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased” (eudokeo) (Matt. 3:17). On the mount of transfiguration during His years of ministry God said: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased “eudokeo” (Matt. 17:5); prophetically God said of Him: “Behold my servant in whom my soul delighteth” (Isa. 42:1). Therefore, concerning His Person, His role, and His abilities, God is well pleased.
      - (g) Had the ability to make peace by the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20) laying the foundation for reconciliation.
      - (h) Is able to “present you holy and unblameable” in the sight of God (Col. 1:22)
  - ii) It will be seen from the context that Paul is dealing with the comforting and assuring truth that whatever is needed for our spiritual enrichment and completeness, whatever position He is given, all that is needed is found in Him.

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- b) Colossians 2:9 is a different context and it does teach the deity of the Lord. “For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).
- i) We need to understand that some of these false teachers believed in a distant God who did not communicate himself directly to humanity, but that God was manifested in depreciating levels until eventually the lowest level was man. They would, to a degree, agree that Jesus was God but only on the lowest possible level, far removed from what God really is. This the Holy Spirit strongly argues against by declaring: “In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”.
  - ii) There are several words which need clarification for an individual to grasp that which is being said.
    - 1. For:
      - (a) By saying “For” the Spirit is linking this truth with the warning which has been mentioned in verse 8. That is, “Beware lest any man spoil you . . . for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”. Likewise, the word “And” at the beginning of the following verse indicates that all that Christ is in His moral perfections as the glorified man are ours, thus nothing else is needed.
    - 2. In Him dwelleth.
      - (a) That is “Christ” by the multi use of that title in the contexts (ch. 2:2, 5, 8, 11, 17, 20) and the Lord is never called “Jesus” in Colossians without the name “Christ” (ch. 1:1), “Lord Jesus Christ” (ch. 1:2).
      - (b) Dwelleth. The word signifies permanency resides, thus never having a starting point and will never end.
    - 3. Fulness of the Godhead
      - (a) This is the same word translated “fulness” as in chapter 1:19. Due to the following expression “Godhead” it means that every perfection that the Godhead is, is permanently residing in Christ.
      - (b) By using the word “all” there is signified that there is not a single feature, attribute of the Godhead not found in Christ in completeness. He does not have the characteristics of the Godhead in a degree, but every characteristic, grace, and perfection is in its fulness residing in Him. The word “Godhead” indicates the very essence of God.
- c) Colossians is the only writing where of Christ it is said: “Christ is all and in all” (ch. 3:11). When Paul is writing concerning the eternal state he wrote: “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28) and showing that God will be all in all. Here it is different: “Christ is all and in all”.

#### Colossians 1:12

Taking one of these clauses we stand in amazement at the fulness of Christ in His sacrifice which enabled God to have: “Made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12). Who, other than Christ, could have laid the foundation for such blessings. He has:

- a) Made:
  - i) Not in the sense to force us allowing no decision making of our own
  - ii) Made in the sense of conforming us to be meet to be partakers
  - iii) Paul writes that God has “made us able ministers” (2 Cor. 3:6)
- b) Meet:
  - i) We have been fully qualified, and authorized. The Greek tense of the word translated “meet” in this context means that which happened at a particular point of time. It refers to the moment of their salvation when they were made suitable to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. This teaches that our qualifying is not a process but an instantaneous act. Being qualified is not an enablement by some doing of

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- our own to reach the standard (Rom. 3:23), but by the work of Christ bestowed upon us in righteousness, we have the standard of being qualified to be partakers of the inheritance.
- ii) This is more than given a position, it means morally qualified by:
    - 1. What He has accomplished for us:
      - (a) Delivering us from the power of darkness
      - (b) Translating us into the kingdom of the Son of His love
      - (c) By redemption
      - (d) The forgiveness of sins
    - 2. Through whom He has accomplished this work for us:
      - (a) He who is the image of God the Firstborn of all creation
        - (1) For all things were made by Him, and for Him
        - (2) He is before all things and by Him all things consist
        - (3) He is the head of the body
        - (4) The Beginning the firstborn from the dead
          - a. That in all things He might have the preeminence and in Him all fulness dwells (Col. 1:18-19)
- c) To be partakers of the inheritance:
    - i) Partakers, to have an allotment. The tribes each had an allotment, an area designated as belonging to them. Likewise in the gathering of the saints we have been given a place.
    - ii) Israel was given an inheritance (Deut. 4:38); we have an inheritance in Heaven (1 Pet. 1:4); Christ has an inheritance in us (Eph. 1:18); world domination (Psa. 2:8); and the kingship of Israel (Jn. 1:49; 12:13 ).
  - d) In light:
    - i) Light (“phōs”), it indicates underived and absolute light.
    - ii) Does this mean in the light of God’s character, for He is light, or is it we have been made partakers in righteousness, for nothing God does is in darkness.
      - 1. We have been called into “His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9)
      - 2. We are “children of light” (Lk. 16:8; Jn. 12:36; 1 Thess. 5:5)
      - 3. The preposition “en” indicates “remaining in”, indicating we are permanently “partakers of the inheritance in the light” and that is our position for all eternity.

### Summary

Chapter 3:11 is a glorious summary of that which has gone before. Christ is all you need for salvation (ch. 1:12-14); nothing else is needed (ch. 2:4-10); and there is no distinction nationally, ceremonially, culturally, and socially for “Christ is all and in all” (ch. 3:11). He is the incomparable Christ for He is:

- a) All that is needed for redemption (ch. 1:13-14)
- b) All that is needed for reconciliation (ch. 1:20-21)
- c) All that is needed for my perfect presentation (ch. 1:22)
- d) Without peer in that which the Father has been able to accomplish by Him (ch. 1:12-14)
- e) Without equal in position (ch. 1:15)
- f) Without equivalent in ability (ch. 1:16-17)
- g) Without comparable in position (ch. 1:18-19)
- h) Without contemporary in His ability (ch. 1:20-22)

Glorious it is to be able to sing the words of Josiah Conder:

Thou art the Everlasting Word, the Father’s only Son,  
God manifestly seen and heard, and heaven's beloved One.

In Thee, most perfectly expressed, the Father’s glories shine,  
Of the full Deity possessed, eternally divine.

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But the high myst'ries of Thy Name an angel's grasp transcend;  
The Father only—glorious claim!— the Son can comprehend.

Throughout the universe of bliss the center Thou, and Sun,  
The eternal theme of praise is this, to heaven's beloved One.

Worthy, O Lamb, of God, art Thou,  
That every knee to Thee should bow.

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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia