

Jesus said 'All that the Father has is mine' (John 16v15)

(Philp 2v5-11, also see Eph 1v10 & Rev 5v13)

How Big is Jesus?

If you are asked today what is Jesus like, then what would you say? What is your own image of Jesus, of who he is and what he does? Can you picture him?

When I was a young man, I drew a simple picture of God to put in my wallet. It was silly one really, with an old bearded man sat in some clouds. However its purpose was to remind me that what ever image I have God, it is only wallet-sized, it is too small. Looking back now, I wish it had been a picture of Jesus instead ! Some people ignore all the historical evidence and put Jesus in the same basket with Father Christmas and the tooth fairy. Others accept he lived and died in the early first century but was of no further importance to humanity. Christians view him quite differently. They might say, he was born in Bethlehem to Mary and Joseph, escaped Herod by fleeing to Egypt. Moved to Nazareth on their return and when he was about 30 he started a 3 year ministry of teaching and miracles, before being crucified by his enemies, then rose again on the third day. Now having ascended to heaven he sits on a throne somewhere with God. For most of my life, that was my own picture of Jesus. Now I understand the scriptures better, I see that this was such a small picture of a big Jesus.

Looking in John's gospel we can see that when Jesus was telling his disciples about the work of the Holy Spirit, he also said these incredible words "All that my Father has is mine". Really? Who is he talking about when he says his Father? He means the God of all things, the God of creations, the God of the heavens, quite simply the God of everything. That means, he is claiming everything for himself ? Could all this power and might and majesty of God the Father, really be at the beck and call of Jesus to us. Does this carpenter from Nazareth really have everything, and I mean **everything** that God has. This is what he is claiming. But how can that be? If it is true then it explodes our wallet-sized pictures of Jesus.

1. The created world is full of Jesus?

Jesus always existed/ Johns Gospel tell us this. He did not just appear when he was born a baby in a manger. John chapter 1 tells us that all creation was made through Him and for Him. Without Jesus, the created world has no purpose. So let us look first at the creation story itself. Where was Jesus?

In the beginning God said let there be light – Jesus said 'I am the light of the world'

God Separated light from darkness – Jesus takes us out of darkness and into the light, separating us from our sins
"Let the water come together in one place" – Jesus said 'I am the living water'.

"Let the earth produce all kinds of plants that bear grain and bear fruit" – Jesus said I am the bread of life, and I am the true Vine, connected to me means you will bear much fruit.

Then God made the first man who sinned, and then came Jesus the first sinless man, the only one example of the perfect man.

2. The Old Testament is full of Jesus ?

The great preacher Charles Spurgeon 'For every text in the bible there is a road that leads to Christ the centre. I have never found a text that has not got a road to Christ in it' . When we read anything from our Bible think about what it means in the light of Jesus. We should read our bibles with the purpose of finding Jesus in what we are reading. We can not understand the Old Testament with out reference to Jesus.

The land of Canaan is a picture of Jesus. Everything Israel needed was contained there. They had to take the land, work the land, and draw on its riches to have a great life. The temple, and everything else was built on the land of Canaan. In the same way, we can build our living stones together on Jesus, everything we need for a great life is in Him, we build on life on him and draw from his riches.

Prophecies of Jesus: I have a book at home which lists all 456 actual references to the Messiah, to Jesus, in the Old Testament, they are spread right across the books.

3. The New Testament Church was full of Jesus

The New Testament has the Gospel, Acts and letters.

Obviously the gospels tell us about Jesus his life and his resurrection. Writers put the most important point in centre, not at the end like we often do. John 11 (the books centre chapter) tells the story of Lazarus in 3 scenes. The centre scene is Jesus talking to the dead man's sisters, and at the very centre of that passage, are the words from Jesus 'I am the resurrection and the life'. Wow. Right there at the very centre.

Luke's first book is all about Jesus, his miraculous birth, his incredible life, his awful crucifixion, and then the wonders of his resurrection. He doesn't stop there though he writes a second book, the book of Acts. Jesus who has taken his presence away from his disciples and descended into heaven, now sends his Holy Spirit down, and through Him extends his presence throughout the activities of the early church. Jesus carries on his ministry through the church. What did they preach? They didn't preach on how to multiply your church, how to live a clean life, the dreams of Daniel, wealth and health, creation verses evolution, the 613 laws of Moses, leadership principles, or anything like that, that we might hear from the pulpit today. Luke makes it very clear what the topic of their sermons was every time. For example in Acts 8v5, we read that Philip went to the principal city in Samaria, and to the people there, he preached.. Christ Jesus. When Paul gets converted he goes to the synagogues in Damascus, and starts preaching that Jesus was the son of God. We see this again In Acts 17 in the synagogues in Thessalonica where Paul is explaining why the Messiah had to suffer and rise from death. That Jewish Messiah was Jesus.

The teaching and preaching of the early church was full of Jesus. He was always on their lips. What is most frequently on your lips? What do you talk about most? How big is your Jesus?

But you could argue, those passages relate only to evangelism and the setting up of new churches, what about when the churches are established, what was the teaching focussed on then. For this we need to see what Paul talks about in his letters to the established churches. These letters form most of the rest of the New Testament. Take any letter, and see how many times Paul mentions Jesus and you will be blown away by it.

In his letter to the Colossians for example, in the first 29 verses, he mentions Jesus 30 times. In his first 23 verses of his letter to the Ephesians, he mentions Jesus 26 times. Pauls instructions to his churches are **all** about Jesus. When you talk to others, how much do you talk about Jesus? How big is your Jesus?

So creation is full of Jesus, the bible is full of Jesus, but is he even bigger than that?

