

Rooted - February 7th - God in Human Flesh - Troy Knight

TALK IT OVER

Key Scriptures:

Colossians 1:15 - 20
John 12:32

Start reading

Colossians 1:15 - 20

15 Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, 16 for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. 17 He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. 18 Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything. 19 For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, 20 and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

John 12:32
And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Have you ever been around someone who had a Messiah complex, ie. they thought you existed for their glory or to serve them? How did it make you feel?

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- To you, who is Jesus? Who is He to most of our nation? Our world? Why is it so important to get who Jesus is right?
- Troy went through these 4 definers of who Jesus actually is.
 - **He is the eternal all powerful Creator and God.**

Read Colossians 1:15-16. We often think of the human Jesus as the gospels describe him, ie. born in a manger, asleep on the boat, crucified and feeling pain on the cross. How do you reconcile in your mind the humility of the Jesus who walked on this planet with how Paul describes him in this passage? How does this passage change the way you think of Jesus? Discuss this statement: Everything was created through Him and for Him. How should that change the way we live every day?

- **He is the sustainer of all things**

Read Colossians 1:17. Share a time in your life when you knew God was sustaining you.

- **He is the head of the church**

Read Colossians 1:18. What does 'Christ is the head of the church' mean?

- **He is the Savior of the world**

Read Colossians 1:19 - 20. How do these verses explain the exclusivity of salvation through Jesus Christ alone? How did the blood of Jesus bring peace between God and man?

Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Share with your group your moment of realization when the connection was made that God, through Jesus, created everything (i.e. Monarch Butterfly, the human eye, size of the universe, etc...)
- If you are still struggling with believing Jesus and believing in Him, then share with your group that which is holding you back. What are you still fighting to believe?
- At times we can all struggle with wanting control. What area(s) of your life are you clinging to and not giving God complete control over?

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Commit this week to trust God with something that you are holding onto. If you aren't sure what that is, then pray for God to reveal to you what you need to stop trying to control & trust Him to handle.

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- God, thank you that you came to earth as a baby and that you walked the earth in my human shoes. Help me to trust you and give up control to You. I want to see your greatness and pray that you help me to seek after You. - Amen

Start digging. For further study.

- Read the 2nd page and discuss it.

Question: "What is the supremacy of Christ and what are its implications?"

Answer: The supremacy of Christ is a doctrine surrounding the authority of Jesus and His God-nature. In the simplest of terms, to affirm the supremacy of Christ is to affirm that Jesus is God.

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines supreme as "highest in rank or authority" or "highest in degree or quality." In essence, there is none better. The supreme of something is its ultimate. Jesus is the ultimate in power, glory, authority, and importance. Jesus' supremacy over all is developed biblically primarily in Hebrews and Colossians.

A main theme of the book of Hebrews is explaining the work of Jesus in the context of the Old Testament system. Jesus was the fulfillment of the Old Testament Jewish traditions and roles. Another main theme of Hebrews is that Jesus does not simply represent a new way of doing things. Rather, He is supreme. He is the actual fulfillment of the old way of doing things and is therefore greater than those ways. Concerning the temple system under the Mosaic Law, the author of Hebrews writes, "But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which He is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises" (Hebrews 8:6). In essence, Jesus is greater than the Old Testament system. He both encompasses and supersedes the old way of doing things. This is evident in the many comparisons of Jesus to Old Testament roles and rituals. For instance, we are told that "because Jesus lives forever, He has a permanent priesthood. Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them" (Hebrews 7:24–25). Jesus, therefore, encompasses the Old Testament priesthood and is supreme over it (see here for more on this).

Hebrews explains that Christ is supreme over more than just roles and systems. Hebrews 1:3a says, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word." Similarly, Colossians 2:9 says, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form." Essentially, Jesus is God.

Colossians 1:15–23 is labeled "The Supremacy of Christ" in some Bibles. In this passage, Paul makes it plain that Jesus is over all things. Christ is called "the image of the invisible God" and "the firstborn over all creation" (Colossians 1:15). The word firstborn may seem confusing. It does not imply that Christ was created (as in the doctrine of the Jehovah's Witnesses). Instead, the term firstborn refers to a position of authority. To be "firstborn" was to hold an honored position. Paul immediately goes on to explain Jesus' role in creation: "For by Him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16). This means that Jesus is not created but is Creator. He is God.

Paul goes on to say, "He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy" (Colossians 1:17–18). Paul highlights multiple areas in which Christ has authority—over creation, over the Church, over death, and finally "in everything." Christ is both before all things and encompasses all things ("in Him all things hold together"). Therefore, Christ is supreme.

This doctrine is essential to our view of and worship of Christ. The supremacy of Christ affirms that Jesus is fully God. He is not simply a man greater than the rest but is truly above all creation, as only God can be. This truth is essential for our salvation. God is infinite and, therefore, our sin against Him is an infinite offense. In order to atone for this offense, the sacrifice must be infinite. Jesus, as God, is infinite and thus an able sacrifice.

That Jesus is supreme excludes us from saying that He is only one of many ways to God. He is not just a good moral teacher whom we may choose to follow; rather, He is God, and He is over all. Jesus' supremacy also makes it evident that we cannot atone for our own sins. In fact, "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). Jesus both fulfilled and replaced that system. Salvation is not based on works (see Ephesians 2:1–10). And, once we are saved, Jesus' supremacy shows us that we cannot aspire to be like Him of our own strength. Jesus is wholly other, supreme over all. Christians are called to be like Jesus, but this is through the work of the Holy Spirit (Philippians 2:12–13; Romans 8).

The supremacy of Jesus teaches us that He is not simply a spiritual being above the rest. Paul tells us that through Him all things visible and invisible, in heaven and on earth, i.e., spiritual and physical, were created (see Colossians 1:16). Hebrews 1:4 calls Jesus superior to the angels. This truth negates any tendencies toward angel worship. Jesus created the angels and is above them. We are explicitly told He is greater than they. Therefore, we need only worship Jesus. Similarly, that Jesus created the things of earth means that creation is not worthy of our worship. Jesus is supreme over both the physical and spiritual realms, thus giving both arenas importance while still remaining sovereign over them.

When we understand the supremacy of Christ, we have a more accurate view of Him. We more fully understand the depth of His love; we are more able to receive and to respond to His love. Theologians believe that Colossians was written, in part, to combat heresies rising in Colossae. It seemed fitting to Paul to affirm the supremacy of Christ in order to quash these misled beliefs. He affirmed Christ's supremacy, His lordship, and His sufficiency for us. Hebrews explains the link between the Old Testament covenant and the new covenant of Jesus. It reveals the old system as a shadow of the ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The supremacy of Christ is central to an accurate view of His Person, His work, our status as believers, and the Kingdom.