

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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The Source Of Life

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Colossians 1:15-24



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My name is Dave. One of the pastors here. It's a joy to be able to teach you this morning. For those joining us livestream, we say good morning to you as well. And I want to... To start our time really quick. If you are a teacher of any sort... homeschool, in school, virtual, the whole nine yards. Around the globe today, there's a lot of churches praying for teachers today. So would you just stand really fast for us to just say a huge thank you to you. Anybody? Any teachers? Go ahead and stand. Just real quick. We're just going to say... Yeah. Thank you. Thank you so much. We're just grateful for you and I want to just pray for you before we get our time into the Word. So let me pray. Father, thank You for today. Thank You for your kindness. For Your grace. For Your mercy. Thank you for these teachers that are investing numerous hours, hard days, long weeks, in the next generation. And God I pray that You would strengthen their hand, that You would encourage their heart, and You would focus their minds even this week. And so use them in a great way. We're grateful for them. And we give You all praise in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, if you have your Bibles, Colossians chapter one. Colossians chapter one. We're going to continue our study of the book of Colossians and the idea of being rooted. What it means to be rooted. We're going to look today at Jesus being the source of life that creates and causes spiritual roots, in a sense, for us, you and I, to grow into faithful, fruit-bearing trees of hope. When you think about the Sun and you see this picture behind me and the power that this star has. 93 million miles away from the Earth and yet it radiates light and heat. This solar energy. This solar energy is essentially the source for agriculture, for cultivating land, producing crops, raising livestock, breathing, oxygen. I mean, it's the ultimate source that God has ordained for physical life and light. And yet so much more is the son of God. The source for spiritual life and light. The son of God, Jesus the Christ, is the one who is our source of life. He's not just a vitamin supplement. He is the ultimate source. He's the most significant and influential person in the history of the world. Think about Time magazine. Year after year after year after year. No other face has been on that cover that much of curiosity of who does this man say that he is? What does history say that he has done?

As we come to our text today, I'm reminded. A few years ago, I took one of our... I went with one of my kids as a chaperone... wasn't sure what I was thinking, but took 30 some kids for their tenth-grade class up to New York City. It's not a good idea to get into the subway with that many kids and trying to do headcounts, but I think we brought them all back. At least I hope we did. As we were there, we made our way up to Central Park, to Fifth Avenue, to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This is one of the largest art museums in the country and it has over two million pieces in it. There's specifically one piece that was being hosted the week we went. It was a piece by Van Gogh. This piece is called The Straw Hat. Van Gogh was an artist and it's fascinating how he would paint because he couldn't afford to pay someone to do the painting, so he would set himself in front of mirror and then paint himself. This particular portrait, I call it the most expensive selfie of all time. It actually was recently named to be about 80 million dollars. Wowzer. Van Gogh. The self portrait.

When I think about God... If He took a selfie and used words to describe himself, I think we would find Colossians 1:15 and following. It's one of the most glorious galleries in the Bible that shows both the supremacy and sovereignty of Jesus. It's God's self-portrait, in a sense, of himself in Christ. This is the passage. Now,

listen. This is the passage that pastors... When they come to this text and preaching through the Bible, this is the text that they want to... that I want to, this week, read and sit down. It's indicative after indicative after indicative of who God is. All the illustrations are going to fall short this morning. Just going to let you know. I'm going to try to explain to you who God is in the person of his son, Christ. This text is what Paul penned from a prison in Rome to a church that was being influenced by other voices. Questioning who this Christ is. Other voices saying it's Jesus plus something. He would be emphatic to say, no, it's Jesus plus nothing that equals everything.

And this is what the text says. First, 15. "He is the image of the invisible God. The firstborn of all creation. 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. And He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body of the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. For in Him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, He has now reconciled in His body of flesh, by His death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him. If indeed you continue in faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven and of which I, Paul, became a minister."

What a text. Paul listed six truths this morning. So buckle in. Let's roll. The first one is this. Who is this Jesus of the Bible? Who is he? The first one is this. Jesus is God. Jesus is God. Notice verse 15. He is the image of the invisible God. Verse 19. For in Him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. He is the image of the invisible God. The word image there is a word. It's a unique word. We get our word icon in English from it and it carries with it two ideas. The idea of exact representation and full manifestation. You have an icon on the desktop of your computer called Jesus. You click that, you get God. The fullness of God. Paul is saying, to see Jesus is to see God. Jesus is the visible expression of the invisible God. We, yes, are made in His image. Jesus is the image of God. Listen. A man did not become God. God became a man. This is the incarnation. This text speaks volumes of Christmas and Easter all at the same time.

