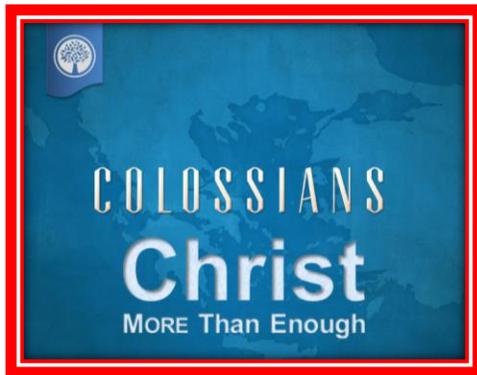


Christ – More than Enough

Colossians 1:15-17 - NCBC, August 2, 2015

Christ is worthy – Give Him first place in everything.

- Christ – The Image of God (v. 15a)
- Christ – The Uncreated Creator (v. 15b-16)
- Christ – The Powerful Sustainer (v. 17)



Jesus is the glorious Christ – our Messiah! The greatest of all delights. His power is unequalled. His supremacy is unparalleled in His perfections. Jesus Christ is God – and He is worthy. **May God help us to evermore give Him first place in all aspects of our lives.**

Since this is my first official Sunday in the pulpit as your new pastor, let me just take a moment to thank you all again for all the prayers, encouragement, love and sweet welcome that you have extended to our family as we've come to New Castle Bible Church. We truly feel loved and welcomed here. Thanks so much for your kind and

gracious welcome. We are so excited to partner with you in God's gospel!

I've chosen to preach through Paul's letter to the **Colossians** for our first pulpit series together. During my two candidating messages I preached from Col 1, and so the next two Sundays we will go back and pick up the amazing passage that we skipped over in those first two messages, and then we'll start in chapter 2 and plan to work through the entire letter between now and Christmas.

I'm so excited about studying Colossians together with you! This letter is all about the supremacy of Jesus Christ – that **Christ is More than Enough** for all that we need. I believe that God desires to use this study to heal, strengthen, refresh, and build up our faith together. So I'd encourage you to join me in privately reading through all four chapters of Colossians at least once a week for the duration of this preaching series. Pray that God would use His all-sufficient Word to help us know more of Christ. Come every week prayed up – prepared to worship through your active listening, note-taking, and Spirit empowered response of repentance and faith. I firmly believe Christ will change all of us more into His image by the power of His Spirit as we actively seek to know Him more through His Word.

So now, please take your copy of God's Word and open to **Colossians chapter 1**. I'll be reading **verses 15-18**, so please stand with me now in honor of God's Word as I read our text for us from Colossians 1:13-18, in the **English Standard Version**:

Colossians 1:13-17 *He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.*

This is the word of the Lord. You may be seated.

Let's Pray.

One night a wife found her husband standing over their infant's crib. As she watched him looking down at their very first baby, she saw on his face a mixture of emotions: disbelief, doubt, delight, amazement, enchantment, skepticism. Touched by this unusual display and deep emotions, with eyes glistening she slipped her arm around her husband. "A penny for your thoughts," she said. "It's amazing" he replied. "I just can't see how anybody can make a crib like that for only \$46.50."

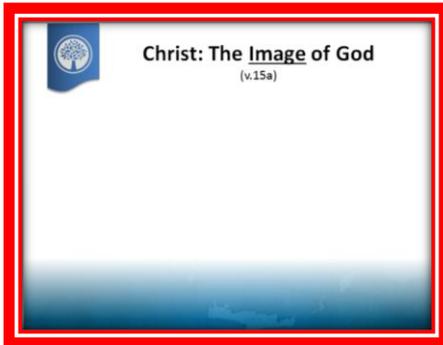
You know – us men aren't the only ones who sometimes struggle getting the main point out of life. All of us can easily find ourselves missing the forest for the trees – putting the emphasis on the wrong syllable – and getting

entangled and distracted by putting major focus on minor points.

But Christian – **We must not let our “doing” ever distract us from our “being” in Christ.** May we never move our focus off of Jesus Christ! He is the preeminent King of glory. He is the majestic and sovereign ruler of all. He is the highest thought, the substance to all our worship, and the ultimate object of all true praise.

