

# God E20 Final

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## Who Did Paul Think Jesus Was?

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## Who Did Paul Think Jesus Was?

Jon: Hey, this is Jon at The Bible Project. We are entering into the last stretch in our conversation on the identity of God. This has been a really long conversation. We've gone through the Hebrew Scriptures and looked at the complex identity of God. We then turned to the Gospels and looked at how Jesus and the Spirit are related to God's complex identity. We looked at how Jesus thought of himself in relationship to God the Father. And now in this episode, we're going to turn to the Apostle Paul.

Tim: Here's something significant and it's counterintuitive at first when you hear it. The earliest expressions of Christian belief that were written down are the letters of Paul. The way he talks about Jesus is the same kind of highly exalted view that we find in the Gospel narratives.

Jon: Paul was a first century Jew, and like all of his family before him, he would daily recite the Shema, which goes like this: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one." But Paul does something interesting. He takes this prayer that was so embedded into his being and he adapts it.

Tim: 1 Corinthians 8: "Yet for us, there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we exist through him." It's a little poem. He's made a little messianic Jesus style Shema prayer right here. He's basically stuck Jesus in the Shema.

Jon: So let's drop into the psyche of Paul the Apostle, how he thinks about Jesus of Nazareth as the true human and also as somehow Yahweh himself. Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

We're going to talk about God.

Tim: Continuing episode.

Jon: This is about the identity of God, and we're going to be in the New Testament looking at what Paul has to say about the identity of God.

Tim: That's right. We're cruising through, showing how each of the main parts of the New Testament is developing the identity of Jesus as it carries forward the theme of God's identity as a complex unity.

Jon: So we're going to be looking at a lot of New Testament passages?

Tim: Yeah. Here's something significant and it's counterintuitive at first when you hear it because the four Gospel accounts come at the beginning of the New Testament and then the book of Acts and then you get the letters of Paul and the other apostles. And because the events talked about in the gospels were the foundation events for the Jesus movement, it's hard to do a remap when you're thinking in terms of chronology.

Jon: Of when things were written.

Tim: Not when the events happened but when the texts came into existence.

Jon: Got it.

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Tim: If you're looking at it from that lens, what was written first, the letters of Paul are the earliest Christian literature that exist.

Jon: So before the gospels were written, Paul had penned these epistles.

Tim: Correct. We talked about this. We did an episode on this about how to read the Gospels or what are the Gospels.

Jon: We haven't actually done it.

Tim: Luke. It's the beginning of Gospel of Luke series. We did the whole thing on the origin of the Gospel.

Jon: Yeah, okay.

Tim: It's a long time ago. It was a lot of ideas ago. Jesus obviously went around saying and doing things, and a lot of those were really easy to memorize. So you have a whole body of what Bible nerds called Jesus tradition. These are the orally memorized teachings of Jesus. Things like the Sermon on the Mount and those parables.

These have all been committed to memory so they're floating around and they're being preserved and passed on by the circles connected with the apostles. That's all happening right from the very beginning. But the literary works that we know as the Gospels are mosaic of all of that material that was happening. And all that's happening as Paul's writing his letters.

Jon: At the same time?

Tim: Yeah. In other words, teachings of Jesus and the stories about him are being memorized and then told in all this period - from his resurrection. Even before, I'm sure. He even got killed. People are memorizing what he was saying and passing it on.

Jon: Right? Because if you're in another city, it's not like you've got YouTube to pull Jesus up and watch his sermon. Someone had to tell you.

Tim: Totally. So he taught intentionally in short, memorable sayings and really captivating short stories for the purpose of easy to pass along teachings. Basically, the point is, is the gospels are coming into existence in this very period when Paul's actively writing his letters.

Jon: Got it.

Tim: And so, why that's interesting is that Paul, the way he talks about Jesus is the same kind of highly exalted view that we find in the Gospel narratives that technically post-date Paul. The materials in the Gospels predate Paul that the final literary shape of the Gospels pause to him.

So we're looking at the earliest Christian literature, the earliest expressions of Christian belief that were written down are the letters of Paul. What you find in them

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isn't some idea that like, "Well, actually, the earliest Christians just had no clue and they were just figuring it out. And since the Gospels were written 40 years after the events, they have the most developed views of Jesus." It's not the case. It's actually right from the very beginning, you just have the same ways of talking about Jesus as Yahweh.