And this truth, found in this book called the Bible, is the truth that separates Christianity from all other world religions. This text is a text that your Jehovah's Witness... and if there are any in this room or watching, we are grateful that you're here. That Mormons, if you're in this room or watching, we are grateful you are here. For our Muslim friends that follow Islamic teachings. They would all say that this Jesus... They would respect this Jesus of the Bible and they would say he's a good man, but they would not say he is God. This is the text that, when I have coffee with my Jehovah's Witness friends and Mormon friends and Muslim friends, that I share with them. This last week, I'm doing a run around the block and I have a great friend that lives across the street from us and his family is from Pakistan. He's a devout Muslim and he's been to Christmas service with me and I've been to the mosque with him. We've engaged over great food, conversations, disagreeing, but having great dialogue.

This week, he's reading a lot of books on the history of Jesus and I'm running these stops, mowing the lawn. He comes over to me and he says, "Hey, I need a favor." "What do you need, bud?" He says, "I'm interested. If you were going to try to convert someone to Christianity, what are the specific words you would use to do that?" I go, "Okay. Did you just ask me that? I'd be glad to share with you what we would say." And I began to think about specific texts like Colossians 1. Texts like Hebrews 1:3 says, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being." Colossians 1:19, as we just looked at, says, "All the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." Colossians 2:8. "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy or empty deceit. For in Him, in Christ, the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." Philippians 2, a familiar passage. For those who are followers of Christ, may be familiar with. It says, "Although he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant." This text is heavy. It's amazing.

But what does it mean that he was in the form of God but then did not count equality with God something to be grasped? I think this is what it means. I think that being fully God and fully man at the very time... that he didn't just walk around, tapping into his God-ness all the time. There's certain nuggets throughout the Bible where we see him do miraculous things, but I think what it means... If he's 12 years old and he's playing kickball... Jesus was a 12-year-old boy at one time, right? He grew up to be a man. If he's a 12-year-old boy and he's playing kickball, he doesn't kick the ball to Jupiter. That's what I mean. He's not grasping. He's not just tapping in. He's not winning every single relay race in middle school. No, that's not what he's doing. But then there are times where he would give us glimpses of miraculous powers that only God had. Matter of fact, in the Old Testament, God would refer to His name as the Hebrew verb to be, which is I am. God told Moses. He says, listen, you tell them... When he sent Moses to help rescue and deliver the Israelites from captivity and the exodus from Egypt, he told him to tell them that I am sent you.

There are times when Jesus actually equates himself with the God of the Old Testament, because He is God, by calling his very name I am. You see a glimpse of His power. It happens in John chapter 13 to 18. John chapter 13 to 18. The narrative slows way down. It's five or six chapters, but it's one event. He's having the Lord's supper. He's washing the feet. He's implementing the supper. Saying, this is going to point to me. As he's doing this, Judas is there and the Bible says very clearly that Satan entered Judas. And then Jesus told Judas to go and do what you have to do. He's the sovereign one. He knew what was going to happen to him. Because he was going to lay his life down as a servant to die. He knew that. But he tells him to go and do. And John, he wants us to know that Judas is there and that Satan entered Judas.

But then John 18 is a fascinating text. It's the arrest, a few hours later, at night, late, when they go to arrest him. When they go to arrest him, it's a huge crowd that comes with them. Soldiers and all. As he's there, it's fascinating that John specifically says parenthetically... He puts in there. He's just going along with the narrative and he says, "And Judas was there." And then they asked him. Where is the son of God? Where is this Jesus? And Jesus says, "I am." The Bible says, "I am he," but in the original language, he just says, "I am." I think it was just a quick foreshadow of what He was going to accomplish on the cross and the power that He

had. Because when He says, "I am," everyone fell down, including Judas. I wonder what happened in that moment. When the enemy, Satan, got floored by a voice, not a sword.