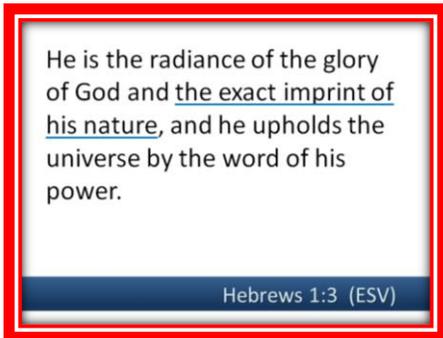
So it's with a joyful necessity that we turn our attention now to the person of Christ as He is clearly revealed to us in the Scriptures today. This morning we are surveying the Mt. Everest of Christology – one of the highest pinnacles of biblical teaching about the person of Jesus Christ. This passage in **Colossians 1** joins with **John 1** and **Hebrews 1** to offer the most profound and stunning description of the deity of Jesus Christ. And I fully realize my trembling inadequacy to portray the fullness of majesty and joy that is contained in our text this morning from Colossians 1. So this morning as we gaze upon the glory of Christ together, please know that He is worthy – and pray that He would be preeminent in every part of our lives!

Let's begin now by considering the first part of verse 15, where we learn that, **Christ is The Image of God (v. 15a).**



15 - *He [His beloved Son – Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God...*

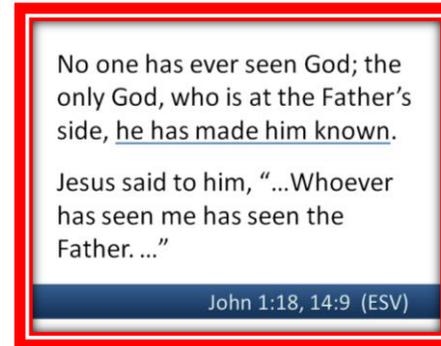
Christ is the image of God. Hebrews 1 says it this way,



He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, ...

Wow. Jesus Christ – perfectly reveals the nature and glory of God to us. He makes the invisible spirit of God visible in his incarnation (1 Tim 1:17, 6:16). But Jesus is more than just a copy or a picture of God. Jesus, being

God Himself, reveals God to us. Note how John records this in **John 1:18**,



No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side [that's Jesus Christ], he has made him known.

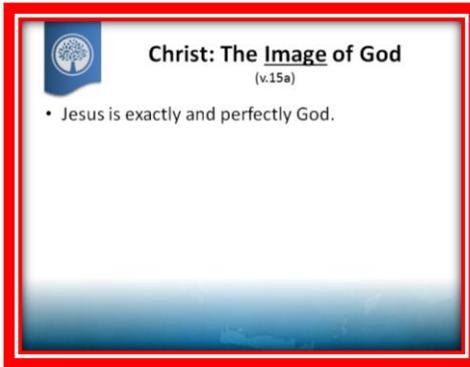
And then later in **John 14:9**, Jesus tells Phillip,

"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

In **John 10:30** Jesus says it as clearly as possible,

"I and the Father are one."

The point is clear for us this morning.



Jesus is exactly and perfectly God. Jesus is fully God in every way. Jesus therefore deserves our worship this morning! Jesus Christ is God.

The deity of Jesus Christ is foundational to the Gospel. The general revelation of Creation itself loudly shouts out every day the power and wisdom of God. But grand canyons and beautiful sunsets cannot reveal the saving nature of God's redeeming heart to us. To personally know God and His grace we must know His Son Jesus Christ. To see what God is like, we must look at Jesus. It is only in Jesus that the invisible attributes of God's grace, mercy, and love are clearly and perfectly revealed.

Notice verse 19 of chapter 1:

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

All the fullness of God – all his power, his character, his works, his supremacy – dwells in the person of Jesus Christ. For Christ is not only exactly and perfectly God, but through his incarnation, he was born in the likeness of man and was found in human form.