So relevant to our conversation, I just want to have us work through a handful of passages in Paul's letters where he expresses his views about Jesus. What's fascinating is that he actually almost never has to argue for his views about Jesus. He's writing to followers of Jesus. And so, really what you want to look for is what he just assumes what he says that shows, "Hey, I know this, you know this, we all believe this, this is what followers of Jesus believe about Jesus." And you find these comments that he makes that are just astounding. They're rarely the main point. They're usually just, "You know we all believe this." And then he uses it to go on to make some other point. Which tells you that this is already common knowledge, common talk.

So anyway, Paul's really important in the conversation of tracing what Christians believed from the very beginning about Jesus. Anyway.

Jon: Jesus and the identity of God.

Tim: Correct. Yeah, all as one package.

[00:07:43]

Tim: Here's a well-known passage, at least for some people. If people know the Bible well, if they know Paul's letters well, here's a well-known passage from Romans 10. He says, "Here's the message concerning faith that we proclaim." "We" being he and the other apostles. "That if you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you'll be saved. For there's no difference between Jew and Gentile. The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him for - quotation from the Old Testament book of Joel - everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Paul's condensing here actually not his own unique message. He's saying, "Listen, this is what we all believe. The message that we all proclaim, me, Peter, John, we're all saying the same thing. Jesus is Lord, and if you trust in His death and resurrection for you, you're on the Jesus team."

Jon: Is he using Lord as master or Lord as Yahweh?

Tim: We've talked about this. Jewish tradition by this time, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures has been available for a couple of centuries now. Super widespread. The Greek word to render the divine name for Yahweh is Kurios, which means the Lord or master.

So if you declare with your mouth Jesus is Kurios. Now, it's ambiguous in one sense because it could technically mean he's your master. Or for a Jew to say this to a mixed community of other Jews and Gentiles who are all reading, have as a part of

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their scriptures the Greek Bible, then this becomes a very loaded statement, Jesus is Yahweh.

Let's try and make an argument. How can we figure out. He goes on to say, "Listen, there's no difference between a Jewish person or a Gentile person. The same Lord is Lord of all." So Jesus is Lord. He's the Lord of all humanity. He's not just saying—

Jon: He's not just my master, he's master of everyone.

Tim: That's right. Then he goes on to quote from the Old Testament book of Joel. "Everyone who calls on the name of the Kurios, Lord, will be saved." And actually, put it there. He's quoting from the book of Joel, which if you read it in Hebrew, it's "everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh." So not just God. The Hebrew texts that Joel wrote is the name Yahweh. It's very specifically the divine name is the God of Israel.

In the Septuagint, the Greek translation, that got translated as everyone who calls on the name of the kurios. Paul just said, "Jesus is kurios. Everyone who calls on the name of kurios will be saved." You can see the logic.

Jon: It's very weird for him the first time to say, "Jesus is Lord, and by that I mean master." And then for them to say, "Next, everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved." These are exact same word. He would probably be a little bit more careful.

Tim: That's right. We saw this in the page 1 of the Gospel of Mark, a quotation from the Old Testament, and in the divine name slot, Lord. Then how he applies it in a story about Jesus is he puts Jesus in the Yahweh slot. That's exactly what you're seeing here. This is just one example. There are dozens of examples like this all through Paul's letters. It's interesting because again, he doesn't argue for the case. He just assumes it as if it's just the thing.

Jon: His point here is that both Jews and Gentiles are under the same to the same family name?

Tim: One Lord.

Jon: One Lord. Isn't he riffing off of something Moses said when he says, "If you declare with your mouth and believe in your heart"?

Tim: Yeah, that's a whole other thing.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Maybe to bring it back to something probably from our first conversation, what many people throughout the history of Western Christianity have wished Paul would have said was Jesus is God. But instead what he says is things like this, which ends at mostly the same place.

Jon: Or wouldn't it be nice if he would have said Jesus is Yahweh?

