

Colossians 1:13-20

Dear Christians Led by our Supreme King:

Do you like Taco Bell's taco *supreme*? Have you listened to the music of Diana Ross and the *Supremes*? What do you think of the United States *Supreme* Court? The word "supreme" comes from the Latin root "*superus*," meaning above or over. The word "superior" shares the same root. The dictionary defines "supreme" as "*the highest in rank or quality.*" Simply put, it means the best and greatest of all. Now, I don't know if the taco supreme or Diana Ross' singing group are the greatest of all, but it sure is true that Jesus is greatest of all: "***He is the head of the body, the church...so that in everything he might have the supremacy!***"

This *Christ the King* week, the last week of the church year before we begin anew in Advent, we'll use Paul's words to remind us that ***Jesus Is Supreme Over All Things.*** (1) ***Supreme over all creation*** (2) ***Supreme over his church*** (3) ***Supreme in the resurrection.***

1

We live in a strange day and age when even many people in some Christian churches are trying to "de-god" Jesus. They claim that modern minds reject the notion of a man being God, so they dumb Jesus down to make him "more believable." You know the whole routine: They say that Jesus was a great man, a great prophet, a great teacher, a social justice warrior -- but certainly not God.

That, of course, flies squarely in the face of what the Bible teaches: "***He is the image of the invisible God.***" In the next chapter Paul writes, "***In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form***" (2:9). We read in Hebrews (1:3), "***The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.***" In other words, if you want to know what God is like, just look at and listen to Jesus. In the words of the Nicene Creed, written by early Christians 1,700 years ago to defend the truth that Christ is truly God: Jesus is "***God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made...***" Where did the early Christians get those words? Right here from Colossians chapter 1: "***For by him all things were created.***" In fact, this section of Colossians before us today is thought to be one of the most ancient creeds (confessions of faith) of the Christian Church.

Jesus is supreme over all creation. Without his sustaining force, the world and universe would fly apart into chaos. "***He is before all things*** (that is, eternal), ***and in him all things hold together.***" The orderliness of the universe, the laws of nature, the mathematical precision of the planets, the remarkable construction of our bodies (*examples of 60,000 miles of blood vessels and billions of miles of DNA*), the flabbergasting "spookiness" (Einstein's term) of quantum mechanics -- all these are expressions of Christ's will. The universe is this way because our supreme Jesus made it this way. "***For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible...all things were created by him and for him.***" Angels, demons, presidents, kings, mullahs, popes -- all earthly authorities are ultimately subject to the King of kings and Lord of lords. As Paul says in Romans (8:39), nothing "***will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***" He is the supreme power over all creation.

2

He is also supreme over his Church. "***He is the head of the body, the church.***" A body can't live without the head. Neither can the Church exist without its Head, Jesus. Using another picture: "***He is the vine, we are the branches.***" Spiritual life flows from him to you and me.

Christ's supreme power was most wonderfully displayed when the King came to rescue his people. We were enslaved in a dungeon of eternal death, chained to the walls of sin, groping around blindly in the dark looking for a way out. We were helpless! But our King came to the rescue. "***He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son...in whom we***

have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” Our supreme King made the supreme sacrifice to save his people. He shed his holy blood. He removed the Father’s just anger over sin. He defeated Satan and his demons. And...he demolished death!

3

“He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead.” If Jesus had not risen from the dead, there would be no Christian Church. There would be no need for any churches. Death would be supreme. Death would be king. We would live a miserable, pessimistic existence with no hope and no future.

But, Jesus **did** rise from the grave. He is *“the firstborn from among the dead.”* On Easter Sunday the grave could not hold our supreme King. And because that’s true, there is no grave that can hold you. Since he is the *“beginning”* or *“firstborn of those who rise from the dead,”* you and I will follow. We’re next! We will not always be “pushing up daisies,” as the old expression goes. We will one day, when the King returns, push up casket covers and urn lids!

Our King has guaranteed you, in writing -- right here in the Bible -- that our greatest enemy, death, is but a wimpy foe, a toothless little Chihuahua that jumps up and down, yipping and yapping, making a lot of noise trying to scare us. But the truth is, because of Jesus, death’s bark is much worse than its bite. Our King says, *“Because I live, you also will live.”* We draw our life, our unending life, from the power of our King.

Friends, can anyone else do for you what Jesus has done for you? Don’t accept any cheap imitations. There are lots of fake teachers with fake teachings who will tell us their own ideas about how to get right with God. But only Jesus is supreme. Only Jesus is the *“image of the invisible God”* through whom we can see and know God. Only Jesus, true God, is your supreme King!

Amen.