Think about this with me. Genesis teaches us that every person is made in the "image of God" (Gen 1:26-27). But God's image in us has been broken and marred by our sin. No human from the very beginning has ever perfectly carried the image of God in their person – until Christ. Every one of us have sinned. **We have put something or someone other than Christ as first place in our lives. This is what it means to sin.** But when Christ was born by the Spirit through the virgin Mary, He became the only human being to perfectly take on the image of God.

You see, Jesus is not only 100% God,

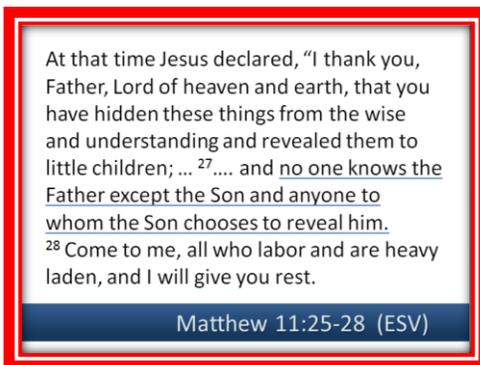
Jesus is the only perfect and sinless human.



Listen to **John 1:14**,

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

It is this glorious truth of God becoming man that empowers the saving work of God's gospel. For the only way we can know God the Father is through the Son. Note carefully Jesus' teachings from Matthew 11,



Matt 11:25-30 ... , and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸ *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

And so I ask you this morning, do you personally know God? You can not know the Father unless you know the Son. You say, but how can I know if the Son has chosen to reveal the Father to me? Please listen carefully for a moment.

Christ's invitation to come to Him today is a real invitation. If you are convinced of your own sins, and sensing your lostness apart from God ... then come to Jesus. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. He will show you the Father's love, peace, and joy as you repent of your sins and believe in Christ's finished work on your behalf.

Do you know Christ? Have you trusted your life to Him?

Jesus is God-man. That means **Jesus deserves first place in everything.**



Jesus is more than fire insurance. He is more than a religious crutch or spare tire to call upon only when you get in a bind. Christ is God with us. And that means He is worthy of every part of our lives. Is there any part of your life this morning that you have not surrendered to Christ? Loved ones, Jesus deserves first place in everything. Today is a day to move deeper into joyful rest in Christ.

For not only is Christ the very image of God, but **Christ is the Uncreated Creator (v. 15b-16)**.



Read with me again the last part of verse 15 and 16 in our text:

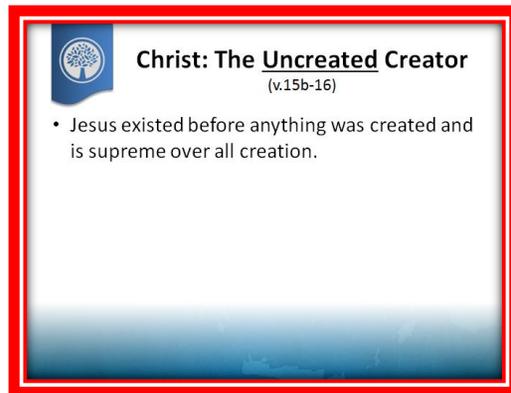
...the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him.

This is an amazing insight into the person of Jesus Christ. Christ is the Uncreated Creator. Let's unpack it one piece at a time.

First we learn that Christ is the "firstborn of all creation." In Scripture, this word "firstborn" can mean one who is chronologically born first... as in **Exodus 12:12** when God executed judgment on the Egyptians by killing the firstborn of every household who wasn't under the blood-covering of the substitutionary lamb. Or "firstborn" can be a description of privileged position or rank, as in **Exodus 4:22** when God says that "Israel is my firstborn son." Obviously Israel was not the first nation ever established chronologically, but in God's eyes it was the most esteemed and highly favored nation of all nations.