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- Tim: But that is in essence what he's doing.
- Jon: But is there ever a point in the New Testament where the divine name is used? It's always Lord.
- Tim: It's not pronounced.
- Jon: Never pronounced.
- Tim: No. The early Christians just adopted the tradition that was centuries old by this point, which is not saying the syllables of the divine name.
- Jon: That's fascinating. The divine name...
- Tim: Yahweh.
- Jon: So the divine name Yahweh written with Hebrew letters, but then pronounced Lord?
- Tim: That's right.
- Jon: Adonai?
- Tim: Adonai. It's pronounced Adonai.
- Jon: So whenever a Hebrew reader would get to that, they wouldn't say the word they're looking at, they would say the word Adonai?
- Tim: Mm-mmh.
- Jon: And then, when all the Hebrew Scriptures are translated into Greek, instead of translating the Hebrew letters into Greek letters, they just said, "Let's just use the word Adonai."
- Tim: Yeah. They just actually put the word. Instead of saying it aloud like you do when you read the Hebrew text, you see the four letters of the divine name and say, "Adonai," they actually put in the Greek translation of the word Adonai, which is kurios, Lord.
- Jon: Then because of that, now, Paul never says Jesus is Yahweh because—
- Tim: He does say that. He just says it in the Greek language.
- Jon: Which is Jesus is Lord.
- Tim: Which is to say Jesus is Lord.
- Jon: I mean, someone must have translated the divine name into Greek.
- Tim: Oh, yeah. There are transcriptions of it. They are very piecemeal. The entry on the divine name in the dictionary of ancient biblical Hebrew has a whole long entry on

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every single piece of evidence for the pronunciation of the divine name. And there are some ancient Greek spelling of it.

Jon: Just none in New Testament?

Tim: None in the New Testament. There you go. That's a great example because he says the phrase "Jesus is Lord" and then quotes from the Old Testament, which has Lord and Yahweh slot. That's interesting.

Here's another example. This one's awesome. We've already been in this territory. It's in his 1 Corinthians 8 when he's writing them about food sacrificed to idols.

Jon: The so-called idols, so-called gods.

Tim: Yeah, the so-called gods. This is what's great is the Shema, which is the ancient Jewish prayer, "Hear O Israel, Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one." In context, the one is there he is our one God in distinction to the Canaanites many gods whose land we're going into.

So Paul picks up the language of that and applies it in a similar dynamic where you have Greek and Jewish Christians living in a really dense Greco, Greek and Roman city, ancient Corinth with idols temples everywhere. Temples are also the meat markets because animals were being slaughtered there perpetually. We've talked about this.

Jon: So, can I buy some meat from a pagan temple?

Tim: Yeah. Can I buy some meat? Is the meat itself some taboo or cursed? Then the other thing is, can I go have a meal there? Like if my friend's is going to dedicate whatever his next crop to Zeus and offers his sacrifice—

Jon: Because they'll have a little festival in the temple?

Tim: Yeah, they'll eat the animal that has been sacrificed.

Jon: That doesn't happen in Jewish culture, right?

Tim: It did happen in Jewish culture.

Jon: They ate the animal in the temple?

Tim: Yeah. Or in the precincts. Some offerings were burnt up whole, like the whole burnt offering. But there were other offerings that are among the other categories that either the Levites eat it - it's dedicated to them - or like the Thanksgiving offering is you just take it. And really they just got it and burn up some parts and then you get all the meat to go celebrate.

Jon: To have a party?

Tim: To have a party.

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Jon: It's the barbecue pit.

Tim: Yeah, it's a barbecue pit. That's true in ancient Greek and Roman temples too. His first warning is 8:4. "Concerning eating food sacrificed to idols, we know that there's no such thing as an idol." Meaning these idols aren't themselves divine beings, these statues. He's not saying that it might not represent a real spiritual being. He's not saying that. He says, "Listen, we know there's no God but one. No ultimate creator and ruler, except the one God." He sounds very Jewish right there.

"And even if there are other spiritual beings, gods in heaven and on earth - of course, there are many gods and lords - yet for us, there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we exist through him." It's kind of hard just to talk about it. Then the note I put there for you, you can see it. Once you print out, it's a little poem. He's made a little messianic Jesus style Shema prayer right here.

So think about how this works. Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one. He just said up above, there is no god but one. Now he's taking the first half of the Shema, "the Lord is our God," and he's broken Yahweh and Elohim.

Jon: For there is one Elohim.

Tim: There's one Elohim.

Jon: There is one God, the Father.

Tim: The Father, from whom are all things and we exist for him. He takes one title for the God of Israel from the Shema and he applies it to the Father. Then he goes on to say, "And there's one kurios, one Lord, Jesus the Messiah by whom are all things and we exist through him." He's doing so many things right here.

So the first is that he's basically stuck Jesus in the Shema.

