

# The Preeminence of Christ

by Erlo Stegen

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*The sermon emphasizes the preeminence of Jesus Christ, His impact on the world, and the importance of understanding and living according to His teachings.*

**Duration:** 1:28:54

**Scripture:** Proverbs 14:21, Matthew 22:39, Luke 10:30-37, John 19:17, Colossians 1:17-18, Revelation 1:8

**Topics:** "Christ's Supremacy", "Gospel Centrality"

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## Description

The video is a sermon transcript discussing the impact of Jesus' birth and death on the world. It emphasizes that the birth of Jesus has changed the world, while also highlighting the significance of his death. The speaker mentions a booklet written by the CFT branch in Pretoria, which summarizes the teachings of Dr. Kennedy on this matter. The sermon also touches on the connection between the Gospel and modern economic progress, stating that those involved in missions have experienced economic and educational advancement. Additionally, the speaker warns against prioritizing politics over Jesus Christ, emphasizing the eternal significance of Christ's preeminence.

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## Transcript

We ask you Lord Jesus to be with us, speak through your word, open the eyes of the blind, may the deaf hear, so that the light of heaven would shine in our hearts. Amen. We find our text today in the letter to the Colossians, chapter 1, and we read from verse 17 and 18.

And he is before all things and in him all things consist that speaks here of our Lord. 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. Let's start with that first word in verse 17.

He is before all things. And then at the end of verse 18, that in all things he may have the preeminence. Do you hear what God says about our Lord Jesus Christ? That he is before all things, he must be before everything.

And he is the beginning of all things. This is the position of Jesus Christ, the first and the last. I wonder whether to you, Jesus is also the first and the last.

Whether in your life he is the beginning and the end. Jesus said that he who loves father, mother, wife, children, or anyone else or himself more than me, he is not worthy of me. You who have a wife or

husband, ask yourself, who is the greater one to you? Is it the Lord Jesus or is it your spouse? Your mother, your father, compare them to the Lord Jesus.

Who is actually the first? Among your brothers and sisters and them or your children, who is the first? Is it them or is it the Lord? And I don't want you to leave the service here today without the knowledge and without the firm decision that Jesus is indeed the first and the last to you. Jesus is also the source of all good things. All creation was made by him and all things continue to exist through him.

It is an awful tragedy. It is an awful tragedy, a terrible danger that people don't know this about the Lord Jesus Christ. That he must have the pre-eminence in everything.

It is terrible if you don't comprehend that in your own family. It is a tragic thing if a preacher doesn't understand it. It is also terrible if politicians don't understand it.

It is a fearful thing to think that anybody in any form of leadership should not fully understand that Jesus is number one. And that is why it is a terrible, accursed thing, an abomination to remove the Lord Jesus Christ out of our classrooms, out of parliament, refusing to pray. If you don't understand it now, you will understand it on the day of judgment.

When everyone, from politician through to preacher through to father, mother, children, all of us will stand before him and you will understand it as they who have not acknowledged him are cast into hell. There is a booklet written by the CFT branch in Pretoria. I read it last night and I couldn't put it down.

And in that they have also made a summary of some of the things that Dr. Kennedy has written in one of his books. Where he explains about this matter. Where they say that the birth of Jesus has changed the world.

And I'd like to say that the death of Jesus has changed everything. Some of these points I'm going to use from this extract. I highly recommend that you take this and really count it as a sin if you don't.

Just seek this out and read it for yourself. Let it dispel the darkness from your mind. Now this is a time in these weeks where the politicians are canvassing.

And they are going up and down the land promoting their party. And I say to anyone that if politics is more to you than Jesus Christ himself, you will regret it one day. And the very things that they proclaim and that they are promoting anyway will fizzle out one day.

And so it would be a terrible thing if you have been zealous for politics and not for Jesus Christ who takes the preeminence and will last forever. Consider also their enthusiasm for politics, their zeal going up and down promoting what they believe in, how much more so we with the gospel. How shouldn't we be zealous with such a fiery zeal for our Lord Jesus Christ? In this extract it starts by saying, had Jesus never been born, this world would be a miserable place to live in.

For he is the first, he is the greatest, no one has ever been like him. He is the one who died the death of the cross. There is a certain film made by a certain man.

He had lived an immoral life before. But he says that this story of Jesus Christ and his cross has revolutionized his life. And so for years he contemplated how to make a film of the last hours of the Lord Jesus' life.

