8.11.26 pm: Christ is above all things.

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Date: 08 November 2026

Preacher: Stuart King

[0:00] Good evening. It's wonderful to be together again as we seek to worship God and hopefully be blessed in our time together as we open up his word again this evening we're blessed this morning through Duncan and we pray that we will be blessed again this evening.

I'll maybe go through some of the intimations just given the fact we didn't manage to go through them this morning with the two minute silence and obviously evening service after the service this evening around half seven till about half eight we'll have youth fellowship so anyone S1 to S6 please do stay behind or if you're listening online come down to the church for half seven it would be good to see you.
Oh the eyes I'm getting old now. Got the Bethesda shoebox appeal on there you can read the rest of it as I can only read those words. Shoeboxes again community lunch last week it was the postponed one myenstery is an excellent £632 which goes to the families of the Kilda boat so continue to remember those families in your prayers.
Ladies fellowship will meet tomorrow and if you want to reach out about any of them speak to either Lucy or Peggy for any ladies looking to join that. Little fishes as normal Tuesday morning again in the church here if anyone's got young ones please do come along and take them with you.
Road to recovery will be on Tuesday evening for anyone dealing with addiction especially as we're kind of heading up to Christmas time and it's a very difficult time for those that are struggling with addiction so please do keep them in your prayers as well.
[1:37] So SU will meet again in Mr Ena's classroom at 12.45 on Wednesday so again anyone of secondary age please do go along.

I was there last week for the first time and it was good to see you I think there was about 10 or 12 people there which is great to see so please be encouraged to go along. So prayer meeting next I believe we'll be at 7.30 I'm taking that myself so that will also be on Zoom but also in person and then I'll just leave the rest of them for you.
Hopefully you've had the chance to look at them or if not maybe at the end of the service some of them will go up again but we'll begin our time of worship this evening by singing to God's praise in English from Psalm 24. Psalm 24 and we'll sing the first six verses of the psalm.
We'll sing our Gaelic Psalm 3rd but we'll sing English Psalm 1st Psalm 24. The earth belongs unto the Lord and all that it contains the world that is inhabited and all that there remains.
Down to the end of verse 6. This is the generation that after him inquire O Jacob who do seek thy face with their whole heart desire. We'll stand to sing these stanzas verses 1 to 6 of Psalm 24 to God's praise.
[2:52] The earth belong unto the Lord and all that it contains.

The world that is inhabited and all that there remains.
For the foundations that are beyond the seas that lay.
And he hath it established upon the floods to stay.
Who is a man that shall ascend into the hill of God.
[4:09] All who within his holy place shall come above firm the Lord.

Good hands are he whose heart is pure and unto vanity.
Who hath not lifted up his soul nor swore deceitfully.
He from eternal shall receive the blessing him upon.
And righteousness he from the God of his salvation.
[5:24] He from eternal shall be the Lord and all that there is. This is the generation that after him inquire.

O Jacob who do seek thy face with their whole heart desire.

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Let's join together in prayer. Let's pray. Our gracious and ever-blessed Father Lord. We give thanks that as we come before you again this evening.
We come before you to worship your most holy name. We give thanks that as we look to you we see our sovereign God. We see our wonderful creator.
A creation which we see so clearly in the wonderful landscape around us here Lord. Even in the difficult weather we're able to see your power.
[6:35] We're able to see your majesty. And even as we look into the skies we're able to see your handiworks. As we look to the stars that we can't number but you can number.

And we give thanks that as we look to you we see a God of justice. We see a God of peace and we see a God of love. A love which we see so clearly and so evidently in the sending of your only Son. Him who knew no sin. Who became sin for us so that in him we may be made righteous. And we pray that as we look to the cross. As we look to it even as we turn to your word on each and every page.
We're able to see your salvation plan. That as we look to the cross we're not ones who forget what truly happened there. We don't sanitise what happened there and just gloss over it.
But that we are reminded of the suffering that took place there. The blood that was shed on the cross there. For no matter where we find ourselves. Either in the heights or the depths.
[7:35] We're able to turn to a God that knows what it is to suffer. That knows what it is to weep. That knows what it is to grieve. And we give thanks for that Lord.

