

Jesus Is More Than Enough

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[0:00] Colossians 1 is where we are tonight and we'll be reading verses 15 to 23. And in him all things hold together.

And he is the head of the body, the church. He's the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior, but now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation, if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.

This is the gospel you have heard, and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. Well, is Christ enough?

Paul wants to make that crystal clear, that Jesus is more than enough for everything that we need. Why is Paul doing that in this letter?

[1:48] It's for the simple reason that because in every age, in every church, in every heart, there is a temptation to focus on something else, or someone else.

And so we forget him. We make church about something else. We make our lives about someone or something else, and we shrink Jesus down.

We make him less than what he is. We don't find him to be completely satisfactory. Now, if you're not saved, then this is the way that you live.

The reason you have not believed in him is because you don't think you need to believe in him. You have made the Lord of glory no big deal. But if you are a Christian, you know that you can do the very same thing.

You do it every time you sin. You do it every time you go to church, and you think about that experience, more about how you feel, what it did for you.

[2:52] Did those people talk to you? Did they ignore me? When we make church more about us than about Jesus, and we judge that experience by ourselves instead of by him, we are thinking less of Jesus than what he deserves.

When we live joyless, powerless, mundane lives, when we live lives that are hardly different than the world's, then we're making less of him.

And God doesn't want us to live those kind of lives. He doesn't want us to live those kind of lives. Those kinds of lives aren't worthy of Jesus Christ. And so Paul is encouraging these Colossians to see that Jesus is more than enough for them.

He's everything they need. And so this evening, we're going back into our great, glorious Jesus Christ. We're going into the heights. We're going down into the depths of who he is.

And so tonight we are in verse 18. And in verse 18, Paul says, and he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything, he might have the supremacy.

[4:16] So that in everything, he might have the supremacy. That word means first place. The first place. And so that's where we're going. Paul wants us to see Christ as he is, as having the first place, not just in church, not just in creation, but in everything.

So he's building his case. He's building his case. We saw a week or two ago that Jesus is the Lord of creation. He has the first place in creation.

For from him and through him and to him are all things. And so tonight, Paul adds on to his argument and he says, he is the head of the body, the church.

Jesus, just as he is the Lord of creation, he is the Lord of the church. And so that means he leads and we follow.

He provides and we receive from him. He rules and we submit. So Paul uses the very same language in Ephesians where he says, Christ is the head of the church of which he is the savior.

[5:31] Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands. What it means to be a head is to be over, to be the Lord of the church.

And so we need to ask, now what does that mean for us? What are the implications of that? If Jesus Christ is the head of the church, how should that affect us? What should we think about that? What does that mean for us? A couple things. First, it means that we must always ask what Jesus wants of Grace Fellowship Church. We can be very concrete.

We must always ask what does Jesus want of Grace Fellowship Church? That's our first concern. We don't have the luxury to ask what do I want?

Where's my agenda? Because in the big scheme of things, and I'm not saying this to be rude, but what you want is irrelevant compared to what he wants.

[6:29] He's the head. This also means that we don't take orders from the world. We don't take orders from the world. Well, this is what the church should be. You shouldn't talk about that, the world says.

You shouldn't talk about this. You shouldn't say that. That's not politically correct. This is what you can talk about. No. You don't tell my body what to do, do you?

Your head doesn't tell my body what to do, and neither does any other head tell the church what it is to do. We take our orders and our commands from Jesus Christ. How awful it would be if my body started listening to you.

It would be terrible for me. But everywhere you look, there are so-called churches who are taking orders from some other head than Jesus Christ. And so we utterly reject that on the grounds of Colossians 1.

Jesus Christ is the head, and so we must always ask, what does Jesus Christ want of Grace Fellowship Church? That's what matters because he's the Lord. Second, the second implication of that is that we must always do what he says.

[7:37] That follows. we not only ask, what does he want, we do what he says. Sometimes Jesus gives the church hard commands, things that are difficult, things that are dangerous, things that people don't want us to do, things that maybe in our flesh we don't want to do, so the world doesn't want to hear the gospel.

And it's much better to sit back and be a wallflower and not say anything. The world doesn't mind us helping the poor, but keep your gospel to yourself. We don't want to hear that. Or give us some other gospel.

Don't tell us about sin and the need for righteousness and the judgment to come. Just tell us about a God who's okay with me and who loves me. I'll hear that.

But Jesus doesn't give us that option. The gospel is hard for sinners to hear, but he says preach. He says go. And so we preach and we go.

He says do hard things. And so we take up our cross. Jesus is never doing a bait and switch. He's never telling us one thing and then it turns out to be something else.

[8:48] He's told us that if we are going to follow him, that means taking up our cross, dying to ourselves. And so we do that as the church. Why? Because he's the Lord.

He's the Lord. He's in the first place in the church. And the third implication, we must seek to honor him in everything that we do at Grace Fellowship Church.

We must seek to honor him in everything we do. If he has the first place, then we must make it clear that he has the first place in our hearts. Not just in my heart individually, but as in our hearts, our meetings, our worship, the way that we serve each other, the way that we listen.

Do you know, children, the way that you listen to the preaching of God's word says something about, do you honor Jesus or do you not care about him? Do you belittle him?

And so the way we listen, the way we speak, it must be clear that if he is in the first place, we must make it clear that he is in the first place. This is not about us.

[9:55] This is for him. All this is for him, for his honor, for his fame. God designed it that way and in calling us and saving us, he has called us to fulfill that, to live for his honor.

Fourth implication, if Christ is the head of the church, that means that your pastors are men under authority. Men under authority.

There's only room for one at the top and it's him. And so we try to make this crystal clear.

When you take your membership commitments, what you vow to each other and to God when you become a member here is that you will give unreserved submission to Jesus Christ as Lord.

Unreserved submission. Now, you never ever give unreserved submission to any man, any mere man, anywhere, ever. There is only one Lord. There is only one King and he doesn't share his throne with anyone else.

[11:02] And so if Jesus says, and he would never command this, but I don't think, Jesus says, jump out of the plane and you have no parachute, you jump out of the plane. Things that you don't understand, things that are dangerous, you do them just because he says so.

That's what unreserved submission means. There's nothing ruled out. There's no exceptions.

There's no exclusions. It's not like the end of those commercials. You know, you hear them and they're telling you how great the product is and then all of a sudden they get this person who's talking really quick and saying all the things that we don't mean.

This offer's not good in Indiana and Iowa and whatever else. There's no reservations. There's no exclusions because of who he is.

He is the Lord. But your pastors are not lords. This is not our church. We're not lords.

We are servants. And some men have called themselves lords and some men have thought themselves lords. Some pastors have thought themselves lords. But Paul says, we do not preach ourselves but Jesus Christ is Lord and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

[12:13] So pastors are servants for Jesus' sake. Now do we have authority? Yes. But our authority only goes so far as Jesus allows it.

It only goes so far as Jesus' word. And so Jesus says, jump out of the plane and you jump. If I say, tie my shoe, you smile and you say, no.

I only obey as far as the word goes. So our authority as pastors only extends to the extent that Jesus gives it to us.

He's the great shepherd. We are the shepherd boys. We're the little shepherds. And so respect your pastors but never confuse us with Jesus who's the Lord.

He's the head of the church. So Jesus has the first place in the church. And you know, we could probably have a whole series just on that. But Paul, he goes further.

[13:16] I think he elaborates what he means. And this is what he says. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead.

So not only is Jesus the Lord of the church, but he is the Lord of the new creation. He's the Lord of the new creation.

Now, those really aren't two separate things because the church is actually a new creation. It's not something of this world, is it? We are going home. The church is something that belongs to the next world.

And so these things aren't two different things. But Paul is saying, not only is he the head of the church, he is the Lord of the whole new creation. creation. He says something remarkable.

He says he is the beginning. And that's amazing. He is the beginning. Out of him comes a whole new creation. So this should remind you of Genesis 1.1, where in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

[14:18] So the new creation has its Genesis 1.1 moment of coming into being in him, in Jesus Christ.

He is the beginning. It begins with him. Now, if we're going to understand this, we have to see what Paul is doing here. He's dividing history.

He's dividing time into two distinct ages, two distinct humanities, two distinct creations. And so the first age, the first creation, is the age of Adam, the first Adam.

And then we have the second creation, the new creation, the second Adam. Now, ever since Adam fell into sin, you know, it wasn't just he and Eve that were affected.

We all fell together with him because he was the representative of all of us. He was the head of that whole humanity, of humanity. And so when he fell, we fell.

[15:24] And ever since Adam fell, this new, this creation, this world, this humanity has been the age.

It's been marked by death and by sin. And so all men are born under the power and the dominion of sin. They're born as slaves to sin.

And that's why, parents, you don't have to teach your children to sin because they come forth as slaves to sin. They're going to sin because of their slavery to sin because they are now fallen with Adam.

And so we're all born into this humanity. And just as Adam was created under the law, we are all born under the law. And the law says, the man who does these things shall live.

So here's the law. Here are the rules. The man who does them shall live. It says, obey and you will live. And that's not unfair.

[16 : 24] That's not ungracious. It's not wrong. It's not unjust. It's just simply, it's justice itself. The law is what we owe God.

And so here we are. We are born under the law and yet born slaves to sin. It's a helpless situation. And so we find ourselves trapped, guilty, powerless, not able to obey, not wanting to obey, unable to save ourselves.

And that's the situation in the first humanity, first creation. So Jesus came and Galatians says he was born under law to redeem those under law.

And so he took on the requirements of the law. The law that said, do this and you will live. So now he comes not as just one more man in the line of Adam, but as a second Adam, a new man.

And he takes on the requirements of the law that says, do this and live. And after a life of obedience, a perfect life of obedience, where no one could accuse him of wrong, no one in heaven, no one on earth could accuse him of a single wrong.

[17 : 44] He goes to the cross and he dies for sinners. He dies for our sin, the just for the unjust. And so all that we had done in our sin was given to him.

It was put to his name, his account. He took the blame, the line we sing. He died for our transgressions. And through his death, we escape the penalty of our sin.

Through his death, the just for the unjust. But that's not the end. That is not the end of redemption story.

That's not the end of our salvation. Because just doing that would not set us free from our sin. That, just doing that, would not save us from sin's power.

It would not give us new life. It would not bring about a new creation. We needed something else. We needed a new life. Not only a new record, but a new life, a new power, a new recreation, a resurrection.

[18 : 50] And so he died and he was buried. And sometimes we just put those things together, but the scripture is very clear. He died and he was buried.

What's the significance? Why bother saying he was buried? It was because burial marks. It certifies that that person his life in this world is over.

It's the end of that life. To be buried is to end your relationship with this world. And that's why you experience some sort of closure when you go to a funeral, don't you?

So a person dies and for the first few days you're working on that of preparing and getting the arrangements together. And after the funeral there is something of, okay, that's over.

Now we need to move on. He's not coming back. He's no longer of this world. Well, Jesus died and he was buried.

[19 : 57] He ended his relationship with this world, with this humanity, with this creation, but he didn't stay dead.

He rose again. But he didn't rise like everyone else. He wasn't the first person to rise from the dead, but his resurrection was different.

And we have to understand this. His resurrection wasn't like anyone else's resurrection before it. So you know Lazarus, he was raised from the dead. Elisha, in the Old Testament, he prayed for a boy, a young man, and that boy came back to life.

But that young man didn't come back to a life free from sin, free from the power of sin, free from the power of death. He took up this life again, the same kind of life that we live, and he still sinned, and then he died again.

And Lazarus, he came up from the grave, but he didn't begin a new creation. He didn't participate through resurrection and eternal life.

[21:03] He rose again, and he sinned again, and he died again. But Jesus' resurrection is something altogether different.

It's the first of its kind. It's the first fruits that are the same as what's going to happen at the end. And so he rose again, and in rising again, he broke right through sin and death.

He went right past this world, this creation, and he began in himself the new creation. And so his resurrection was the beginning of a whole new creation, a whole new world, a whole new humanity. It's a whole new kind of life. It's not more of the same old life. That's what Lazarus and that boy and other people who have been raised from the dead.

It wasn't more of the same old life. It was a totally different life. It's a life with God. It's a life that's stronger than sin. It's a life that's stronger than death. It's a life that ends in resurrection for all who are in Christ.

[22:07] And so, when you are joined to Jesus in his new humanity, in his creation, his new creation, you are born again.

you start over a new life. The Bible puts those two ideas together, the new birth and resurrection. So, when the new birth, regeneration, being born again, is not something that you do alongside of Jesus.

It's not something that you do separate from Jesus. It is to join Jesus in his resurrection life. It's to begin to participate in that eternal life.

It's to begin to live to God. And so, speaking of Jesus and speaking of ourselves, Paul in Romans 6 says, the death he died, the death Jesus died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God.

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God. Now, Paul isn't saying make that happen. He's not saying make that happen.

[23:14] He says, know and understand and count on it, live like it already has happened. You are alive to God through the new birth. You have died to the power and the rain and the dominion of sin.

You are alive to God through your union with Jesus and his resurrection. Peter, in 1 Peter 1.3, says, praise be to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

How did new birth come to you? It came through the resurrection of Jesus Christ and when you are savingly united to Jesus, you participate in a whole new kind of life.

So Jesus' resurrection life becomes your life. See, becoming a Christian, becoming a real Christian, being born again, it's not turning over a new leaf, it's not getting some fresh paint on the walls, it's a new creation.

You pass from death to life, your spirit passes from one creation to the next, you have eternal life, heaven comes to you, the future becomes your present, and so Jesus is this Lord of this new creation.

[24:34] He's the first one through and he reigns over the entire creation. In him, eternal life lives and so to have him is what it means to have life.

John, the apostle, says in 1 John at the end, and we are in him who is true, even his son, Jesus Christ, he is the true God and eternal life.

Eternal life is not something that you have beside, separate from Jesus, in addition to Jesus. To have Jesus is what it means to have eternal life. John says in 1 John elsewhere, and this is the testimony.

God has given us eternal life and this life is in his son. He who has the son has life. He who does not have the son of God does not have life.

Salvation is not a ticket that just falls down from heaven and falls into everyone's pocket and if you feel like it, you can take it out or use it. Salvation is not a ticket that falls down into the elect person's pocket and they can take it out and use it.

[25:51] Salvation is Jesus Christ. It's in him. He is the ticket. To have him is to have life. He is the life of the new creation. He is the Lord of the new creation and the only way to heaven is to have him, is to take him.

So he's the firstborn. He's the beginning. He is life and so take him. Throw away everything else. This is what it means to repent and believe. It's to throw away all your other hopes, throw away all your other boasts, throw away everything else you're leaning on and cling to him and say, he's all I need.

He's all I need. That's what it means to repent and to believe. Wow, there's so much more I could say. But let me just end with some application.

Three points of application. One, see yourself, Christian. See yourself for who you are. See yourself for who you are. You are not in Adam anymore.

You have put off the old man. You are not guilty. The life you had in Adam where you were guilty, separate from God, wandering east of Eden, under the dominion of sin, under the guilt, under the condemnation of sin.

[27:10] That's not your, that's not who you are anymore. That's not your life. You are not under the dominion of sin. You are not condemned. That's the old man.

That's the old creation. That's life in Adam. But you have taken off the old man and you've been, you've put on the new man. So the old you, that old life, it died.

And it was buried in Jesus' tomb. We were buried with him through baptism into his death. So you are in Christ.

And that means you live with his resurrection power. Your life is his life. And one day, his life will so overflow into you that he will take your lowly body and make it like his glorious body.

But that is not something that is different than what has already begun. You are already experiencing. You are already experiencing that new creation. And one day, it will be complete when you see him.

[28:18] So now you have power over sin. Through Christ, you died right out of the kingdom of sin. Sin no longer rules over you.

You died out of that kingdom and God resurrected you into the kingdom of his son. And so you can obey. You can live a different life. Why?

Because his life flows into you by his spirit. And so count on it. See yourself for who you are.

Second application, don't live in your poverty.

Live in his riches. Don't live in your poverty. Live in his riches. If you're savingly joined to the Lord of the new creation, the Lord of the new heavens and the new earth, the one who went right through death and resurrection, you are incredibly rich.

And so every day, all the time, in every situation, and moment by moment, you are either choosing to live according to your poverty or according to his riches.

[29:29] So we either live thinking, I can't do this. I can't handle this. This is impossible. We either live looking to ourselves.

We are measuring our potential by our resources. And of course, our resources run out really quick. And it seems like the waves keep coming and we know we don't have anything.

And so you either live looking at your empty checkbook. Or we can say, I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

See, your potential isn't, you know, your checkbook has been connected to a different account. It was once connected to your account and it had nothing there.

We're just poor and weak. But your potential isn't tied to that account anymore. Your checkbook has been tied to Jesus Christ and his account.

[30:26] And so your potential isn't what you have. Your potential is what he has. His resurrection life. Your potential is the Lord Jesus Christ. We have fullness in him, Paul is going to say.

We don't need anything else because he stuffs us full of everything that we need. And so your checkbook is tied to his treasury. So don't live on your poverty. Live on his riches.

Write the checks. Write the checks that faith demands because the checks have already been signed by Jesus Christ. If you venture on him, the account is solid.

He signed them. And so are you running out of patience with your spouse? You're getting on each other's nerves. They're being unreasonable.

Maybe you're being unreasonable. In that situation, in this everyday little situation of the tussle of marriage, you either live in your poverty or you live in Christ's riches.

[31:28] And so by faith, you see yourself joined to Jesus. And out of his life, you find grace to be patient, to be forgiving, to have power to love.

