I. God's intention in His administration is to give Christ the preeminence in all things, to cause Christ to have the first place in everything—Col. 1:15, 18:
   A. The entire world situation is under the rule of the heavens by the God of the heavens to match His intention in His economy, of which Christ is the center—Dan. 7:9-10; 4:34-35; Eph. 1:10.
   B. For Christ to have the preeminence in all things, God needs a people; apart from God's having a people, there is no way for Christ to be made preeminent—Col. 1:18; 3:10-11.
   C. Under His heavenly rule God is using the environment to make Christ the centrality (the first) and the universality (everything) to us—Rom. 8:28; Col. 1:18, 27; 3:4, 10-11.

II. Christ has the first place, the preeminence, in God's economy—1:18; Eph. 1:10:
   A. Christ is the preeminent One, the One who has the first place in everything—Col. 1:18.
   B. Christ is preeminent in the triune Godhead; the first, the Father, exalts the Son, and the third, the Spirit, always testifies concerning the Son—2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:9; John 15:26.
   C. Christ is preeminent in God's exaltation of Him—Acts 2:33a; Eph. 1:22:
      1. Christ has been exalted to the right hand of God in the third heaven—Acts 2:33a.
      2. In God's exaltation of Christ, He has been given to be the Head over all things—Eph. 1:22.
   D. Both in the old creation and in the new creation, both in the universe and in the church, Christ occupies the first place, the place of preeminence—Col. 1:15, 18.
   E. For Christ to be the first means that He is all; since Christ is the first both in the universe and in the church, He must be all things in the universe and in the church—3:10-11.

III. Christ should have the preeminence in our personal universe—v. 17; 1 Cor. 10:31:
   A. As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for Christ's preeminence, we are under His heavenly rule—Dan. 4:26; Matt. 5:3.
   B. Christ, the preeminent One, must be the centrality and universality in our church life, family life, and daily life—Col. 3:17; 1 Cor. 10:31.
   C. Under God's exaltation of everything is working together for our good; this is especially true of the things in our personal universe—Rom. 8:28:
      1. Our personal universe includes ourselves, our families, and the church.
      2. In our personal universe many things happen day by day for the purpose of making Christ preeminent; we need to realize this and be submissive to God's heavenly rule—Eph. 1:11; Rev. 4:11.
   D. In order to give Christ the preeminence in all things, we must be willing to be adjusted, to be broken, and to be made nothing so that the Lord can have a way in us, through us, and among us for the building up of His organic Body—Eph. 3:17; 4:16.
   E. If we have a vision of the preeminence of Christ, our living and our church life will be revolutionized, for we will realize that in all things Christ must have the first place—Col. 1:18.

IV. Christ should have the preeminence in our love—Rev. 2:4:
   A. To give the Lord the first place in all things is to love Him with the first love; we need to maintain and develop our first love toward the Lord—v. 4.
   B. Whatever one loves, his whole heart, even his whole being, is set on and occupied and possessed by—1 Tim. 6:10; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; 4:8, 10a; Titus 1:8.
C. Whether there would be a day of glory in the church’s victory or grievous days of the church’s decline depends on what kind of love we have—Rev. 2:4; 2 Tim. 3:2-4.

D. Our love for the Lord must be absolute; we should not love anyone or anything above Him—Matt. 10:37-39.

E. We love the Lord because He first loved us, infusing His loving essence into us and generating within us the love with which we love Him—1 John 4:19, 8, 16.

F. We love the Lord according to the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity as love—Rom. 5:5; 8:35, 39; 15:30.

V. Christ should have the preeminence in our tripartite being—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11, 15-16:

A. We worship the enthroned Christ in the heavens, but we experience, enjoy, and partake of the indwelling Christ in our spirit; we are one with Him in a very subjective way—v. 1; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 3:17:

1. The Christ who indwells us is not a small, limited Christ but the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent Christ—Col. 1:15-16, 18-19.

2. We need to be infused, saturated, and permeated with the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent Christ until in our experience He is everything to us—2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11.

B. Because Christ is our life, all He has and all He has attained and obtained become subjective to us; universally, Christ is extensive, but in our experience, He is our life, our being—v. 4; Rom. 8:34, 10.

C. The content and constituent should only be the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—Col. 3:10-11.

D. We should allow Christ to fill our entire being and replace every aspect of our natural life with Himself—Eph. 3:17; Col. 3:10-11.

VI. Christ should have the preeminence in our spiritual experiences—1:18, 27; 2:9-13, 20; 3:1-4:

A. The history of Christ is the experience of the Christian, and the experience of Christ is the history of the Christian—1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5-6:

1. The history of Christ becomes our experience and our spiritual history—John 14:19b; Gal. 2:20.

2. In the organic union with Christ, whatever Christ passed through has become our history—John 15:1, 4-5.

B. In Colossians a number of phrases point to our experience of Christ; these expressions give us a complete picture of the proper experience of Christ—1:27-28; 2:6, 8, 13, 19-20.

VII. Christ should have the preeminence in our human living—3:18—4:1:

A. God desires that Christ be expressed through human life—Phil. 1:19-21a.

B. The living of the believers must be in union with Christ; this means that in our living we need to be one with Him—1 Cor. 6:17; John 15:4-5:

1. We need to be one with the Lord Jesus just as He is one with the Father—10:30; 14:10; 6:57.

2. We and Christ should now have one life and one living; the Son’s life becomes our life, and our living becomes the Son’s living—Gal. 2:20.

3. The living of the believers in union with Christ results in the expression of Christ in their human living—Col. 3:18—4:1.

C. We should do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus—3:17:

1. The name denotes the person, and the Lord’s person is the Spirit—2 Cor. 3:17a.

2. To do things in the name of the Lord is to act in the Spirit; this is to live Christ and to give Him the preeminence in our human living—Col. 1:18.