

"to become." The word "preeminence" is from a verb meaning "to hold the first place." The object, then, of His relation to the Church is that He might come to hold first place in all things. As Beginning, Firstborn, Head, He comes to the right and title of the highest rank. Blessed and holy is His Name. The pertinent question is: do we recognize personally this order of matters? Has God stated something which we reject and deny? May we be humble and accept gladly God's assessment of things. Amen.

Notes:

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

"Christ and the Church"

Colossians 1:18

Introduction

1. Christ is related to all things. He has to be because He is God.

2. The grandest relation which He sustains is to the Church. There is none more lofty. What is the Church? It is that company of called out believers on Jesus Christ who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into His Body. Hence, the Church is an organism, not an organization! In the text, it is referred to as the "Body."

3. His relation to the Church breathes its very existence. Without Christ, there wouldn't be a Church in the Biblical sense of the word. However, since Christ is related to the Church and it exists, He has provided certain wonderful guarantees to it. Here are some of them:-

1. SOURCE OF LIFE "Who is the Beginning."

The word for "Beginning" is the Greek term denoting "origin." This is exactly what Christ is in His essential character. The definite article is used with the word in some manuscripts, but whether it is accepted or not does not alter the fact that the word speaks of Him being the absolute Beginning. This not only identifies Him as God, but singles Him out as the Member of the Holy Trinity Who established the Church! Some of the implications of this word are:-

a. Christ as Source. Christ is the Source from whence the Church rises. There was no Church in the OT. It is entirely a NT innovation wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

- b. Christ as Power. The originating Power for the Church is Christ. This thought is to be linked with Matt. 16:16-19.
- c. Christ as Cause. The effect of Christ is the Church. He is the dominant Cause. The Church in asense is the cause of Christ.
- d. Christ as Priority. Both in time and in dignity of position, Christ is the Beginning.

NOTE: The word "beginning" or a related term is used of our Lord elsewhere in the NT. Check out these instances:

- a. Beginning of creation--Rev. 3:14.
- b. Beginning of resurrection--1 Cor. 15:20,23.
- c. Beginning of life--Acts 3:15.
- d. Beginning of salvation--Heb. 2:10
- e. Beginning of faith--Heb. 12:2.

The testimony of Revelation 1:8 summarizes this whole blessed truth. Praise His Name!

## 2. POWER OF LIFE "The firstborn from the dead."

His dominant position is enforced by this worthy title. It reaches additional warm truth:-

- a. He is Lord of Life. Having passed through death, Christ rose triumphant over the grave. His sinless humanity was changed as He came forth in the power of resurrection life. This was a kind of new birth which was first with Him. His now was the indissoluble life. Glory to His Name. Anyone having to do with resurrection life must claim it through Him, our wonderful Lord.
- b. He is Pledge of Life. His resurrection gives promise of ours. The preposition "from" speaks of "out from among." Others will follow from the grave, but He was the initial

One. All will be in order (1 Cor. 15:23). The Church sustains a peculiar relation with Him at this point.

## 3. RULER OF LIFE. "He is the Head of the body, the Church."

The personal pronoun "He" is emphatic. Not only the Creator, but HE again is the Head in speaking about the Church. What does the Head provide? Among other items, let the following be noted:-

- a. Authority. The Body without the Head has no authority for movement or ministry. All authority is gained through the Head.
- b. Direction. The Body is subject to the Head in the way it moves and concerns itself. He leads, guides, and directs the Body in its total operation.
- c. Sovereignty. He is Supreme. None other can take His position nor title. He has established those in the Church in subordinate positions, but all are subject ultimately to Him.

Christ as Head is a wonderful thought. It places all others as His bondservants, vassals, and implements. Here is an inexhaustible secret of rest and strength for every limb within the Body. As for the limb, so for the whole Body,

"To know to do the Head's commands,  
For this the Body lives and grows;  
All speed of feet all skill of hands,  
Is for Him spent and from Him flows."

Conclusion Why is all this revelation given to believers by the Holy Spirit? The purpose is stated in the text: "That in all things He might have the preeminence." "Have" is from the verb