

## 2026 1Q Christ in Philippians and Colossians

### Lesson 8 The Preeminence of Christ

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

#### SABBATH

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Read Memory Text:

- He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians 1:15-17 NIV84.

What does this text mean? Does this support Jesus as fully God? Are there other texts that affirm Christ's full divinity?

- “**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. In him was life, and that life was the light of men... The **Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us**. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:1-4, 14.
- “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by **his Son**, whom he appointed heir of all things, and **through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.**” Hebrews 1:1–3.
- “Christ Jesus: **Who, being in very nature God**, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” Philippians 2:5-7

But we also have texts about worship, that only God is to be worshiped:

- “You shall have no other gods before Me... You shall not bow down to them nor serve them.” Exodus 20:3–5
- “Fear the LORD your God, serve him only.” Deuteronomy 6:13

And Jesus is worshiped by people and angels:

- The Magi “fell down and worshiped Him.” Matthew 2:11
- After calming the storm: “Those in the boat worshiped Him, saying, ‘Truly You are the Son of God.’” Matthew 14:33
- The women “came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.” Matthew 28:9

- The healed blind man says, “‘Lord, I believe,’ and worships Him” and Jesus accepts it. John 9:35–38
- Thomas: “My Lord and my God!” John 20:28
- “Our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13
- “Let all God’s angels worship Him.” Hebrews 1:6

Can you think of other texts that validate the full divinity of Jesus?

Why is it a **requirement** for salvation that Jesus is fully God?

What is the war over? God’s trustworthiness. Satan did not allege angels were not trustworthy—he is an angel, his attack was not against angels, it is against God. Satan hasn’t sought the position of an angel, he had the highest angelic position, he has sought the position of God.

- O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, “**I will ascend** to heaven; **I will raise my throne** above the stars of God; **I will sit enthroned** on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. **I will ascend** above the tops of the clouds; **I will make myself like the Most High.**” But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. Isaiah 14:12–15.

If Jesus is not fully God, then His sacrifice does NOT reveal that God is love, it does not reveal that God is selfless, it does not reveal the truth about God but would reveal that God is selfish, is willing to sacrifice another to protect Himself—and Satan’s lies about God would not be refuted and distrust of God would not be removed.

So the only way the war ends is for God Himself to reveal the truth about Himself in its fullest.

But was the revelation of God’s character of love alone sufficient to save human sinners?

And this truth, that revelation of truth alone is not sufficient to save human sinners, has been used by the legalists in the camp as a pretext/validation to cling to their false legal theology.

The legalists (those who teach the penal legal theories of salvation) rightly point out the truth that revelation of the truth of God’s character of love alone was not sufficient to save human sinners. The revelation of truth was sufficient to solidify the loyal angels in their loyalty, but human sinners needed more than the knowledge of God’s trustworthiness. Yes, human sinners needed to be won back to trust, so the truth must be revealed, but they needed something else once they were won back to trust—this is taught in multiple Bible illustrations like Jesus saying we must eat His flesh and blood, which was updated to the bread and wine of the communion service. These symbols teach the two elements we need for salvation—we need the flesh/bread, which is the truth, for if we don’t have the truth then we won’t trust God and cannot be saved. But once we trust God, then we need what is represented by the blood/wine.

And this is where the legalists err, because they have accepted the lie about God's law, falsely believing God's law functions like human law, they falsely think the added element is a legal one, and that element is a blood payment a death payment to a punishing God. So they interpret the blood that Jesus said they are to take in, as Jesus' death paying the legal price.

But they err on multiple points. They err in that they misconstrue God's law as imposed rules; they err in that they misconstrue sin as legal rather than lethal; and they misconstrue the meaning of the blood to be a death penalty paid rather than the truth that it represents the righteous *life* of Christ that we receive through faith. As Leviticus 17:11 states "the life is in the blood" but they have distorted to teach that the blood teaches the death.

But they are correct in teaching that revelation of truth alone is not sufficient to save human sinners because we needed more than just restoration to trust, we needed a new sinless life, cleansing from the sin condition itself.

The atonement model that teaches that the ONLY achievement Christ had to accomplish in order to save us from sin was to reveal the truth about God in order to dispel the lies of Satan and win us to trust is known as **Moral Influence Theory**.

