



## Col 1:15-20- HTCD – All Things – 1 May 2022 – Small Group Notes

(Some quotes from the sermon are included in brackets in case the group find them helpful.)

The following three questions are connected. Read all three out and then see if there is any insight in your group.

Does what you think about yourself matter?

Does what you think about Jesus and God matter?

How do these connect, or how should they connect?

People get all sorts of wrong ideas about Jesus. Can you think of any times you have seen humorous or significant misunderstandings regarding who Jesus is?

What passages of scripture, can you think of, that show Jesus in glorified form?

Some examples might include John 1, Hebrews 1, passages in Revelation, or the gospel accounts of the transfiguration.

In the talk, Shawn shared several ways people might try to cast Jesus into their own mould from a blog entry by Kevin DeYoung. The categories quoted from the blog post included Republican Jesus, Democrat Jesus, Therapist Jesus, Starbucks Jesus, Open-minded Jesus, Gentle Jesus, Hippie Jesus, Yuppie Jesus, Spirituality Jesus, and Good Example Jesus.

Why do you think people are tempted to settle for a reduced understanding of Jesus? How can we counteract this within ourselves?

**Read Colossians 1:15–23** while making note of any expansive words or phrases. Paul is straining to communicate the supremacy of Christ. What stands out to you?

As a way into the passage, we will focus on the phrase ‘all things’.

False teaching, at the time, said that Jesus was simply a created emanation of God. That as such he wasn't physical, but only appeared to take on human form.

Why might this have been a concern for Paul, or should be a concern for us?

### **Read Colossians 1:15-16 – Jesus created all things**

The list Paul gives of what Jesus created is odd. Why this list? Any ideas?

What is shocking or humbling about thinking of Jesus as creating all things? What questions or observations might you have?

### **Read Colossians 1:16 – All things... are created for Jesus**

Verse 16 has Jesus creating all things, all things being created through him, and for him. What is the difference in these statements? What difference in meaning does it bring?

(Poem by Joseph Mary Plunkett

“I see His blood upon the rose,  
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,  
His body gleams amid eternal snows,  
His tears fall from the skies.  
I see His face in every flower;  
The thunder and the singing of the birds,  
Are but His voice - and carved by His power,  
Rocks are His written words.  
All pathways by His feet are worn,  
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,  
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,  
His cross is every tree.”)

### **Read Colossians 1:17 – Jesus is before all things**

What does it mean to say that Jesus is before all things? How does this connect with our understanding of the trinity, or a fuller understanding of who Jesus is?

(Quote by G. Campbell Morgan in *The Crises of the Christ*,

“He was the God-man. Not God indwelling a man. Of such, there have been many. Not a man deified. Of such there have been none save in the myths of pagan systems of thought; but God and man, combining in one personality the two natures, a perpetual enigma and mystery, baffling the possibility of explanation.”)

### Read Colossians 1:17 – Jesus holds together all things

For us to exist is not some inalienable right. We only exist because God has willed that we exist and continues to do so.

(Quote from William Barclay, which uses the example of gravity, first quoting an anonymous source,

“[Jesus Christ] is the principle of cohesion in the universe. He impresses upon creation that unity and solidarity which makes it a cosmos (an ordered system) instead of a chaos (an unformed mass). Thus (to take one instance) the action of gravitation, which keeps in their places things fixed and regulates the motions of things moving, is an expression of His mind.”

Barclay comments on this,

*“...it is the Son who, as it were, holds the world together. That is to say, all the laws by which this world is an order and not a chaos are an expression of the mind of the Son. The law of gravity and all the so-called scientific laws are not only scientific laws; they are divine laws. They are the laws which make sense of the universe. They are the laws which make this a reliable and a dependable world. Every law of science and of nature is, in fact, an expression of the thought of God. It is by these laws, and therefore by the mind of God, that the universe hangs together, and does not disintegrate in chaos” (The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, p.144).*

### Read Colossians 1:18-20 – Jesus reconciles all things (also worked out in vs. 21-23)

Remember where we began. Jesus created all things. Things in heaven and on earth. Now we find that he reconciles all things, things on earth, or things in heaven.

What does it mean to say that Jesus reconciles all things?

If we stand back from this passage it is stunning to see what Paul has written about Jesus. Jesus created all things, all things are created for him, he is before all things, in him all things hold together, and he came to reconcile to himself all things.

Which of these statements mean the most to you?  
How can the reality of who Jesus is more affect how we see ourselves and how we live for him?

(The following prayer was used to close the sermon as a fitting response to the glory of God. A person being able to pray this prayer in a whole-hearted way may take time, but our goal should be to be able to give ourselves completely to God.

### **Wesley Covenant Prayer**

I am no longer my own, but thine.  
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be employed for thee or laid aside for thee,  
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.  
And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
thou art mine, and I am thine.  
So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven.  
Amen.)

Shawn Swinney