Jesus is God. Listen. Listen. You have a few options. You can glance at him or you can gaze at his face and worship Him. And so let's be a people who worship Jesus. Let's be a people who... The root word of worship is to ascribe worth or value to. Let's ascribe worth. Let's ascribe value to this Jesus of the Bible. Let's ascribe all... Listen, if you worship anything else... Anything else you ascribe worth or value to, it will not satisfy your heart. It won't satisfy your heart. It may work for a week. It may work for a year. It may work for a few years. But you were created by God, redeemed, if you are a follower of Jesus, and He is the one to worship. Look, what happens... Not only will you not be satisfied if you worship anything else other than Jesus, but then, if you don't live up to that status... Let's just go with social media for a second. Everybody likes the likes on something you post. And you're not living up and that becomes your idol and your identity and you're getting in this rhythm of just longing for likes. When you forget that you've been loved by God. So much so that when you don't get as many you think you should, it crushes you. This is why Jesus... You should worship Jesus because He satisfies your heart and He was crushed for you. Jesus is God.

Notice, too, He's eternal. Jesus is eternal. He's the firstborn of all creation. Now, this is where a lot of your other world religions and what I would call false religions would say... This is their proof text. They would say Jesus is not God. He was created. So what's Paul saying here? I think he's being extremely clear that Jesus was not created. That He is eternal. Because in verse 16, he will unpack with clarity that Jesus is the creator. So why is he using this word firstborn of all creation? One cannot create himself. It's a word that's used in that culture, in that day and time, of position. Of status. Of rank. I think what he's shouting is that Jesus is sovereign and supreme. He is eternal. His eternity has always existed.

We see this throughout this Bible. We see it in Isaiah chapter six. 700 years before Jesus comes on the scene. 700 years. You have a prophet named Isaiah. In chapter six, he says, "In the year king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord high and lifted up and angels were flying around his throne, singing holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was and is and is to come." He goes and he begins so enthralled with who this person that he sees that God then says to him, at that moment, "You're a man among unclean people, so who am I going to send to represent me?" He says, "Here am I. Send me." And then He tells him specifically that no one is going to probably really listen to you, Isaiah. And Isaiah would go. He would go so hard and so long that John 12 would record in verse 41 that Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of Him. He would be strengthened and sustained in such a way by seeing the eternal one that it caused him to endure to the end.

Listen, if somebody comes and they say, listen, man. We want you to... If God comes and says I want you to pastor for 60 years and nobody's going to listen to you. And then history tells us they probably sawed him in two. It's not in the Bible, but history would probably tell us that Isaiah was martyred for trying to be a representative of God. I'm like, I don't think I'm signing up for that one. If I could talk to the prophets when I get

to heaven, after seeing the major prophet himself, I would want to ask Isaiah... and I think this is what Isaiah would say. When no one's listening to you and you go 60 years serving and then they kill you, what sustained you? I think he would say, I saw the Son of God. I saw His glory. And I ran for 60 years to get to see His face again. When you see the eternal one, as laid out in the Scripture, He will sustain you as well to the end.

Listen, Jesus is the eternal one. Jesus would say to those who always were coming after him... The Pharisees in John 8. They were asking him about Abraham and he says, "Before Abraham, I was." And they tried to kill him there. Listen, this leads us to what? It leads us to bow in humility before Jesus. It leads us to bow in humility before Jesus. He is the eternal one. We are not the eternal one. It leads us not to think of ourselves, to think less of ourselves, but rather to think of ourselves less. Look, your best day... Listen, your best day with a venti with about eight shots in it and a Red Bull, you might get 24 hours. You might get 24 hours and you have to lay down and sleep. He's never slept. Although Jesus did when He was here on earth, as the God man, He is not now. He is reigning supremely.

So Jesus is God. Jesus is eternal. Notice third is Jesus is the creator. Jesus is the creator. Notice in verse 16. Verse 16 says, "For by Him all things were created, in heaven, on earth, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, rulers, authorities. All things were created through Him and for Him." Where did you come from? He made you? Why are you here? For Him. It frees you up to live your vocation for the glory of Christ. It frees you. Understanding that He is the creator. He has creator rights over your life. And so whatever vocation you find yourself in. Whatever. You can live as one who has been created by Him if you know Him and one who could represent Him and reflect Him for Him. [Abraham Kuyper 00:24:38], the Dutch reformer who helped found the university there in Amsterdam. This is his inaugural speech. He says, "There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ who is sovereign over all does not cry, mine."

