

COLOSSIANS: JESUS+

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH OF COLOSSE

Part 2: First and Foremost

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The Colossians Challenge

Read the whole book of Colossians every week, out loud with someone, for the length of the series.

Colossians 1:15-23

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Jesus is the visible, historical person who demonstrates the invisible heavenly Father.

Through ancient eyes, “firstborn” doesn’t refer to birth order but to the concept of birthright.

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.

Jesus created everything and is over everything.

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.

Jesus is in charge.

This is his church.

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.

Reconciliation: bringing two parties back to right relationship.

²¹Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²²But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel.

^{23b} This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, _____, have become a servant.

Jesus...

*Creator, owner, holder of all things, leader of the church,
origin of all that is good, reconciler of our soul.*

He is... “the eternal, independent, and self-existent Being; the Being whose purposes and actions spring from himself, without foreign motive or influence; he who is absolute in dominion; the most pure, the most simple, the most spiritual of all essences; infinitely perfect; and eternally self-sufficient, needing nothing that he has made; inimitable in his immensity, inconceivable in his mode of existence, and indescribable in his essence; known fully only by himself, because an infinite mind can only be fully comprehended by itself. In a word, a Being who, from his infinite wisdom, cannot err or be deceived and from his infinite goodness, can do nothing but what is eternally just, and right, and kind.”

- Adam Clarke, 18th Century Methodist Minister

Next Steps

The Colossians Challenge: Before the end of today, decide where and with whom you will read through Colossians each week. Set a time and place.

The Epaphras Challenge: This week start making a list of 5 people who don't know Jesus that you will invite in person to Easter over the next few weeks.

Small Group Questions

- 1) On most mornings, what's your first waking thought? What's foremost in your mind as you start your day?
- 2) Read Colossians 1:15-23. Does this passage challenge any of your beliefs about Jesus? Which of your beliefs does it reinforce?
- 3) How would someone act if they truly believed this passage?
- 4) Looking at your own life, do you see any thinking or behavior that could be making you an enemy of God right now? (see verse 21)
- 5) How can we pray for you right now?