

PRE-EMINENCE OF JESUS

"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 pre-eminence."— Col. 1:18.

INTRODUCTION.— Probably no man can be found in any profession today who is willing to announce to the world, "I am pre-eminent in my profession." No lawyer, no doctor, no teacher, no preacher, no scientist, has announced, "I am the light of my profession." Should any man dare to make such a claim, we would immediately brand him as an egotist, and he would become contemptible in the eyes of his colleagues. Yet, when Jesus announces, "I am the light of the world," there is a hearty "Amen" throughout Christendom. And when Paul declares that "in all things he should have preeminence," we all agree.

I. Jesus is pre-eminent in the fulfillment of prophecy

Every prophecy written of him has been, or will be, fulfilled. More than six hundred bits of prophecy found in the Old Testament have been accurately fulfilled, even to the minutest detail, in Jesus Christ. This fact furnishes one of the finest proofs of his divinity

II. Jesus is pre-eminent in the intellectual world.

"Whence hath this man this wisdom?" (Matt. 13:54) , asked the people in his own country who heard his teachings in the synagogue. "They were astonished at his teachings," says Matthew, and in Luke 2:47 we are told that even at twelve years of age "all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers." The variety of his illustrations and the accuracy of his descriptions show his wonderful knowledge of the manifestations of God in every realm. No man was able to "ensnare him in his speech." The priests and elders, the scribes and Pharisees, the lawyers and doctors were not able to match his logic nor overthrow his word. He was not only the wisest of the wise, but he taught the wise wisdom.

III. Jesus is pre-eminent as a preacher

His sermons were short, but full of wisdom. His longest recorded sermon is the "Sermon on the Mount," as given in chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Matthew. One can read every word of that carefully in twenty minutes. But where is there a recorded sermon that approaches that one in thought and power and promise? It gives us teaching as to

1. Who are the happy (Matt. 5:1-16).
2. New rules of conduct (Matt. 5:21-48).
3. Ostentation in religion (Matt. 6: 1-18).
4. Laying up treasures (Matt. 6:19-24).
5. A cure for anxiety (Matt. 6: 25-34).

6. Beams and motes (Matt. 7 :1-5) .
7. The Golden Rule and its application (Matt. 7 6-12).
8. Two gates, two ways, two ends (Matt. 7: 13-20)
9. Wise and foolish builders (Matt. 7:21-29).

These lessons and teachings are all fitted; together naturally and beautifully. Where is there a preacher who can build a sermon like the "Sermon on the Mount"?

IV. Jesus is pre-eminent in loveliness

He is "the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely." "We love him, because he first loved us." All praise and adoration belong to him. No wonder the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest!" It is becoming in every one to love him with the whole heart and mind and soul and strength.

V. Jesus is pre-eminent in name

His is the "name that is above every name." The old and oft-repeated statement that "there is nothing in a name" is as false as can be. There is something — yea, *much* — in the name of my wife and of your mother. Let some one slander these, and it cuts to the heart. Much more: let *none detract from the name of Christ*. Let every true Christian honor his Lord by refusing to wear any other or any additional or any different name.

VI. Jesus is pre-eminent in honor

He is above all and over all. "Let no man glory in men." Not Moses, not Paul, not Luther, not Wesley, not Campbell, *not anybody*, but CHRIST is *all in all!* He is above all men and all angels. He is the "Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Brave men are needed who will honor him in their preaching and in their living. Men who will dare stand up and preach his word without compromise and without apology.

VII. Jesus is pre-eminent in the church.

"All authority in heaven and on earth hath been given unto me" (Matt. 28:18). We get our orders from him. There is no authority delegated to pope or priest or people. On the mount of transfiguration the eternal God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then he charged, "*Hear ye him!*" The world is crying, "We would see Jesus." There is so much of sadness, sorrow, suffering and sighing in this old world, we need to preach Jesus, the great Physician, the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Lord of glory.

VIII. Jesus is pre-eminent as a Saviour.

This is the greatest thought connected With Jesus the Christ. Men and women ought

to be willing to accept Christ for what he *is*. Saviour! He alone is able to save, but he is "able to save unto the *uttermost*." The world has no welcome for the broken down, the defeated, the discouraged, the hopeless. Only Jesus has a welcome for all who are weary and heavy laden. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." *Will you come?*

— Author unknown