

Keep Jesus Big and Out Front

Colossians 1:15-23

¹⁵ He 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.

JESUS is GOD	¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
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“Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” John 14:9

The incarnation: fully God and fully man

JESUS is HEIR	^(15b) the firstborn of all creation.
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“And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.” Psalm 89:27

JESUS is CREATOR	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.
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“All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.”
John 1:3

By Him...source of creation
Through Him...agent of creation
For Him...goal of creation

JESUS is INFINITE	¹⁷ And he is before all things, ^(18b) He is the beginning,
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“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.’” John 8:58

JESUS is HEAD	¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church.
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“...and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.” Colossians 2:19

JESUS is REDEEMER	²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
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“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1

The Maker of the Universe

Poem by Frederick William Pitt (1859-1943)

The maker of the universe, as man for man was made a curse:
The claims of laws which He had made, unto the uttermost He paid.
His holy fingers made the bough which grew the thorns that crowned His brow:
The nails that pierced His feet were mined in secret places He designed.
He made the forests where there sprung, the tree on which His body hung:
He died upon a cross of wood, yet made the hill on which it stood.
The sky that darkened o’er His head, by Him above the earth was spread:
The sun that hid from Him his face, by His decree was poised in space.
The spear revealing precious blood was tempered in the fires of God:
The grave in which His form was laid, was hewn in rock which He had made.
The throne on which He now appears was His from everlasting years:
But a new glory crowns His brow, and every knee to Him must bow.

JESUS is LIFE	^(18b) the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
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“Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.” Revelation 1:17b-18

JESUS is SUSTAINER	^(17b) and in him all things hold together.
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Time for a science lesson!

AND YOU!

²¹“And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.”

Jesus is big and out front, but He is also personal and near.

Past:

alienated, hostile, doing evil

Present:

Now reconciled

To be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1)

“present” (sacrifice)

“holy” (the sacrifice and the altar)

“blameless” or “without blemish” (a sacrifice worthy of the Lord)

“above reproach”

Future:

“continue”

“stable”

“steadfast”

“not shifting”

Christ, the Foundation

“For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 3:11

A life of faith  Not shifting from the hope of the gospel  Jesus Christ

The hope of the gospel is not:

Avoiding hell

Making it to heaven

Being a good person

Being a good church member

A happy life

Health and wealth

⁴⁶ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?⁴⁷ **Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them**, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸ **he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock**. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹ But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.” Luke 6:46-49

The hope of the gospel is:

Keeping Jesus big and out front

And at the same time keeping Jesus personal and near

How would you answer the question- WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

“...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things (**HEIR**), through whom also he created the world (**CREATOR**).³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature (**GOD**), and he upholds the universe by the word of his power (**SUSTAINER**). After making purification for sins (**REDEEMER**), he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (**KING**)⁴ having become as much superior (**PREEMINENT**) to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.” Hebrews 1:2-4