So here when the Scriptures declare that Christ is the firstborn of all creation – it does not mean that Jesus is a created being – for vs. 17 is clear that Jesus is the eternal preexisting God. Rather firstborn of all creation

means that Christ is *prior to* and *over* all creation – of first importance, and of highest rank. He is given all the priority, authority, and inheritance of the most loved. Christ always was. Always is. And always will be. **Jesus existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.**



Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the Beginning and the End (Rev 22:13). His Name is not the great "I Was." Nor is His name "I will be." His Name is "I AM" (Jn 8:58). Our God is an eternal God and He is always present. He is here even now with us – no matter what you are going through in your life right now. Can you trust Him this morning?

If you have doubts this morning about whether or not King Jesus is powerful enough to save you or deliver you from your present distress... Verse 16 should overwhelm

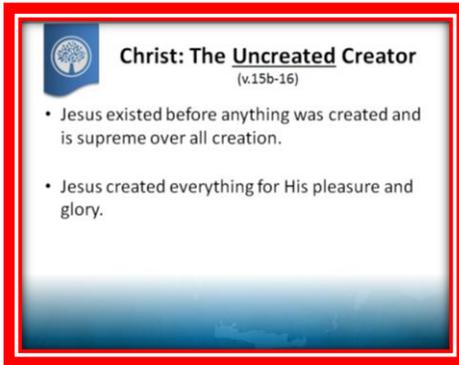
any doubts about Christ's power and authority like a flash flood rushing down a steep mountain bank.

Christ's power and authority is seen first in the fact that He is the Creator of everything that was made – both the *invisible* (like heaven and things which can't be seen), and the *visible* (like the earth and things which can be seen). Every form of matter and life in the entire universe owes its existence to Jesus Christ – the Creator of all things.

Paul goes on in verse 16 to list four classes of angelic powers – thrones, dominions, rulers, or authorities – all referring to the highest orders of the invisible angelic world. He wants to be sure that the Colossians understood that these spirit beings are created by the power of Christ and conquered by the power of the cross. There are no rival powers that can match the supreme power and authority of Jesus the Son of God.

Think about this point with me for a moment,

Jesus created everything for His pleasure and glory.



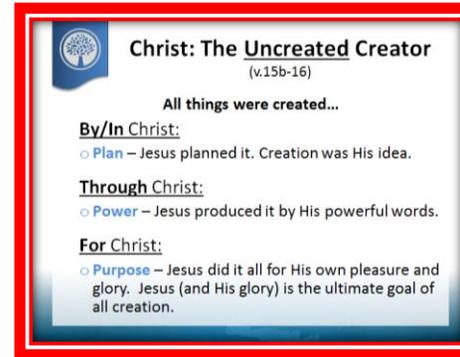
Christ: The Uncreated Creator
(v.15b-16)

- Jesus existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.
- Jesus created everything for His pleasure and glory.

Everything that was made, was made by Christ, through Christ, and for Christ. Isn't that what the verse said?

If you write in your Bible (which I would encourage you to do with the learner's spirit of a Berean), you might note verse 16 by underlining the words by him, through him, and for him.

It's worth marveling at the supremacy of our creative Lord as we consider these prepositions.



Christ: The Uncreated Creator
(v.15b-16)

All things were created...

By/In Christ:

- **Plan** – Jesus planned it. Creation was His idea.

Through Christ:

- **Power** – Jesus produced it by His powerful words.

For Christ:

- **Purpose** – Jesus did it all for His own pleasure and glory. Jesus (and His glory) is the ultimate goal of all creation.

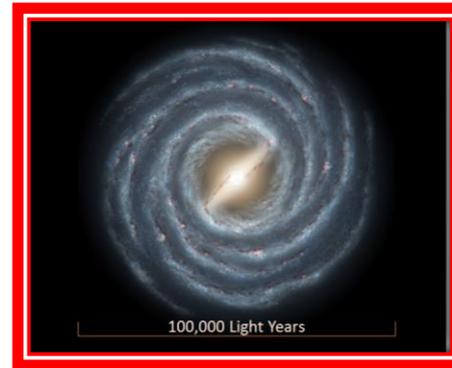
First, the Scriptures teach that all things were created **By/In Christ**. That simply means that **Jesus planned it. Creation was His idea**. There is nothing that was made that didn't first exist in the mind of Christ Himself. No plant. No animal. No cell. No starry constellation. Not one of you. All things – everything and everyone – is created by Christ. And all things were created **Through Christ**. This means through the agency of His own power, everything that was made was made (John 1:3). **Jesus produced it by His powerful words**. Let there be, and there was! And all of creation – with its invisible and visible universe – is all made **For Christ**. **Jesus did it all for His own pleasure and glory. Jesus (and His glory) is the ultimate goal of all creation.**

Now I fear that we all nod our heads in light-hearted agreement with this without considering deeply the majestic glory of these truths. Jesus – the God-man-is not only our Savior, but He is our Maker.

