

# **Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philipians and Colossians**

## **The Preeminence of Christ**

Lesson #8 for February 21, 2026

Scriptures: **Colossians 1:13-19**; Genesis 1:26-27; John 1:1-3; Ephesians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; 4:9; Romans 6:3-4.

1. Has anyone ever questioned the preeminence of Christ? Or, tried to take His place? Who?

[From *the Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=T-BSG:] The Bible says that Jesus has the **preeminence in all things** (*Col. 1:18*). But what does that idea mean? Many English versions render the Greek word *prōteuō* as “**first place**” rather than as “preeminence” (*see, for instance, the NRSV, NASB, CSB, CEB, etc.*). The verb *prōteuō* occurs only in this passage in the New Testament, suggesting that it was carefully selected for a reason. **It emphasizes Jesus’ unique and unsurpassed position.** The original text implies that Jesus’ resurrection grants Him the authority to become Lord of all things: “He is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place** in everything” (*Col. 1:18, NRSV; emphasis added*). In other words, Jesus was Lord by right; now He becomes Lord in fact! Universal supremacy and sovereignty are the expected results of His victory over death. John the revelator also highlights this notion when affirming that Jesus is “**the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler** over the kings of the earth” (*Rev. 1:5, NKJV; emphasis added*). Jesus’ death and resurrection inevitably lead to His rulership over all things. [Why is that?]*—T-BSG\* 106.†§*

2. Read **Colossians 1:12-14**.

[T-BSG:] This ... lesson emphasizes two major themes:

1. Jesus’ titles, as presented in Colossians 1:15–20, emphasize His redemptive work on behalf of the human race. He is the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn over all creation, the Head of the body, and the Beginning. [He came primarily to teach us about God!]
2. **Jesus came into this world to perform reconciliation between God and humanity, in a particular sense, but also between God and the whole creation, in a broader sense.***—T-BSG\* 106.††*

[T-BSG:] Colossians 1:15–20 is a hymn in praise to Christ for His work of redemption. In applying several titles to Jesus, Paul resorts to the Old Testament, so as to demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament covenants.*—T-BSG\* 107.‡*

### **The Image or Visible Likeness of the Invisible God**

**Colossians 1:15: Christ is the visible likeness of the invisible God. He is the first-born, superior to all created things.***—American Bible Society. (©1992). The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation®\* [GNT] (Today’s English Version) [TEV], Second Edition, (Colossians 1:15). Philadelphia: American Bible Society [abbreviated as Good News Bible-TEV\* or GNB-TEV\*].†† [Christ came to teach us about the Father!]*‡

3. What is implied by the idea that Jesus is *the image of the invisible God*?

[From the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=BSG:] It is in Jesus, the person of Jesus, who is also God our Creator, that we have redemption. He worked out our redemption for us, and by faith in Him we have been moved from the realm of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

... We will look at one of the most comprehensive and sublime statements about Jesus in the New Testament. What does it mean that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God,” yet also “the firstborn over all creation” (*Col. 1:15, NIV*)?—BSG\* for Sabbath Afternoon, February 14.†§

4. **In order to correctly understand this passage in Colossians, we must do some careful evaluation of the words and the context in which they were written. In scholarly terms, this is called “exegesis.” It means to do our best: (1) To determine what the author originally meant to say to his audience, and then, (2) To see if we can determine what that should mean for us in our context.**

[T-BSG:] The phrase “the image of the invisible God” points to the true humanity of Jesus, thereby referring to His incarnation. The Greek word translated as “image” is *eikōn*, which is frequently used in the biblical record in order to indicate that something is a representation of something else. Thus, for instance, the statue of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:31–3:18 is called *eikōn* various times in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament. Obviously, the concept of representation can be traced back to Genesis 1:26, 27, where Adam is referred to as created in the image of God.—T-BSG\* 107.†§

**Genesis 1:27: So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female.—Good News Bible-TEV.\*†**

5. So, humans were created in the “image of God.”

[BSG:] **Human beings were created to be as much like God as possible—physically, spiritually, relationally, and functionally. Still, they reflect God’s image in certain aspects only, and sin has damaged even that.** But Jesus enables us to “see” the invisible God.—BSG\* for Sunday, February 15.†† [Do you feel that we can “see” God today?]†

