

March 1, 2020

Pastor Steve Hardy
Jesus Christ, Above All
Colossians 1:15-20

Friends brought a paralyzed man to Jesus and, seeing their faith, he announced "Friend, your sins are forgiven." This raised a reasonable question in the minds of the Pharisees that actually brought them near the truth: "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Luke 5:20-21). *Indeed!*

- I. Jesus is God the REVEALER, 1:15; see also Hebrews 1:1-3.
- II. Jesus is God the PREEMINENT, 1:15-18.
 - A. By virtue of his PREEXISTENCE, 15.
 - B. By virtue of his ROLE IN CREATION, 16-17.
 - C. In relationship to the CHURCH, 18.
- III. Jesus is God the RECONCILER, 1:19-20.

In an affirmation of his authority as God to forgive sin, Jesus healed the paralytic with a word (Luke 5:22-25). This left observers with a choice—continue their rejection of Jesus, or bow in amazement. We all must choose to acknowledge the identity of Jesus the one and only, preeminent One, God the Son, and worship...or remain unforgiven and unreconciled to God the righteous judge of all.

Family Time:

Today's passage in Colossians is considered to be one of the greatest declarations of the identity of Jesus. Spend time working together to memorize Colossians 1:15-18. See who can say it first, word perfect! Then spend some time talking about Jesus. With teens you might talk about some of the inadequate views of Jesus, such as the idea that he was just a great teacher or prophet, and how such views fall short of his revealed and demonstrated identity.

For Further Study, Thought, and Discussion:

1. The role of Jesus Christ in creating is expressed in John 1:3. Compare this with Colossians 1:16. What does John state explicitly that Paul (in Colossians) omits? How does Paul expand on John's statement, and what is the significance of his additional thoughts? What is the main truth about Jesus each author is seeking to demonstrate? What application do those truths have to your life?
2. Hebrews 1:1-2 affirms that God reveals himself to mankind (see also Romans 1:18-23). Read the rest of Hebrews 1 through chapter 2, as well as the passage in Romans. What specific fuller

revelation of God (his nature and his plan, for instance) has now been seen through the appearance of Jesus who bears "the exact imprint of his nature"? (Hint: Hebrews 2:3, the practical warning to us.)

3. Colossians 1:17 and Hebrews 1:3 both speak of the sustaining role of Jesus over the entire universe. What assurance does this offer when it comes to the matter of prayer? How should this impact faith and trust when things in your life seem to be "coming apart"? Discuss this from the viewpoint of Joseph wrongly imprisoned, Moses as he is driven out of Egypt as a fugitive, Daniel as an exile, Esther in the king's court, or the disciples fleeing at the arrest of Jesus (you may think of many more examples). Did God have a plan? Does God have a plan that he continues to oversee? What does that mean to you?
4. Jesus is the reconciler, and Paul is next going to address (in vv. 21-23) the opportunity to personally experience reconciliation with God. What is the **basis** for that reconciliation (v. 20)? Why is the truth that Jesus was the "fullness of God" necessary in making that provision possible (you might consult Hebrews 10)? Can a person be reconciled to God (saved) if they put their faith in a Jesus who is less than the fullness of God?

NEXT WEEK: Colossians 1:21-23, "Unmoved"