And so he has made it, but he hasn't told the half. There are some who criticize that the film exaggerates. I would rather say no, the story of the cross goes far beyond what he has tried to depict.

Jesus has come with light, he has come with his way, he has come with life and with understanding, what if he had never come? There are some, I know of one person in particular who said, I don't even believe that Jesus ever came and that he ever was crucified like that. But that same person when he writes a letter will say I'm writing it in the year 1999 or 2004 not understanding the significance of even the date. Because it refers immediately to AD.

There is also the BC era, some people are just sitting on their brains. And AD meaning Anno Domini. In other words, the year of the Lord.

Because every book refers to that date referring back to the birth, the time of our Lord Jesus Christ. When you write 1994 or 2000 or 2004, you are automatically acknowledging the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Revelation 21 verse 5, Jesus says behold I make all things new.

Jesus cannot touch something without it being made new and revolutionized. When Jesus was born, the era was made new. Time was revolutionized and counting began.

He touched time, his birth has changed time forever. And we need to note that whatever he touches is eternally revolutionized. Everything that the Lord Jesus has touched and all blessings in this world has been because of Jesus.

And all academics, all professors who don't acknowledge the Lord Jesus, they automatically make themselves to be fools. When Jesus came, it utterly changed the way we use the word Jesus. The way we use time and the way we think about time.

And that same atheist who says well he was never there, but they are acknowledging it even when they write the date. Everything, every era, every kingdom, every empire always crumbles and disappears into nothing. But the kingdom of the Lord Jesus and he himself never sees rottenness or decay.

God said I search in vain in history to find anyone similar to Jesus Christ or anything which can approach the gospel. I'll touch a few things and speak to you as an educated person. Even the very sanctity of life, the value of a human person, the value of people has been made by Jesus.

Before the coming of Jesus, what was a person's life worth? It was cheap. The value of a human life was considered from a barbaric point of view to be cheap, to be worth nothing. That is how many still today who are atheists, like in our country, they just take a life and they consider the next person's life to be worthless.

But to those who have Jesus, because of Jesus coming, they value highly the value, the dignity of the next person. And so we proclaim now that every single human being is worth more than the whole world put together. Just one soul, whether an adult or even a baby, every person is more valuable than the world put together.

That is because of Jesus. Before his coming, what was a human being? They would consider a life to be like that of a goat, just to be slaughtered. The question is then, had Jesus never come, had he never died on the cross, what would it be like in this era? Would you be here? You probably wouldn't even exist.

Before Jesus came, the nations would take their children, the pagans, and offer them. And even offer their babies as sacrifices to the demons to be burnt. There's plenty of archaeological evidence all over the world of those temples, those altars, where they would sacrifice babies to demons, to spirits.

There's plenty of evidence of altars where people would sacrifice their very own children. Just think how cheap lives were. The prophets of Baal and Asheroth and them, they would sacrifice babies, children, people, being murderers.

And you find that the pagan heart still today counts that life to be cheap, where a person would sacrifice their own children, a mother will abort her very own baby who is inside her. In those days, there was the practice of infanticide, where a mother, if her child was infirm or in any way disabled, they would take the child out to the forest to be eaten by beasts, animals. You see what the world would be like without Jesus? And look at it, you struggle and you kill, it's not that you're killing English or Afrikaans or whatever others, you're killing your own children.

The Christians came, those who had received Jesus. Those first Christians then rescued these babies. They counted every life as precious and they cherished lives.

They took these children, raised them up as believers. They started orphanages, they started homes. It's because of what Jesus brought.

Those who don't have Jesus, they don't have anything to show of what they have really done. They spend their lives on their own desires, on their drugs, on their alcohol, on their immorality. If you can't have Jesus you feel like you can't take Him along with yesterday, is there any measure left of benevolence from now on? And those with Jesus in their hearts know His words because Jesus speaks.

He said for instance, let the children come to me. And so that's why the Christians have always counted lives, children as very precious to God and have rescued and saved children. On the other hand you'll find that ungodly governments like ours proclaim that you can legally kill your own child in the womb, abortion.

I don't know how people who abort their babies will be able to stand on Judgment Day. I'm Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Communists. I'm the one who has saved my life, my family, my job.