Listen, scientists use this principle. It's called the anthropic principle in creation. It says this. That the universe appears to be carefully designed for the wellbeing of mankind. Imagine that. Think about the Earth's rotation in and of itself. Any faster that it speeds up or any way it slows down, we would freeze or burn. The Moon? The Moon is placed perfectly. That affects the tides of the oceans. The Earth is 3/4 water and 1/4 land. How aren't we all drowning right now? Any closer to the Earth, the tides take over. Listen. Jesus is creator God. He has creator rights. He is the source of life. He brings life and light. Not to show you where to walk, but how to walk. And so let's listen. Let's lean in and listen to Jesus. As you humble yourself before this God, bend your heart and your ear to this word and listen to him.

But notice not only is he the creator, but he's also the sustainer. That which he makes, he sustains. Notice in verse 17. Verse 17, the text says, "And He is before all things," another reminder of His eternity, "and in Him all things hold together." One writer says it like this, "He keeps the cosmos from becoming chaos." Hebrews 1 says it like this, "He upholds all things by the word of his power." His very word of his power. Think about the Earth with me for just a moment. Scientists have used a unique formula to determine its weight. I'm not going to attempt to say this... I would hurt myself... but it's 13 and then 170 and 21 zeros behind it in pounds.

Suspended. Hung in air. Held by the very word of its creator. Namely, Jesus himself. Look, I can't get my dog to obey me with my words. He upholds the planet.

One pastor and author by the name of Louie Giglio, pastor down in Atlanta, years ago, was speaking about God and His greatness and a microbiologist came up afterwards and started to explain to him as a Christian worldview, as a scientist, how he is enamored and in awe of the human body. Of how God has made us. There's a particular protein molecule that is essentially the glue of cells. That holds things together inside of us. And wouldn't you know it would be in the shape of a cross. That which, for years, the Christian faith has longed to write about and sing about and run to. Not that it's validating the Word itself. It's one of those unique nuggets that God in his kindness just allows us to see that whispers reminders that He's holding it together inside and out.

Jude would say it like this. "Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy." To him who is able to keep you. Listen, God is able to hold you. When I had... We have four kids and when they were young... They were six and under at one time and it was just a blur. A lot of coffee and not a lot of sleep. But I remember when we would walk... When they got to the age of being able to walk, where they would... I would just put one finger down and they would hold onto it. They would hold onto it tight and they'd have Cheerios in the other hand, crushing some food. I would walk kind of slow and they would kind of walk... and then would they would trip, they stubbed their foot or something, and they would trip, they didn't have enough strength to hold themselves up, so they would... Eventually, they would let go and wipe out and blood and didn't have a lot of teeth so we were okay, but a few fell out. They'd start screaming and I'd just give them to Mom and then Mom would take care of that. And then I wised up in my parenting and I said, man, if I just hold their wrist and they trip, they're not going down. I'll drag them. I'll drag them along.

This is what God's doing. He's holding you. He's holding me. In Christ. He is the sustainer of life. Listen, when He holds the universe together and your life together, you and I should hold to him in prayer. We should pray to him. I mean, tonight, we're going to pray and I long for the night... Our pastors long for the night that we would come and if not come, at least log in and livestream with us. Listen, if Daniel from the Old Testament was here and he was exhorting us to pray, he would do it from the perspective of knowing what it's like to be threatened, to lose your life, over prayer.

A lot of people, when they think of Daniel being thrown in the lion's den, they think maybe he was talking about God, but that's not what happened. He was talking to God. The guys that he was working with were so jealous, they went to the king. He made a decree that says anyone who prays to the God of the Bible is thrown in the lion's den. Daniel even knew that and he valued prayer more than breath itself. Because he continued to do it. It was his dependence on God. It was his leaning in and holding fast because God was holding him. He was in communion with him. Even though he was thrown in the lion's den, God protected him. And not one touched him and he came out the next morning. But he wasn't thrown in there for... We see in the New

Testament a lot of folks were arrested, and Paul was in prison, for preaching the gospel. Daniel was in the lion's den because of his dedication to pray to the living God. It was the lifeline for his life. And so let's pray to Jesus.

Notice he's not only God and the sustainer and the creator, but he's also the head. Notice the text in verse 18. Verse 18 says, "And he's the head of the body of the church." No pastor, no elders, no giver, no group of people are over the church. Jesus is the head. And uses the word head here because I think he's trying to communicate to us, it's from the head we get direction. It's from the head. It's from the head, right now, that's telling my hands to move in a certain way. My feet to go in a certain direction. It's from the head you get direction. Discernment. This is who is the head of providence. This is who is the head of the church. Listen, let's obey Jesus. Let's lean in and obey Him if he is the head. Listen, if you get to a point in your life where your ideologies and your philosophies begin to trump the Bible and what Jesus has said, your life will start to look like an escape room without any clues. You'll run into a lot of walls. He's the head.

