



## The Big Picture Colossians 1:15-23

April 28, 2019  
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In the gospels, Jesus appears on the scene as the eternal Son of God to break the curse of sin. His people (God's chosen people) rejected Him. He lived a perfect life without sin and became the perfect sacrifice. Last week, we celebrated what we always celebrate: He died in our place and for our sin, drinking the cup of God's wrath. How many of you have visited the Hoover Dam? If we were to stand at the foot of the Hoover Dam towering over our heads with 726 ft of concrete and iron stretching 1,244 ft long and 660ft thick. It holds back so much water that it deformed the earth's crust and caused 600 small earthquakes in the decade after its construction. Let's just say this wall or structure were to break and the force of all this water were to spill out on top of you, consider this as the weight of God's wrath on man's sin. This was the cup that Jesus was willing to drink from and take on this wrath to save man from sin and spilling His own blood as the final sacrifice to break the curse. Then it happened... as miraculous proof that He was God's Son, God raised Jesus from the dead.

**Let's look at this Big Picture today?** Turn with me to Colossians chapter one in your Bibles. Men did not make up the Bible. All of it is the word of the Most High God; the New Testament and definitely the Old Testament as well. There are some church leaders that have considered the Old Testament to minute or even completely the Most High God is more powerful than any ancestor, person, government or gods that people worship. This story is true and reliable because it is His Word.

### **Colossians 1:15-23 English Standard Version (ESV)**

*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. 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.*

First, **Christ is Sufficient for CREATION. (v 15-18)** He existed in the beginning before there was anything else. Jesus Christ is the perfect image – the exact likeness-of God and is in the very form of God and has been for all eternity. In verse 15 and summed up in verse 17, we see that **Jesus Christ is ETERNAL.** He is both the representation and manifestation of God. Thus, Jesus

Christ is fully God in every way. Firstborn can refer to one who was born first chronologically, but most often refers to preeminence in position, or rank. Firstborn in this context clearly means highest in rank, not first created. It is impossible for Christ to be both created and the Creator of everything. He existed before the creation and is exalted in rank above it. I truly believe that when we all get to heaven and walk through the pearly gates and see across the celestial sea and observe the angels, saints and beasts worshipping the Lord our God by proclaiming "Worthy is the lamb that was slain, worthy is He; Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty" we will see Jesus Christ sitting on the throne. If He is the image of the invisible God, the hands and feet of His Father, we will see Jesus face to face. He will not be dressed up in a robe with a long thick white beard and blue eyes. We always have this self-image of what God will look like and the answer is: He will have dark skin and will probably have a large nose and brown eyes. God will look like Jesus because God is Jesus. Jesus is God.

In verse 16, we see that **Jesus Christ is CREATOR**. He is the Creator. He created everything on earth and in heaven and is all powerful over everything. **When God speaks, things happen**. He spoke, and everything came to being. He created angels for His worship and service. "Thrones or dominions or principalities or powers do not regard whether they are holy or fallen, since He is Lord of both groups. But we know Lucifer (known as the Devil or the Accuser later in OT writings) was a fallen angel along with other created angels who became His demons. False teachers suggest Jesus was one of them, merely a spirit created by God and inferior to Him. Paul rejected this and considered Jesus as the preeminent One who also created everything we can see — the sky, land, water, mountains, oceans, sun, moon, stars, all plants and animals. Finally, He created man according to His image. God created man to enjoy all that He has created. God created everything and saw that it was good. His Purpose to create was for Him! **Jesus Christ created the PHYSICAL and SPIRITUAL universe for HIS pleasure and glory**. We were created for a relationship with God. God didn't have to create a world or us, but He chose to. At this time in all creation, there was no death, no sin, no pain, no sorrow at all. It was a perfect world with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden with everything they need. However, if they ate from that one tree, they would be punished and die. One day, the devil tempted the woman to eat the food from the tree that was forbidden. The woman listened to the devil and ate the fruit. Then she gave it to her husband to eat. Both disobeyed God's command and was cast out of the garden because of their sin.

Second, **Jesus Christ is Sufficient for SALVATION. (v 19-20)**

We must realize Paul is teaching us that God is not in everything even though He created all things, but all the fullness of God dwells in Christ alone. It was Jesus to reconcile "to change" or "exchange" our relationship with God. Because of sin, human beings and God were now separated forever. **All Have Sinned**: Like the first man and woman, all people like us since then have sinned by not listening to God's commands and are separated from God. The result of sin is eternal punishment in hell. **ALL have sinned; man is unable to return to God without God**. *Psalm 53:1-3* informs that we need Jesus for salvation stating: "*The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good. God looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all fallen away; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.* **Sin BREAKS the relationship between God and us. GOD restores man to a right relationship with Him through Jesus Christ**. The curse continued in Gen. 6, God floods the earth killing everyone. He found only one-man pursuing God, Noah; God sends a Rainbow of a promise; but everyone starts rebelling again; **God's presence is made known**; Gen. 11 people are scattered across the earth making up their own laws, religions and gods; God blesses Abram: making Him into a nation; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob who then has 12 sons.

Third, **Jesus Christ is Sufficient for SANCTIFICATION. (v 21-23)** He continued to have a remnant make a covenant with us throughout the ages. READ, v 21a. Israel was enslaved by the nation of Egypt; Moses delivered Israel; Tabernacle was God's dwelling place and the **Ark of the covenant known as the presence of God**, 10 commandments to remember God is perfect and holy; teaches people how to relate to God and others; continued to rebel in the wilderness; headed to the Promised land & whole generation died; Judges, Kings and Prophets tried to bring order and stability; Division of the Kingdoms in 930 BC; captivity and exile; 538-400 BC restored Israel.

READ, verses 21-23. **Christ's DEATH on the cross paid the FULL penalty for the sin for all who believe.** Also, in verse 22, we see **Believers can experience a HOLY and BLAMELESS relationship with God.** God considers us Christians as holy as His Son and blameless (without spots, blemish, or wrong) and Christ is the one who presents us pure before God's sight. Much like a father would present his beautiful daughter in a wedding ceremony to the man that she will be married to, Jesus Christ presents us.

**Christ is the One who makes you a NEW CREATION.** He declares you as righteous and will mold you and shape you into a new creation. When making clay on the potter's wheel in my undergrad, I noticed that if the clay was not positioned in the center of the wheel grounded on the pallet first then the clay would fall or collapse off the wheel even before it is able to be formed and created into something new. The same is with God who saves us but also wants to perfect us and make us new. Like that clay in the center of that wheel, place your life in the potter's hands in the center of His will by continuing in the faith and obedience so that He may sanctify you and one present you.

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*Romans 8:28-30 describes those who are saved are saved for a purpose. Jesus is still the one who cleanses us and makes us new. It still is about Him when we persevere in faith and obedience, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."*

God loves us very much. He gave us a perfect way to reconnect to Him. God sent Jesus to show us the way back to Himself. Who is Jesus? Jesus is God's one and only son. Trust that Jesus Christ has created you; He is able to save you and cleanse you as you believe in Him as Savior and making Him Lord of your life.