

Can't Get Higher

Colossians 1:15-20

Consider the context of this hymn of exaltation (v15-20) in the flow of Colossians chapter 1:

- Before the hymn: “...we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” (v14)
- After the hymn: “And you... He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death...” (v21-22)
- The content of this hymn answers the question, *Why Jesus?*

A. Jesus is exalted over all creation (1:15-17).

1. His rank declared (v15)

- “the image of the invisible God”
- “firstborn over all creation”

Key word: “firstborn” – *prōtotokos* – Literally: *first to have been brought forth* (Luke 2:7)

Metaphorically: *of the highest priority, of the highest rank, worthy of the inheritance* (Psalm 89:27, Heb. 1:6, Col. 1:15, 18, Rev. 1:5, Rom. 8:29)

2. His rank defended (v16-17)

- What did He create?
- What is the purpose of creation?
- What is His relationship to all created things?

B. Jesus is exalted over all redeemed creation (1:18-20)

1. His rank declared (v18)

- “the head of the church”
- “the beginning”
- “the firstborn from the dead”

CLIMAX OF THE EXALTATION: “that in all things He may have the preeminence”

2. His rank defended (v19-20)

- Who is Jesus by nature?
- Who is Jesus by action?

** What value can you find in meditation on Jesus?*