**John 14:9:** Jesus answered, “For a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.** Why, then, do you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”—Good News Bible-TEV.\*†

6. **While Jesus came as a human being, He also was fully God. He came as close to representing God to us as was possible. This was His main reason for coming!**

**Hebrews 1:3:** He reflects the brightness of God’s glory and is the exact likeness of God’s own being, sustaining the universe with his powerful word....—Good News Bible-TEV.\* [Is it possible for deity to die? Jesus died!]†

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, veiling His glory, humbling Himself, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed....** In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize God. In

sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father.—  
Ellen G. White, *Letter 83, 1895*,\* par. 25 (*10LtMs, Lt 83, 1895*,\* par. 25).<sup>†‡</sup>  
<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p14060.5690031&index=0><sup>†‡</sup>

7. **Matthew 11:27** and **John 1:1,2,14,18** give us some clues as to why Jesus was uniquely able to reveal the Father. Compare **John 1:11**, essentially saying His family rejected Him!

[BSG:] When we look in the mirror or at a photograph [of ourselves], we see an image of ourselves, but it is a flat, two-dimensional portrayal. In some respects, a sculpture gives a clearer idea yet still falls far short of the living, breathing, animated reality. The biblical concept of image, while sometimes referring to these lesser representations, suggests something broader still.—*BSG*\* for Sunday, February 15.<sup>‡</sup>

[BSG:] Note other ways in which Jesus described His relation to God the Father:

- “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working” (*John 5:17, NKJV*). [They were ready to stone Him!]
- “I and My Father are one” (*John 10:30, NKJV*).
- “No one comes to the Father except through Me” (*John 14:6, NKJV*).—*BSG*\* for Sunday, February 15.<sup>‡§</sup>

[BSG:] Jesus also repeatedly described Himself in an absolute sense in terms of God’s name: “I AM” (see *Exod. 3:14*); “I am the bread of life” (*John 6:35*); “I am the light of the world” (*John 8:12*); “I am the good shepherd” (*John 10:11, 14*); “I am the resurrection, and the life” (*John 11:25*); “I am in the Father, and the Father in me” (*John 14:11*); and “Before Abraham was, I am” (*John 8:58*).—*BSG*\* for Sunday, February 15.<sup>‡§</sup> [They threw stones!]<sup>†‡</sup>

[BSG:] If Jesus were anyone other than God Himself, what would it mean except that the Father sent some created being to die for us? Why is that so radically, and crucially, different from God Himself, in the Person of Christ, dying for us?—*BSG*\* for Sunday, February 15.<sup>‡</sup>

8. **A creature sent to die for us certainly could not raise himself/herself from the dead. (John 10:18) Doing so would prove his/her divinity. So, such a creature could not adequately represent the Father to us. We might learn some good things about that creature, and s/he might teach us some good things about God. However, we would not have the chance to see God in person to know for sure what He is like.**

## “Firstborn” Over All Creation

[BSG:] In the New Testament, the terms “firstborn” and “first begotten” almost always refer to Jesus (see *Luke 2:7, Rom. 8:29, Heb. 1:6, Rev. 1:5*), including both occurrences in Colossians. But even when it refers to others, it does not necessarily mean the one born chronologically first. **The biblical concept of the “firstborn” emphasizes the special relationship a son bears to his father, regardless of birth order.** Also, there are instances of younger sons being more prominent: Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, to name a few. David, though the youngest of eight sons, is anointed king (*1 Sam. 16:10–13*), and through the psalmist God said, “I will make him My [*sic*] firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth” (*Ps. 89:27, NKJV*). He also

tells Moses, “Israel is my firstborn son” (*Exod. 4:22, ESV*). In this sense, then, **the term connotes first in terms of preeminence.**—*BSG\** for Monday, February 16.<sup>†‡§</sup>

9. In the United States, the term we use for the wife of the president is *the first lady*. That certainly does not mean that she was the first female to be born!

