Gracestoration
Update
"Restoring People in God's Grace and Making Disciplers"

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WHO IS THIS JESUS?

Many in our Christian culture know something about Jesus Christ historically, but know little about Him personally. For some He is prophet and a good human being. Others view Jesus and His followers as unloving and judgmental. For many others, He is a vile oath and/or a swear word.

Who is Jesus Christ to you and me? We will look at the Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians to see how he reveals Him. Hopefully rediscovering His power, love and beauty will revive our relationship with Him and His with us.

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven" (Col. 1:15-20).

Jesus is God in a human body – *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation"* (vs. 15). The Apostle John said that Jesus *"became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we* [John and the other disciples] *saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth"* (Jn. 1:14). The Apostle Peter testified, *"we were eyewitnesses of His majesty"* (2 Pet. 1:16).

Jesus was fully God and fully man and was tangible. The Apostle John affirmed this, *"What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life"* (1 Jn. 1:1).

Jesus is the firstborn of all creation (vs. 15). Jesus is *"the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything."* (vs. 18). Also, that *"His Son* [Jesus]*... would be the firstborn among many brethren...* [that we be] *conformed to the image of His Son"* (R0m. 8:29). Jesus is The one that God planned for us to be conformed to because Jesus Christ is God's perfect prototype of what the faithful Christian is to be totally like.

Jesus was the creator of all things. *"For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him"* (vs. 16).

1. He created the vast starry galaxies and universes --
2. The earth and all of its beauty: oceans, rivers, mountains, plains and all living plants and animals, including all mankind--
3. Governments, authorities, kings, leaders, families natural or supernatural --
4. Whether visible or invisible all were created by and for His pleasure.

We Christians benefit also, *"He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will"* (Eph. 1:5). He redeemed us for His pleasure and we also are enabled to enjoy Him and all of His benefits!

The Apostle John testified, *"All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being"* (Jn. 1:3).

Jesus is before all things (vs. 17). The first words of the Bible

(Gen. 1:1) are, *"In the beginning God."* The Apostle John records, *"In the beginning was the Word... and the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us... the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"* (Jn. 1:1,14).

Jesus is the "glue" that holds the whole universe together. Gravity is a great mystery to scientists. They can explain what gravity is and does, but no one can define its essence except the Scriptures, *"in* [by] *Him all things hold together* (vs. 17)". When God rested on the seventh day after creating, He and Jesus were and are not passive or inactive, but continue to oversee the continuation of the growth and maturation of their creation until the end of time.

Jesus *"is also head of the body, the church* (vs. 18)**."** This truth is accepted intellectually, but rarely practiced in our churches where the leaders and congregations actually look to Jesus for His direction. Creative imagination instead of acknowledging Christ's leading trumps His headship in church life and ministry. God gave Jesus, *"as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all"* (Eph. 1:22-23).

Paul reveals the error of ignoring Christ's headship, *"not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God"* (Col. 2:19). The remedy for this error is, *"keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on the things above* [Christ and His leadership]*, and not on things that are on earth"* (Col. 3:1-2).

Much error, pain and conflict would be avoided if Jesus was looked to for His leading and wisdom in the local church. **Jesus *"is the beginning: the first born from the dead so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything*** (vs. 18)***".*** Jesus was not only the securer of our salvation; He also proceeded us in resurrection glory. *"Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep... in Christ all will be made alive"* (1 Cor. 15:20-22). Some day we will all gather around His throne and worship Him, *"Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."* (Rev. 4:11).

For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him (vs. 19)**.** *"In Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form"* (Col. 2:9). Jesus was God and was all that could be expressed of God in a human body was expressed in Him. God has also determined that through Jesus' indwelling of the believer, we also *"may be filled up to the all the fullness of God"* (Eph. 1:19).

The Apostle Peter stated in His greeting, *"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence"* (2 Pet. 1:2-3).

Not only was Jesus Christ truly God in a man's body, but He also saved us, so that He may dwell within us in order to express His Divine nature in, through and with our cooperation. God began a new relationship with His people.

Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep...My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand"* (Jn. 10:11, 27-28).



Jesus reconciled all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven (vs. 20)**.** This was God's crowning act! ***"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed* [entrusted] *to us the word of reconciliation"*** (2 Cor. 5:19).

The writer of Hebrews concurs. ***"Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen"*** (Heb. 13:20-21).

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36). **THIS IS JESUS!**

WHO IS THIS JESUS!
Jesus as represented in each book of the Bible --
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www.gracestoration.org
Click under Grace Nuggets.

Please pray for Bob and Jim, his ministry partner, as they leave for Asia August 31, to teach three groups of pastors in three locations. Many have suffered and are still suffering for the sake of Jesus and His gospel. They return home September 18th.