

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Video Lecture Series

by Dr. Stephen Myers and Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

Module 4:
CHRISTOLOGY

Lecture 10:
**THE PREEMINENCE
OF CHRIST**



The John Knox Institute
of Higher Education

John Knox Institute of Higher Education

Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

© 2021 by John Knox Institute of Higher Education

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, John Knox Institute, P.O. Box 19398, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-19398, USA.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

Visit our website: www.johnknoxinstitute.org

Rev. Robert D. McCurley is minister of the Gospel at Greenville Presbyterian Church, in Taylors, South Carolina, a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), Presbytery of the United States of America.

greenvillepresbyterian.com

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

by Dr. Stephen Myers and Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

Module 4

Christology

Lectures by Dr. Stephen Myers:

1. Introduction to Christology
2. The Divinity of Christ
3. The Humanity of Christ

Lectures by Robert D. McCurley, ThM:

4. The Hypostatic Union
5. The States of Christ
6. The Offices of Christ
7. The Necessity of the Atonement
8. The Nature of the Atonement
9. The Extent of the Atonement
- 10. The Preeminence of Christ**

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

Module 4: CHRISTOLOGY

Lecture 10:

The Preeminence of Christ

Introduction

The series of lectures in this fourth module on Systematic Theology has been devoted to the study of the Doctrine of Christ. The purpose was to explore what the Bible teaches about the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the last three lectures, we have focused on the work of Christ, specifically his atonement. We've learned about its Necessity, Nature, and Extent. In this last and final lecture of this module, we will explore the Preeminence of Christ. After all that we've learned about Christ's person and work, where does that leave us? We've reached the culmination of our study in the consideration of the place that the Scriptures give to Christ, in the church and world, and in our own minds and hearts. Christ has the preeminence, which means he is superior to all others. This entire module should lead you to magnifying the superiority and supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Theme: *The Preeminence of Christ.*

I. Scriptural Basis

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by 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 might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Colossians 1:14–20)

1. Christ has, and must have, the preeminence in all things.
2. Christ is preeminent as Creator.
3. Christ is also preeminent in the church.

Questions:

1. Compare Colossians chapter 1 with Hebrews chapter 1. What do they instruct us about the preeminence of Christ?

II. Doctrinal Overview

1. Christ's preeminence means that he is superior to all others.
2. Christ has all the preeminence in Systematic Theology as a whole.
 - a. The first module—Christ is the source of the written Word in the Spirit.
 - b. The second module—Christ is the finest and fullest revelation of God.
 - c. The third module—Christ fulfills the covenant of works, and he serves as the Mediator of the covenant of grace between God and men.
 - d. The fourth module—The person and work of Christ.
 - e. The fifth module—Salvation begins and ends with Christ.
 - f. The sixth module—Christ alone is the Head of the church, and King of his own kingdom.
 - g. The seventh module—The future millennium, the resurrection of the body, the last judgment, heaven, and hell are all centered on Christ.
3. The Five Solas of the Reformation
 - a. Scripture alone, faith alone, Christ alone, grace alone, to the glory of God alone. Scripture is the Word of Christ. We are called to faith in Christ. We receive the grace of Christ, and all to the glory of God in Christ.
4. Christ has all the preeminence in the Bible as a whole.
 - a. Christ is the center of the Old Testament.
 - b. Christ is the center of the New Testament.
 - c. Seeking Christ in the reading of the Bible.
5. Christ has all the preeminence among the nations.
 - a. We see it all throughout the Psalms.
 - b. It is foretold by Old and New Testament prophecies.

Questions

1. How is Christ at the center of different branches of Systematic Theology? How do we see that Christ has all the preeminence in Systematic Theology as a whole?

2. What are the Five Solas of the Reformation? How is Christ at the center of these Five Solas?

3. Why do we say, “If you love Christ, then you will love both the Old Testament and the New Testament”?

4. What are the implications of Christ’s preeminence in the Bible as a whole?

5. How does Christ’s preeminence throughout the Bible guide us as we read and study God’s Word?

6. How does the Book of Psalms instruct us about the kingship and preeminence of Christ among the nations?

7. What other books of the Bible tell us about Christ's preeminence among the nations?

III. Polemical Exposition

1. Four arenas where Christ's preeminence is attacked or undermined:

- a. Within the state or civil governments—nations and magistrates do not have religious liberty to believe and do as they please.
- b. Within the church—we must resist every tendency to compromise with Roman Catholicism.
- c. Within the family—families have to acknowledge the preeminence of Christ within the home.
- d. Within the individual—Christ's preeminence strips man of all glory, and gives it all to the Lord alone.

Questions:

1. What does the Doctrine of the Preeminence of Christ among the nations instruct earthly governments?

2. Why should we resist the Pope and any compromise or tendency toward Roman Catholicism?

3. What lessons can families derive from the doctrine of the Preeminence of Christ? _____

4. How does man's fallen human nature oppose the preeminence of Christ?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. The greatest desire and longing of every true believer must be knowing the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. The entire existence and purpose of the Christian's life should be the pursuit of glorifying Christ.
3. The chief and most direct act of glorifying Christ is worshipping him according to his design.

Questions:

1. How do the Scriptures prove that knowing Christ must be the greatest longing and desire of every true believer?

2. What does it mean, to "glorify Christ"? What is intended in glorifying Christ? What are the motivations to glorify Christ?

3. What are the practical applications of the preeminence of Christ in regard to worshipping God?

V. Self-Reflection

As we close this teaching module, let us meditate on the passage in 1 Corinthians 16:22–23: “*If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*”

The words, “Anathema” and “Maran-atha” (v. 22) bring us to the very edge of eternity. Ask yourself if these words apply to you. The great line of division is between those who love Christ, and those who do not. Believer, Christ bore your curse and now you long for his coming. Unbeliever, the curse is still resting upon you. You need to repent and seek Christ, or he will appear as your justly condemning Judge.¹

¹ *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible*, “Thoughts for Personal/Family Worship: 1 Corinthians chapter 16.