10. God has very specific plans for us if we are willing to cooperate with Him.

**Romans 8:29:** Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart **to become like his Son**, so that the **Son would be the first** among many believers.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\*†*

11. Read **Colossians 1:15-17**. Does Paul give us some good reasons for calling Jesus the firstborn over all creation (*NKJV*)? In slightly different words regarding Jesus being the “firstborn” (Colossians 1:15):

[T-BSG:] All the titles ascribed to Jesus in Colossians 1:15–18 serve to highlight His preeminence, each calling attention to different aspects of His redemptive work. The title “firstborn over all creation” in Colossians 1:15 (*NKJV*) foreshadows the similar title in Colossians 1:18, “firstborn from the dead,” and is related to it. Paul’s usage of the term “firstborn” is rooted in the Old Testament. Usually, the title “firstborn over all creation” is interpreted in two ways: (1) it portrays Jesus as ruler over all creation and, hence, His uniqueness and superiority; (2) it portrays Jesus as eternally pre-existent and the Creator of all things. After all, “by Him all things were created. . . . All things were created through Him and for Him” (*Col. 1:16, NKJV*), and “He is before all things” (*Col. 1:17, NKJV*). It is unnecessary to take one view at the expense of the other, as they complement each other.—*T-BSG\** 107-108.<sup>‡§</sup> [A person who is a Jehovah’s Witness does not believe this.]<sup>‡</sup>

[BSG:] **Clearly, Paul does not mean to suggest that Jesus was the first being created.** In fact, he categorically excludes that possibility. Twice, in two different ways, he says **Jesus created all things**. They were created by Him and for Him (*Col. 1:16*). In both cases, **Jesus is indicated as the personal agent through whom God carried out the process of Creation** (see also *Eph. 3:9, John 1:1–3, Rev. 4:11*).—*BSG\** for Monday.<sup>†‡§</sup>

[BSG:] Paul’s statement is as comprehensive as possible. All means all—spatially (heaven and earth), ontologically (visible and invisible), and functionally (thrones, dominions, principalities, powers). The latter terms normally refer to angelic beings (see *Eph. 3:10, Eph. 6:12*). As if to make sure he cannot be misunderstood, **Paul also indicates that Jesus existed “before all things” (*Col. 1:17*).** The Greek expression can mean precedence in rank as well as in time, but in every other instance in Paul’s writings, it refers to time (see, for example, *1 Cor. 2:7, Gal. 1:17, Eph. 1:4*).—*BSG\** for Monday, February 16.<sup>†‡§</sup> [A person who is a Jehovah’s Witness would not agree!]<sup>‡</sup>

[BSG:] Another reason Paul gives for Jesus’ preeminence is that “all things are held together in him” (*Col. 1:17, NET*). The Greek word (*synistēmi*) literally means “bring together” or “unite.” **Jesus is the unifying factor of**

**the universe, not only because of His role as Creator but also because He is the Redeemer.—BSG\* for Monday, February 16.†§**

[BSG:] God, the Creator, died for us. What could our works add to that? Why is the idea that our works could add to what Christ has done already for us blasphemous?—BSG\* for Monday, February 16.‡ [The human Jesus died, not the divine Christ!]<sup>‡</sup>

12. **While we do not have any letter from the Colossians to Paul, they did send a messenger to him. It would be very useful to have both sides of the conversation. However, Paul suggested some of the problems that were occurring in Colossae.**
13. **Heretical ideas** that apparently were being suggested in Colossae include: **1) Teaching that belief in Christ alone is not adequate for one's salvation; that is, belief one must also follow certain Jewish customs such as circumcision. (See Acts 16:31.) 2) Docetism which is the belief that Jesus was not fully human, that He just pretended to be human and appeared as a human being.** This idea came from their belief that it would be impossible for one person to be fully God and fully human at the same time! They believed that anything that was material and could be touched was sinful and only the invisible "soul" of a person could be righteous. **These ideas can be traced back to Plato and are definitely not Christian ideas.**
14. **Paul was categorically denying both of these claims. Paul said that Jesus was fully God and fully human and a right relationship (called *faith*) with Jesus is all that is required for salvation. (See Acts 16:31, the words spoken to the Philippian jailer.)**

