

## Christ: Lord of All Ephesians 1: 20-23

As you examine the first chapter of Ephesians, you quickly discover the vast treasure of eternal truth conveyed by the apostle. Clearly, there is more within these verses than mortal minds can comprehend, but it is one of the most encouraging and hope-filled passages in all of Scripture. Following a brief introduction, Paul immediately dealt with the abundant spiritual blessings that accompany a relationship with Christ. He then offered a prayer for their wisdom and knowledge in the Lord, hoping to lead them into a better understanding of the blessings they had received in Christ.

As I studied this chapter, I thought of a musical piece that continually builds in intensity and excitement, until it reaches a crescendo, the much-anticipated climax. We have all heard the expression – “saving the best for last.” That is exactly what Paul did through the superintendence of the Spirit. This first chapter of Ephesians starts strong, continuing to build, until it reaches the ultimate climax. Paul had literally saved the best for last. Having discussed their blessing, and a prayer for increased understanding, Paul finally presents the topic he had been building for all along – the Person and Position of Christ the Lord.

Through this beautiful passage, we are reminded of the preeminence and provision of Christ for those who are undeserving. As we discuss the [qualities](#) of Christ revealed in the text, I want to consider – [Christ: Lord of All](#).

**I. The Demonstration of Preeminence** (20) – [Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set \*him\* at his own right hand in the heavenly \*places\*](#). Paul spoke of the great demonstration of power and preeminence revealed in Christ. Notice:

**A. The Discretion** – As you examine this statement, you have to consider the previous verses. Paul speaks of the power in Christ, and the extension of that power to us. We must also consider the source of this power. This was afforded Christ through God the Father. God chose to show forth His power in the person of His Son. As Christ walked and lived here upon the earth, He did so according to the mighty power given Him of the Father. In Christ, humanity experienced the power and provision of the Father.

**B. The Display** (20b) – [Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead](#). God’s power was mightily displayed as He raised Christ from the dead. Three days prior, Christ had given up the ghost, dying on the cross of Calvary. For those who watched, it appeared the life and claims of

this man had come to an end. No doubt, those who opposed Jesus rejoiced at His death. However, death would not be the end of the story. On that third and glorious day, Christ came forth triumphant from the grave, being raised by the power of God.

- It is impossible to over-emphasize this eternal truth. Had Christ not risen from the grave, He would have been no different than others who came before Him. His promise of eternal life would have been in vain because He would have been unable to provide life beyond the grave. This is the cornerstone of our faith – the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Because He lives, we have the assurance of resurrection life in Him. Because He rose again, and now lives, we are assured eternal life in Christ! [1 Peter 1:3 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.](#)

**C. The Distinction** (20c) – [Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.](#) Following the resurrection, Christ ascended back to the Father, where He is now seated in heavenly places. This place of distinction was reserved for Christ and no one else is worthy to be seated there. From this place of prominence, seated beside the Father in heaven, He makes intercession for us! We have comfort knowing our Lord and Savior is there pleading our case before the Father, mediating on our behalf. [Rom.8:34 – Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.](#)

**II. The Dominion of Power** (21) – [Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.](#) Paul goes on to reveal the mighty power possessed by the one who is seated at the Father's right hand. The realm of His power is limitless. Consider:

**A. The Sovereignty** (21) – [Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion.](#) Christ is elevated to a position far above all power and authority in this world, even above the angels in heaven. There are none who are not subject to His rule and dominion. Christ is Lord over all.