I'm not going to be killed by abortion. I'm the leader of the Communists, the leader of the Babulali, I'm not going to be killed by abortion. I'm not going to be killed by abortion.

dying, how he cried out that I'm drowning in a sea of blood and that is only naturally the case because people who refuse Jesus Christ automatically have a murderous heart and want to kill. A person without Jesus has no pity and mercy on the infirm and little children, but one who has Christ in the heart will be compassionate even to the most disabled child, whatever might be wrong with them. And you women should especially serve the Lord Jesus and have him in your hearts because before Jesus came, women weren't considered to be of real value.

Their lives were cheap. For a very long time, for a very long time we've been saying that if you don't have the Lord, you girls, you'll be cheap. That is why we say that AIDS travels with wheels.

Haven't we been saying this for a long time, that a girl doesn't know where this lorry driver comes from, he's driving a log lorry and she just allows herself to be picked up and she gets AIDS from it. Without Christ, you'll find that the culture denigrates women, doesn't treat them of any value. If only you knew

when we were growing up what it was like.

You are in a different era now, but if you knew then how they treated women, how her life was considered to be of no value. It is through Jesus that the lives of women have been seen to be of value. He says that during the Roman Empire, half of the population were slaves.

In Athens where Paul preached, three quarters of the population were slaves. You know what a life of a slave was like? A slave didn't earn a salary. He was treated like a dog.

The slave owner could treat him as he wanted to and abuse him according to his whim. If he wanted to kill him, he could do that just as he felt. Do you remember the story of that girl who was 16 years old? Do you remember the story I've told before, you who are here, of that 16 year old girl who was manacled as a slave? Slavery has always been rampant, but it was through the Gospel and its influence, through the Lord Jesus Christ, that slavery was brought to an end.

But in Islamic countries, there is slavery practiced till today. Christians have tried to get rid of slavery in Islamic countries. The slaves have tried uprisings in Islamic countries.

And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery. And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery. And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery.

And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery. And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery. And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery.

And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery. And they've tried to fight against their lot in slavery. Where there's active fighting against this practice.

God worked through his people centuries ago. People in Britain, like William Wilberforce, who brought an end to official slavery in those kingdoms. I was just mentioning Mr. Sinzheimer's husband had been named Wilberforce.

But should you remove the Lord Jesus out of a culture, if you take him away, there is automatic devolution, de-civilization, a going backwards. It is Jesus who taught us to care for the poor. Let me read for you, for example, a verse in the Bible, like Proverbs 14 verse 21.

Jesus emphasized compassion on the weak, on the hurt, on the poor. Take for example his parable about the good Samaritan. Others ignored him.

This man who was suffering there, who had been beaten up, but it was a Samaritan, a person of mixed race, who felt compassion. The Lord Jesus used that as an example. Old age homes were established as a direct result of Christian principles, the teachings of Jesus.

Widows, orphans, the sick and the disabled were not cared for by the state, but by the church. When politicians try to do these things themselves, they make a mess of it. It is Christians who have made a success of helping the poor, the widows, the orphans, etc.

Only then is there progress, is there civilization. Look, for example, at the Salvation Army, which was established in many countries today. They are the ones who have been helping the poor, helping those who don't have and taking in the socially rejected.



The first printing press was because of the Bible believers, because the Gutenberg press centuries ago was established to print the Bible. Luther and Calvin said all education must be in accordance with Jesus Christ because he has established education. And those nations which accepted those teachings have progressed, they've become civilized and they have invented things because Jesus Christ enlightens the mind.

And scientific advance is also through Christians. But compare it to other countries that have not received the gospel, like in China and in India, and see the degradation, the poverty, lack of progress. You'll find on the other hand those Indians who came to our country here, they've been clever, they've advanced, they came as cane cutters and they've progressed since then.

But back in their own country you'll find millions still sleeping on newspapers in the street. Take out the gospel of Jesus and you'll see. Remove the light and darkness automatically has entrance.

Take out, extract the salt and you'll find that rottenness will set in. The scientific age is pre-eminently through Christianity. And there are some who say that science and religion and Christianity is in contradiction.

Not at all. It is because of Christianity that science came into being. There was the age of the steam engine, that era.

Now it's more properly called the nuclear age. Or the computer age. Or the space age.

The scientific revolution has had its basis, its roots in Christianity or those who had a Christian background. Those without the gospel still used animal dung to stop them sweating under their arms in it. As a deodorant.

As a deodorant. Try and expel the gospel. Try and dismiss Jesus and you'll see what will happen.

