

**The Primacy of Christ**  
St. Matthew 11:27-30

These are the words of Jesus: "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Jesus makes some very specific claims in this passage. He states that all things have been given to Him; that no one can learn of God except through Him; that He is the only one who can give us rest. Learn from Me! This is the message of Jesus.

Within the church there is an apparent diversity of opinion regarding the foundation of truth. Not all are of one mind regarding what constitutes the first principles of Christ. It must be to Christ Himself that we go for a guide and interpreter. There must be a common place of beginning. Only then will we be able to be united as Jesus desires us to be.

The Christian view of religion parts company with every other religious attitude in the insistence upon the primacy of Jesus as the interpreter of truth. We understand and receive His words, "I am the door" (John 10:7-9). We affirm His statement, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6). We believe the words of Jesus when He says, "Upon this rock I will build My church" (Matthew 16:13-18). We affirm His words, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last" (Revelation 1:11). We see Him setting forth His teaching with the words, "But I say unto you".

In the preceding verses we find several undeniable truths that Jesus taught concerning His primacy. We find that He alone is the door. There are not multiple doors

to salvation, only one. We see that Jesus is the way, truth, and life. Notice that each of these words is singular in nature. This is the distinctive Christian view of religion. There is only one way, only one truth, and only one spiritual life. Jesus unequivocally states that "no one comes to the Father except through Me". Regarding the church, we must understand that it is not our church, it is His church. He built it upon the rock. This rock was not Peter but rather the fundamental truth that Peter spoke when he exclaimed, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matthew 16:16).

This affirmation is what each Christian shares with all other Christians. We have all confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We cannot be born again without confessing our belief in who Jesus is. This is the rock upon which the church is founded. This very foundation shows the primacy of Christ.

Jesus opened the Revelation to John on the isle of Patmos with the statement, "I am the Alpha and the Omega". He encompasses everything from A to Z. He also expresses Himself as, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty" (Revelation 1:11). Jesus thus encompasses time, as we know it. We can only exist in the present and reflect upon the past (that which is and that which was). We have no assurance of anything beyond this very instant. Yet Jesus encompasses more than the present and the past, he also encompasses the future. He is not bound by time such as we are. He is from everlasting to everlasting.

The difference between the Christian and every other religious person is that the Christian accepts the words of Jesus as authoritative (Hebrews 11:1-2). This is the primacy of Christ. God spoke in previous times to the world in many different ways. He spoke to Noah and told him to build an ark. He spoke to Adam and Eve in the garden as

He walked there in the cool of the day. He spoke to the children of Israel from Mount Sinai in such an awesome display that the Israelites begged that God no longer speak to them but rather that He speak only to Moses. God spoke to Elijah in the still, small voice. Yet now God has spoken to us by Jesus.

Jesus is not merely a great teacher. There have been numerous teachers in the past. Teachers that have influenced generations of individuals, teachers that have founded religious movements that continue to our day. Buddha was a teacher to the nation of India, Zoroaster was a teacher to the Persians, Confucius was a teacher to the Chinese, and Mohammed was a teacher to the Arabs. These men were all teachers, but unlike Jesus they basically limited their teachings to a single race of mankind. Jesus, on the other hand, was much more than a teacher. He is also the Saviour (Luke 2:8-14).

In the original Christmas story, angels appeared to shepherds in their fields at night with the announcement that in Bethlehem that very night a Savior was born! They said this represented tidings of joy to all people, not a single group. Yes, the mission of Jesus shows his primacy over every other teacher who has ever been known on Earth.

There were great teachers in the Old Testament times as well. Moses was the great teacher and lawgiver for the nation of Israel, but he is not the one we should turn to today. Elijah was one of the greatest prophets of God calling the nation back from idol worship and sin, but he is not the one we should turn to today. In the account of the Transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17:1-5) we find Jesus and three of His disciples upon a mountain where Jesus' appearance is changed. Not only is there a transfigured Savior but Moses and Elijah appear there as well. Peter is overcome with the emotion of the moment and proposes that three tabernacles be built. One for Moses, the great law giver of Israel,

one for Elijah, the great prophet of God, and of course, one for Jesus (whom Peter had just confessed as the Son of God in the previous chapter). Before he can even get the words out of his mouth, the voice of God is heard, "This is my beloved Son, Hear Him!" Moses had spoken in the Old Testament law, let him speak no more. Elijah had spoken to an idolatrous generation, let him speak no more. Listen to Jesus! Here is the primacy of Christ. He is indeed the living presence of God among us.

Christ has a special relationship with His church. He is described in numerous places as being the head of the body, the church. The apostle Paul was diligent to show this truth in Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:15-16; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18; and Colossians 2:9-10.

Christ must have the primacy; everything else depends on this teaching. If we wish to be saved we must acknowledge the primacy of Christ. There is not other path to God than through Him.