And let me take a caveat here—in reality God had to provide more, to more, than reveal truth to save humanity from sin, but sinners who are saved from sin **do not have to understand the details of that in order to be saved from sin—all that is required to save sinners from sin is genuine restoration of trust that is based upon the truth of who God is**. Once trust is restored the sinner will participate in, receive, benefit from, the every other element of the plan of salvation that God has provided through Jesus. So while it is true the plan of salvation requires God to provide something more than only a revelation of truth about Himself, it is not true that we must comprehend the details of that in order to be saved.

Those who cling to the false penal legal theologies rightly point out that truth alone to win us to trust is not sufficient to save human sinners from sin. But having been tricked into believing the lie that God's law functions like human law, they falsely conclude that the something more that is needed is a legal payment to get a legal adjustment.

It is only by returning to worshiping God as Creator and recognizing His laws are design laws, the laws life are built to operate upon, that we recognize that when Adam sinned God did not get changed, and His law did not change, but the very condition, the heart, mind, and spirit of Adam and Eve were changed, corrupted; they became terminal—dead in trespass and sin. Their life was out of harmony with God and the spirit of fear and selfishness now was their animating motivating life-force and it could not be reconciled to God—it had to be replaced.

The life breathed into Adam by God was pure love and trust but their sin changed their spirit, corrupting it with fear and selfishness. They did need to be restored to trust in God by the truth, so that they could receive from Him, not a legal adjustment, not a payment to a wrathful judge so he won't harm them, not a legal stamp in a record book, not a declaration of legal righteousness while they

remain unrighteous, but so they could receive a new life, a new spirit, a pure holy spirit, the Spirit or life of Christ instilled into them by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

And because our God is the God of reality not fantasy, not fiction, and because we are real beings, with real identity, individuality, and a spirit that is really infected with fear, selfishness, and distrust of God, we must be reborn with a new spirit of love and trust—which is represented as the blood—and we do that after we have been won to trust by partaking the truth, represented by the bread.

But how could God get a new sinless, uncorrupted, pure, holy breath of life, a new spirit into humanity when every single human is born with their life given to them by a mother and father who themselves are infected with the spirit of fear and selfishness?

No good work, no ceremony, no trust, no legal proclamation, no adjustment in a book, will cause a human to, in reality, have a new life, a new breath of life, a new spirit, a animating motivating energy—only by Jesus being born as a member of this human family and thereby partaking of that same life breathed into Adam but, because the Father to His humanity was the Holy Spirit He infused, introduced, brought, a new sinless spirit, breath of life, into this species. And, then, Jesus lived as a human, exercising only human abilities through faith in His Father and thus as the Bible says, He was tempted in all points just like we are yet without sin (Heb 4:15), and then He purged, killed, eradicated, eliminated the life/spirit of fear and selfishness that He received through Mary and rosed in a purified humanity animated only by His sinless life.

And that is what each one of us need after being won to trust! We need to be reborn with a new life (John 3:3), a new spirit, the life of Christ (Gal 2:20), and then we leave the human family tree descended from Adam, animated by the spirit of fear and selfishness, which are symbolically represented as dead branches, and are grafted into the new family tree headed by Christ. He is the vine and we are the branches.

Because of Jesus there are two human family trees, there is the natural human family tree that every single human ever born through history is a part of by birth. That family tree is the one that has the life of Adam flowing in it, the life of fear and selfishness. But because of Jesus, we can by faith be reborn into His family, we can receive through faith His life, and when we do that we become part of the family of heaven, it is no longer our old fearful selves living but Christ living in us.

- Yet to all who received him, to those who **believed in his name**, he gave the right to **become children of God**—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. John 1:12-13 NIV84
- **“Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.** For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the **Spirit of sonship**. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that **we are God’s children”** (Romans 8:14–16 NIV84).

This is reality, it is not fantasy, and this is the only way to heal, fix, redeem, save humanity from sin, because our God is the God of reality. And there is nothing penal legal going on as in a human law court system, but there are absolutely laws involved, God's eternal, never changing, unmoving design laws that life are built upon—the laws of health. There is no other way for us to be saved than through what Christ has done for us.

