



SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

SERIES: Ephesians

Monday, January 11, 2021

Scripture: Ephesians 1: 19-23

TITLE: Who's in First Place?

Have you ever baked a cake? I'm the chef of the house, but baking cakes is not my thing. My wife, however, is a cake artist. She is a master baker. Well, I asked her, "What makes a successful cake?" She tells me, it's getting things in the right order. "What does that mean?" I asked her. She told me that baking is an art form. If you do things out of order, the recipe will fail. You won't have a delicious cake. As she said this, it dawned on me, that's a lot like our lives. When we don't get things in the right order, our lives can be pretty messy.

The Apostle Paul has some great advice for getting things in the right order.

"I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³ And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself." (Eph. 1:19-23, NLT)

Paul's words here echo what he would write in Colossians One. Paul says that Christ is "far above any ruler or power". In fact, "God has put all things under the authority of Christ". Colossians One would call this the pre-eminence of Christ. But if I were to write this today, I'd say Christ is to be the first place in our lives.

You see, that's the proper order of things. When you move Christ from the first place of your life, everything begins to slowly get messy.

Marriages turn south, when the focus is on oneself or the kids.

Careers turn to scandals, when the focus shifts from honoring Christ to winning at any cost.

Families dissolve, when Christ gets dethroned by football, romance novels, jobs, online affairs, and the list just goes on.

So let me ask you a serious question? Who or what is in first place in your life? Before writing this, even I couldn't answer, "Jesus". I wish I could have. But it's amazing how easily and unintentionally things dethrone King Jesus. That's likely why your life isn't where you want it to be, or know it should be. We don't want our lives to end up like a meme on Facebook that says "Nailed It," but in reality, we've failed.

So, here's my challenge for you today: identify who or what has taken first place in your life. Is it YouTube? Video games? A boyfriend or a girlfriend? Is it a hobby? Is it serving at church? Whatever it is, if it's not Jesus Christ, He is not in first place.

Once you've identified your priorities, it's time to get Jesus back in the right spot. Identify one thing you will do today to make Christ your priority, and move the other things down. You'll then be in the process of getting things in the right place. When you do this, enjoy the sweet desserts of things in the right order.