Jon: Right. Which is weird on its face because we have one God in the Shema, one God who is Yahweh the Lord, and he's trying to insert Jesus in but keep the language of one.

Tim: Yeah, you're right. It's one of these things where when we're talking about the complex unity of the God of the Bible, one plus one equals one.

Jon: Because he could have easily been like, "Well, let's riff on the Shema. For us, there are two gods." He could have easily done that.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: But he didn't.

Tim: But he doesn't. He says, "For us, there's one God, that's the Father and there's one Yahweh, Lord, Jesus Messiah." In the Shema, the whole point is, Yahweh is our God.



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Jon: You know, when you said, "One plus one equals one," that made me think of is just infinity plus infinity equals infinity. Right?

Tim: Go on. Can you explain infinity?

Jon: Well, no, I can't explain infinity. It's a concept we can't understand. There are so many weird things with infinity. Like there's a different sizes of infinity. I don't really fully get it. That doesn't make sense intuitively. But if you take every single number, that's an infinite set of numbers, right? But now take every odd number. That's also an infinite set of numbers. But which is bigger?

Tim: I suppose it would be.

Jon: It's smaller, but it's still infinity. So it's a smaller infinity. I don't understand it. But anyways.

Tim: That's interesting.

Jon: So you take an infinity like every odd set of numbers that is infinity, you add that to every even set of numbers that is infinity, and what do you get? You get every single number, which is infinity. Anyways, one plus one equals one.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: If God is transcendent and ultimately is beyond meta, then one plus one equals one.

Tim: That's right. Again, this isn't just punting to mystery.

Jon: But it is.

Tim: No, it's not a mystery. It's naming the limits of the capability of our actual brain to comprehend realities that are beyond however much math we can comprehend.

Jon: I would love to talk to a mathematician about the infinity things because I'm wondering is how they would explain it exactly. Because it's important in math to understand that there are different types of infinity. It's not just some cute little thing to think about. It's actually an important distinction. It factors into something, like some formulas and things. But it's not something you can understand. You can't comprehend it, but it's important that you believe it because it actually changes.

Tim: Yeah, that's interesting. It might be a helpful analogy. It remains to be seen how practical...

[00:22:21]

Tim: Notice in 1 Corinthians 8, it's just one verse. 1 Corinthians 8:6, it's the Shema Jesus style. The Messianic Shema. He's taken the two descriptions of the God of Israel, God Elohim, and Yahweh, and he's broken that one with two words. Identified the Father with one, identify—

Jon: He divided infinity in two.

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Tim: Yeah. Now we have two infinities. One is the Father, the other is Jesus Messiah. Then he attaches matching phrases to each. So the Father is from whom are all things and we exist for him. So this is talking about the One God as creator. So from whom creation is an expression of God's own creative energy. From whom are all things. But then what he says about Jesus matches "by whom are all things."

Jon: What's the difference between from someone and by something?

Tim: This is a Jewish rabbi converted to Jesus believes that he is Yahweh become human and that the God of Israel is Father who loves the Son in the power of the Spirit. Do I have shelf space in my mind for God using a second self as the medium by means of which He brings creation into existence?

Jon: We do, in fact.

Tim: We have a lot of shelf space for that idea.

Jon: We've got two big shelves at least. The word and the ruakh, wisdom also.

Tim: Yeah, there you go. Jon, you passed.

Jon: Yaay, I've been paying attention.

Tim: You are acing this quiz. Remember the word of Yahweh, there's even a psalm that says it. Psalm 33: "By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made." Which matched a statement from the book of Proverb "by means of wisdom, Yahweh founded the land."

So Paul's drawing upon that shelf space here of the Father as the one from whom. Like he's the equivalent of "in the beginning, God created." How does God create in Genesis 1? By means of his word and the Spirit. And so, Paul draws on that and puts Jesus on that shelf. He's not limiting Jesus to that, but he's using a Jewish category to help make sense of how one plus one equals one.

Jon: That's cool.

Tim: So he's mixing three of our categories here of Yahweh the one God. Or he's drawing upon three traditions here. The Shema, the word of Yahweh, and wisdom of Yahweh.

Jon: Does he talk about wisdom?

Tim: No, the category of Jesus being the one by whom creation happened.

Jon: Now, also in Genesis, isn't that kind of by the ruakh?

Tim: Correct. The ruakh is in the mix.

