

# All Things

## Colossians 1:16-18

**FOCAL Read Responsively** Colossians 1:16-18 ... all things were created by him, and for him: {17} **And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.** {18} **And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.**

**ILLUSTRATE** A burglar broke into a house, shining his flashlight around and looking for valuables. He had just picked up a CD player when a strange, disembodied voice echoed from the dark saying: 'Jesus is watching you.' He nearly jumped out of his skin, clicked off his flashlight and froze. When he heard nothing more he continued. Just as he pulled the stereo out he heard: 'Jesus is watching you.' Freaked out, he flashed his light around frantically. Finally, in the corner of the room his light beam came to rest on a parrot. 'Did you say that?' he hissed at the parrot. 'Yep,' the parrot confessed, 'I'm just trying to warn you that Jesus is watching you.' The burglar relaxed. 'Warn me, huh? Who in the world are you?' 'Moses,' replied the bird. 'Moses?' the burglar laughed. 'What kind of people would name a bird Moses?' 'The kind that would name a Rottweiler "Jesus"'.

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We love our *things*. We love them so much that our *things* often get us in trouble. The reason our economy is staggering is because we have placed a higher value on *things* than on common sense. Families have borrowed, putting themselves in terrible debt. Banks have financed housing for people who couldn't afford housing. *Things* have become our gods, and these gods have betrayed us.

How can we get out of the mess that we're in in this country? Only by returning to a proper mental attitude. Our worldview needs to change from *things* to something greater. We need to understand that *things* cannot make us happy. Israel learned this lesson the hard way. Saved from Egyptian bondage God's people failed to put God first. Instead they continually complained:

**Numbers 20:5 ... wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; ...**

Israel became *thing focused*, so much so that when they were offered "a land filled with milk and honey" they refused it. They kept looking back to Egypt. This backward look - putting *things* first and God last - eventually destroyed that generation of believers.

If you belong to God through faith in Christ Jesus then your life has undergone a great change. At the very least your worldview - how you view truth and act upon it - should be different now from what it used to be. **All things were created by Jesus, and for Jesus.** If everything is created by Jesus and for Jesus then it naturally follows that *everything we have* is on loan from God. It all belongs to Jesus. He made it. He made the materials that made it. He gives the strength that makes it. *Things* do not matter - your relationship to Christ matters. He gives us *things* because He loves us, but we must never idolize these things. **Jesus is before all things.** He was here **before** there were things, before the

earth was formed, and He will be here long after all things cease to be. That car, boat, four wheeler or house that you *just had to have* will one day fall under decay. Not far from our local Church there is two family homes that are overgrown, with roofs fallen in and windows smashed. Down Highway 412 you will pass several houses, one directly across from the high priced golf course, that are fallen in and taken over by weeds and bushes. These were homes where people lived, loved, and grew up. The *things* - the house and those things in it - are long since gone. But the souls won to Christ live on.

Where is your treasure? Is it in Christ, or is it in things that rot and wilt and fade away? May God touch your hearts and call you to the Master's side. In Jesus' Name I pray this.

### **1. Things Are Nothing Compared To Christ**

**FOCAL** Colossians 1:17 ... And **he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**

**Jesus IS before all things.** Men have - from the very beginning - tried to put things in front of a right relationship with God. Consider **God's Israel**, who were saved with a mighty hand out of Egypt. Israel was a nation of slaves, and had no things but pain and suffering to call their own. They cried out to God, and the Lord heard their cry and raised up Moses to be their deliverer. Israel put Christ *first*. They did as God commanded, and slew the Passover Lamb, sprinkling his Blood on the door posts of their houses. Because they put Christ our Passover *first*

**1 Corinthians 5:7 ... even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:**

The Bible tells us that the Lord caused the Egyptians to *give all their jewelry and clothing* to the departing Jews. Put God first and God will take care of you. **Christ is before all things.** This is a statement of fact, as sure as gravity is sure.

