

“Oh, that we might know the Lord!
Let us press on to know him!”
(Hosea 6:3)

GOD CHASERS CLASS

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE STUDY

JANUARY 29, 2012

FELLOWSHIP HALL 9:15 AM

Glorious, Real, Awesome, and Personal

Colossians 1:15-25

I'm not very good at algebra, but if

Jesus + Nothing = Everything
then

Jesus = Everything.

Of course, we know that Jesus is not literally everything, because you are not Jesus, and you are someone -- you are an individual being who matters to Jesus. Algebra can give us a great book title, but Jesus is more than algebra can explain.

Although equations (and great book titles) don't express the whole picture, what the Apostle Paul wrote about Jesus is even more far-reaching.

I don't think it's possible to find more glorious and all-encompassing language than the words Paul wrote to the Colossians about the place of Jesus in our universe. And because Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the description is not merely Paul's view, but is an astounding portrait revealed to us by God.

Paul begins the description:

He is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15).

OK, now the algebra gets harder. Even the Drs. Reiter, two math geniuses in our class, can't solve this one. Through the Apostle Paul, the Holy Spirit highlights an inexplicable mystery by telling us that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Notice that the text does not say "the image of the invisible Father." We must always be careful not to equate the word "God" solely with the Father, as though Jesus and the Holy Spirit are assistant Gods. God is one, and God is also a Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit -- three in one and one in three. Paul says Jesus is the image of God.

Inexplicable as it may be, for a God Chaser that does not make it any less real or less important to think about. If God is the omnipotent creator, omnipresent and omni-everything,

eternal, sovereign over everything that exist, if God is all in all, and Jesus is the very image of the invisible God, that all takes us right back to the book title, the equation Tullian uses.

Here's more about Jesus:

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him [*or* by means of him; *or* in 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. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

And why does all this matter to you?

Because it is Jesus who provides your redemption, the forgiveness of sin, and it is Jesus who plans to present you blameless and above reproach before the Father (there's the Trinity again). Jesus is the most central factor in your future, the only difference-maker who ultimately matters for you.

There's much more wonder and mystery in this. We'll try to scratch the surface of it all in class on Sunday -- even the surface is glorious and real and awesome and personal in a way that surpasses any topic imaginable.

Tom