

Is Jesus too Small?

Colossians 1:22

Colossians 1:15-18

...

That is small.

When we look into the manger this is what we see.

A small baby.

God's Son ... yes ... but still a small baby.

It is good to remember His smallness ... that He was like us.

For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 2:17

Indeed

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.

Hebrews 4:15

The smallness of the baby is the means by which divinity can identify with humanity.

Like us in every way ... a baby who needs to be fed, burped, bathed, changed, carried and rocked to sleep.

One who completely identifies with all our weaknesses – even who knows what temptation feels like.

The small baby in the manger.

Cute ... small ... one of us.

It is important to see this.

But also important that we keep perspective.

Don't fixate on the manger and make your Jesus too small.

To see why we can't make Jesus too small let's turn to Colossians 1:9-23

When you read these verses, specifically verses 15-20, it is impossible to come to the conclusion that we should make Jesus small.

The Son is the image of the invisible God

Genesis 1:27 says, "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them."

So we are image-bearers of God.

But Jesus is that, and more.

Not just in the image.

But THE image.

When you look at us as image bearers you see:-

- sin.
- brokenness.
- hopelessness.
- failure.
- put your word there.

When we look at Christ as THE image we see.

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. (Hebrews 1:3)

- fullness of love.
- fullness of power.
- fullness of wisdom.
- fullness of authority.

There is a uniqueness that Jesus has. It is a uniqueness tied to His position

The firstborn over all creation.

As a place of position we might start thinking that he is first in existence ... or first in line.

That is true. But the biblical concept of "firstborn" has more to it. Two Scripture examples:-

This is what the Lord says: "Israel is my firstborn son." (Exodus 4:22)

I will appoint him (David) to be my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth. (Psalm 89:27).

So first-born is not “he didn’t exist and now he does and others will be born later.”

But first-born is an appointment of status, or privilege, or position.

Positionally Jesus stands in authority over creation, making every aspect of creation under his power and rule and authority and control.

As Jesus exercises his rule and authority and power over all creation he uses it in a very specific way.

For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

Paul is outlining the extent of comprehensive authority.

In heaven and on earth. Visible and invisible.

Supernatural and natural.

Beyond imagination and unseen to us ... as well as that which we touch, see, smell, taste, hear.

Distances so far we can’t even get beyond our own solar system ... that which is so close it is only a breathe away.

Thrones

The seats of power in the angelic world and the seats of power in our world. Whether they are good or evil.

Powers

The institutions and mechanisms which seek to persuade us. Materialism. Technology. Me-ism. Generational ideology. Undercurrents of philosophy. Whether for good or evil.

Rulers

These are individuals who have power. Dictators. Company directors. Charismatic entrepreneurs. Political leaders. People with indescribable amounts of money. Whether for good or evil.

Authorities

The ruling bodies which have been given the right to make decisions that impact others. Those installed by democracy or by disorder. Governments. Educational institutions. Social structures.

Heaven. Earth. Visible. Invisible. Thrones. Powers. Rulers. Authorities

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Every single aspect of creation that we can name, or identify, or label, and think about. It has all been covered.

And it is all

... in Him

In Christ all is created. All of these aspects of creation are under His authority.

In every one of these environments and situations and forces Jesus has absolute supremacy.

(God) raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. (Ephesians 1:19-21)

And it is all

... through Him

Through His power, and might. Through His creative word that speaks and it all comes into being. The divine accomplishment where in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:1-3)

And it is all

... for Him

What is creation all about? It is about Jesus. Ultimately is the goal of everything.

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church. (Ephesians 1:22)

Christ is the unique agent of creation.

He is prior to creation.

He is the goal of creation.

And in between all of this he holds all of creation together – all it takes is his word.

In one way or another all creation finds their identity in Christ.

Whether we want too, or not.

Whether we accept it, or not.

We all take our continuous existence from him.

Jesus is the one who brings coherence into our lives.

Look in the manger.

There is a miracle taking place.

The method of salvation that takes absolute supremacy, authority, power, the fullness of creation ...

... in Him.

