**Colossians 1:15-20**

I. Introduction

A. What do you want? Where do you think you’ll find it?

B. Rather than calling us to simply deny our desires, Scripture redirects our desires to objects that are more worthy of them.

C. “It would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”—C.S. Lewis

D. “The soul tends to shrink to the size and quality of its pleasures.” –John Piper

1. Those who treasure pornography will find their hearts less capable of enjoying and connecting emotionally with their spouse.

2. Those who treasure outward appearance will find their hearts less capable of real depth and character.

E. The Colossians were being tempted to add things to Jesus in order to find true fulfilment, and Paul reminded them that nothing could be more worthy of their desire than Jesus himself.

II. Jesus is the image of the invisible God (v. 15)

A. Greek: Jesus is the “icon” of God

B. It is an amazing claim to make about a Jewish rabbi whom people had recently seen walking around in Nazareth

 C. Other similar Biblical claims: Col 2:9, Hb 1:3, 2 Cor 4:6

D. Practically speaking this means that the God of the universe is exactly like Jesus of Nazareth. If you want to know the God of the universe, just watch the man, Jesus, love, heal, teach, forgive, serve, confront, etc., and you will know exactly what God is like

III. Jesus is the firstborn over all creation (v. 16-17)

A. Firstborn = one who has priority and authority over the family (see Ps 89:27)

 = Jesus is Lord over creation

B. Because all things were made through him and for him

1. All things = literally everything (heaven & earth, visible & invisible, spiritual rulers and earthly rulers)

2. All things created through him

a. In Genesis 1 God creates the world through his word.

b. In John 1:1-3 Jesus is that Word who was with God and through whom all things were made

3. All things created for him

a. Everything exists for his purposes—to display his incomparable greatness

 b. Nothing exists merely for its own sake

4. “There is not one square inch in the whole domain of our existence over which Christ does not cry, Mine!”—Abraham Kuyper

C. “In him all things hold together” (v. 17)

1. He is like the sun in the solar system. Everything centers on him

2. Sometimes we get that flip flopped and live as though he exists for us rather than us existing for him.

IV. He is the firstborn from the dead (v. 18)

 A. He is not only Lord of creation; he is Lord of the new creation

B. He is the first person to receive resurrection life and a resurrection body, so he is the pioneer and trailblazer

C. He has authority over death and Hades (Rev 1:17-18
D. When he returns he will give us resurrection life and resurrection bodies (Phil 3:20-21)

 E. Even death exists to reveal his power and incomparable greatness

IV. Conclusion

A. So what do you want? Where do think you’ll find what you want?

 B. Nothing compares to Jesus

**Discussion Questions**

1. Consider the truth that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God.” Consider your own view of the being called “God” and consider your own view of Jesus of Nazareth. How are they similar and how are they different?

2. Consider the truth that Jesus is the “firstborn over all creation” and that “all things were created through him and for him.” Do you regularly live with the conscious awareness that you were created by him and for his purposes? How would doing so impact how you live your daily life?

3. Consider the description of Jesus as “the firstborn from among the dead.” Comments were made on Sunday that Jesus is the only person who has received resurrection life. How did those comments correspond to your own understanding of things? What Bible passages seem relevant to that discussion?

4. On Sunday we talked about how our desires and wants shape our hearts. This summer, what are one or two ways you plan to cultivate your desire for Jesus and your relationship with him?