- There are those in positions of prominence within the world who refuse to submit to the Sovereign, but they do not detract, nor alter His sovereignty. All will bow in humble submission before the Sovereign of the Ages in judgment. Our Lord is sovereign! [1 Peter 3:22 – Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.](#)

**B. The Supremacy (21)** – *Far above...every name that is named* Not only does Christ possess an elevated, sovereign position, He possesses an elevated name: one above any name that could be named. There were men of renown in Paul's day, those who held positions of great influence and power. Even these were inferior to Christ and His great name. None possess a name like that of Christ. He has a name above every name. At His name, the kings of the earth will bow in honor and worship. At His name the nations of the earth will tremble as He returns in power and great glory. There is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved! Jesus has a name above all others! *Phil.2:9-11 – Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: <sup>[10]</sup>That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; <sup>[11]</sup>And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Rev.1:7 – Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*

**C. The Longevity (21)** – *Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.* The power and sovereignty of Christ is unlimited. He reigned in heaven prior to coming to earth as a man. He ascended back to the Father and is seated on the right hand of power. He reigned in Paul's day; He continues to reign in our day; He will reign forever, throughout eternity. He is sovereign over the earth, and He will be sovereign in eternity. There has never been a time when He was not God, and there will never come a time when He ceases to be the sovereign God. We need not fear now or in the future. Our Lord reigns, and that will never change! *Rev.1:8 – 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.*

**III. The Designation of Position (22-23)** – Finally Paul deals with the preeminent position Christ enjoys, and the great significance that has for the saved by grace. He spoke of:

**A. Christ's Lordship (22a)** – *And hath put all things under his feet.* Reemphasizing much of what he had previously shared, Paul again spoke of the sovereign position of Christ. Having been raised victoriously from the dead, and ascended back to the right hand of the Father, all things are now under the feet of Christ. There are none who rival His position or authority. He is Lord of all, reigning in sovereign power and authority! The feet that were pierced by the hands of wicked men are now above all. The earth, as well as the created beings in heaven are under the feet of Jesus. Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate are under His feet! Satan and the demons of hell are under the feet of Jesus! All in heaven, the earth, and under the earth, are under the feet of the Sovereign.

**B. Christ's Leadership (22b)** – *and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.* Christ is sovereign over the church as well, being the head of the body. He stands in unrivaled leadership of the church; and rightly so – we are His purchased possession. All who have been saved by grace through faith in the finished work of the cross are part of the church. Christ is the head of the church. This doesn't refer to a local congregation or a specific denomination. Christ is the head of the church, all the saved by grace! As the head, He affords guidance and leadership for the body. The head cares for the needs of the body. What have we to fear? We are in Christ, and He is the head of the church. We can rest assured in His care and provision for us!

**C. Christ's Relationship (23)** – *Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* Here we see the gracious position of Christ in relation to the body. The church is the body and Christ is the head. The body possesses the fullness of Christ, being filled with His Spirit, empowered to carry out the work He desires. Christ loved us enough to die for our sin, providing our salvation. He desires a relationship with us, including fellowship with Him. We have been entrusted with the Gospel, given a mandate to enlarge the body, reaching those yet unsaved by His grace!

▪ This verse reveals a humbling truth that we are unable to fully comprehend. Consider the thoughts of John Phillips: *We cannot comprehend this statement or exhaust it. It is God's solemn word that the Lord Jesus—who fills all in all, who is higher than the high, who conceived and created the universe through His omniscient and omnipotent power, who is the object of angelic worship and the ceaseless theme of seraph song—is incomplete without us. We can understand that we are incomplete without Him, but that He should be incomplete without us is incomprehensible.*<sup>i</sup>

**Conclusion:** I hope you have been enlightened and encouraged through the message today. These verses reveal eternal truth that is impossible to fully comprehend or appreciate. While my ability to discern this truth is limited, I rejoice that Jesus Christ is Lord over all. He is the head of the church, the body of Christ. He desires men to know Him in salvation and service in the Kingdom work. I am humbled and honored to be part of the body. Do you know Christ as your Lord and Savior? If not, come to Him in repentance and faith. He desires you to be part of the body of Christ!

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<sup>i</sup> John Phillips Commentary Series, The - The John Phillips Commentary Series – Exploring Ephesians: An Expository Commentary.