Do you see why the only way for humanity to be saved from sin, and also for God to eliminate sin from the universe is for Jesus to be fully God?

But Satan doesn't want people experiencing salvation, he wants to keep people trapped in fear and selfishness, so he has created a counterfeit system of salvation built upon human law in which people are tricked into believing that they get legal pardon for all the deeds of sin while they remain sinful. It is this penal legal fraud that has enslaved so many people, just as the Jews were captives in Babylon, so too today millions of God's people (yes God's people) have their minds and hearts captured, enslaved, to a penal legal system of salvation that the Bible symbolically calls Babylon.

And of all the ancient heathen cultures that interacted with Israel in the Bible story arc, what is Babylon famously known for? The first government with a penal legal system of justice, the code of Hammurabi.

And Christianity has been taken captive by this penal legal fraud. It happened when Constantine converted and the church began to teach God's law functions like the laws of Rome, imposed rules, and justice is punishing law breaking, and salvation is getting legal pardon. And this system traps people in fear. So many Christians I know who believe this lie live in fear of going to heaven if their sins haven't been erased from reality, from memory, not just record books. Why is it so important they cling too hiding, covering, erasing, forgetting? Because they don't trust God and don't trust the saints to love them if they knew of their sins. They are still living like Adam hiding in the bushes, ashamed and afraid and the old spirit of fear is still motivating their thoughts.

These poor precious souls need to be set free, and it is only the truth about God as our Creator and Savior whose laws are design laws which will set them free. As long as they cling to the lie that God's law functions like human law they will remain trapped because that lie requires the believer to believe God is the source of pain and death inflicted for justice sake and thus they cannot trust Him, but must be protected from Him.

## **SUNDAY**

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The lesson points our attention to these texts:

- Jesus said, "I and the Father are one." John 10:30.
- Jesus said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." John 14:9.

What do these texts mean? How do we apply them?

Do we really believe this? Do we have more anxiety or concern about going into the Father's presence than going into Jesus'?

Do we believe we need Jesus to plead our case to the Father? If we were to ask a church group, when thinking of the heavenly judgment are you glad we have a friend in court—and then ask, who is that friend, what is the answer usually given? Jesus! But what about the Father do we think of Him as our Friend? Do we sing what a Friend we have in the Father? But if we have seen the Father in Jesus shouldn't we sing that?

How did Jesus treat the woman caught in adultery? Who plead with Jesus to do this? Do we see the Father doing anything different? Do we teach the Father needs Jesus to plead His blood to be merciful?

How did Jesus treat the religious leaders who entrapped the woman caught in adultery? Who pleaded with Jesus to be merciful to them? Do we see the Father treating them the same? Or do we think we need the Father to be influenced by His Son?

How did Jesus treat Judas? He washed his dirty feet—who plead with Jesus to do that? Do we see the Father washing Judas' feet?

How did Jesus treat the people who spit on Him, beat Him, mocked Him, stripped Him naked and crucified Him? He forgave them—do we see the Father doing the same or do we think that the Father would need someone to influence Him not to strike out in wrath?

The Bible says,

- But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8 NIV84

Do we believe this? Do we see the Father's love in this or do we believe Jesus is in heaven pleading to the Father in our behalf? Do we believe the Father would sacrifice His life for us or not?

- “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself” 2 Corinthians 5:19 NKJV.

Do we really believe Jesus and the Father are one? Do you see how the false penal legal theology has split the Godhead and teaches a loving sacrificial Savior who must do something to an angry wrathful and offended Father in order to prevent the Father from killing us. Now they will couch this under very holy sounding language such as holiness, righteousness, justice, but the result of their false theology is a god who is the source of death that we must be protected from. Thus, this false theology teaches a belief in a god who we cannot trust unless something is done to him and then leads people to cling to their life of fear and sin but seek to hide it all under a legal pardon, the blood of a sacrifice, a robe of righteousness or some other mechanic.

Evidence of this infection to Christianity:

- **Roman Catholic**

Christ, because he was guiltless, sin-free and in favor with God, could **offer himself up as a means of persuading God to relent of his angry wrath against the sins of mankind... God is personally offended by sin and thus he needs to be personally appeased in order to offer a personal forgiveness.** (Sungenis, Robert. Not By Faith Alone. Queenship, 1997. As quoted in Webster, William. "The Roman Catholic Teaching on Salvation and Justification." Christian Resources, <https://christiantruth.com/articles/rjustification>, pp. 107, 108. emphasis mine).

