

Colossians 1:15-16

“Who is Jesus Christ?”

In Colossians 1:15-18, we see many names, titles and descriptions of Jesus Christ - who He is and what He does. There were many heresies circulating around the church in Colosse, and Paul writes these titles and descriptions of Jesus to refute the heresies. For instance, one heresy, called Gnosticism, taught that since Jesus was God, He could not have had a real physical body, because they believed the body was evil and sinful. We know from God’s word that although **Jesus is truly God, He is also truly man**, and has a physical body, but without sin. Here are some of the names, titles, and descriptions of Jesus that we see in Colossians 1:15-18:

- 1.) **Jesus is “The Image of the Invisible God” - verse 15;**
- 2.) **Jesus is “The Firstborn over all creation” - verse 15;**
- 3.) **Jesus is “The Creator of all things” - verse 16;**
- 4.) **Jesus is “Preferred Before all things” - verse 17;**
- 5.) **Jesus is the One who “Holds all things together” - verse 17;**
- 6.) **Jesus is “The Beginning or Origin of all things” - verse 18;**
- 7.) **Jesus is “The Firstborn from the Dead” - verse 18;**
- 8.) **Jesus is “The Preeminent One” - verse 18.**

In this lesson, and the next few lessons, we will look at what all these names, titles and descriptions mean, and some of them are similar in definition, but they all show us who Jesus is.

15-16 **He is the IMAGE of the INVISIBLE God, the FIRSTBORN OVER all CREATION**, for by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **ALL THINGS were CREATED THROUGH HIM** and for Him.

•**Ephesians 3:9-10** “And to make all people _____ what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in _____ who _____ all things _____; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the _____ and _____ in the heavenly places,”

•**Hebrews 1:1-3** “_____, who at various times and in different ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us _____ His _____, whom He has appointed heir of all things, _____ whom also He made the _____; who being the brightness of His _____ and the express _____ of His person, and _____ all things by the _____ of His _____, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

•**Genesis 1:1-2 & 26-27** “In the beginning _____ created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the _____ of _____ was hovering over the face of the waters.” “Then God said, ‘Let _____ make man in _____ image, according to _____ likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in _____ own _____; in the _____ of _____ created him; male and female _____ created them.”

•**John 10:30-33** “_____ and My _____ are _____.’ Then the Jews took up stones again to _____ Him. Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have _____ you from My _____. For which of these works do you stone Me.”The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because _____, being a _____, make Yourself _____.”

•**John 1:1-3 & 14** “In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the _____ was _____ and the Word _____. He was in the _____ with God. All things were _____ through Him, and without Him _____ was _____ that was made. (Verse 14) “And the Word (Jesus) became _____ and dwelt among us, and we beheld His _____, the _____ as of the only begotten of the Father, full of _____ and _____.”

Definition: “You, BEING a MAN, make YOURSELF GOD” — BLASPHEMY means the act of insulting, **showing contempt, or LACK of REVERENCE for God.** Yes, this would be blasphemy for anyone else to say, but it was NOT blasphemy for Jesus, because **it was TRUE! He WAS a Man, and He was also truly GOD!** When the Jewish religious leaders tried to come up with a crime or charge by which they could put Him to death, the only “crime” they could say He had committed was “blasphemy” by saying He was God.

Definition: “I and MY FATHER are ONE” — Literally, in the Greek, Jesus is saying, “I and the Father are the SAME THING.” Because the Greek language is SO SPECIFIC, we know He is NOT saying that He and the Father are the SAME PERSON, because obviously the Father and the Son are two separate persons or personalities. However, **the Bible teaches that God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit are ONE ESSENCE, One in nature, substance and power. We worship ONE GOD,** and HE TELLS US that He exists in the form of three persons - this is the mystery of the Trinity. The New Testament shows us over and over again that Jesus is EQUAL to GOD the FATHER!! He is not a LESSER god on a scale of gods, and He is NOT merely a GOOD MAN or prophet, as many religions want to believe. **JESUS IS THE GOD-MAN, God who came in the FLESH,** in a HUMAN BODY to become our Savior and die on the cross for our sins.

• **Timothy 3:16** “And without controversy great is the _____ of godliness (the nature of God): _____ was manifested (revealed) in the _____, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, _____ on in the world, received up in _____.”

Definition: “The IMAGE of the INVISIBLE God” – When it says **Jesus is the “Image of God”**, it means **He is the perfect or exact representation of God**. But He is not just a copy, He is the real thing! God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity, **put on an “earth suit” of flesh to come down to humanity, to be born as one of us, so that we could SEE Him in ACTION**. God the Father is invisible to the human eye, as He is a spirit being (John 4:24). No one has ever actually seen **God in His divine ESSENCE or FACE TO FACE**. In the Old Testament, a few people “saw God,” but it was either a VISION of God on His throne (see Ezekiel 1:1 & 1:26-28, Isaiah 6:1-6, Daniel 7:9-14), or they saw a PORTION of God’s glory as Moses did (see Exodus 33:17-23), or they saw the pre-incarnate Jesus, as did **Abraham, who saw the Lord in appearance as a man** (see Genesis 18:1-22. The other “two men” were angels - see Gen. 19:1). We, as sinful beings, cannot stand in God’s presence, we would be burned up in an instant by His glory. Only by **BEING BORN of the SPIRIT** are we **re-created into a being** who will be able to be in God’s very PRESENCE for all eternity.

