

Who is Jesus Christ?

Text: Colossians 1:15-22

Introduction:

1. Confusion abounds in the world as to who Jesus Christ really was and why He came to earth.
2. The text before us today leaves us in no doubt as to who Christ is and why He came. Let's consider three answers to the question "Who is Jesus Christ" from this section of the Word of God.

Jesus Christ is...

I. The Revealer (Vs. 15a)

A. God's Invisibility – "the invisible God"

1. Exodus 33:20 *"And he said, **Thou canst not see my face**: for there shall no man see me, and live."*
2. 1 Timothy 6:16 *"Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; **whom no man hath seen, nor can see**: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."*
3. John 1:18 *"No man hath **seen** God at any time;"*
4. John 4:24 *"God is a **Spirit...**" (A spirit has not flesh or bones. Lk 24:39)*

B. God's Image – "who is the image"

1. 'image' = exact likeness, portrait. The same word used by Christ in the Gospels to refer to Caesar's image on a penny (Matt. 22:20, Mk 12:16 & Lk 20:24)
2. 2 Corinthians 4:4 *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, **who is the image of God**, should shine unto them."*
3. Hebrews 1:3 *"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the **express image** of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" 'express image' = used to describe a tool for engraving or carving. Refers to a precise reproduction in every respect, a stamp or impression.*
4. John 14:8-9 *"Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, **and yet hast thou not known me**, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"*
5. Illustration: The Gospels reveal God's nature as displayed in the Son of God. E.g. His **compassion** at the grave of Lazarus, His **righteous anger** at religious hypocrisy with the Pharisees and religious leaders of His day, & His **love** for sinful mankind.

Jesus Christ is...

II. The Creator (Vs. 15b-19)

A. Creator of the Cosmos (Vs. 15b-17)

He is...

1. The Head of Creation (15b)
2. The Means of Creation (16a)
 - a. Things in the heavens
 1. Psalm 19:1-3 *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."*
 2. Romans 1:20 *"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."*
 3. Illustration: The number of the stars

In 600 B.C. the prophet Jeremiah wrote, "...the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured..." (Jer. 33:22) The first man acknowledged to have counted the stars was Hipparchus in 190-120 B.C. After making a study of the stars, he announced that there were 1,080. It is now generally accepted that without the aid of a telescope and on a very clear night, up to 4,000 stars can be seen. With the aid of modern telescopes, it is estimated that there are 10 to the power of 21 stars. That's the number 1 with 21 zeros after it! If you could count 20 stars per second, it would take 100 million billion years to count that many stars! Interestingly, this number is also an estimate of the number of grains of sand on the seashores of the world. The Bible says of God, *"He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names."* (Psalm 147:4)

4. Illustration (the sun): The sun has a diameter of 864,000 miles (one hundred times that of earth's) and could hold 1.3 million planets the size of earth inside it.
5. Illustration (the star Betelgeuse): Has a diameter of 100 million miles, which is larger than the earth's orbit around the sun.
- b. Things in the earth (e.g. botanical, animal & human life)
 1. Illustration (the eye):

The human eye is extremely complicated – a perfect and interrelated system of about 40 individual subsystems, including the retina, pupil, iris, cornea, lens and optic nerve. For instance, the retina has approximately 137 million special cells that respond to light and send messages to the brain. About 130 million of these cells look like rods and handle the black and white vision. The other seven million are cone-shaped and allow us to see in color. The retina cells receive light impressions, which are converted to electric pulses and sent to the brain via the optic nerve. A special section of the brain called the visual cortex interprets the pulses to color, contrast, depth, etc., which allows us to see 'pictures' of our world in three dimensions. Amazingly, the eye, optic nerve and the brain's visual cortex are totally separate and distinct subsystems. Yet, together they capture, deliver and interpret up to 1.5 million pulse messages every milli-second (one thousandth of a second)! Dr. Gary Baxter Pg. 77-78

2. Quote: "Max Planck, winner of the Nobel Prize and one of the founders of modern physics, wrote, "According to everything taught by the exact sciences about the immense realm of nature, a certain order prevails – one independent of the human mind...this order can be formulated in terms of

purposeful activity. There is evidence of an intelligent order of the universe to which both man and nature are subservient.”