- **Eastern Orthodox**

Since Adam had fallen under the curse, and through him all people also who proceed from him, therefore **the sentence of God** concerning this could in no way be annihilated; and therefore Christ was for us a curse, through being hung upon the tree of the cross, so as to offer Himself **as a sacrifice to His Father**, to annihilate **the sentence of God** by the superabundant worth of the sacrifice (Saint Symeon the New Theologian. "On the Transgression of Adam" (homily). As quoted in "Thinking About the Atonement: The New Testament." Orthodox Church in America, <https://www.oca.org/reflections/fr.-lawrence-farley/thinking-about-the-atonement-the-new-testament> emphasis mine).

- **Evangelical**

We affirm that the atonement of Christ by which, in his obedience, he offered a perfect sacrifice, **propitiating the Father by paying for our sins** and satisfying divine justice on our behalf according to God's eternal plan, is an essential element of the Gospel (Neff, David. "A Call to Evangelical Unity." Christianity Today, June 14, 1999, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1999/june14/9t7049.html> emphasis mine).

- **SDA**

I've always been baffled by those among us who deny the **penal substitutionary** aspect of Christ's death, viewing it as merely a **dramatic expression of God's love**, as opposed to a **legal payment for sin**. For them, penal substitutionary atonement goes like this: you break God's law (sin), you face God's wrath (death). Period. However, to spare us, God poured out His wrath against the violation of His law (sin), not on the violators of His law (sinners) but on the sinless Jesus, the only way that God could "be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). **In short, rather than killing us for violating His law, the Father killed Jesus instead... Or, to put it crudely, the Father killed Jesus so that He wouldn't have to kill us.**

Clifford Goldstein, from Cliff's Edge *Adventist Review*, December 8, 2023 article Law, Freedom, Love emphasis mine; [https://adventistreview.org/cliffs-edge/law-freedom-love/?fbclid=IwAR3wAGrpMo-HQQi2KFA1HxfD47q5Aam6lZ6yJTNk-5FH7QZr66b8h\\_3CqX0](https://adventistreview.org/cliffs-edge/law-freedom-love/?fbclid=IwAR3wAGrpMo-HQQi2KFA1HxfD47q5Aam6lZ6yJTNk-5FH7QZr66b8h_3CqX0)

The penal legal theologies ultimately interfere with restoring trust in the Father, yes many people, have placed trust in Jesus while believing this fraudulent system. And to the degree they trust Him and open their hearts to Him, He heals them and they are reborn and saved, but in truth, many live in fear of being in the Father's presence without Jesus there to protect them. And they will be surprised when Jesus finally introduces them to the Father and they discover God was always for them, the Father is in reality exactly like Jesus in every way and was never the source of death, He is the source of life and is seeking through Jesus to purify us and save us from sin which is the source of death.

## MONDAY

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The lesson has us focus again on our Memory Text for the week:

- He is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn over all creation**. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians 1:15-17 NIV84.

And we can add to that the text from Hebrews 1:6:

- And again, when God brings his **firstborn** into the world, he says, “Let all God’s **angels worship him**.” Hebrews 1:6 NIV84

What is the meaning of Jesus being firstborn?

Some have read these texts and suggest that Jesus is a divine being but is the offspring of the Father, not eternally co-existent with the Father? Is that what these texts are teaching? No, firstborn in the Bible is not about birth order but about position of authority.

Who was Abraham's biologically firstborn son? Ishmeal but which son inherited the promises of God and thus is considered Abraham's firstborn? Isaac. We see this repeated Isaac and Jacob's children:

Who was Isaac's firstborn son? Esau, but who inherited the promises and therefore is considered the firstborn? Jacob.

And which of Jacob's sons was biologically born first? Reuben, but which son was considered firstborn?