... through Him.

... for Him.

It is all there lying in the manger.

Now look at that manger and ask yourself.

Is my Jesus too small?

Are we like a monkey with our hand caught in a jar.

Monkeys were easily caught in colonial time using a calabash.

Food is placed in the empty calabash and monkey comes and grabs the food; but now the fist of the monkey is too big to come out.

The monkey is so fixated on the food that it will not release it. It will fight and pull and tug, but the very thing that is keeping it trapped is the very thing that it won't let go of.

The captors just then need to come up and grab the monkey and it is trapped forever.

If we have a small Jesus we can be like that can't we.

We have these aspects of our lives which we desperately hold on to.

Maybe it is our identity or our status.

Maybe it is blame and guilt-ridden decision making.

Maybe it we are too proud to seek help, or too determined to not be humble.

We see Jesus has to offer. He'll give us identity and status. He will take the guilt and shame and blame. He has just grace for the humble.

Is my Jesus too small because ... well because Jesus will you be enough?

Or do we see Jesus who can take any aspect of creation and say, "You don't need to fixate on any of that. I have it ... fully ... under control."

In me you can be more than conquerors.

For neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,

Creation which is

... in Me.

... through Me.

... for Me.

Nothing can separate you from that.

Is my Jesus too small?

Are we like Marlin from "Finding Nemo"?

Marlin was always afraid. Fair enough. Right at the beginning of the movie a Barracuda killed his wife and all but one egg. It is incredibly sad when an animated fish is no longer drawn.

Marlin feared the reef.

Marlin feared the bigger fish.

Marlin would rather stay in the anemone.

If we have a small Jesus we can be like that.

We fear. We doubt. We worry. We get anxious.

We second-guess. We back-track. We procrastinate.

Everything is a crisis ... or a drama ... or a catastrophe.

We place ourselves at the whims of other people's words.

We question ourselves every moment.

We doubt our worth and our value. Question our own character. And wonder if we are actually making a difference.

Is my Jesus too small? Or do we see the power and authority of Jesus that is going to bring us through anything?

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus.

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. (1 John 4:16-18)

The day of judgement is the day when creation becomes new ... the new heaven and new earth. If Jesus can give us confidence there, can't he give us confidence in every aspect of our lives.

Is my Jesus too small?

Are we like pre-school children who are at school for the first day.

Up to this time we have been home with Mom.

And mom gave us all her attention. And she cuddled us and cared for us a loved us.

As far as we were concerned it was all us.

Then we go to pre-school. Very quickly, very distressingly, we realise that we are not the centre of the universe. There is this whole world of other people who get attention and need care.

If we have a small Jesus we can be like that can't we.

Where Jesus has become "mine".

My Saviour. My Lord. My King. My Redeemer.

And that is true ... from the foundation of the world you are known.

Salvation will be because of your name written in the book of life.

But what about all the kids who didn't have a Mum?

And those in the playground who are standing on the edge of the sandpit because no-one has invited them to play?

Or the person afraid to try the building blocks because they have been told their whole lives they are worthless, and useless and will come to nothing.

Do I have a small Jesus who I keep to myself?

Or is my Jesus the one who has the power and authority and might to be over ... through ... in. For us to bring him along and say, "Jesus let's stand together at the door of this persons' heart."

You knock and call ... because people will answer."

In the manger there is a miracle ... the method of salvation that takes absolute supremacy, authority, power, the fullness of creation and wraps it up as a baby.

As a gift.

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Who is the gift for?

And he is the head of the body, the church

The place and power and rulership and authority which Jesus has over the cosmos is now concentrated onto the church.

Christ and Christ alone holds this position.

The body.

The church.

The people.

Christ identifies with it all.

The CEO of all creation is the CEO of the church.

There is no one more qualified.

No-one who will invest more time and energy and sacrifice.

His spirit is our spirit.

His image is our image.

His power is our power.

When we look into the manger that is what we see.

There is nothing that you can go through or will go through that He cannot be there for you.

Set your eyes on Him in faith.

And stop thinking small.

Prayer