- c. Things invisible (e.g. principalities and powers. The unseen world)
- 3. The Goal of Creation (16b)
- 4. The Forerunner of Creation (17a)
- 5. The Sustainer of Creation (17b)
 - a. Illustration: The Atom

8 positively charged protons closely associated together within the confines of its tiny nucleus with 8 neutrons with no charge. According to the laws of physics, these should attract each other and the whole history of electrical phenomena and electrical equipment have been built on these principles known as Coulomb's law of electrostatic force and the law of magnetism. What holds the nucleus together? Why doesn't it fly apart? (D. Lee Chesnut) In seeking to explain the powerful force that holds protons together within the nucleus, scientists coined the phrase "strong nuclear force," but have no explanation for why it exists. Karl K. Darrow, a physicist, comments: "You grasp what this implies. It implies that all the massive nuclei have no right to be alive at all. Indeed, they should never have been created, and, if created, they should have blown up instantly. Yet here they all are...Some inflexible inhibition is **holding them relentlessly together**. The nature of the inhibition is also a secret...one thus far reserved by Nature for herself."

b. Illustration: The rotation of planets

B. Creator of the Church (Vs. 18-19)

- 1. Its Originator (18b)
- 2. Its Firstborn (18c) (Reference to his rank & position)
- 3. Its Preeminent One (18d-19) (means He is to have first place)

Jesus Christ is...

III. The Reconciler (Vs. 20-22)

A. The Payment of Reconciliation (Vs. 20)

- 1. The Blood shed on the cross
 - a. Hebrews 9:22 *"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without **shedding of blood** is no remission."*
 - b. Illustration: Israel reconciled through the blood of the sin offering. *"And the priests killed them (the goats for the sin offering), and they made **reconciliation with their blood** upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel."* (II. Chron. 29:24)
 - c. Scriptures emphasis on the Blood of Christ: we are purchased by the blood (Acts 20:28); Atonement/propitiation is by the blood (Rom 3:25); we are justified by the blood (Rom 5:9); we are redeemed and granted forgiveness through the blood (Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14; 1 Pt. 1:18-19; Rev. 5:9); we are drawn near to Christ by the blood (Eph. 2:13); we are cleansed by the blood (1 Jn. 1:7); we are washed from our sins in His blood (Rev. 1:5)
- 2. The Peace secured (Rom 5:1)

B. The People for Reconciliation (Vs. 21)

- 1. Their Past (Vs. 21a)
 - a. They were **Estranged**
 - 1. 'alienated' = cut off, separated, a foreigner or stranger

2. "...**without Christ...without God in the world.**" (Eph 2:12)
- b. They were **Enemies**
 1. 'enemies' = hostile, hateful
 2. 'mind' = the rational faculty, the heart, seat of moral judgment
 3. 1. Corinthians 2:14 *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*
 4. Romans 8:7 *"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."*
 5. Psalm 10:4 *"...God is not in all his thoughts."*
 6. Note: For a sinner to be saved, he must repent. Repentance involves a radical change of mind!
- c. They were **Evil**
 1. James 1:15 – sinful deeds are conceived in the mind and birthed in the actions
 2. "wicked works" = sinful practice
2. Their Present (21b-22a)
 - a. The Intervention of God
 1. "yet now"
 2. Read Ephesians 2:1-4
 3. Romans 5:6-9 *"For when we were yet without strength..."*
 4. 1 Timothy 1:13 *"Who was before a blasphemer..."*
 - b. The Substitution of Christ
 1. "body of his flesh" – Christ died in a real body
 2. 'death' – Christ died a real death for sin
 3. Illustration: Estranged wife and husband reconciled at the grave of their only son.
3. Their Future (22b)
 - a. Holy = set apart
 - b. Unblameable = without blemish, spot (1 Pt. 1:19)
 - c. Unreproveable = unaccusable, beyond reproach. Lit. "not to be called in" No charge can be laid.

Conclusion:

1. Have you been reconciled to God? Have you received Christ's free offer of salvation?
2. Does Christ have first place in our lives? E.g. personal, family & church?