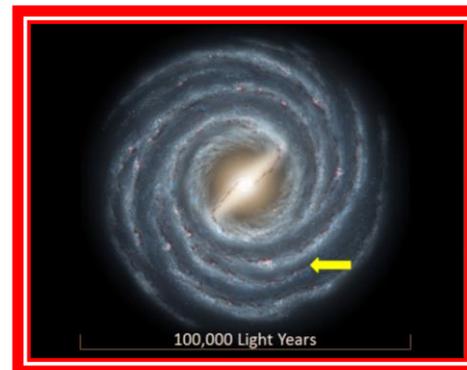
We must awaken our souls to awe of Christ this morning! Pastor Louie Giglio has a thrilling message that you can watch online entitled “Indescribable” in which he tours the Milky Way Galaxy and shows us just how huge our Lord really is. I highly recommend it to you.

Picture with me for a moment how it must have been on that first day of Creation. When from the mouth of our Lord came the words, “Let there be light.” And blazing forth at the speed of 186,000 miles per second came forth light!

And so our entire solar system was created by the word of Christ at an instant! But our solar system is just a small cul-de-sac in a much larger subdivision called the Milky Way Galaxy. And to get around our galaxy, we have to use a measurement called a “Light-Year.” The distance that light travels in one year – that’s 5.8 trillion miles = 1 light year. And our one little subdivision of the Milky Way Galaxy is estimated to be 100,000 light years across. Here’s an artist construction of hundreds of photos that show what we think our Milky Way Galaxy would look like if we could ever get outside of it to take a photo (which of course we haven’t been able to do yet.)

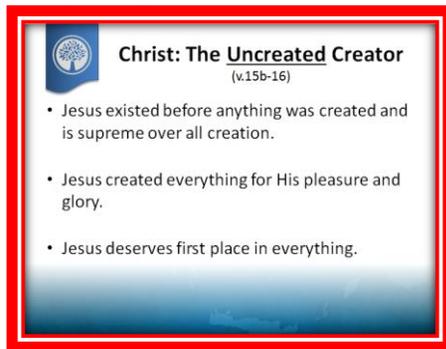


If you’re feeling small right now, it’s because we are. It is good to “right-size” Christ and ourselves this morning. There’s no dot that we could put on this image that would allow us to even see our entire solar system – much less planet Earth. To give you an idea, if our entire solar system was the size of a quarter, our Milky Way Galaxy would be the size of the entire North American continent! But just in case your curious, here’s about where we live in the Milky Way subdivision.



We live somewhere right between those outer rings. That's right. We're not even in the center of our own galaxy. That's because Jesus made everything for His glory – not ours.

You see loved ones, **Jesus deserves first place in everything.**



Christ: The Uncreated Creator
(v.15b-16)

- Jesus existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.
- Jesus created everything for His pleasure and glory.
- Jesus deserves first place in everything.

Christ is more than enough friends. He is God, and He is our uncreated Creator. So let's consider for a moment what difference this makes in our daily lives.



Applications

- Jesus (& His glory) is the defining explanation & purpose for all things.
- We fulfill our created purpose only as we live for Jesus, by Jesus.
- The motivation and goal of our obedience is the glory of Christ.

Here are some applications for us to consider this morning. First, understanding that Christ is our creator means that **Jesus (& His glory) is the final explanation & purpose for all things.** Every one of my weaknesses is now for the purpose of showing His strength. Every trial and suffering now comes with the aim to perfect me more in Christ's sufficient rest. And so we seek to "do all for the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31).