## **Head of the Body (Head of the Church)**

[BSG:] Read Ephesians 1:22 and Colossians 2:10. What does "head" mean in these passages? What does Paul mean when he calls Jesus the "head of the church" (*Eph. 5:23*)?—BSG\* for Tuesday, February 17.‡§

**Ephesians 1:22:** God put all things under Christ's feet and gave him to the church as supreme Lord over all things.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**Colossians 2:10:** And you have been given full life in union with him. He is supreme over every spiritual ruler and authority.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**Ephesians 5:23:** For a husband has authority over his wife just as Christ has authority over the church; and Christ is himself the Savior of the church, his body.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

[BSG:] It is natural to speak of the head in a metaphorical sense in reference to a leadership position, as reflected in countless languages across the globe. We find similar use throughout the Old and New Testaments. Notice how "head" is used in the following verses:

1. **Exodus 18:25**—Moses chose "able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens."
2. **Numbers 31:26**—"the heads of the fathers' houses" (*ESV*).
3. **Deuteronomy 28:13**—God will make Israel "the head, and not the tail" if they will obey Him....
4. **1 Corinthians 11:3**—"The head of every man is Christ."

**Thus, Christ as the head of the church provides leadership, guidance, and nourishment for the church's unity and growth (see Col. 2:19).—BSG\* for Tuesday, February 17.†‡§**

[BSG:] Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. Here also Paul describes the church as a “body.” What other aspects of the church are conveyed by this metaphor?—BSG\* for Tuesday, February 17.‡

## The “Beginning” (and Initiator)

**Colossians 1:18:** He is the head of his body, the church; he is the source of the body's life. He is the first-born Son, who was raised from death, in order that he alone might have the first place in all things.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.\*

[BSG:] In Hebrew the words for head (*ro`š*) and beginning (*rē`šit*) are related. The first instance of the latter word in Scripture is in Genesis 1:1: “In the beginning [*rē`šit*] God created the heaven and the earth.” **Jesus is head** of humanity and of the church, **not only because of the Incarnation but also because He is the Creator.**—BSG\* for Wednesday.†‡§

[BSG:] In Greek, the word for beginning (*archē*) has a broad meaning. Here, “beginning” refers to Jesus as the source or initiator of the church (*Col. 1:18*), and therefore its Head, just as He is the “beginning” or initiator of Creation.—BSG\* for Wednesday, February 18.‡§

[BSG:] Jesus is not only the initiator in terms of Creation and the church, He is also—through His resurrection from the dead (*Rom. 6:3, 4*)—the initiator of the new creation. Because the wages of sin is death, His victory over death also shows His victory over sin and His power to re-create us in His image. All this demonstrates why He is “the firstborn from the dead”.... His is the preeminent resurrection, even though not the first (Moses was the first, which is why the dispute with the devil ensued over his body [*Jude 9*]). Without Christ's resurrection, no one else could be raised from the dead.—BSG\* for Wednesday, February 18.‡§ [Jesus's resurrection proved God's ability to resurrect!]<sup>‡</sup>

[BSG:] It's helpful at this point to review briefly all the reasons Paul has given for Jesus having preeminence:

1. He is the perfect manifestation of the invisible God.
2. He is the agent by whom all things were created.
3. He existed before all things, and all things are brought together in Him.
4. He is the head of the church, which is His body.
5. He is the initiator of Creation and the re-creation.
6. He has conquered sin and death and thus earned the right to resurrect all who put their trust in Him as Savior.
7. [Christ] Jesus has always existed, but now, by virtue of all this, He has come to have the preeminence as Head of humanity and Head of the church.—BSG\* for Wednesday, February 18.‡

[BSG:] What must you change so that you can better experience Christ's

preeminence in your own life?—BSG\* for Wednesday, February 18.‡

## To Reconcile All Things—The Great Controversy

**Colossians 1:19-20:** <sup>19</sup>For it was by God's own decision that the Son has in himself the full nature of God. <sup>20</sup>Through the Son, then, **God decided to bring the whole universe back to himself. God made peace through his Son's blood on the cross and so brought back to himself all things, both on earth and in heaven.**—*Good News Bible-TEV*.\*†