Jon: Yeah, the ruakh is in the mix.

Tim: Correct.

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Jon: All right.

Tim: But for this point, he's drawing upon the tradition and identifying Jesus as the wisdom of God. In one breath, this is one sentence. Like one verse in the New Testament.

Jon: Sorry. How do you know he's drawing on the wisdom of God, and the Word of God versus the ruakh of God? Because he doesn't specify.

Tim: You're right. You're right. It's mostly that as we're going to see in a few other examples, he treats the Spirit as a third entity alongside the Father and the Son.

Jon: A tri-entity?

Tim: Correct. Here he's just focusing on the Father and the Son because it's making his point. He's using the Shema to talk about idolatry. So Father and Son. That's a great example.

Here's another example. Let's go to Colossians 1. What's interesting is, a lot of Paul's most dense statements about Jesus are found in poems that are embedded in his letters. And whether he wrote them or he's adapted an earlier poem that was used in worship, and he likes it and adapted it...people debate these things but—

Jon: But it's there.

Tim: But it's there and it's a beautiful poetic form. This is one of the most epic poems in the New Testament. So cool. It's not formatted as poetry in most English translations. I've discovered it's not good. Colossians 1:15, he's talking about Jesus. He is the image of the invisible God. So think Genesis 1.

Jon: Yeah, it's the image of God. Which is you should be thinking like, "Humans are the image of God."

Tim: Humans are the image of God. He's the image.

Jon: He's the image.

Tim: So Daniel 7, he's the human one...

Jon: The man, the Son of Man.

Tim: ...exalted to the throne of God to share in God's rule. He goes on to say, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." Oh, yes. Remember first born here.

Jon: You know what? We've talked about the firstborn language. I think I understand it, I don't know if I do.

Tim: Let's talk about it again.

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Jon: Let's talk about it again. What I remember you saying is that at very practical level from the firstborn child, that means I get the inheritance. I'm the one through whom the legacy will continue.

Tim: It's about status, the preeminent status.

Jon: So I have status, in that I am the preeminent one in this family, because I'm the firstborn amongst all my siblings. And one day, once my parents are gone, it'll just be me. I'm the one. Because it seems like what he's saying when he says firstborn of all creation, it's not like God had a bunch of kids and Jesus was the oldest. He's just using that word and taking part of its connotation...

Tim: Yes. Yeah, he's not using the procreation part of the metaphor, which he makes clear by the next thing that he says. What he is talking about is Jesus as firstborn was a well-known Hebrew Bible image, both in God's own speech and another people speech to talk about the one who...If you want to use a category for the one who's so closely identified and even shares flesh and blood and is the embodiment of the status of the Father, it's the firstborn son.

In human terms, of course, there's procreation involved, because that's by nature of the case. But once you start getting into the Hebrew Bible categories of this Son of Man, this human one that's exalted to share in God's rule over the universe, and it's the one that in Psalm 110, David calls this one master, who is this one? So he's drawing on that category.

Then look what he says. Jesus is the image, he is the exact human who participates in God's own identity and rule, the firstborn of all creation, for by means of him, all things are created.

Jon: If he was created, then how did he create everything?

Tim: Yeah, that's basically it. Who's the one by whom all things are created? In Jewish theology, that's the one God. And who is the one God for Paul? The Father and the Son.

Jon: The firstborn. Both of those words, Son and firstborn, carry with it procreation baggage for me.

Tim: I mean, that's what the words mean.

Jon: But we don't use the word firstborn or son very often—

Tim: Yeah, we never would. And we never would.

Jon: But in Hebrew and Greek you do?

Tim: I think the apostles recognize that they're putting language to the indescribable. Just like somehow he can break the Shema apart and talk about the Father and the Son, and in the same breath say they are the one God one - one plus one equals one - so he's using language to say something that doesn't fit any categories we have. In that sense, it breaks the meaning of the words, but—

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Jon: But is that a typical thing and Greek or Hebrew where you would use firstborn to not refer to literally the one born of?

Tim: Oh, Israel is the son of God. Israel...

Jon: Is the firstborn of God.

Tim: Yeah. Exodus 4, Israel is my firstborn son.

Jon: Okay. So that's a category already.

Tim: Correct.

Jon: For me, it's like, "What?"

Tim: God calls the family of Abraham "My firstborn son" in Exodus 4. Namely, my representative people in the world. So what you do to them you do to me because they are my...That's right. Okay. All right. There's an analogy in Hebrew Bible. God didn't give birth to these humans.

