

# The Image of the Invisible – week 1

**Warm-up:** Discuss how people think of Jesus today? How limited is their view? Do people consider faith in Jesus relevant to today's world? If not, why not?

**Background:** Paul wrote this letter about AD60 to the church in Colossae, which had been established by Epaphras but was subject to heretical attack that devalued the person and work of Christ. Paul had not visited the church. The city, which used to be a major power in the Asia Minor (now Türkiye) region, but was now a second-tier city, eclipsed by Laodicea and Hierapolis. However, like all these cities, it was under the influence of Rome politically and the church was influenced by various itinerant teachers. Thus, there was a tendency to syncretism (adopting a mixture of views) and to compromising.

**READ: Colossians 1:15-20**

Paul uses parts of an old hymn to emphasise the supremacy of Christ. There are 2 strophes or verses.

<b>v 15-18a – Jesus' relation to God and the world</b>	<b>v 18b-20– Jesus' relation to salvation</b>
<i>He is the image of the invisible God..</i>	<i>He is the beginning</i>
<i>The firstborn of all creation...</i>	<i>The firstborn from the dead</i>
<i>For in Him all things were created..</i>	<i>For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell...</i>

**Q1:**

- (a) What does it mean that Jesus is the image of the invisible God? How can there be an image of one who is invisible?
- (b) What does it mean to you that you are now the image of God to the world (since Jesus lives in us)?

**Q2:** Reflect on the statement that in Him 'all things were created'. What is included in 'all' (see verse 16)? What helps you to appreciate Christ's supremacy over creation (when you look at the stars, nature, beauty....)? What does it mean that all this was created 'for Him'?

**Q3:** In what practical ways is Jesus the 'head' of the (our) church? What should that mean for how we approach our times together? What does it mean for CBC in this time of transition?

**Q4:** Verse 19-20 take us one step further as to why God was pleased to have all the fullness of God dwell in Jesus. What was God's purpose? How and when will all things be reconciled in Christ?

**Q5:** How should it affect us and our view of the world, that Jesus is supreme and pre-eminent above all things - what is our image of Jesus? Are we sometimes embarrassed about Jesus?

**Q6:** Does this help to change our perspective on our lives? Is Jesus worth your all? What is the message that we have for the world?