15. This is one of the key verses in the New Testament, showing that the plan of salvation involves the entire universe. The beings living in the rest of the universe needed to see the truths revealed by the life and death of Jesus. Compare **Ephesians 1:8b-10; Ephesians 3:7-10; and 1 Peter 1:12.**

**Ephesians 1:8b-10:** <sup>8b</sup>In all his wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>God did what he had purposed, and made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Christ. <sup>10</sup>This plan, which God will complete when the time is right, is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head.—*GNB-TEV*.\*†

**Ephesians 3:8b-10:** <sup>8b</sup>God gave me this privilege of taking to the Gentiles the Good News about the infinite riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup>and of making all people see how God's secret plan is to be put into effect. **God, who is the Creator of all things, kept his secret hidden through all the past ages, <sup>10</sup>in order that at the present time, by means of the church, the angelic rulers and powers in the heavenly world might learn of his wisdom in all its different forms.**—*Good News Bible-TEV*.\*† [Can the angels really learn from us?]<sup>‡</sup>

**1 Peter 1:12:** God revealed to these prophets that their work was not for their own benefit, but for yours, as they spoke about those things which you have now heard from the messengers who announced the Good News by the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. **These are things which even the angels would like to understand.**—*Good News Bible-TEV*.\*†

16. See the handout on [www.Theox.org](http://www.Theox.org): "The Great Controversy Described in Scripture."

([https://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart\\_BTGG\\_PDF\\_Gnrl\\_Great\\_Controversy\\_Described\\_in\\_Scripture\\_16.pdf](https://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart_BTGG_PDF_Gnrl_Great_Controversy_Described_in_Scripture_16.pdf))

17. **Paul used some subtle language in Colossians to try to express the fact that he believed that Jesus was fully and completely God.**

**Colossians 1:9-12:** <sup>9</sup>For this reason we have always prayed for you, ever since we heard about you. We ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will, with all the wisdom and understanding that his Spirit gives. <sup>10</sup>Then you will be able to live as the Lord wants and will always do what pleases him. Your lives will produce all kinds of good deeds, and you will grow in your knowledge of God. <sup>11-12</sup>May you be made strong with all the strength which comes from his glorious power, so that you may be able to endure everything with patience. And with joy give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to have your share of what God has reserved for his people in the kingdom of light.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.\* [Compare other versions.]<sup>‡</sup>  
[BSG:] But, based on this passage, that "fullness" encompasses a lot. It

embraces God's eternity and self-existence and His power to create and re-create. Most important, it underscores His wisdom in conquering sin and death through the most unimaginable means—the Cross. And thus, He transformed that most inglorious object into a testimony of His eternal love for every created being. **[Imagine winning the biggest war of all time by dying!]** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (*John 3:16*).—BSG\* for Thursday, February 19.‡§

[BSG:] 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).**—BSG\* for Thursday.†‡§ [See Ellen G. White, *The Bible Echo*,\* May 29, 1899, par. 1. <https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p459.1409&index=0>.]‡

[EGW:] Heaven viewed with grief and amazement Christ hanging upon the cross.... The wounds made by the nails gaped as the weight of His body dragged upon His hands. His labored breath grew quick and deep, as His soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world. All heaven was filled with wonder when the prayer of Christ was offered in the midst of His terrible suffering,—“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34. Yet there stood men, formed in the image of God, joining to crush out the life of His only-begotten Son. What a sight for the heavenly universe!—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*\* 760.2.‡

[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3757&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3757&index=0)‡

[EGW:] [At the third coming when the wicked are judged and destroyed:] **This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown.** God is the fountain of life; and **when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life.** He is “alienated from the life of God.” Christ says, “All they that hate Me love death.” Ephesians 4:18; Proverbs 8:36. **God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them.**

**At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this.** Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; **but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe.**

But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, **the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences.** The precepts of His law are seen to be perfect and immutable. Then sin has made manifest its nature, Satan [has made manifest] his character. Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*\* 764.1-3.†† [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3781&index=0>]†