You devolve to become like the primates. Other people will laugh about you or scoff as they drink tea discussing what happened to you. I don't have time to mention all the different points.

The sun would go down and anyway this afternoon I need to go somewhere. Even economic progress had its foundation in the gospel. Look at the people who have been connected to missions, those who have built at missions or around missions, those who have been in that environment have progressed economically.

They and their offspring have been more educated and have had better jobs. A person with Jesus stops with a lazy lifestyle. They become hardworking.

They become inventive. They are able to build and do things that mean progress to them and can supply their needs. A hundred years ago orphanages were still in existence in Europe but it's not necessary anymore because of the economic progress that has been so powerful.

But here in Africa you find that there is a growing need for orphanages especially because of the AIDS crisis. You will find that western nations have progressed economically. Whereas those that have not accepted the gospel are not inventive.

They don't find out things in advance unless it's a nation where they copy from Christian nations and their research and use what they have invented. It was because of the gospel that I survived, that I'm here. Had

I been smoking, drinking, messing around, I probably wouldn't even be alive.

Kwasi Zobantu mission exists because of the Lord Jesus, because of what He has done. Our educational centers, our horticulture, all of that is a result of the gospel. If you who are without the gospel, what have you invented? What have you done? What progress has there been? It was through the gospel that I have not fought against the blacks.

I might have been saying, well, they are without a soul, what does it help? But instead I value them and that is why we together preach the gospel. All good comes with the gospel. Remove the gospel and no good remains.

You'll only go backwards. You can take any other field, like health. There has been progress because of the gospel.

It is the gospel that causes people to be healthy. It is said we now have freedom in our country. What freedom when there are so many people dying as never before? Look at the people dying because of diseases like AIDS, because of criminality.

There has never been as many people dying in South Africa because of these unnatural causes than since this freedom. Go to an AIDS patient as they are dying and ask, well, what has freedom done for you? There is no medicine like the medicine of the gospel. The gospel heals people.

Jesus commanded his people to go out and to pray for the sick, to lay hands on the sick. And there is no pill like the gospel because it is also protective in nature. Not only does it heal, but it secures you from being attacked by these things because you don't do the things that will cause ill health.

Yes, there are the sicknesses. But remember, hospitals... Hospitals were founded because of Christianity and the present hospital systems, nursing. That began with Christians, even though today you might find unbelievers and atheists in these very hospitals.

But why don't you go and read history and understand these things? Or do you still need to be nursed because you are such a baby, you don't know your very own history? You will find that there are still hospitals in existence like St. Augustine's, St. Mary's, Holy Cross. You will find that there are still hospitals in existence like St. Augustine's, St. Mary's, Holy Cross. You will find that there are still hospitals in existence like St. Augustine's, St. John's, and hospitals like that because of their Christian background.

But today you will find doctors working in them who don't believe in Christ and who give injections and practice their medicine, being atheists. But today you will find doctors working in them who don't believe in Christ and who give injections and practice their medicine, being atheists. More than a hundred years ago, before the 20th century, you found that there were hospitals, but they were made for the poor.

Rich people were seen to buy doctors at home. You will find that there are still hospitals in existence like St. Augustine's, St. Mary's, Holy Cross. You will find that there are still hospitals in existence like St. Augustine's, St. Mary's, and hospitals like that because of their Christian background.

And he, Louis Pasteur, for instance, as a Frenchman and an outspoken Christian, he was involved in the area of bacteriology and made great progress in that field. Bacteria, germs, the tiniest invisible things but which can cause diseases. Today we use words like to pasteurize something.

That means to make completely germ-free. They would stop the bacteria through different techniques and we know that because of Louis Pasteur. Like the practice of sterilization today.

It wasn't like that before, but it was through these Christian doctors that they invented these things like we would sterilize water today. Make sure that no germs find entrance. Vaccines, have you been vaccinated? If you feel on your arm, or don't you both, you should know on your arm already that you've been vaccinated.

Vaccination against many deadly diseases. Vaccination against many deadly diseases was based on the research of these Christian scientists. If you come with other stuff and reject the gospel, then rather keep quiet about it.

If you keep your mouth shut, people will at least think you're a fool. Think that you're wise if you don't say foolish things. Even if you are a fool, but if you keep your mouth shut, people might think you're a wise man or a wise girl.

The average life span of Jesus Christ is about 28 years. In the time of A.D. 33, the average life span that's across the world was approximately 28 years of age. People died very quickly and few made it to old age.