Jon: In a metaphoric way he did.

Tim: Exactly.

Jon: But in a metaphoric way, did God give birth to Jesus?

Tim: Mary gave birth to Jesus.

Jon: But in a metaphoric way?

Tim: In a metaphoric way, something like that seems to be going on. Let's just say the firstborn title given to Jesus ends up evoking a whole bunch of different associations and ideas. Here, it's very clearly one of status because the firstborn isn't someone who is created because by means of the firstborn all things were created.

So similar to what he said in the Shema in 1 Corinthians 8, "by means of him," same idea.

Jon: All things except for Yahweh were created through him.

Tim: Well, that's because he is Yahweh. I mean, at least in Paul's logic. He's the firstborn of all creation. How do I know that? Because by means of him, all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities. Here he's referring to the sons of God, the spiritual beings.

Jon: So thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities, are all these the invisible spiritual...?

Tim: Visible and invisible.

Jon: So visible thrones and invisible thrones?

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Tim: Correct.

Jon: Visible dominions and invisible dominions.

Tim: Yeah. Remember in Hebrew Bible thought they are corresponding.

Jon: Cool.

Tim: For all things have been created through him and to himself, or for himself.

Jon: That's interesting because that phrase "all things have been created through him and to himself" in... was it Romans we were looking at? No, Corinthians.

Tim: In Corinthians.

Jon: He says same kind of thing. For him and through him.

Tim: Totally.

Jon: But the "for him" is referring to the Father, and "through him" is Jesus. And here in Colossians, the "through him" and "for him" are both for Jesus.

Tim: And that's because, the poem goes on, "he is before all things and in him." There he's riffing off a phrase in Isaiah, where God says, "I am the beginning and the end." He is the beginning before all things, and in him, all things hold together. He's the head of the body, the church, he is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead ones. So he matches the firstborn of all creation.

He's the exalted human, Son of Man, and the wisdom of God and word by whom it was all created. That's first born up there. Here, firstborn is he's the first new human who's gone through death and came out the other side as the new humanity so that he might have first place in everything.

It makes sense why he's using poetry to explain this, because how else...there's no language adequate. That he is God, he is a part of the complex unity that is God's identity and he is the first real human who's passed through mortality into the new humanity. And so, he also becomes the chief of the whole new future for the human race. That's the claim at least. It's getting cosmic real quick.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: He keeps going. The poem is still isn't over. "For in him, it was the Father's good pleasure for all of his fullness to dwell."

Jon: That's now tabernacle language.

Tim: Correct. Like the glory of Yahweh, like what Ezekiel saw, the human figure on the throne. "And through him to reconcile all things to himself." So Jesus was the one through whom all things were created. Jesus is the one through whom all things are reconciled.

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Jon: Or recreated, right?

Tim: Yeah. "Having made peace through the cross with things on Earth or things in heaven." Sheesh. There's no way to truly explain this poem. You just sit with it.

Jon: Remember when we talked about poetry?

Tim: Oh, yes. Yeah.

Jon: The purpose of poetry is to sit in it or to waterski on it, or to hold it up to your face.

Tim: Put your ear up to the buzz of the hive of a poem. That's right. We don't need to say anymore. I just encourage if you are listening to the podcast, go get out Colossians 1:15-20, memorize it and spend a long time pondering it. It says more than even the words themselves can communicate. It just evokes so much more richness of meaning. And it's about Jesus as the expression of God's power and love.

Jon: Thanks for listening to this episode of The Bible Project podcast. This episode was edited and produced by Dan Gummel, music by Tae the Producer and the intro music is by the band Tents.

This is Thanksgiving week here in the United States, and so we just wanted to take a moment and let you know that we are incredibly thankful for you for listening along, for being involved in this project, for sharing it. For those of you who donate so that we can make videos and this podcast and all the resources, we are having a blast, and we're so incredibly grateful for you. We really are. Happy Thanksgiving. Thanks for being a part of this with us.

Man: This is (man) from Raleigh, North Carolina. My favorite part about The Bible Project is that I don't have to necessarily read the whole Bible before understanding it, and then I can get that general summarization before I get motivated to read. We believe the Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus. We are a crowdfunded project by people like me. Find free videos, study notes, and more at [thebibleproject.com](http://thebibleproject.com).