[C.S. Lewis as quoted in BSG:] “A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But **let us not come with any patronising [sic-British spelling] nonsense about His being a great human teacher.** He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”—C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York, Collier Books, 1952), p. 41.—[as quoted in BSG\* for Friday, February 20].††§ [*Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis can be viewed on the Internet.]†

[EGW:] .... **God cannot be compared with the things His hands have made.** These are mere earthly things, suffering under the curse of God because of the sins of man. The Father cannot be described by the things of earth. **The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight.**

**The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. The Word of God declares Him to be “the express image of His person.”** “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Here is shown the personality of the Father.—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*\* 614.2-3.†† [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p30.3403&index=0>]†

[EGW:] Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent Son of God.... In speaking of his pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him.—The Signs of the Times, [sic] August 29, 1900.

**He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent.... He is the eternal, self-existent Son.**—Manuscript 101, 1897.—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*\* 615.2-3.†† [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p30.3408&index=0>]†

## Jesus’s Work of “Reconciliation”

[BSG:] When we think about Jesus, the gospel, and the plan of salvation, why must we keep the concept of the entire universe’s involvement and interest in what Jesus has done here as part of our thinking? What must have gone on in their minds when they saw their Creator, their eternal

Creator, on the cross? It's one thing for us to be awed by it, but the unfallen universe knew Him in His eternal glory. What must have gone through their minds as they witnessed the One whom they had worshiped in heaven die on the cross?—*BSG\** for Friday, February 20.<sup>‡</sup> [Jesus died on the cross. Christ did not die! Christ is divine.]<sup>‡</sup>

[*BSG:*] What would you say to someone who does not believe that the Father and the Son have always coexisted? Why is this such an important truth? How would you explain that there has never been a time when the Father was without the Son, except at the cross, when there was a temporary “sundering of the divine powers”? (See Ellen G. White Comments, *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 924.)—*BSG\** for Friday.<sup>‡§</sup> [Once again, notice that Jehovah's Witnesses do not teach this.]<sup>‡</sup>

**18. The death of Jesus and the temporary suspension of the divinity of Christ in order to demonstrate the seriousness of sin make it clear to us that sin will have no place in God's eternal kingdom. Sin leads only to death! (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23)**

[*T-BSG:*] The Bible teaches us that Jesus is our Creator and Redeemer. He came into this world and died on the cross to purchase us back to Himself. The One who created us (*John 1:1–3*) is the same One who came in the flesh (*John 1:14*) “to give His life as a ransom for many” (*Matt. 20:28, NKJV*). Through His death and resurrection, He conquered sin and death and attained the preeminence over all things in heaven and on earth. Thus, because “of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen” (*Rom. 11:36, NKJV*).—*T-BSG\** 110.<sup>‡§</sup>

19. The *Teachers BSG\** on page 107, quoting Michael P. Green, also makes the statement: “Christ had to purchase our freedom with his [*sic*] own life.”<sup>‡</sup>

**20. Christ did not come to purchase us back! We never belonged to anyone else, not even to Satan, although he would love to claim us! If God needed to buy us back from Satan, what did He pay for us? These ideas have come from the “Ransom Theory” of the atonement which is NOT biblical.**

21. The Ransom Theory which was believed by many Christians for several hundred years after the death of Christ essentially says: When we sinned, we sold ourselves to Satan who had been driven out of heaven because of his rebellion against God's character and government. So, God told Satan that He would give him the Person of Jesus Christ in exchange for all the sinners. Satan never cared for sinners anyway. Since his one great desire was to take the place of Christ, Satan agreed. So, after receiving the souls of all sinners, God the Father gave the soul of Jesus to Satan; and Jesus died. However, as we know, Satan could not control and keep the body of Jesus. When the Father called Jesus, He arose out of the tomb in His own divine power, and Satan lost control of Him. **So, what do you think? Did God win the great controversy by deceiving the Devil?**

22. Is it possible to see Christ in our lives? Has the transforming power of God changed us? Are we becoming more like Jesus every day? Is Jesus actually the Lord of our lives?

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§Italic type is in the source. Last Modified: February 12, 2026

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