Listen Beloved. Our text *doesn't* say **Christ wants to be before all things.**

Many people view God and the truths of God as if the Lord was standing there - hat in hand - *hoping* you'll do what He says. That is a low - and a false - view of God. Christ doesn't *want* to be before all things, Christ *is* before all things. The wicked believe that God is asleep or not there because they put their things - money, sex, power - above the things of God. Yet the Lord God commands:

**Isaiah 45:22-23 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. {23} I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.**

Everyone *will* bow the knee to God. Jesus Christ is coming again. He Who is the **blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (1**

**Timothy 6:15)** shall one day return for His people. **He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God (Revelation 19:15)** and unto Him, the Scripture says:

**Philippians 2:9-11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: {10} That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; {11} And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

**At the Name of Jesus - not Joseph Smith nor the Pope nor of any saint or the virgin called Mary - every knee shall bow. Christ is *before* all things.**

He is above all, and through all, and in all. If you will not put Him first now, you will one day put Him first. He is first. Quit worrying about what you don't have and put Christ first. Jesus told His disciples:

**Matthew 6:27-33 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? {28} And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: {29} And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. {30} Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? {31} Therefore take no thought, saying,**

**What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? {32} (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. {33} But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**

**Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.** Look to Christ, not to *things*. God will care for His Children when they care for His Son.

God will provide our needs when we recognize that **Christ is before all things**. God cares for those who love Him. He cares for His own. I read a little poem the other day that said:

Said the robin to the sparrow,  
"Friends, I'd really like to know  
why these frantic human beings  
rush about and worry so."

Said the sparrow to the robin,  
"Friend, I think that it must be  
that they have no Heavenly Father  
such as cares for you and me".<sup>1</sup>

**Christ is before all things.** Israel lost all things when they placed things first and Christ last. You will always lose all things when you place the thing first and Christ last. Solomon had great riches and great power. He had hundreds of wives and concubines. Was he blessed?

Listen to his heart:

**Ecclesiastes 2:17-18 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit. {18} Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.**

Solomon said "I hate what I have done, because I'll leave it to the man after me". He worked his whole life gathering nothing, for he laid up no treasure in Heaven. **Christ is before all things.** Jesus illustrated the foolishness of worshiping *things* rather than God in the following parable:

**Luke 12:16-21 ... The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: {17} And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? {18} And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. {19} And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. {20} But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? {21} So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.**

People chase after *things* as if they are gods, but they are no gods. The Apostle tell us that:

<sup>1</sup> from Henry Blackaby, *The Ways of God*

**1 Corinthians 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.**

Things are always *below* God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The life that will not understand this is the life that is wasted, and eventually lost.

Our text goes on to say:

**FOCAL** Colossians 1:17 ... And he is before all things, and **by him all things consist.**

That word translated as "**consist**" means "**to be held together**". Everything you have, you have because of Christ. You may say "Now wait a minute, Pastor, I work for my sustenance. I owe nothing to anyone". Don't be a fool. Don't you know that your health - your life - is a gift from God. The Bible tells us that it is God Who **forms us from the womb (Isaiah 49:5)**. Christ is the Source of all life. Jesus said:

**Luke 12:15 ... Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.**

It's not how much you own that gives you life. It is WHO you know. Do you know Jesus? Jesus said:

**Matthew 10:39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.**

You have what you have because God lets you have it. The life focused on Christ is the blessed life. The life focused on Jesus is the overcoming life.

## **2. God's Church Must Focus On Christ And Not Things**

**FOCAL** Colossians 1:18 ... And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

**ILLUSTRATE** An old woman and an old man were sitting together eating their lunch. The old man told the old woman, "Honey, over the past many years you have always been tried and true". The old woman responded, "Honey, I'm tired of you, too!"

.... **I'm tired of the nonsense that I hear out of every news paper and television in our country.** Over and over again I hear people talking about how bad things are. Are they bad? Yes, people are out of work. Sin is rampant in our country. Money isn't worth much anymore (not that its ever been worth much). Yet Christ has never changed. The Bible says that:

**Hebrews 13:8-9 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever. {9} Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.**

**ILLUSTRATE** Quite frankly, I don't care what a liberal mainstream media says about anything. I was watching a *Discover Channel Presentation* the other day that was on sharks. As the narrator talked about one type of shark he began to push the religion of evolution. If the narrator said it once, he said it 50 times that "this shark evolved to be a perfect predator over **400 million years of evolution**". First of all that's stupid. Scientists don't know how long the shark - or anything else for that matter - has been on the earth. They use strange dating methods that are flawed to come up with the "millions of years" mantra by which they push evolution. **Rock from the lava dome of Mount Saint Helens volcano - formed in 1986 - has been dated to be a half million years old. The lava flows from Mount Ngauruhoe in New Zealand have been dated to be between one quarter to 3.5 million years old. These flows are, we know for a fact, from 1949, 1954, and 1975. Some wood that was buried by a lava flow in Australia was dated between 45,000 years up to 45 million years old<sup>2</sup>. A living mollusk was tested using the Carbon-14 method and was conclusively proven to be dead for 3000 years<sup>3</sup>. Evolutionary Scientists are pushing a faith that has absolutely no validity - and yet requires an amazing amount of faith.**

What about Christianity?

