

# JESUS, THE SON, THE IMAGE OF GOD AND THE FIRSTBORN OVER CREATION

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## INTRO:

- Jesus is not just a part of what we do. He is everything to what we do and who we are.
- There is no such thing as a Christian faith without Jesus. We need to always seek to know him.
- When was the last time you sat down, picked up a Bible and just learned about Jesus for yourself?
- The Colossians were being told about a "Jesus" who was not the Jesus Paul knew and preached.
- Paul was writing to correct false things others had told them.
- God has this same desire to communicate truly about Himself.

## MAIN TEXT:

*"The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation." (Colossians 1:15)*

## 1. THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

### JESUS IS A VISIBLE AND COMPREHENSIBLE IMAGE OF GOD:

- Paul begins to describe who Jesus is by telling them who Jesus reflects
- Jesus is the one what we can know God, because He perfectly communicates God.
- He make the incomprehensible accessible. We cannot fully comprehend an infinite God, but we can know Jesus the man who is also God. Jesus still humbles our understanding. It's part of why we worship Him.
- "The end of comprehension is the beginning of worship." Dr. Duffield, *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology*
- God is above and beyond us in all ways, and that can make Him seem distant and hard to know.
- But, the Incarnation of God, The Son, in the person of Jesus Christ means...

Jesus is born of the Virgin Mary  
He lives a human life  
He had a human ministry  
He died a human death  
He is raised again, fully human and fully God

- Jesus unites God and His creation

Even those closest to Him didn't always understand Him:

*"Philip said, 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.'"*

*Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work." (John 14:8-10)*

- Jesus uniquely and perfectly images God the Father
- If you want to know what God is like, look no further than Jesus
- What better way for God to communicate Himself than to become human.
- Making idols is way of trying to make an invisible god visible. Jesus makes idols obsolete.  
He doesn't allow us to fashion God after our own making
- He offers us a perspective of God that brings out God in sharp relief.



We can see an example of how a simple shift in circumstances can make something reveal its beauty and majesty. This first image is shown with a cloudless, infinite sky. It shows the relationship between what's accessible (the



ground/field) and what's infinite in a nondescript way. This second image of the same field is very different. A simple change in the relationship between the same sun, earth, and sky, and a majesty reveals itself. This helps illustrate how Jesus alters our perception of the invisible God. Jesus reflects God's glory in a way we can understand. Likewise, those who follow Jesus as his "ambassadors" (2 Corinthians 5:20) are also "clouds" when they love in practical ways those who Jesus loves, which is basically everyone.

*“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being” (Hebrews 1:3)*

- God radiates through Jesus and Jesus radiates through us.
- We are part of God’s plan to reveal Himself to those that don’t yet know Him
- That desire is evident even at the beginning of the rift between God and people
  - In Genesis 3, it’s not God who hides from the people who betrayed Him, but
  - It’s the faithless people who hide from a God who seeks them
  - Today, God still seeks those who are far from Him and He humbled Himself (Phil. 2:3-8)
- God reveals Himself in His Word (Jesus, the living Word in the flesh and the Bible, God’s written Word)
  - The Bible is not simply a list of rules and punishments
  - It’s a rich history of God’s self-revelation to people who He would draw to Himself
  - Rick Warren Institute research: One activity has the greatest impact on Christian maturity: simple Bible reading
- God not only wants us to understand who He is, He also understands us:

*“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:15-16)*

- God gets us because He wants to! There’s nothing we can experience that God in Christ has experienced: He is our brother (Hebrews 2:11-12) and knows what it’s like to feel sadness,...  
to mourn,  
to feel hunger and fatigue,  
to go through puberty (yep),  
to shoulder all of the pain and brokenness of humanity
- When we cannot empathize with another’s pain, Jesus can. Nothing surprises Him or puts Him off.
- He is compassionate, but He is also corrective when we need it.

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10)*

## **2. THE FIRSTBORN OVER ALL CREATION JESUS IS OUR BROTHER, BUT HE IS ALSO OUR KING**

- “Firstborn” is *mongenes*, a Greek term that indicates primacy of inheritance.
- Judah is an example of a “firstborn”, even though Reuben was the eldest son
- When Judah is blessed by Jacob along with his brothers (Gen. 49:1-27), he is set in authority over his siblings (29:10), including Reuben who was born before Judah. The blessing of Judah is also a prophecy of Jesus, who was “firstborn” as well.
- Judah’s actions, while not always exemplary, were noble when he offered himself in the place of Benjamin to be imprisoned by Joseph (Gen. 44:33-34), foreshadowing Jesus offering of Himself on the Cross.
- Jesus demonstrated his brotherhood by offering His life for ours, even as Judah did so for Benjamin, but He demonstrated He is Lord and King when He took His life up again and rose from the dead to rule and reign.
- He’s a good King because He offers us His victory over sin and death. He holds nothing back.
- He will also return for His own to set up an eternal Kingdom here on earth.

Jesus is with us, among us, and over us.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What’s invisible to you? How, if at all can you see it?
2. Have you ever wondered what God is like? What’s His personality and character?
3. What do you think God thinks of us? Of you? No Sunday school answers. Get real.

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4. How do you relate to the idea that God is an eager communicator? Do you believe God wants to communicate Himself to you, and why, or why not?
5. How do you know you can know God? What part, if any, does Jesus play in that knowing?
6. When you read about Jesus in the Bible, what do you learn about God? What does that do to your heart? Do you feel attracted? Repelled? Both? And why?
7. What do you think of the idea that Jesus is both a brother and a King, maybe even your King?
8. Do you long for a God who can both perfectly know what you're experiencing and perfectly lead you through it all as your sovereign? If you're somewhat put off by that thought, why? And how would you fashion God differently if you could?
9. What do you want this Jesus, this brother-King, to do for you?