4: Western society is full of Jesus and points to Jesus

Our Western Society and its underlying positive values was built by Christians on the values of Jesus. Such as our laws on equality are Christian, you only have to look at Hindu societies and their Caste system, or Islamic law and the lower value of women, to see that clearly. Our hospital system reflects the compassion of Jesus for the sick, our education system was championed through Christianity and the monasteries reflecting the passion of Jesus to teach even the poorest the ways of the Kingdom. Through the centuries some of the greatest art is both inspired by and sponsored by Christians, and much of it points directly to Jesus. Handels Messiah, and the amazing ceiling of the Sixtine chapel.

Most people live within this Western Society oblivious to the elements of it that are pointing clearly to the work and heart of Jesus.

But that is on earth. What about in heaven.

5. Heaven is full of Jesus

Some angels are assigned to earth to help the believers do the work of Jesus, but the rest are in heaven worshipping Jesus 24/7. The praise and rhythm of heaven itself is focussed on Jesus.

The Trinity is the Father God, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. But even in the Trinity we see God and the Spirit both focussing on Jesus.

What we say comes out of what is in our heart.

God's heart was full of Jesus, so when we spoke audibly, he is speaking about Jesus "This is my dear son, with whom I am well pleased".

Similarly with the Holy Spirit, who is at work in us, only reveals one thing to us and that is Jesus and what he wants for our life. If we are empowered to do things, then we are being empowered to be like Jesus. The Holy Spirit's work is all about Jesus.

Even God himself is full of Jesus.

What does Jesus do with all of this praise and worshipful adulation from creation, heavens and from within the Trinity? He reflects all of this glory back onto the Father.

Exalted

Paul captures this fullness of Jesus wonderfully in his letter to the Philippians

"Jesus, his very nature is God. The Father has poured himself into Jesus, and then despite being God, comes humbly to serve and die for a creation that has been separated by God from its Sin. Then because of his obedience to God the Father in doing this, he is exalted to be above everything, and all this worship of Jesus gives glory to God the Father. Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians (2v6-11)

That is now, but in his letter to Ephesians Paul writes of the Father's future plans for Jesus. 'God made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Jesus. This plan, which God will complete when the time is right, is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and earth with Christ as the Head.' (Eph 1 v9-10)

John recounts this in his vision of Jesus in Revelations (5v15) 'I heard every creature in heaven and on earth, in the world below, and in the sea (all living beings in the universe) and they were singing 'to him .. be praise and honour, glory and might for ever and ever'.

So how big is Jesus? Everything points to Him.

Creation is full of Jesus and points to him. The Bible right across the Old Testament and New Testament is full of Jesus. The message of the apostles and the early Church was full of Jesus. The heavens are full of Jesus, even God is full of Jesus. 'The spotlight of heaven and earth never leaves Christ. He is the melody, the rhythm, the tempo, and the music behind all things. The heavens and the earth sing his songs and play his tune*'.

"All that the father has is mine!". (John 16v15). Yes, we see from creation, the Bible, the heavens, and God himself that this is true. Everything that the Father has, then Jesus has also. On top of that, we know from scriptures that one day all creation will recognise him as the Lord of all.

So what should our picture of Jesus be like? How do we describe Jesus to others?

Describing Jesus

In his famous prayer that got put to music the preacher SM Lockridge tries to describe Jesus. He spoke of His power, His mercy, His righteousness, His sincerity, His patience and His Grace. He goes on to say that Jesus was the

greatest phenomenon that has ever crossed the horizon of this world, he was the centrepiece of civilisation and yet Jesus is the personal sinners saviour. He is the only one in all history qualified to be the all sufficient saviour. He is there for everyone. He sympathizes with you and he saves you. He strengthens you and he sustains you. He guards you and he guides you. He forgives you, he cancels debts, he breaks off chains and he heals the sick.

The Pharisees couldn't stand him, but found they couldn't stop him. Pilate could find no fault him, and the grave could not hold him. He is the King of Israel, He is the King of Heaven, He is the Lord of Lords.

After this great long description of Jesus, Lockridge declares 'I wish I could describe him to you, but he is indescribable ! That's my King. I wonder do you know him?

My focus

What is my main occupation and focus in life and in ministry and what do I talk about most? It may be a job, or a relationship. Perhaps as a Christian pressing into do Gods work, your passion and focus is in evangelism, church-planting, prophecy, memorising your bible, studying theology, being a good leader, doing social action for your community, saving the environment, praise and worship, miracles and prophecies. There are so many great things that can become our focus, but they are still **things**. They are not a person. They are not Jesus. In doing all these things even if the intention is that they are for Jesus, in our thinking Jesus can be pushed into a corner, whilst we go about our daily work, even the Lords work. He might be mentioned in our work as a side dish, but he should be centre stage, he should be the main course. What we do and how we do should come out of our relationship with Jesus, and we keep him in focus as we go about our days.

How big is Jesus to you, and however big he is, is he in the centre of your life, or is he somewhere on the side.

We pray today for a bigger picture of Jesus in our own lives

As we read our bibles, we need to be reading about Jesus

As we preach, teach, and share with others, we need to be focussing on Jesus.

As we reach out practically to serve others, we need to listen to be guided by, and be empowered by Jesus. We need to be showing the love of Jesus in all we do.

Bottle in the ocean

We sometimes think of the Love of God a vast ocean which seems to be infinitely wide and deep. But we can enlarge our picture of Jesus to see him in the same way. Then imagine you are a bottle floating in this ocean of Jesus and the Love of God, but the bottle is not just in the ocean, but there is ocean inside the bottle do.

We are in Jesus and Jesus in us.

That's my King. I wonder do you know him.

(*from Jesus Manifesto by Sweet & Viola)