

December 16 Answers

- 1) In his letter to the Colossians, Paul declared the truth which would guard them from heresy and motivate them to persevere in the faith: the **supremacy** and **sufficiency** of Jesus Christ (Col 1:15–20). First, Paul emphasized Christ’s supremacy over creation, saying that Jesus is “the **firstborn** of all creation” (Col 1:15). We usually associate the term firstborn with birth, as in the first child born (cf. Luke 2:7), but it can also denote priority in **time** or supremacy in **rank**. Jesus was **before** “all creation” in time, and He is **over** “all creation” in authority. Paul was **not** saying that Jesus is the first created being, but rather that Jesus is supreme over all things as Creator, for “all things were created **through** him and for him” (Col 1:16). Second, Paul declared Christ’s sufficiency in **redemption**, saying that “through him,” God was pleased to **reconcile** “all things” to Himself, “making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col 1:20). *The truth of the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ refutes false teaching.* In Christ, the “whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col 2:9). This refutes any system of thought which denies either the **humanity** or the **deity** of Christ. In Christ, we received a spiritual circumcision by participating in His death and resurrection (Col 2:11–12). This refutes those who insist on **adding** law-keeping to faith in Jesus. In Christ, we died to the world and its fallen ideas and values (Col 2:20–22). This refutes those who demand **asceticism** (false humility, severe self-discipline) and the **worship** of angels. *The truth of the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ also motivates us to live a holy life.* In Christ, we have been raised to heavenly places. This motivates us to **set** our minds on things above, not on things on earth. In Christ, we died and our life is hidden with Christ in God. This motivates us to put to **death** the deeds of the flesh. In Christ, we have been raised to newness of life. This motivates us to put on a “compassionate heart, **kindness**, humility, meekness and patience” (Col 3:12). Our **union** with Christ is the basis of everything we are spiritually, and if we **abide** in Him, He will empower us to live a holy and righteous life.