But, last, he's the savior. He's the savior of the world. Notice what the text says in verse 18. "He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead." Meaning he's the first to be resurrected, to never die. Again, others... Jesus had raised people from the dead, but His resurrection becomes our in a sense. His is the one that is of preeminence. His is the one that is of supreme value. Because in His resurrection, you and I have the hope of a resurrection one day. And notice what he has done. In verse 20. "Through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross." How? Listen, there's been a lot of historic documents signed over the last month of peace treaties between countries that have had war with each other. The greatest war on the planet is the war that your heart and my heart has raged against a holy God. And the greatest peace treaty that's ever been... ever accomplished... was not accomplished by the signing of a pen, but by the shedding of the blood of the son of God.

This Christ, who lived a perfect life and died in our place, was hung on a cross and bled and died. On that cross... Look, forgiveness of sin comes from the shedding of the blood, but it was in that moment that he absorbed and drank every bit of wrath that is rightly due to you and me. It was in that moment that the son of God, the perfect lamb of God, took the blow that you and I deserve of God's wrath. He received it and he drank every last drop of it. Corinthians tells us this. It says, "He who knew no sin became sin for us so that we might be the righteousness of God." What does that mean? It's the great exchange. His righteousness, when you trust Him, when you bow before Him... And, listen, you're not going to see Him probably as God and as head and as eternal and creator if you don't see... if your eyes aren't open first to see that He saves you from your sin. That He forgives you of your sin and gives you freedom and resources. Not to be perfect, but to follow him. To be sanctified in a sense. He's the one.

And so, listen. I'm asking you this morning, in this room, there online, if you've never trusted Christ, if you've never trusted Him... I had lunch this week with a young man. Sophomore in college. I said, scale of one to 10. 10, you've committed. You're not perfect. You're leaning in. You're following Him. Where are you

at? He said, "I'm a seven." I'm like, "I love your honesty. Tell me. How do you get to a 10? What's holding you back?" "Man, I keep messing up. I got to stop messing up. And I'll come to him." I'm like, "That's why He came. You can't. You can't. Matter of fact, after you trust Him, you're going to keep messing up." But this is the glory of repentance. The first of the 95 theses that Martin Luther nailed to the castle in Wittenberg to start the Reformation... The very first point that he wrote on there to lead a reforming of the church back to Christ and in the Bible. He said, "The Christian life is a life of repentance." You come to Him by faith.

You're justified... I took... We were at Chipotle. I took chips out. Using chips. I put this chip... This chip is justification. Let's go today into the throne room of God and receive the righteousness of Jesus. Today. Outside at Chipotle. He says, "I can do that?" I say, "Absolutely you can do that." Over some chips, he was justified before God. Trusted Christ. Gave his life to Christ. So then this chip? Man, this is the rest of your life. It's called sanctification. It's going to be some great days. It's going to be some hard days. The key is you keep leaning in. Holding fast. Because He's holding fast to you. And then this one is glorification. That was a big chip. In this chip, this is where we see Him face to face. And so where are you at today? I ask. Have you trusted Him? Leaned in? Do you know... He knew the Christmas story and the Easter story, but he didn't know the hero of both of those stories. Because you know about something and not know someone. It's a big difference. Matter of fact, it's a chasm of difference. So I plead with you. I plead with you to trust Him. Believe on Him. We will serve you any way we can. We would love to help you any way we can and walk with you.

So let's trust Jesus and let's tell everybody about Jesus. He is the God man. He is the head. He is the savior who has come to make peace with God and reconcile us to a holy God. He is so glorious. Let's pray. Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. You are supreme. You are preeminent. You are the very source of life. That grants hope for hard days, joy in good days, perspective. God, in what we all would say are some unique, challenging, hard days, God, the hardest day on the planet was the day that you took the wrath of the father upon yourself. And it's light of that day, God, that we run to You. Hold fast to You. Knowing that You are holding us. Your word tells us there's nothing that will snatch us from Your hand. God, we love you. We praise you. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.



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