But by 1990, the average human life span was 62. But with the increasing life span, it was directly the influence of missionaries and what they brought to these different areas. It was because missionaries also taught a different lifestyle and they said don't live in this way.

Don't use drink, don't be drunk, don't use these narcotics and so that helped them. They also built hospitals for the sick. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is all things and it also makes people to be healthy.

You know what scientists have found as they researched among doctors? Scientific studies have shown that going to church and being committed spiritually is good for your health physically and mentally. And it's not preachers who try to preach the gospel. It is scientists who have researched and found that those who are committed spiritually, who go to church, they are more likely to live longer and to have a healthier life because of the way that they live.

Some doctors in hospitals, they even recommend for the patients that they should be able to sing choruses, they should have the bible read to them, that they would feel better even physically. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is all things and it also makes people to be healthy physically and mentally. People from the nearby neighborhood, they came and they said we'd like to see your dying wife.

Afterwards they said to me, you know, she looks like she's well and alive and healthy. They noticed in her a glow, a glory because the presence of Christ, even if we are dying, is there. If you want to discard Christianity, then go back to complete pagan living with the skins and with all those things that you know from the past.

Doctors also said your wife has been so courageous, she should have been dead a long time ago. I said to them, it is the Lord who brings that about. Let Jesus be preeminent in all things.

Ask yourself, is Jesus first to you? If he's not the first to you and it's instead your girlfriend or boyfriend or son, repent today. If Jesus is not the very first one in your life, make him to be the first today. I ask you, your wife, your husband, your old person or child, whoever you are, is Jesus the first in your life? If he's

not, make him to be the very first.

If you doubt that, it would be good if you would openly choose the Lord Jesus Christ, publicly show. You could come down here and kneel, calling on the Lord, if you have not made him the first in your life, in the past. You see in everything, in schooling, in health, Jesus is number one.

He is the first. He has preeminence. Make him preeminent in your life too.

Shall we pray? Lord Jesus, examine every single life, every heart here, whether you are the first in the life of that person. And if there is anyone who hasn't given you the first place, and hasn't given you the first place, Lord, grant them repentance, so that they will be able to mourn and to repent and turn away from their sins, that you might be the first in their lives. That it might be clearly evident in every life that Jesus is the number one in their lives.

Amen. Lawrence Nightingale, you may have heard of her. She was born in 1820 and died in 1910.

She is the founder of modern nursing. And that she had compassion on the sick and the wounded was directly because of the Gospel. She was especially influenced by a certain pastor in Germany, a Lutheran pastor.

His name was Theodore Flitner. She was blessed by him. She was directly influenced by that spiritual influence.

And she said, I don't want to get married, I just want to serve. She went out helping ex-convicts. She taught nurses how to nurse.

She went into war zones when the British were at war with the Russians. She went into war zones when the British were at war with the Russians. She recruited nurses from young ladies from Christian groups and it was the Lord first.

Today, nursing is so different. It's money first and the needs of the patient come second. She said, I don't want to get married, I just want to serve.

And she said, I don't want to get married, I just want to serve. She became a legend in her time. She became known as the body with the lamp because she would go into these war zones and hospitals visiting late at night with her lamp.

And she became a heroine through that. Even the Red Cross had its roots in Christianity. Even the Red Cross had its roots in Christianity.

The founder of the Red Cross was a man called Dunant, a Christian man who witnessed a battle in Italy and saw the battlefield and the dead and the wounded. And he got a committee of five together, founded the International Red Cross which would work on any side with non-political alliances, would not take sides with any group. In 1864, there were about twenty-four members of the Red Cross.

It was in 1864 when he got twenty-four delegates from sixteen different nations together and they founded officially then the International Red Cross. Millions have been helped. It was as a direct result of his Christian belief that it happened.

I feel sorry for you who don't have the gospel. Maybe it's only in hell that you'll wake up and realize the truth. It shouldn't need a lot of money.

It shouldn't need a lot of money. It shouldn't need a lot of money. There shouldn't be any person in this world who's ashamed of being a Christian and propagating the gospel.

But if you are, forgive me repeating and repeating you're the biggest fool in this world. Your brains, whether they be great or little, are in your backside and not in your head. And you're sitting upon it.

You can sit on eggs after twenty-one days. They'll hatch if your weight isn't too big to break them. But these eggs that you are sitting on, I don't think you'll have any chicks in this world and in the world to come.

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