



### Our Understanding of Christ is Everything!

- The understanding of the person and work of Christ is at the center of Christian belief:
- Christians are by definition believers in and followers of Christ, and therefore our understanding of Christ is central and determinative in the Christian faith:
- Christ was the means through which God would accomplish reconciliation:
  - He needed to be both human and divine so that He might be the mediator between man and God and reconcile man to God:
  - Reconciliation could only be accomplished through the incarnation, God being made flesh:

**Supremacy of Christ over the Church:**

**Submission to Christ in the Church:**

## I. Christ:

## II. His Church:

### I. Christ:

#### A. Christ is Our Spiritual Location (1:2):

τοῖς ἐν Κολοσσαῖς ἀγίοις καὶ πιστοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ

##### 1. In Christ:

"In Christ," reflects our tie to a higher society, the Christian Community:

##### 2. In Colossae:

The geographical location which located them in regards to this earth, a specific context, and a clear concern:



### Colossae:

- Colossae was a small town situated on the south bank of the Lycus River in the interior of the Roman province of Asia (included in modern Turkey).
- Located about a hundred miles east of Ephesus, its nearest neighbors were Laodicea (10 miles) and Hierapolis (13 miles). Both of these cities, the more important of which was Laodicea, are named in the Epistle as having communities of believers (2:1, 4:13-16).
- During the periods of the Persian and Greek empires, Colossae was a city of considerable importance. Both Herodotus (fifth century B.C.) and Xenophon (fourth century B.C.) speak of this fact, the former calling Colossae "a great city of Phrygia" and the latter describing it as "a populous city, wealthy and large."
- But the road system was later changed, and a decline in the social and commercial importance of Colossae set in. In Paul's day it was only an insignificant market town. Lightfoot therefore speaks of the Colossian church as "the least important to which any epistle of Paul is addressed."

### I. Christ:

#### A. Christ is Our Spiritual Location (1:2):

#### B. Christ is Our Sovereign Head (1:18):

##### 1. Christ is Head of the Body (καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλή τοῦ σώματος τῆς ἐκκλησίας) (1:18a):

- Christ is the body's Lord. To be the Head of the church is to be its sovereign, its Chief, its Leader:
- Christ and His people are a living entity. The union that exists between Christ and His people is most intimate and real:
- Christ shares His risen life with His people; it is this life that animates the members of His body:

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A. Christ is Our Spiritual Location (1:2):

B. Christ is Our Sovereign Head (1:18):

1. Christ is Head of the Body (καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος τῆς ἐκκλησίας) (1:18a):
2. Christ is the Beginning (ὡς ἐστιν ἀρχὴ) (1:18b):
  - The ground of Christ's headship over the church:
  - He is the uncreated principle, the active cause in relation to the church:
  - Christ is the founder of this new humanity, Christ is the origin and source of the life of the church, the fount of its being:

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2. Christ is the Beginning (ὡς ἐστιν ἀρχὴ) (1:18b):
3. Christ is the Firstborn out from the Dead (πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν) (1:18c):
  - a) Christ was the first to come from among the dead in true resurrection life:
  - b) Christ is the first-fruits who guarantees the future resurrection of others:
  - c) Christ possesses in himself the new and higher life that his people now share:
    - Christ holds in Himself the principle of this new life and by virtue of our union with him we are partakers of this resurrection life:

## I. Christ:

A. Christ is Our Spiritual Location (1:2):

B. Christ is Our Sovereign Head (1:18):

C. Christ is Our Reconciliation (1:20, 21-22)

## I. Christ:

## II. His Church:

## II. His Church

A. The Church is More Than the Individual (3:5-11):

The Christian life is not a solitary experience: At conversion the individual is lead into a living and dynamic fellowship with other believers: At conversion we are brought into a state of "witness":

The "ekklesia" was a society in which neither the community was lost in the individual, nor the individual lost in the community.

## II. His Church

A. The Church is More Than the Individual (3:5-11):

B. The Church is More Than a Building etc. (4:15):

1. The Church is More Than a Building:
2. The Church is More Than a Particular Body of Believers (i.e. First Baptist Church):
3. The Church is More Than a Denomination (i.e. The Presbyterian Church; Lutheran Church):

➤ Believers who met in individual homes are called the church:

Rom 16:5, 23  
1Cor 16:19  
Phlm 2

➤ Believers in an entire city are called the church:

1Cor 1:2  
2Cor 1:1  
1Thess 1:1

➤ Believers in a region are called the church:

Acts 9:31

➤ Believers throughout the world are called the church:

Eph 5:25  
1Cor 12:28

➤ We can conclude from this that the group of God's people considered at any level from local to universal may rightly be called the church:

## II. His Church

A. The Church is More Than the Individual (3:5-11):

B. The Church is More Than a Building etc. (4:15):

C. The Church Should be Focused on Building (2:19, 2:2-3):

"It is from Christ as Head that "the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows." Each believer is thought of as forming a vital connection with Christ the Head. Thus joined to Him, they all become the joints and ligaments by which the church is supplied with energy and life (Vaughan, p. 205)."

- Col. 2:2-3 – "For I want you to know in what struggle I engage for you...so that their hearts may be cheered. We want you welded together in love and moving on to all the riches that the full assurance of insight brings with a knowledge of Christ, the mystery of God, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge lie hidden" (Berkley Version):

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- συμβιβασθέντες “united, compacted, welded into genuine unity” and this
- “in love” (ἐν ἀγάπῃ) – the revelation of God’s loving purpose in Christ cannot be properly known without being united in brotherly love:

## II. His Church

- A. The Church is More Than the Individual (3:5-11):**
- B. The Church is More Than a Building etc. (4:15):**
- C. The Church Should be Focused on Building (2:19, 2:2-3):**
- D. The Church is Worth Suffering For (1:24-2:5):**

### ➤ The Church as a Body of Persons:

The church is a body of persons called out from the world and separated from sin by the power of God to faith in the crucified and risen Christ, having had wrought in them by the Spirit, through the Word, the nature of the risen Christ, being indwelt by the Spirit, made members one of another, and linked by that Spirit to the risen Christ in the Heavens:

### ➤ The Church is Global:

The church comprises all true Christian believers taken out of all nations, tribes, and tongues united with their living Head, Christ Jesus:

### ➤ The Church is an Internally Unified Community:

This unity is not external, consisting in the form of government, but it is spiritual and the result of the unifying power of the Holy Spirit: