

11 January 2015

RPC Christian Education Series: Christ and Culture

Colossians 1:9-20

Intro

Consider the series title “*Christ and Culture*”. What kind of things would you most like to come away with by the end of the series?

Think about the past few weeks and months of news headlines, Facebook posts, twitter tweets, articles, etc. Name as many of the issues or trends (could be national or international, secular or religious) that have featured prominently in our culture. What goes through your mind or what does it feel like when you’re faced with the sum total of those issues and trends?

Read Colossians 1:9-20

The Colossian church, which consisted of mostly recent converts from the Gentile world, was threatened with two main dangers: 1. an external current of immorality and paganism all around them and 2. an internal current of heresy that proclaimed Jesus as Savior, but ultimately incomplete and insufficient. What parallel dangers might also exist for us?

What kinds of things do Paul and Timothy pray for the Colossian church in **vv.9-12**? Why do you think those things are important to the context of the believers in Colossae and our own?

In **vv.13-14** we read that God “*has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son*”. In **vv.15-20** that follow what do we learn about

The King who reigns over the kingdom	how He reigns/His relationship to the kingdom

Of all the millions of things that Paul could have mentioned that Christ made through and for Himself, he mentions four specifically in **v.16**: “*thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities*”. What does he mean by those things (see also **Colossians 2:15**, **Ephesians 6:12**) and why do you think they are specifically mentioned?

Notice the repetition of phrases like “*all creation*”, “*all things created for Him and through Him*”, “*in everything pre-eminent*”, “*all things hold together*”, “*all the fullness*”, and “*reconcile to Himself all things*”. Why the repetition and what implications do these phrases have for a series like “*Christ and Culture*”?

Not only does Jesus have divine sovereignty and supremacy over all things in the scope of creation, but He’s also the sole authority over His church. In **v.18** we have a view of Christ as the “*head of the body, the church*”. What purposes does the head have over the body? How does this view of Christ impact

1. any inferiority to the culture we may feel
2. any persecution from the culture we may experience
3. any engagement or non-engagement in culture we might pursue?

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For every one look at the culture, let's take 17 looks at the One who reigns over it:

Colossians 1

[13a] He has delivered us from the domain of darkness

[13b] He has transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son

[14] In Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins

[15a] He is the image of the invisible God

[15b] He is the firstborn of all creation

[16a] By Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities

[16b] All things were created through Him

[16c] All things were created for Him

[17a] He is before all things

[17b] In Him all things hold together

[18a] He is the head of the body, the church

[18b] He is the beginning

[18c] He is the firstborn from the dead

[18d] In everything He is preeminent

[19] In Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell

[20a] He reconciles to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven

[20b] He is making peace by the blood of his cross