Jacob gave Joseph a coat of many colors. This was Jacob's way of setting Joseph apart from his brothers as the one who would occupy the position of firstborn. The firstborn received a double inheritance, something that Joseph received, as each of his sons Ephraim and Manasseh received a full portion, and the Bible explicitly confirms:

- “The rights of the firstborn belonged to Joseph” 1 Chronicles 5:2 NIV84.

So in the Bible firstborn does not mean biological descent but means the one who is the inheritor of the blessings, the one who is the head of the family. And Jesus is the firstborn over all creation, the one through whom all creation was made, and the one through God's promises, power, blessings and salvation flow to all creation.

- For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the **government will be on his shoulders**. And he will be called Wonderful **Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father**, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Jesus is the firstborn over all creation, but it not about the origin of Jesus, but about Him being our Creator, Savior, and the Head of all life.

What does it mean to realize that our Creator died for us?

## **TUESDAY**

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- For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in **Christ, who is the head over every power and authority**. Colossians 2:9-10 NIV84.
- And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him [Christ] to be **head over everything for the church, which is his body**, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. Ephesians 1:22-23 NIV84.

What do you understand these texts to mean?

Jesus is:

- Creator—so all things come from Him—He is the source, designer, builder—the **head**.
- Sustainer—all things are sustained by Him, His life continues to flow out, His wisdom, guidance, love, truth—thus He is the source of all health, happiness, advancement, growth, development—the **head** water, the source of all.
- Savior and Healer—He is the only human to live sinlessly, the source of salvation, and thus the second Adam, the new **head** of the human family
- He is the revealer of truth about God that destroys the lies and through Him all things in heaven and earth are reconciled to God and thus all un fallen beings in heaven are secured in their loyalty to God through Jesus. He is the **head** of all heavenly beings.
- He is the leader of life, the way, the truth, and the life, the first being to sacrifice infinity to save the finite and thus He is the **head**, the leader, the one we model after, the perfect example.

We could list many more metaphors and examples of being the head. But what does it mean that Jesus is the head of the church?

And what church is the body of Christ?

Is the Bible speaking about a denomination? When an organization calls itself the remnant church are they claiming that their organization is the body of Christ?

Can a person become part of the body of Christ, the church, by joining an organization a denominational church?

If a person cannot become part of the body of Christ by joining a denominational church, then can any denominational church BE the body of Christ, the church the Bible is talking about in this verse?

So, would the church that constitutes the Bride of Christ, the body of Christ, be then the “congregation” of humans who are saved, the members represented as the five wise virgins who had oil in their lamps, but the members represented by the five foolish virgins who have their lamps (Bibles) but no oil, they would not be actual members of the body of Christ—correct? Why?

Because to be part of the body of Christ means we are symbolic branches that are grafted into the Vine. Jesus is the vine, we are the branches, and when we are grafted into the vine we receive from the vine the “sap” the “oil in the lamp” which is the “life of Christ,” which is the “blood” that we must drink (John 6:53). This is the new spirit or life from the Holy Spirit. We actually become a part of the divine nature by receiving this new life and thereby become part of the mystical body of Christ and His life flows in us, as Paul wrote, “it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:20).

This is how a person becomes part of the body of Christ, they must actually receive His life as the animating and motivating energy within them. And the only way to receive this life is through trust that results in surrender of the old life of fear.

Legal adjustments, joining organizations, do not provide this, in fact the legal theologies obstruct it.

Then Christ becomes the head in the same way you are the head of your body. His life, animating and motivating you, heals and transforms you and you become sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and Christ directs our hearts and minds and we fulfill His calling and purposes here on earth, just as you direct the actions of your hands and feet.

With all of this in mind then, how do we understand this passage?

- Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For **the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church**, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now **as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything**. **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy**, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. **In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies**. He who loves his

wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— Ephesians 5:22–29 NIV84.

What does this mean?

How are husbands to be the head of the wife?

Husbands can only be a Christlike head if they are Christlike, meaning that they trust Jesus, have been reborn, and are advancing in the truth and practicing His principles. Claiming legal salvation and practicing the principles of this world, authority and domination through office over others, is not what this passage is describing.

Is there a problem for husbands, wives, and families if husbands are not the head? What problems arise?

Is there a problem if a husband take the headship role with an imposed law construct view of God? What is the problem?

