Colossians 1:15-20 (NIV)
15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

51-01-02-Christ Central and Supreme
Christ preeminent, the Incarnation, Epiphany, the Cross, believers Col 1:15-20
God’s supreme investment in Christ calls us to the same investment.

INTRODUCTION: (Text for the Scripture Reading)
– [Wheels weren’t invented by us, but copied from God, Who created solar systems and rotating spiral galaxies. Each astronomical wheel has a center from which its outside extremities move in a circle. Earth owes its existence and health to the gravitational pull of the Sun, just as we and this entire universe owe our existence and well-being to Jesus, Who is God’s Center for all of creation.]
– Jesus can’t just be a part of our lives. He’s the all supreme Center from which all else is ordered and arranged. Some may try to invent a “convenient Christ” who says nothing about how they think or how they choose to live. This is not the real Son of God! HOM.idea.
– In this message, we’ll be looking at the centrality and supremacy of Christ in 3 areas: Scripture, salvation, and the life of the saints. First...

I. Christ Is Central and Supreme in the Scriptures
A. The resurrected Christ gave a Bible study on the road to Emmaus—Luke 24:25-27. He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. (Jesus invites us each day to a Bible study with Himself!)
B. The key question to ask when reading Scripture: “What does this passage have to do with Christ, His character, His mind, the reason for His coming to earth?” [Early Church fathers used to raise such questions in all their commentaries! Nowadays, modern skeptic scholars raise questions about God’s answers!]
C. The Bible is a book of divine wisdom or God’s logic.
   1. Jesus is the eternal Logos [reasoning or logic] of God—John 1:1. In the beginning was the Word [the logos], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (Jesus is God and expresses God’s thoughts.)
   2. Jesus is also our Wisdom—1 Cor 1:30. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. (These 3 [“righteousness, holiness and redemption”] are spiritual aspects of God’s wisdom in Christ—the areas God wants us to be wise about!)
3. In the Old Covenant, God was external to believers; but in the New Covenant, we participate in this “mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (It’s not worldly glory, but God’s own glory!)  

4. God’s supreme investment in Christ calls us to the same investment. Why is this must be the case?  
   a. In Christ, the Father fully invested Himself for this world’s sake—v.19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.  
   b. Jesus must become our own supreme investment, capturing our focus, our concentration, our full attention.

**CONCLUSION:**

–So, we must ask ourselves, “Is Jesus central and supreme in my life?”  
**We can’t share Him** with those who have no “hope of glory,” unless we ourselves enthrone Him in our hearts and crown Him King... daily!  
–A feverish preoccupation with worldly cares and concerns can spoil that investment. But, our time is limited. At the end of our earthly lives, the quality of our relationship with Jesus will depend on how seriously we took His centrality and supremacy. Inviting Him into our hearts makes His indwelling presence certain, but yielding to His life within is a moment by moment choice. That yielding can be helped by praying what Frances R. Havergal expressed in her poem: **Live out Thy Life Within me**

Live out Thy life within me, O Jesus, King of kings! / Be Thou Thyself the answer to all my questionings; / Live out Thy life within me, in all things have Thy way! / I, the transparent medium, Thy glory to display.

The temple has been yielded, and purified of sin, / Let Thy Shekinah glory now shine forth from within, / And all the earth keep silence, the body henceforth be / Thy silent, gentle servant, moved only as by Thee.  

Its members every moment held subject to Thy call, / Ready to have Thee use them, or not be used at all, / Held without restless longing, or strain, or stress, or fret, /Or chafings at Thy dealings, or thoughts of vain regret.  

But restful, calm and pliant, from bend and bias free, / Awaiting Thy decision, when Thou hast need of me. / Live out Thy life within me, O Jesus, King of kings! / Be Thou the glorious answer to all my questionings.

**TRANS:** God has revealed Himself in Scripture, and the summation of His Self-disclosure is Christ. But the universal theme running like a thread through the Bible is salvation history, where...

**II. Christ Is Central and Supreme in God’s Salvation Plan**

**A. Universality is part of centrality** [Shakespeare is still popular, because his plays universally portray the human condition.] (Christ’s Gospel is not fiction but a real-life drama—current in all times, to all cultures, for all ages—universally confronting all human needs.)

**B. We understand this more deeply by tracing the universal in each aspect of His Incarnation:** in OT prophecy, in His annunciation to Mary, in His birth, in His presentation in the temple, in His baptism, in His temptation, in His miracles, in His teachings, His transfiguration, His crucifixion & resurrection, His sending of the Holy Spirit, His building the Church, and in His 2nd Coming!

**C. Why is the Jesus Film** (based on the Gospels) such an internationally effective tool for evangelism? Because it meets the universal needs of the human condition, which all other religions and human philosophies fail to meet!

**TRANS: God’s supreme investment in Christ calls us to the same investment.** Saying that Christ is central and supreme doesn’t make Jesus bigger than He really is. It describes His true dimensions! We, as God’s people, must have the proper evaluation and estimation of the centrality and supremacy of God’s Son, our Savior, because...

**III. Christ Is Central and Supreme in the Life of the Saints**

**A. Christ living inside our hearts is the secret “mystery.”** Paul tells of in Col 1:25-27, “I have become [the Church’s] servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

**B. Why is Christ’s indwelling presence so supremely important?**

1. It’s God’s secret, planned before creation [We prepare birthday presents before the party, not as afterthoughts.] (But for us, we obtain a spiritual birthday, when we unwrap the gift of God’s Son.)

2. Although “for ages” this Gift was concealed in the activities of salvation history, it has been disclosed to us in the NT Gospel.

Live out Thy life within me, O Jesus, King of kings! / Be Thou Thyself the answer to all my questionings; / Live out Thy life within me, in all things have Thy way! / I, the transparent medium, Thy glory to display.

The temple has been yielded, and purified of sin, / Let Thy Shekinah glory now shine forth from within, / And all the earth keep silence, the body henceforth be / Thy silent, gentle servant, moved only as by Thee.  

Its members every moment held subject to Thy call, / Ready to have Thee use them, or not be used at all, / Held without restless longing, or strain, or stress, or fret, /Or chafings at Thy dealings, or thoughts of vain regret.  

But restful, calm and pliant, from bend and bias free, / Awaiting Thy decision, when Thou hast need of me. / Live out Thy life within me, O Jesus, King of kings! / Be Thou the glorious answer to all my questionings.