So we pray that as we turn to you this evening. As we turn to your word. That you would bless our time together. You would bless our singing. And you would bless the word as we open it up this evening.
We pray and give thanks for the intimation sheet which we looked upon. We give thanks for that as we see many things happening throughout the week.
We are blessed to have this building being given to us by you. Think of that wonderful provision. And we pray that as we seek to use it. That we would use it to your glory.
Not to the glory of North Harris Free Church. Not to the glory of any individual groups. But that we would be doing everything according to your will. Seeking to see your will done on earth as it is in heaven.
[8:34] So we give thanks that we are able to pretty much fill up every day in the week. And use this building to your glory. We pray and give thanks for the volunteers. Those who put and set aside time in their week to be able to help.

To be able to lead. To be able to support. All that we do. And we pray Lord that we would continue to see many more. Stepping up to be able to help and to serve you.
In whatever way. Even things that are unseen. And often in the background Lord. We give thanks for all those who put their hand to the plough. And are able to help to continue to do your work here Lord.
And we pray that as people look on in our community here. As those who look on even this very evening. As they see the lights on in a dark evening. That we would indeed be a beacon of light to the community around us.
That we would radiate a light. And that we would radiate a warmth. As people come into your building here. To hear your word. Grant us the opportunity to go out into the community.
[9:38] To share your word. Even through our own lives. To share the love of Christ. And how we conduct ourselves. As individuals. And as a corporate body.

And as a congregation here Lord. So we pray that you would continue to grant us opportunities. To share the gospel. But that you would grant us that boldness. And that courage. To take the individual opportunities.
That we have each and every week. Those conversations. Those opportunities that we maybe bypass. Those ones that we maybe limit in our own minds. As we think.
We maybe not speak to a certain individual. For whatever reason. Maybe we've tried before. And it's fallen on deaf ears. But that we would have the courage. And the boldness to share your word. With everyone that we encounter Lord.
So we ask that you would equip us. As a congregation. As well. To do that Lord. We give thanks for David. As he continues to minister to us.

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[10:33] And Mary. And we give thanks for them. We give thanks for the faithful. And diligent service. That they provide here Lord. And we especially pray for David. As he is in Dundee.

This weekend. We give thanks for sustaining him. Over this past weekend. And the various services. And talks. With which he was leading. At the conference. And at the communions today. We pray.
That you would again. Give him words this evening. As he leads the communion service tonight. In Dundee. We pray. For that congregation there. We ask that you would indeed bless them. And if it is according to your will.
That you would increase their number. And that they would be able to see new members. Being added. Into the church there. We pray for our own. Presbytery. We pray for our own denomination. At large. We pray for the various vacancies. That we have here. In our own presbytery. We ask Lord. That you would continue to see those. Pool pits filled. That we would be able to.
[11:29] One day be able to see. That there are no vacancies. Across the presbytery here Lord. And we pray. That you would continue to raise up. Men. To go into the harvest Lord. For we know.

That the harvest is plentiful. But the labourers are few. So we ask Lord. That you would continue to raise up. People to go out. With the gospel. To all corners. Of your vineyard. To all corners of our own islands.
All corners of Scotland. And that we would be able to see the gospel. In every town. And in every village. We would be able to see souls being saved. So we ask Lord. That there would indeed be. A revival. On our islands. A revival across our nation. And that we would be able to see people. Turning. To the glorious gospel message. That transformative message.
That transforms our lives. That turns hearts of stone. Into hearts of flesh. So we ask Lord. That you would allow us to continue to pray for that.
[12:22] And that you would do the work. And that we would be able to see many more souls. Coming into your house. To hear your word. And to ultimately be changed by it. Pray as well for the young ones.

We pray for the young ones. In our own congregation. Think of those that are meeting afterwards. At the youth fellowship. We give you thanks for those who come along. And pray Lord. That you would indeed bless that work. That you would bless the work of JAM.
Come. Connect. And rooted. In all the youth work that we do here. As a congregation. And even Presbytery wide. We give thanks that. We have another big YF. In a couple of weeks.
Being hosted in Stornoway. And we pray. That just like last time. There would be over a hundred young people. Coming to hear about the work. That you have done in the lives. Of your servants. And that we would be able to. Continue to create those bonds. Those times of fellowship together. For the young ones. And that these friendships would go. Go beyond. Just that moment in time.
[13:17] But that they would be going on. For years to come. And that we would be able to see young people. Remembering their creator. In the days of their youth. So we ask Lord. That you would continue to go. Amongst the young ones.