## **WEDNESDAY**

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The lesson states that without Christ's resurrection no one else could be raised from the dead—why is that so?

But what about the wicked who are eternally lost in the end, aren't they resurrected before they die again? Is their resurrection the same resurrection that the righteous experience or different? In other words, is the resurrection of the wicked at the end of the 1000 years possible only because Christ rose from the dead? Or could every human be raised from the dead like the unsaved are at the end of the 1000 years even if Christ did not come and overcome death?

This question is designed to differentiate first death and second death. First death is a sleep death and both the righteous and the wicked die this death, and both are raised from it.

But first death wouldn't exist if God didn't intervene and interfere with the natural course of sin by Jesus becoming our Savior. The natural course of sin is not sleep and resurrection, but eternal separation from God and thus annihilation and non-existence.

We can conclude that the unrepentant, not having accepted Jesus, not having participated in His death as Scripture teaches, not having been reborn with a new spirit, are resurrected from the first death but without a new spirit, without the life of Christ, without rebirth, renewal, recreation, and therefore it is merely the reanimation of their sinful bodies with their ongoing fearful self-centered spirit, they come forth with the same avarice, greed, lust, hate, and fear and selfishness as they went into the grave.

But the righteous, when they are raised at the beginning of the 1000 years, having been reborn while here on this earth prior to their sleep death, are raised with a new life, the life of Christ, and they could only experience this new life through Christ's victory as we explained earlier.

Is this confusing or make sense?

## THURSDAY

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- For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Colossians 1:19-20 NIV84.

How are all things, including heavenly things, reconciled to Christ at the cross?

We have explained how humanity was saved and reconciled to God through Jesus, but what about sinless angels, this text indicates that somehow the death of Christ was beneficial and important to them as well—how?

- Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* to myself.” John 12:30-32 NIV84.

The word “men” in this English translation is added by the translators, it is not in the Greek. Jesus did not say He would draw all men, but would draw all unto Himself, which is what Paul is describing in Colossians.

- “And there was **war in heaven**. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the **dragon and his angels** fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they **lost their place in heaven**. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the **devil**, or **Satan**, who leads the whole world astray. He was **hurled to the earth, and his angels with him**.” Revelation 12:7-9

“war” is *πόλεμος* (*polemos*), from which we get “polemic,” which is an argument.

Satan is an angel who began his war, which is a war of ideas, of words, in heaven, and 1/3 of the angels in heaven sided with him and were cast out of heaven. But while 2/3's of the angels stayed loyal, they had many questions and it wasn't until Jesus' death that Satan's lies were fully exposed, the truth of God's character fully revealed and Satan was cast out of the hearts and affections of his former angelic friends in heaven.

- For though we live in the world, we do not wage **war** as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish **arguments** and every **pretension** that sets itself up against **the**

**knowledge of God**, and we take captive every **thought** to make it obedient to Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

- For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men. 1 Corinthians 4:9 NIV84

Read the third paragraph,

- The only way sin could really be defeated forever, and all things be reconciled that could be reconciled, is summed up in that one glorious truth: God loved—He loved the universe, and He loved us so much that He risked everything to save us through Christ’s death on the cross. The Greek word for “world” is *kosmos*, which can encompass the whole universe. Paul refers to this universal demonstration in the context of following Christ: “We have been made a spectacle to the world [*kosmos*, universe], both to angels and to men” (1 Cor. 4:9, NKJV). *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 65.

Why is God’s truth and love the only way to permanently end the war?

What kind of war is it? It is a war over love and trust, and what is the only way to win love, trust, loyalty, devotion in such a way that it can never be shaken? Only upon reality-based, never changing, truth of God’s character of love and His trustworthiness. Every person must be fully persuaded in their own mind.

God cannot win by might and power but only by the Spirit of truth and love, using power to eliminate enemies only incites fear and doubt in those who are currently loyal and fear distrust and rebellion spread.

Only returning to worship God as Creator, and realizing all His laws are design laws and that God is not the source of inflicted punishment for sin, but that sin severs us from God and causes death, will result in a universe at peace.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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### **The God of Reality: Separating Truth from Fiction Seminar:**

August 13-16 2026 Orlando, Florida. To register and book the resort room at discounted rate, go to:

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