For over two thousand years people have come to the

2 *Refuting Evolution* by Jonathan Sarfati, Ph.D. pages 110-114, ISBN 0890512582

3 <http://www.bibleteacher.org/Dm072.htm#Monkey>

Lord Jesus Christ, have been saved, and have reported amazing and positive changes in their lives. **All things were created by Him and for Him.**

When a person surrenders their life to the Lord Jesus Christ and follows His leadership their faith allows them to **overcome the world**.

Listen to me, Beloved. **Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church.** This phrase tells us very much. **Christ is the Head.** The Body without a Head is dead! Period! Jesus Christ is the Head of the local Church. **Christ as the Head gives direction to the Church.** Jesus told His Church to:

**Mark 16:15-16 ... Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. {16} He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.**

That is so very plain. We are to **preach the Gospel**. The Church is not to run around hammering people, nor are we to flit about worrying about *global warming* or some other nonsense that foolish and unbelieving Scientists have come up with. We are to **preach the Gospel**:

**1 Corinthians 15:3-5 ... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; {4} And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: {5} And that he was seen ....**

Here is the Gospel. **Jesus Christ died for our sins. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Why? Because Christ is the Head of the Body, and you do not enter the Body apart from this Headship.**

He died for our sins, **was buried and rose again. He was seen** and keeps on being seen in the lives of those who believe in Him.

**FOCAL** Colossians 1:18 ... **And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.**

Jesus Christ is the **Head of the Body**. As long as the Head lives, the Body lives. Where the Head goes, the Body goes. Jesus Christ is the Head of the local Church, and His Church is as indestructible as He is. What did Jesus promise His Church?

**Matthew 16:18-19 ... upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. {19} And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**

People will not be loosed from sin until we preach the Gospel. We must go! We must follow our Head. Jesus is with us, and we are to be with Jesus. **Our Head, Jesus Christ is**

**Revelation 1:18 ... he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.**

It is Jesus Who has the keys of death and hell. Have you ever considered that **the devil doesn't even own they keys to his own home, for hell is reserved for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).**

It is Jesus Who is the Head of the Body. If you are His by faith then you shall never see hell, for the Head will never be in hell.

Let's look at this from another viewpoint.

**If you are saved, you are to be part of His Body. Christ is the Head of the Church.** There are no disembodied hands crawling about, like a scene out of a monster movie. The Body has members, and members have value because they are bound to the Head. As the Head Christ is in charge of every believer. *If you are born again you should want to come forward and join with a local Church. He is the Head of the Body.*

**FOCAL** Colossians 1:18 ... **And he is the head of the body, the Church...**

The word **Church** literally means "**the called out ones**". If you are born again by faith in Christ, you are called out of selfishness and called into selflessness. You are called out of "my way" and called to "His way". You are

called out of this world and into His Kingdom. You are called out of death and into life. You are called out of darkness and into light. You are called because the Lord called you here to be:

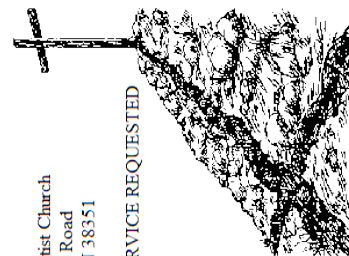
**1 Peter 2:5 ... lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.**

When Christ is the Head of the Body then the Body has purpose, power, and protection. Dear friends, when you hear the gloom and doom of the liberal media, do not be dismayed. Do not be depressed, but look to Christ your Head. Christ's Church is indestructible while it follows the Lord Jesus Christ. Looking back to the beginning of our text:

**FOCAL Colossians 1:16 ... all things were created by him, and for him:**

Jesus controls all things. If we will stay focused on Jesus, believing in Him, then **greater is He that is within us than He that is within the world (1 John 4:4)**. Are you part of the Body? Are you saved by faith in Him Who is our Head? Are you following Him where ever He leads? If not, why not? There is no life apart from the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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