Be with those especially. That are believers. And are in the school at the moment. And maybe face opposition. That maybe struggle with certain. Aspects of school life.
Lord. We pray that you would be with them. And that you would continue to equip them. And comfort them. And be around them. No matter what it is that they face Lord. We give thanks for those.
Who have stepped out in faith. In their youth. And pray that you would continue with them. That they would grow. And that they would strengthen. In the years to come. And that they would go. And that they would make disciples of others. That they would share.
The hope that is within them. That they would share the words. That they hear of each and every week. And even in their own devotional time. And that they would share all that has been gleaned from your word. With those that they encounter in school and beyond.
[14:13] Lord. We especially pray for those. Young ones. And older ones. Who. Who don't know you. And have no desire to know you. Who have maybe woken up this very morning.

With no thought of you. And will put their heads down. Tonight again. With no thought of you. We pray for them. We ask Lord. That you would. Reveal your peace to them. That you would reveal your light to them.

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And that they would recognize that. There is indeed an eternity beyond this life. And that they recognize that. There are only two destinations. There is. Those who are with you.
Those who know you. And there are those who are apart from you. So we pray Lord. That they would recognize the sin in their own lives. Recognize that darkness. And that the only way. To get rid of that darkness.
Is to allow the light to enter. And that they would indeed be. Turning to you. That they would be asking for mercy. That simple. Simple few words of prayer. Lord have mercy upon me. Not according to anything that we do.
[15:08] But according to your steadfast love. And your abundant mercy. We pray Lord. That you would speak to those. Especially this evening. That don't know you. And are maybe in troubled times. Those who are maybe sick.

Those who are maybe anxious. Maybe going through investigations. Those who are maybe needing the end of life. Lord. We ask that you would bring. Them before you.
And that they would come. To know you. We pray for the families. That are grieving at this time. Maybe grieving not so recent losses. But those that are also. Grieving recent losses. We pray that you would equip them.
And that you would comfort them. That you would build them up Lord. And that. Even as the mornings. Rise. And there's emptiness in homes. That they would be turning to your word. And they would be.
Taking much blessing from it. And asking for you to. To enter into their lives. And live a life that is pleasing to you Lord. So. As we continue this evening Lord. Go before us in all that we do. Be round us and keep us.
[16:03] And pardon our many sins. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. We will sing. This time Mission Praise 1072. In Christ Alone.

The well known hymn. In Christ alone. My hope is found. He is my light. My strength. My song. This cornerstone. This solid ground. And firm through the fiercest drought.
And storm. We will sing the whole of the hymn. Hymn 1072. In Christ Alone. And we will stand to sing. To God's praise. Christ alone. My hope is found.
He is my light. My strength. My song. This cornerstone. This solid ground. This solid ground.
The firm through the fiercest drought. And storm. What heights of love. What depths of peace. When fears are still.
[16:59] When strivings cease.

My comfort in hope. My comfort. My comfort. My hope.
My hope. My hope.
of love and righteousness, scored by the ones he came to save.
Till all the gods of Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied. For any sin on him was laid, here in the death of Christ I live.
The Lord The Lord There in the ground, it's what he lay, life's full of my darkness, in purchasing forth, in glorious day, up from the grave he rose again, and as he stands in victory, since the curse of God sits in for me.
[18:49] For I am his, and he is mine, walk with the precious blood of Christ. No guilt in life, no fear and death, blessed the power of Christ in me, from my first time to final breath, Jesus upon my destiny.

O power of hell, no sweet woman, can ever love me from his hand, to him in eternity, to him in eternity, for cause he whole, hear the power of Christ our sound.
If you could turn on your Bibles, if you have them, or you can look on screen, to the letter of Paul to the Colossians, and chapter one.
So Colossians, chapter one, and we'll just read the first 23 verses of this chapter.
So Colossians 3, this is Paul's letter to the church in Colossae, reading from the beginning. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae.

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[20:37] Grace to you, and peace from God our Father. We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.

Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing. as it also does among you, since the day you heard it, and understood the grace of God in truth.
Just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, he is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and has made known to us your love in the spirit.
And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.
He has delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
[22:15] For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or rulers or authorities, all things were created through him and for him.

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together, and he is the head of the body of the church, he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled, in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless, and above reproach before him.
If indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.
[23:25] Amen. And may the Lord bless that reading of his own holy word. Just before we come back to that passage, we'll sing again in Gaelic this time from Psalm 8.

