

JESUS + NOTHING = EVERYTHING

By John Richardson

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 1:15–20

[15] He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. [16] For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. [17] And 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, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. [19] For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, [20] and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

OBSERVATION

Jesus is incredible. When one comes to the Word of God, seeing God/Jesus (He is God) is supreme. Paul gave the believers in Colossae a look into the world around them; his lens was Jesus. All of God's pleasure dwells within Christ, so when one understands that Jesus died in our place and now God sees Christ's righteousness, we must worship.

- “Jesus is...” The opening of this verse should be the bedrock of our understanding of God, function in life, pleasures, motivations, and praise. From the pen of Paul, one can see that Jesus is foremost in all creation—not that Jesus was created but He brought creation about. Without Jesus, nothing would exist (v. 15).
- Every atom that buzzes with energy was formed by Christ and currently holds together by His hand. How powerful is the mighty Person of Christ? To split an atom, one is left with the most destructive forces man has ever explored, the atom bomb. Jesus holds together the seemingly infinite number of atoms in the universe. Paul doesn't stop at physical objects; he continues to unfold the placement of power, kingdoms, and dominion which all rest in Christ. No one exerts one ounce of power or aspires to a position without the permissive or direct response of Christ (vv. 16-17).
- Paul continues to embrace Christ by expanding the reader's understanding that the church exists by the work of Christ. No body functions without a head. Paul writes that without Christ as the head, a body would not exist. Having overcome death, Jesus is the only person to take on death and conquer it. The hope believers have for eternity is in Jesus (v. 18).
- Verse 18 can be difficult to understand. The verb phrase “was pleased” is connected to “all the fullness of God” which introduces God as the implied

subject. So, what does it mean for God to have His full pleasure dwelling in Christ? Where God dwelled in Zion (Joel 3:17) and the Temple (Exodus 36)—not that God lived in these places but He provided covering for sin, His Word, and presence from these places—now Jesus is the functional dwelling place of God, ministering His work of reconciliation. Jesus is the final avenue for restoration into right relationship with the Father and with others (vv. 19-20).

OBEDIENCE

How do you see Jesus? Is He a gatekeeper to heaven or do you see Him as Paul does? Paul wanted to show the infinite worth of Christ so that the believers in Colossae would worship Him alone. What do you worship?

- Memorize this portion of Scripture to bring the truth of Christ into your meditations.
- Worship Christ this week, knowing that all the things above are true. Take a walk and consider the things that Christ is holding together currently. Reflect on the church and how you miss Jesus being worshiped by His church.
- Knowing that invisible things were created by Christ, as well as positions and authorities, thank God for all that He has done for you, for where He has placed you to work, and for the influence that Christ has given you with others.
- Share Jesus and these verses with others. Many have a poor understanding of Christ, and these verses can help expand everyone's vision.

PRAYER

Thank God for Christ. Spend minutes, hours, or days thanking God for Christ.