Second, since Christ is our creator, we must acknowledge that **We fulfill our created purpose only as we live for Jesus, by Jesus.**

Men, have you ever tried to hammer a nail in with a screwdriver? It's a frustrating experience, isn't it? Because the tool is not being used according to its created purpose. In the same way then, our lives will be nothing but frustrating if we are not living to bring attention and praise and honor to Christ and Christ alone.

A couple of weeks ago I had the privilege of working on a small yard project with a young man preparing to head off to college. Since I didn't know him at all, I started asking questions, and eventually asked him if he knew why he was here. I don't think he understood the question, as he asked me to repeat myself, and so I asked again, "Do you know why you're here on planet Earth?" Startled he thought for a while, and then sadly said... "No, I don't have that figured out yet." Loved ones, God created us

for His glory (Is 43:7). He created you and me to know Him, to worship Him, and to tell others of His marvelous beauty. And when you embrace your created purpose and begin to entrust your life to your sovereign Creator, He fills your heart with an abiding power and joy that is deeper than any circumstance – for it is a joy of fulfilling His purpose for you by the indwelling power of God Himself. Are you fulfilling your created purpose? Are you resting in the sufficiency of Christ?

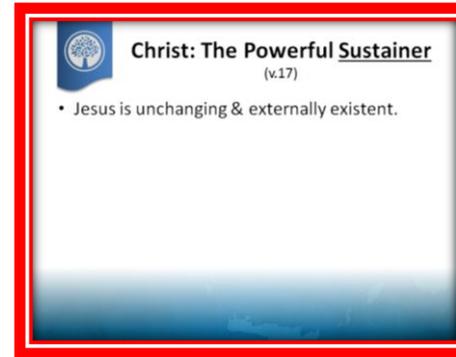
Further, since Christ is the uncreated Creator, **No matter what's going on in my life right now, our God is big enough to handle it.** Isaiah 40:12 says that God holds the entire heavens – the whole universe – in the span of his hand. Doesn't that sound like someone you can trust your life to?

Finally this morning, I want to quickly consider verse 17, where we learn that **Christ is The Powerful Sustainer (v. 17)**

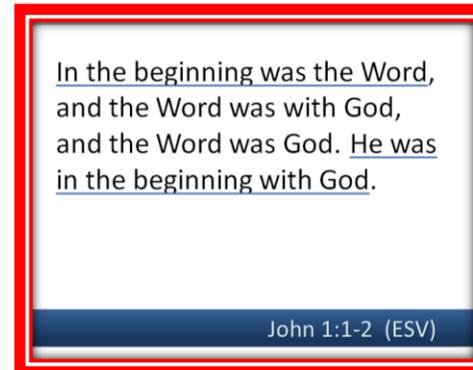
Again we see further evidence of Christ's sovereign supremacy over all of His creation.

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

First, consider that **Jesus is unchanging & externally existent.**



He is before all things. No matter how far back in time you go, there was never a time when pre-incarnate Christ was not. John 1 testifies clearly to this truth saying,



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.

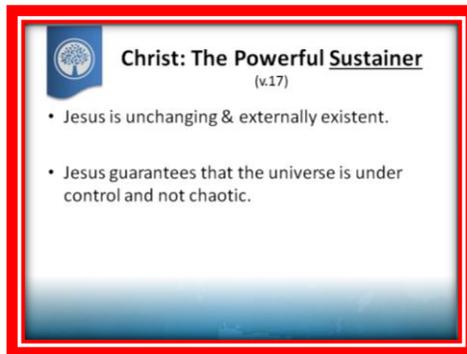
Before the world existed, Christ was in the presence of the Father in all of His glory (Jn 17:5). But the sufficiency

of Christ is exalted further by the next statement that declares that,

In him all things hold together.

This means that Christ unites all that He has created, and holds it together. If it were not for Christ's continuing work, all things would disintegrate and separate.