Psalm 8, and we'll just sing the first two stanzas of Psalm 8, and I'll just read them in English. How excellent in all the earth, Lord, our Lord, is thy name, who hast thy glory far advanced above the starry frame, from inference and from suckling's mouth, thou didst strength ordain for thy foes cause, that so thou mightst the avenging foe restrain.
So we'll sing these verses. We'll remain seated to sing the first two stanzas of Psalm 8, to God's praise. .
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[24:39] . . .

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[25:48] . .

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. . . . . Thank you.
[27:10] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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[30:47] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. might be their relationships, they might be that where they place their ultimate loyalty, maybe political ideologies, don't know quite where we will not open up that can of worms across the globe, but yeah, people's political ideologies may be the thing that they focus on day in and day out, it might be your possessions, it might be your house, your car, it could be anything along those lines, but there's also even subtle temptation within the church to maybe just view Jesus as an important part of life and maybe he's not at the centre of everything that you do in your own life and if we're looking at the church here in Colossae, Paul's writing to the church in Colossae and they were in the same boat that we are today, a couple of thousand years later, same problems were facing Colossae as they do face us today, there were false teachers that were encouraging believers to look beyond Christ to spiritual fulfilness, it wasn't just Christ,

Christ alone for them wasn't enough and that was starting to permeate out through the church, there needed to be more, there needed to be more of a spiritual experience, there needed to be more knowledge, there needed to be more regulations, there needed to be more intermediaries in between, then and only then would you be truly mature in Christ and Paul's writing to address these distortions, we're not going to go through the whole chapter, the whole book sorry, but that's effectively where Paul is writing is to address these distortions, to challenge these false teachers, so it might be a surprise then to see how he starts this whole book, you would have thought possibly that he would have maybe started to attack these false teachers, maybe go straight for the jugular and to provide clarity on who Christ is and what the believer ought to do, but his strategy is simple here, he just provides initially a glorious vision of who Christ is and what he's doing here is very powerful, what he's seeing here is that if we see Christ rightly, if we see him correctly as he is, then all other rival claims, all other allegiances will be insufficient and insignificant and the passage that we have today is probably one of the most wonderful descriptions of who Jesus is in the New Testament. Paul kind of lifts our eyes from the book as we're reading it just now, maybe away from your circumstances, I don't know everyone's circumstances, but hopefully tonight as we read these verses we're able to lift our eyes away and kind of look to the glory of who Christ is and really as we look at this text we see kind of we get to understand one problem that we all have, that the people in Colossae had and the people here today in Harris have and it's that we're continually tempted because of our fallen nature to diminish Christ's supremacy or maybe to look for security and look for purpose, look for our identity, maybe look for our wisdom and our salvation and things around us or even somewhere else. We may profess Christ with our lips, we may say that we believe, but often we live as though something else is more important. I don't know what that is in your life, it may be careers, it may be hobbies, but we often live our lives as if something else is slightly more important than Christ. Maybe our thoughts are occupied by something else, maybe the decisions we make are being governed by something else, maybe our affections are being captured by something else. Hopefully the passage here will confront that tendency that we have and it will be a constant reminder to us of who Christ truly is. So I really want us to anchor our thoughts on three points really and I suppose verses 15 through 23 are kind of segmented up in three separate sections. The first thing we were looking to see who Christ is is that we'll see that he's supreme over creation, which we'll look at in verses kind of 15 through 17. Then after that we'll look at to see how Christ is supreme over the new creation, which we'll see in verses 18 to 20 and then just the remaining verses up to verse 23, we'll then be able to see that Christ is supreme over salvation. So just as we begin verses 15 through 17, I'll read the verses again just as a reminder to us and how this sits under that point of supreme over creation. We read there, he is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through him and for him and he is before all things and in him all things hold together. Even if you just, when you go home this evening, maybe just even just read that one section again and just imagine, just well for me it's just a wonderful thing to read, what a wonderful, breathtaking opening statement that is about who Christ is.

We're reminded through scripture that God is invisible, he's transcendent, he's beyond our comprehension, but Paul says here that Christ is the image of the invisible God. He's not just like God, he doesn't just reflect God, he's a perfect revelation of God. So when you see Christ, you're seeing the Father.