And so when you have no patience of your own, take patience from him. You do it by faith. You say, I can't do it, but he can help me. And he helps you.

You rely on it moment by moment. And so you obey. And you do the next thing. You take the next little step and the next little step after that, and all the time saying, I can't, but Jesus can.

I can't, but he can help me. He has what I need. When temptation comes to you and you feel like you can't resist, it's so powerful. You can either look down in yourself and find nothing there and just say, I can't resist. It's helpless. And just give in.

[32 : 31] You live on your poverty or by faith, you can live on Jesus' resurrection life. his new creation life. Well, he's our head.

And so, a head supplies all the energy and all the strength of the body. The head takes in the food and through the head it distributes the food to the entire body.

And so, Jesus is our head. All of our strength, all of the church's strength comes from him and through him. And so, don't live on your poverty. Live on his riches.

Third application. Those last two applications of seeing yourself for who you are and living on his riches and not your poverty, that all depends on faith.

Faith is the hinge that those two things swing on. You either do it by faith or you don't do it at all. So, the question is, where does faith come from?

[33 : 35] Faith comes by hearing. Faith comes by hearing. It comes from hearing the word of truth. Faith comes to a person's heart. Faith is built up in strength and God blows on the faith of a man as the spirit of God takes his word and he makes it real.

He makes it something more than just words, but this is something I can live on. But it comes through words. And so the third application is this. Preach Jesus Christ to yourself.

Speak to yourself about who he is, what he's done, who he is for you, what you have in him. Preach to yourself who Christ is, what he's done. Preach to yourself what he is for you in whatever moment you find yourself in.

So tomorrow, you're going to be in some situation. You're going to need grace. In that moment, what is going to give you the faith to lay a hold of Jesus Christ? It's remembering.

It's telling yourself who remember who Jesus is for you in this moment. Remember what he's done. Remember his vast potential. Remember who he is. He's the Lord of the new creation.

[34 : 41] Pastors can only preach in certain times. I can only preach to you here and now, but you can preach to yourself day and night. And you have the word of God and the spirit of God is in you to remind you of these things.

So preach Jesus Christ to yourself. Someone said, the most important person in your life is you because no one else talks to you more than you do. So what are you telling yourself?

Are you preaching Jesus Christ to yourself? Martin Lloyd-Jones used to say that we get in trouble when we listen to ourselves instead of talking to ourselves.

When we're just listening to this is how I feel, this is what I think, this is what I feel. Instead of telling ourselves, taking ourselves in hand and saying, remember who Jesus is. Remember the gospel. That's his words. In John chapter 6, Jesus was talking about he's the bread of life and in him, by him, we have life in ourselves.

[35 : 41] And so to take his life and making it our own is how we live. And he says, the words I have spoken into your spirit and they are life.

His words become life. The spirit of God comes through them and gives us life. So do you need more power to live the Christian life?

Then preach Christ, the word of God, to yourself. Remind yourself of who he is. And so preach to yourself. You say, I'm poor. I am poor.

But he is rich. I myself, as far as it goes, as far as me, I'm dead. I'm as good as dead. But in him, I have resurrection life.

Through him, I begin to taste the powers of the age to come. And so do I need patience? He has patience. Do I need wisdom? He is the wisdom of God. Do I need grace?

[36 : 40] He has fullness of grace. Do I have power? He's the power of God. What do I need? What patience, what perseverance, what endurance under suffering do I need? I have it in him.

Every grace I need is in him. Jesus is enough. That is what Paul is pushing us towards. And so living the Christian life, it's living it by faith in Jesus.

And faith comes by hearing. So take an active role in that, in what you're hearing and preach Jesus Christ to yourself this week.

Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, you know that we do get into such trouble when we listen to how we feel, listen to our first impressions instead of thinking about the gospel, thinking about what is

true in the word of God.

Will you will you help us? Will you will you help us to catch ourselves when we're going minutes and hours and days of not thinking about who Jesus is but just thinking about our situation and our problems and our our lack and our failure and our poverty.

[37 : 57] Will you please catch us and show us Jesus and help us to remember who he is. Lord, we do want to live joyful lives, powerful lives for you, full of life, full of fruit.

Will you make us fruitful as we rely on Jesus? And I pray that for those who are dead in their sins, oh, may your love track them down and find them and savingly and powerfully draw them to Jesus and whom is eternal life.

Help them to see that it's nothing in themselves, it's nothing that they can do. He is the life and if they have him, they can have life. Pray these things in Jesus' mighty name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.