• **John 1:18** “No one has _____ God at any time. The only begotten _____, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has _____ Him.”

• **Exodus 33:20** “But He said, ‘You cannot _____ My _____, for no man can _____ Me and _____!’”

• **Isaiah 6:5** “Then I said, ‘Woe is me, for I am _____! Because I am a man of _____ lips, and I live among a people of _____ lips; for my _____ have _____ the King, the Lord of hosts.’”

• **John 14:7-10** “If you had _____ Me, you would have _____ My _____ also; and from now on you _____ Him and have _____ Him.” Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, _____ us the _____, and it is sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has _____ has _____ the _____; so how can you say, “Show us the _____”? Do you not believe that I am in the _____, and the Father in _____? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.’”

Definition: “IN THE BOSOM of the Father” — This is an expression of the closeness and intimacy that Jesus has ALWAYS HAD with the Father. This verse also says Jesus IS (present tense) “In the bosom of” the Father, which indicates the OMNIPRESENCE of Jesus as GOD the SON. He could be here on earth in a physical body, and STILL be PRESENT WITH the FATHER in heaven at the same time.

• **John 5:17-23** “But Jesus answered them, ‘My _____ has been working until now, and I have been working.’ Therefore the Jews sought all the

more to _____ Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that _____ was His _____, making Himself _____ with God. Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, the _____ can do nothing of Himself, but what He _____ the _____ do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and _____ Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.' (Verse 23) "That all should _____ the _____ just as they _____ the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who _____ Him."

Definition: "If you had KNOWN Me, you would have known My Father also" — Jesus is saying, "Look at Me, and you will see God!" If He were not **TRULY God**, He would be either a liar or a crazy man to say such a thing! Hebrews 1:3 calls Jesus the "exact representation" or "express image" of God, meaning that if you could take a photograph of God, He would look just like Jesus. In other words, **there is nothing about God that you cannot see and learn about by looking at Jesus.**

• **John 5:20** "And we know that the _____ of _____ has come, and has given us an _____, that we may _____ who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the _____ and _____ life."

Definition: "ALL THINGS were CREATED THROUGH HIM" — The Bible tells us over and over again that we **WORSHIP ONE GOD, but that He exists in THREE PERSONS:** the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY SPIRIT. Starting in the very first chapter of the Bible, God refers to Himself as "Us" and "Our," then switches back to "His" and "He." Compare Isaiah 48:12-16 with Rev. 1:8,11,17-18. **The same One who "laid the foundation of the earth and stretched out the heavens" is also the One who "was DEAD and now I am ALIVE FOREVERMORE!!"** Jesus Christ is the "Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." In Isaiah 48:12-16, ALL THREE PERSONS of the GODHEAD are mentioned together in the Old Testament!! Jesus is speaking, and He says that God and the Holy Spirit have SENT HIM.

• **John 1:10** "He was in the world, and the _____ was _____ through _____, and the world did not _____ Him."

• **Isaiah 48:12-13 & 16** "Listen to _____, O Jacob, and Israel, My called: I am _____, I am the _____, I am also the _____. Indeed My _____ has laid the _____ of the earth, and My right hand has stretched out the _____." (Verse 16) "Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the _____; from the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord _____ and His _____ have sent _____."

• **Revelation 1:8** "I _____ the _____ and the _____, the _____ and the _____," says the _____, "Who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

• **Revelation 1:11a & 17-18** "Saying, 'I am the _____ and the _____, the _____ and the _____'"

(Verses 17-18) “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, ‘Do _____ be _____; I am the _____ and the _____. I am He who _____, and was _____, and behold, I am _____ Amen. And I have the Keys of Hades and of Death.’”

Definition: “The WORLD did not KNOW HIM” — God has always given to EVERY PERSON IN THE WORLD enough information to know Him IF THEY WANT TO. The truth is, **most people DO NOT DESIRE TO KNOW GOD**, but would rather have a **god or religion of their own making**. When whole people groups and cultures REJECT GOD by turning to IDOLS and FALSE RELIGION, they plunge themselves further and further into DARKNESS, without **Jesus Christ, the TRUE LIGHT**.

•**Romans 1:20-21** “For since the _____ of the _____ His _____ attributes are clearly _____, being _____ by the things that are _____, even His eternal power and Godhead (divine nature), so that they are without _____, because, although they _____ [about] God, they did not _____ Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile (empty, stupid) in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were _____.”

Definition: “FIRSTBORN OVER all CREATION” — “Firstborn” is a title given to Jesus which indicates HIS POSITION. **Jesus is the only begotten Son, or UNIQUE Son of God**, in that He is the EXACT IMAGE of God, and He has existed as God for all eternity. No one else can become a “son of God” in the same sense as Jesus (He was God in the flesh), but we become **sons and daughters of God BY FAITH in Jesus** (John 1:12; I Corinthians 6:18), so in that sense He is the first of many BRETHREN (brothers and sisters).

•**Romans 8:29** “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined (planned) to be _____ to the _____ of His _____, that He might be the _____ among many brethren.”

•**Revelation 1:5** “And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the _____ from the _____, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and _____ us from our _____ in His own _____.”

•**Hebrews 1:6** “But when He again brings the _____ into the world, He says: ‘Let all the _____ of God _____ Him.’”