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[36:24] All the attributes of God are perfectly on display when we look at Christ. God's holiness, his wisdom, his power, his mercy, his justice and his love are all revealed in Christ. And Paul goes on to say Christ is the firstborn over all creation. That's not to say that Christ was created. As a phrase that's often been misunderstood over the years and with heretical movements. I'm going back to my first term at ETS when we were doing ancient church and we're thinking about Arianism. And now Arius argued that because Paul calls Christ the firstborn of all creation, as he does here, that Jesus must have been the first and greatest creature made by God rather than him being eternally divine. And Arius himself used these words, the famous words from Arius, where there was a time when the sun was not. But Paul cannot be saying here that Christ was the first ever created being. Because in verse 16 he immediately says that all things were created through him. He cannot be the creator and part of creation.

This word firstborn here is about authority and about inheritance when he talks of this firstborn. If you think back in the Old Testament, maybe some passages come to your mind. The firstborn son had special rights. He had preeminence. And Paul is saying here that Christ is supreme over creation. He is above creation. He rules over creation. He inherits creation. Everything. Nothing in creation that is not his. Paul then continues, for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through him and for him. Just reading those verses there you see three really important dimensions. Everything was created by him, through him and for him. Christ is the source of creation. He is the agent of creation and he is the goal of creation. The universe that we are in exists because of Christ. It continues because of
Christ and it ultimately points to Christ. Paul says there, and he is before all things and in him all things hold together. Right now as we sit here on this evening, Christ is sustaining creation. Every heartbeat, every breath, every galaxy, every atom, nothing exists apart from his sustaining power. And the passage here is establishing the full deity of Christ. It's a reminder. Think us back to the audience of this first letter. To the church in Colossae who were starting to have false teachers in their midst. They needed to have a reminder of who Christ was, a right view of who Christ was. Jesus wasn't just a good teacher. He wasn't just a moral example for people to follow. He wasn't just a prophet amongst prophets. He is fully God. He's the eternal son. He is the creator of all things. He's the sustainer of all things. And he's the Lord of all things. And the people of Colossae, the church in Colossae needed to hear that. We do today as well in 2026. This doctrine of Christ's supremacy, it's not just a theological thought. It's not something that just academics pour over. It's really the foundation of our Christian faith and our worship. If Jesus was just one teacher among many, then we could compare him to many other alternatives. If Jesus was just a spiritual guide, then we could supplement him with other sources. But if Jesus is Lord of creation itself, there's no rival. There is no comparator. He is Lord of all. Many people ask the question, who am I? And maybe it's a question you ask yourself, maybe younger people, kind of navigating their way through life. And they're asking, who am I? Who am I supposed to be here in this world? The culture itself, the world itself will tell you, just you go and carve out your own identity. You just go and set your course, work out your own achievements, follow your own desires, follow your own relationships, do whatever it is you want, even your self-expression. Scripture itself tells us that our identity is found in relation to Christ and to Christ alone. And that's that solid rock and that solid foundation. The one who made you knows you better than you know yourself. And maybe you're one here today who's overwhelmed with life. Maybe there's something going on in your own life at the moment that is starting to bubble up to a point where you're really struggling at the moment. Maybe you feel like your life's falling apart. Maybe you feel like there have maybe been unexpected challenges that have come along.
Maybe plans that you had have started to become going down a different route. Plans have changed. Maybe health is deteriorating. Maybe relationships are strained. I think it was Corrie Ten Boom. I'll be happy to be corrected if I'm wrong, but I think it was Corrie Ten Boom that shared that story of the tapestry. My mum did a lot of cross-stitch. I think we've got some over there. But when you look at the underside of the tapestry, that's where you see all the knots. You see all the loose ends. And it looks like an apparent chaos. But then when you flip the tapestry round, from that perspective, you start to see this beautiful pattern or words, whatever it may be, that's been stitched on the other side. And we often view our lives from that underneath. We look and we see the chaos and we see the mess, but Christ is the one that's looking from above. He sees all things and he

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sees the beauty which we don't see.
[42:20] Just remember that Christ who created the universe, as is told here, still holds all things together. Nothing is out of his control. Nothing surprises him. Nothing will overwhelm him. Nothing will catch him off guard. So for those that are maybe tempted at the moment, maybe there's an idol in your own life.