This is thrilling truth for us this morning! **Jesus guarantees that the universe is under control and not chaotic.**

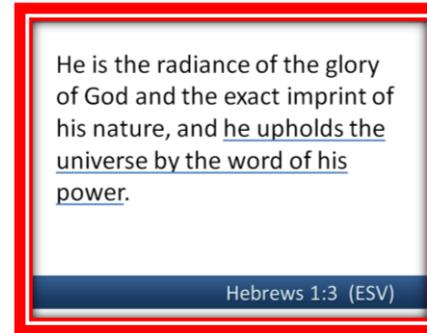


Christ: The Powerful Sustainer
(v.17)

- Jesus is unchanging & externally existent.
- Jesus guarantees that the universe is under control and not chaotic.

Jesus maintains and preserves whatever He has brought into being. All the laws of gravity find their grounding in the person and work of Christ. He is the energy of the universe! He is one who keeps all of the universe orderly and in balance – both in the vast cosmos and in the smallest known cell of our bodies. His Word is able to

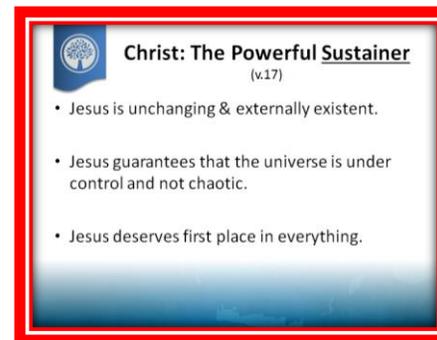
finish what it starts (Phil 1:6), as it upholds the universe by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3).



He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)

So this morning we're learning that Christ is More than Enough for all that we need! **Jesus deserves first place in everything.**



Christ: The Powerful Sustainer
(v.17)

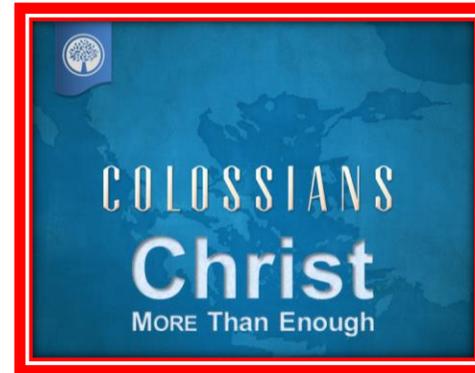
- Jesus is unchanging & externally existent.
- Jesus guarantees that the universe is under control and not chaotic.
- Jesus deserves first place in everything.

So this morning we've learned that Christ is God of very God, the uncreated Creator, and the Powerful Sustainer of all that He has made. Therefore,



We can daily trust Jesus for our protection, care, and needs. We are not God, but our God is a good God. He is trust-worthy. So do you trust Him? If not why not? What is standing in the way of your joyful and thankful submission to a God of such power, authority, grace, and goodness? What is in first-place in your life instead of Christ? How does your idol compare in power, wisdom, grace, and love to our King Jesus?

Second, today we learn that From the perspective of Christ's throne, all is going well. He will reign supreme in the end! Though our world is dark for the time, our God is not off the throne. He is still holding all things together, and He is more than enough for us. Though we are faithful in our civil responsibilities, we do not look to this world for our hope or our peace. Christ is all to us. Though we haven't yet seen everything that we want to see of Christ...we've seen enough to be able to joyfully trust and wait upon Him.



So Christ is more than enough, is he not? Will you join me in praying this week that this would be more and more true in my life and in yours? That I would turn my eyes upon Jesus and look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.

May Jesus Christ have first place in our families, first place in our marriages, first place in our careers, first place in our time, first place in our loves, first place in our conversations, first place in our leisure, first place in our hobbies, first place in our athletics, first place in eating, first place in what we watch, first place in what we hear, first place in art, first place in music, and first place in worship. Friends, Christ deserves first place.

Next week we will pick up our study in verse 18 and consider Christ's sovereign supremacy over His church. Take some time this week to read through Colossians,

and come prepared to feast more upon the glories of Christ's sufficiency. You won't want to miss it!

Let's pray.

Closing prayer.

All I have is Christ – Closing Song

***Jude 24-25** Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, 25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*