

Jesus: Our All In All

Joe Slater

Eight times in six verses the apostle Paul used the word “all” relative to Jesus. See for yourself:

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over **all** creation. For by Him **all** things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All** things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before **all** things, and in Him **all** things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in **all** things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father than in Him **all** the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile **all** things to Himself . . .” (Colossians 1:15-20).

Jesus is “*firstborn over all creation.*” Firstborn connotes His authority and rank, even as King David was called God’s “*firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth*” (Psalm 89:27). Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18).

Jesus created all things (see also John 1:3 “*without Him nothing was made that was made*”). All things were made for him, and all things consist in Him (that is, He sustains His creation).

His resurrection from the dead and headship of the church indicate that He is preeminent (occupies first place) in all things. The world does not acknowledge it, but Christians certainly should!

All the fullness (that is, the fullness of Deity, see 2:9) dwells in Jesus. He is the God-Man! Through Him all things are reconciled to God because Jesus’ blood paid the price for our sins.

Truly, Jesus is our all in all!

Check Engine Warning

Modern automobiles have a "check engine" light, sometimes called a "malfunction indicator lamp." It is designed to alert the driver to a possible serious problem with the vehicle. When this light comes on, most people become seriously concerned and go have the problem checked and corrected immediately.

The same holds true relative to our bodies. Certain symptoms serve as malfunction indicators, telling us that we need to be checked by a physician for a bodily malfunction.

However, some people ignore the warnings. They continue to drive with the warning light on. They put off seeing a doctor. Warnings serve a purpose, and ignoring them may bring serious, even disastrous, results.

Paul says that we should "try" (examine), ourselves "unless you be reprobate." Another version says "unless you fail to meet the test."

In other words, we are to examine ourselves to determine whether we are functioning spiritually as we are designed. We are made in God's image. Are we living in God's image? We call ourselves Christians. Do we live as Christians are supposed to live?

Have we taken a spiritual inventory? Have we taken steps to make any necessary repairs? Or do we just ignore the malfunction indicator? Do we put off seeing the great physician?

Friends, when we examine ourselves and find a malfunction, it is time to either correct the problem or accept the disastrous results. Might I suggest two very serious questions to ask ourselves:

1. If I were to die today, would I go to heaven?
2. If I stood before God and He asked me, "Why should I let you into heaven," what would I say?

Lamentations 3:40 says, "Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord." As someone said, "A spiritual checkup is the key to spiritual health."

What does your "spiritual malfunction indicator" reveal? How will you respond?

--Roy Allen Crutcher (Mt. Carmel, IL)

I DON'T LOVE HER ANYMORE

A forty-year-old man suffering through the classic “mid-life crisis” sat down to talk to a preacher about his problems. He explained how his marriage of twenty years was no longer satisfying or fulfilling. Finally, he reached the bottom line: “I just don’t love her anymore,” he said. “What can I do?”

After a brief moment of reflection, the preacher said decisively, “As I see it, you have only one option.” The man perked up with anticipation. Was the preacher going to suggest a divorce? Would he be free to pursue the thrilling lifestyle of the younger generation that he had come to admire? Would this be his chance to regain his fleeting youth? What was the preacher’s advice?

“Seems to me that the only thing left for you to do is repent and start loving her again.”

So often we hear of married couples who complain that they have “fallen out of love.” That’s sad – but it happens. The real issue is: What do you do when you realize that such a situation exists? The Bible still says the same thing that it has always said. Husbands are to “*love your wives*” (Ephesians 5:25), and wives are to “*love their husbands*” (Titus 2:4).

Please note that these are not just suggestions – they are commands. To fail to love your mate is to commit sin! And sin always requires repentance if there is to be forgiveness.

Be careful not to confuse commanded love with the gooey, silly infatuation of a teenager. It is far more than that. It is the sacrificial love that seeks the interest of the one loved more than self. It is the kind of love that Jesus has shown us (Ephesians 5:25).

--Steve Higginbotham (Knoxville, TN) via *Old Paths*