Again, as I say, I don't know what it may be. There may be something in my own life that maybe we don't see. It could be your success. It could be comfort. Maybe that you're in a really comfortable position. It could be family. It could be money. It could be recognition. It might even be ministry. It might be something that's associated with the church. Whatever it is that becomes ultimate in our hearts becomes an idol. And we need to make sure that we're careful about what they may be.
So this is why Paul is reminding us that all created things exist for Christ. So we should not allow any created thing to replace Christ. The gifts that we have should never be more precious than the giver. I saw Dolan Ruthie on the way and then apologies. I'm just going to mention you both recently married. Gillian and Hugh as well. And some of the younger ones were maybe at some of these weddings. You maybe saw what was happening at the weddings. Now, they exchanged rings during the wedding. There was one exchange of ring prior to that. But they exchanged rings and at no point during this the services did we hear Ruthie O'Dall, well hopefully not audibly, saying, what a beautiful ring.
This is one of the best things I've ever had. I love this ring. No, they love the giver of the ring. It's the symbol of that love that they have for one another. And so we should always remember that the gift should never be more precious than the giver. So we see just those verses in verse 15 to 17 that we see Christ is supreme over creation. Even as we heard Duncan this morning, the glorious pictures of some of those lakes in Canada, Christ was supreme over that creation, which helpfully moves us on to the second point that we see in verses 18 to 20. That's it. Christ is supreme over the new creation.
Look at verses 18 to 20. Starting off there, and he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
[44:39] This is really Paul's central concern and what he's seeking to share with the church in Colossae. It's not just that Christ is first place in our church activities. It's not just that he's first place in theology and when we study God. It's not just that he's first place on our Sundays and that's the only time that he should be first place. No, he's first place in everything and he ought to be in all of our life, in all spheres of our existence, all of your life and all of my life. Christ should be at the centre. Verse 18 again says, Christ is the head of the body, the church. The church is Christ's.

It's not ours. It's not North Harris's. It's not the free church's. The church is Christ's. We get our life from Christ. We get our direction from Christ. The church exists for Christ and that's something we always need to remember. That's why we're told we sit at the Lord's table. It's not the free church's table. It's not North Harris free church's table. It's the Lord's table when we come to sit at it.
Paul also then goes on to say or calls him the firstborn from the dead. Jesus was not the first person ever to be raised from the dead. Other people had been raised temporarily, but Jesus was the first to rise in resurrection glory. His resurrection inaugurates a new creation. So just as he is supreme over the first creation, he is also supreme over the new creation. Paul then continues, for in him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. The fullness of God permanently dwells in Christ. Nothing is missing, nothing is lacking, nothing needs to be added. It's a direct challenge to those false teachers here in Colossae. They were saying that you could find spiritual fulfillment elsewhere. There were other things to be added to God, but Paul says here all fullness is already found in Christ. And maybe that's something that you and I need to hear this evening. Maybe there's something in our own minds that, yeah, I agree with all of these words, but what about this or what about that or what about my prayer life? What about, I don't know enough about the Bible? Maybe that's where you're thinking today, but all fullness is already found in Christ. Look at verse 20. It says, and through him, that's Christ again, and through him to reconcile himself to all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. The cross, Paul is intentional about using, pointing to the cross early on in this book. Cross is at the centre of God's redemptive plan. Reconciliation is possible only, only through Christ.
Sin brings alienation, distance and separation from God. Christ brings peace. And the resurrection of Jesus Christ announces that he is Lord. Many people will say that the resurrection is basically where Christianity falls or rises. If Christ said he was going to rise on the third day and didn't, then

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everything that he ever said was wrong. But he did rise. He rose again. And at Calvary, God did not ignore sin. He judged sin, but he judged it in the person of his son. Christ is the one that took that penalty that we deserved. The greatest problem of humanity is not political instability.
The news might tell you that, especially over in America and wherever recent elections have been. That's not the greatest problem for humanity. It's not economic inequality. It's not our emotions. [48:24] It's not social division. Even as we remember this morning, those who've died in wars, that's not even the greatest problem that humanity has. Those are genuine concerns and they're real. But underneath all that is the deeper problem. And human beings are separated from God because of sin. Because of sin.

We're sharing it with the young ones at Connect and at Rooted over the last couple of weeks. The darkness that we see out in the day and at Halloween, there's a darkness in our own hearts as well. And just like we expect and give thanks for the light in the morning, the light of Christ has to enter into our own lives in order to get rid of the darkness. Only Christ, only Christ can reconcile sinners to their creator. The church belongs to Christ. Not to ministers, not to elders, not to traditions, not to preferences. Christ is the head. As I say, we're looking at our intimations. All ministry programs that we have and we're very blessed as a congregation. All the congregational meals, all the youth programs that we have on Friday, every decision made by the deacons court, every decision made by the Kirk session, ultimately need to be for his purposes, not for our own and not for the church here or for our own preferences. There's maybe some of us today and maybe online that are maybe weary on the road. Maybe it's been a difficult year for you. The resurrection, if we look at it here, means our hope. It's not just wishful thinking. Christ conquered death. That's definitive. He conquered it. So death is not going to have the last word. Suffering, if you're going through suffering, it's not going to have the last word. Evil is not going to have the last word. Christ is going to have the last word. Many people look endlessly for deeper experiences. They look for secret knowledge or they look for spiritual breakthroughs. But Paul says here, God's fullness dwells in Christ. We don't move beyond Christ. We don't add anything to Christ.
We ought to grow deeper in Christ. The answer to spiritual hunger, it's not more than Jesus, it's more of Jesus. Which really takes us to our final point. We've seen there that Christ is supreme over creation. Christ is supreme over the new creation. I'll spend a little bit more time just as we close on how Christ is supreme over salvation. Paul shares this in verses 21 through 23.
After really kind of soaring to the heights of Christology and explaining who Christ is, Paul all of a sudden from verses 21 to 23 becomes very personal. He says, And you who were once alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds. Paul's reminding the believers, and it's a reminder for us of our former state if we're believers. We were alienated, we were hostile, we were sinful, we were separated from God. It's uncomfortable to read, it's uncomfortable for us to hear, but it strips away any illusion of self-righteousness. Paul does not divide humanity into good people and bad people. He divides humanity into those who are reconciled through Christ and those who are still alienated from God. All Christians start in the same place. We're all separated from God because of sin. None of us here are sinless. Then we come to one of the beautiful phrases that we see of he in scripture. He says, He has now reconciled. He says, And you who were once alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death. Look at what God has done when we read this. He's reconciled us. We don't reconcile ourselves. We don't work our way back to God. We don't fulfill a checklist of things to do to make right. God is the one that takes the initiative. He is the one that initiated salvation. God is the one that provides the sacrifice. God accomplished that reconciliation through Christ. Maybe the question we ask is why? We are all sinners.
[52:46] We are the ones that have alienated ourselves from God. So why is it that we ought to be reconciled? And why is it that it's done through Christ? And the reason there, Paul says, is in order to present you blameless, sorry, holy and blameless and above reproach before him. What a wonderful change we see just in those words. We go on from alienated to reconciled, from guilty to blameless, from unholy to holy and from hostile to accepted. Not because of anything we've done, but all because of Christ.

Paul then concludes in verse 23, If indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven and of which I, Paul, became a minister. True faith is a persevering faith. True believers keep trusting in Christ because God's grace continues to sustain them. Here is where we see the

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justification, reconciliation, sanctification woven together. Salvation is completely rooted in the work of Christ.
Christ. We contribute nothing. Christ is sufficient. His sacrifice is sufficient. His righteousness is sufficient. His grace is sufficient. The gospel is not Christ plus something else, Christ plus your works.
The gospel is Christ and Christ alone. Maybe for those that are burdened with guilt, maybe some believers amongst us here that are weighed down by mistakes of the past, they're forgiven. But maybe you're still condemning yourself. Paul reminds us that Christ presents believers holy and blameless before God. God's verdict is far greater than our own feelings of our past. If Christ has declared you forgiven, then don't argue with that grace. For those who maybe doubt their salvation, your confidence should be in the strength of your faith. It should be in the strength of your saviour. The same Christ who created all things and sustains all things is able to keep those who belong to him. But maybe today you're sitting among us and you're not yet a believer. Maybe you're not yet calling yourself a Christian. Maybe you're still exploring what you believe. Maybe you've got questions. Maybe you've got doubts. Maybe there's experiences that have made faith difficult. If that's you, then I want you to notice what Paul is saying to us in this passage.
He's not presenting Jesus simply as a religious teacher or one option among many and maybe the more likely option that you should choose. He's presenting him as the one through whom all things were made. The one who holds all things together and the one who came into this world to reconcile sinners to God. The wonderful news of the gospel is that Jesus came precisely for people who feel far from God. You don't need to make yourself good enough. You can't. You don't need to have all the answers.
[55:56] Christ knows you completely, yet he still invites you to come. The same Lord who rules over the galaxies is also the saviour who welcomes weary, burdened and broken people in. If you feel a longing for peace, if you feel a longing for purpose, if you feel a longing for forgiveness or hope, that is not something that will be satisfied by looking further, even further within yourself. It's ultimately found only by turning to Christ. Today, rather than looking beyond Christ, you'll be trying to look to him.

His arms remain open. His invitation remains there for you and his promises remain true. All who come to him will never be turned away. The invitation is there. The invitation is here for us tonight. If you choose not to accept, he won't force you into his presence. He won't force you into heaven. But there are indeed two destinations. There is an eternity with God and there is a lost eternity apart from him.
And I would urge you to receive that peace that was purchased through his blood. So just as we come to a close, we see really here that the passage starts with Christ as creator and it ends with Christ as the saviour. But in between is the glorious truth that Christ is supreme over everything. He is the image of the invisible God. He is the Lord of creation. He is the head of the church. He is victor over death. He is the reconciler of sinners. He is the saviour and king. The people in Colossae were being tempted to look other ways beyond Christ. Paul's answer here is not complicated. He basically says look to Jesus and Jesus alone. See his glory. See his majesty. See his sufficiency. See his supremacy in all things. And the same message from this letter comes to us today. Maybe the questions, few questions here for us to consider. Are you looking for purpose? Christ is supreme. If you're looking for security, Christ is supreme. Are you looking for peace? Christ is supreme. And are you looking for salvation? Christ is supreme. The answer to all the rival messages from Colossae and from our time here today, all these competing hopes, all these idols that are presented before us are found in Christ.
Christ is above all things. So let us worship him. Let us trust him. Let us obey him. And let us proclaim him. And let us gladly give him the place that he deserves. And it should be first place in everything in our lives. And as we just close just now, next week we'll explore a little bit about how Christ is then proclaimed through his believers and what we ought to do. But we'll conclude now just with a word of prayer and ask for a blessing on those short reflections on that passage.
Gracious and ever-blessed Father, Lord, we give thanks for this letter, which although written 2000 years ago, still speaks to us today. We give thanks that Paul took the approach to, before tackling the false teachings and the issues that were going on in Colossae, there was a desire to first and foremost ground the thoughts and the views and the images of the people there on Christ and on Christ alone, who he is, the fact that he is indeed supreme over creation, he's supreme over the

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new creation, and he's supreme over salvation. So we pray especially for those in our midst today who maybe struggle to to believe that, maybe struggle to to understand that. We ask, Lord, that you would speak to them, you would make yourself known to them and remind each and every one of us that whatever idols we have in our own lives, whatever things we seek to add to the gospel, to even thoughts of our own salvation, I can't come, I can't come to the table because this, this, this and this, that we would turn that spotlight away from ourselves and our own failings and we would turn the spotlight to Christ and to
[60:11] Christ alone as Paul has done for us, Lord. So we pray that you would bless each of us into the rest of this week. We give thanks again for a busy intimation sheet, Lord, and ask that in each of these activities you would be centre, seeking to glorify you in all things and that we would be reminding ourselves each and every day to turn to you and not to seek to add anything to the glorious gospel that we have before us, Lord. So go before us just now, forgive us for all of our sins, in Jesus name we pray, amen.

We will conclude this evening by singing to Mission Praise 109, Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne, hark how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own, awake my soul and sing of Him who died for thee and hail Him as thy chosen King through all eternity. So we'll sing the whole of this hymn and we'll stand to sing to God's praise.
Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise.
Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise.
Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise.
Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise.
Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise.
Christ will sing to God's praise. Christ will sing to God's praise. How in my soul and say of him who died for thee, and him has thy chosen king through all eternity.
[62:00] Round him the son of God before the world began, and he who died where he had dropped, round him the son of man, who every grief and hope that brings a human life.

And he who died where he had dropped, and takes and builds him for his own, that all in him will rest.
Round him the Lord of life, who triumphed on the grave, and brought victorious in the strife for those he came to save.
His glory is now the slave, who died and rose on high, who died eternal life to reign, and lives at death he died.
Round him the Lord of life, and throne in worlds above.
[63:32] Round him the King to whom is given the wondrous people of all. All hail, Redeemer, hail, for God has died for me.

Thy grace shall never, never fail through earth eternity. We'll just conclude with the words that we read of in Hebrews chapter 13.
Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good, that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.
Amen.

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