

Spc156 – What Child is This? – John 1:1-18

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You know... Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, the Inn Keeper, the Shepherds, even the Angels, all of them had the same question – and none of them understood what was going on. All of them were asking – *What Child is This?*

What child is this? – That we should be so awestruck?

What child is this? – That we should not only celebrate but also worship with our entire lives?

What child – is this?

Christians and non-Christians alike – we’ve been celebrating the birth of *Jesus Christ* all our lives. The birth of Jesus had such an impact that it *divided* our calendar system. That is – before the world started trying to cover up the impact of *Christ’s birth* – on our calendar. *But that’s another story.*

But there is *something about this child* that we cannot even grasp – with our natural minds? There is *something about this child* that must be divinely revealed by God – to us.

Let’s pray and ask God to do that. *Lord Jesus, we do pray that you would reveal divinely to us, supernaturally to us, what child this is. That the scales would fall from our eyes, that we would see past the stories, that we would see past the manger scenes on our mantles, that we would see past the cultural covering-up, and that we would have clear in our heart – have it come alive in our heart – who this child truly is. We pray you would do it by your Word and by your Spirit, in your name, Jesus, amen.*

Who is this *babe in the manger*? And what does he really mean to each one of us? I want to start by reading you a few words out of Hebrews.

Hebrews 1:1-2a (ESV)

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son . . .

In these last days, starting with the birth of Christ, God has spoken to us “**By His Son.**” In the original language the emphasis here is on the radical difference between *how* God spoke through prophets in the Old Testament versus what *began* with the *birth of Jesus Christ*.

With the *birth of Christ* God *revealed himself* to us in a way he never had *before* and never would *again*.

What child is this? He is the *revelation of God himself* to us. It seems odd, doesn't it? This baby, born in a stable of lowly animals and laid in a feeding trough, that he would be the *revelation of God* to us? Miraculously conceived in a seventeen-year-old girl who had to fight off all the slander and gossip over her pregnancy and then born in the lowest possible human setting, is this the revelation of the almighty God to us?

Yes, it is – and the Bible says it is more than *just* the revelation of God to us. This child... is God clothed in human flesh.

Turn over to John 1:1.

John 1:1 (ESV)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Notice the “capital W” Word here. This is the LOGOS. It means “*God in expression*” and it is used throughout the New Testament for *Jesus!* Because this child is the Word, the LOGOS. He is *God in expression* – to the world.

And then look down at John 1:14.

John 1:14 (ESV)

14 And the Word (the Expression of God) became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

What child is this? He is God – literally “*in the flesh.*”

John 1:18 (ESV)

***18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.* (he has REVEALED him to us)**

The ESV's very *literal* translation here shows just *who this child* in the manger – *really is*.

the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made God known to us.

THIS CHILD – is “*God in expression*” to US.

In John 14:9 Jesus says;

“... Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father.”

and in John 10:30 Jesus says;
“I and the Father are one.”

This child and God the Father – are one!! GOD – IN the FLESH – has been born – in a manger.

I believe that our culture, even our Christian culture, loses that, or maybe loses the significance or the impact of that during this season. It’s like, “Hey, hey. Are the kids playing with Baby Jesus?” We’ve culturized this image where we’re not in awe. We don’t stand in front of the manger scene and think, “That baby was the God of the universe. The God of all creation.”

Look back up at John 1:3. This is that child in the manger.

John 1:3 (ESV)

3 ALL THINGS were made through him, and without him was not ANY THING made that was made.

What child is this?

He is God *in the flesh* and he is the *creator of all things* that have been created.

Now, turn over to Colossians 1:16-17.

Colossians 1:16–17 (ESV)

16 For by him (this BABY in the Manger) ALL THINGS were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—ALL THINGS were created through him and for him.

17 And he is before ALL THINGS, and in him ALL THINGS hold together.

This baby *born* in a stable – lying in a manger

is GOD in THE FLESH - - AND

ALL THINGS – were created BY HIM

ALL THINGS – were created THROUGH HIM

He is before – *ALL THINGS*

and in Him – *ALL THINGS* – hold together.

Let’s try to wrap our heads around this truth that *all things* were created *by and through* this baby in the manger.

First, just make a mental note of this measurement: One light year is almost 6 trillion miles. So, think of a mile. Then, think of 6 trillion of them strung together. (Not 6 million, not 6 billion – 6 trillion).

Okay, do you have that in your mind? Now, take those 6 trillion miles (1 light year) and put 100,000 of those 6 trillion miles all end to end and *that* is how far across our galaxy is. Our galaxy is 100,000 light years across. (100,00 times 6 trillion miles). But our galaxy is only *one* of 100 billion currently *known galaxies!!* And SPACE.COM wrote an article in May of 2018 saying as our telescope technology improves, that number will probably increase to 200 billion galaxies.

So, our galaxy is 100,000 light years across. There are (known today) 100 billion galaxies and each of those 100 billion galaxies contains up to 200 billion stars. *And the Hubble Telescope* has shown those 100 billion galaxies are all moving away from us at 200 million miles an hour. The most distant galaxy today may be 8 billion light years away *and continuing to expand*. It is almost impossible for us to grasp with our finite minds the immense size of the universe.

AND every galaxy – AND every star. Every lightyear of existence – *continually expanding*. All of them – *every single one* – was *created* BY Jesus, THROUGH Jesus and ultimately FOR Jesus!!!

Psalm 33 says about this child in the manger,

Psalm 33:6-9 (ESV)

6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

7 He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

What child is this? He is God in the flesh – and

He has created over 100 BILLION galaxies
EACH ONE containing up to 200 BILLION stars
and ALL still expanding at 200 million miles per hour

He SPOKE and it all came to be; by his WORD – it all holds together. THAT is who this child is.

So, if that is the *biggest* – the most *inconceivable* – of the “ALL THINGS” Jesus holds together, what about the *other end* of the “all things scale?” What about – *you*? Does Jesus Christ HOLD YOU together?

Let’s go to the other end of the scale and talk about a certain, specific *molecule*. Not just *any molecule*, but a cell-adhesion protein molecule. It’s called LAMININ. And if you haven’t heard of laminin, let me tell you about it so that we can see how true it is – that in Jesus Christ *all things hold together*. Laminin is the cell-adhesion protein molecule that literally holds the human body together. *It’s the GLUE of the human body*.

The question is – how intricately does Jesus Christ really hold “all things” together (including you)? Let me show you a scientific diagram of LAMININ (the cell-adhesion molecule that’s *holding* your body together).

This is a scientific diagram of laminin. Next, we’ll put up an electron-microscope image of an *actual* laminin protein molecule.

The molecule that literally holds your cells together is *in the shape of a cross*. That’s God’s sign to you at the molecular level that Jesus Christ holds your body together! What other signs has he put into science that we haven’t found out yet?

From the 100 billion galaxies in the *universe* to the molecule that holds the *cells of your body* together... *in Jesus Christ ALL THINGS hold together*.

That is who this child in the manger – *IS!*

He is more than we can comprehend with our finite minds.

He is God in the *flesh*

He is the Creator of *all* that has been created

And *in him* – *ALL THINGS* hold together...

And if he can do all of this, *certainly* he can *put* your life together and *certainly* he can *hold* your life together.

Now we’ll turn to Hebrews Chapter 1 (which we read some of earlier).

Hebrews 1:1–2 (ESV)

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

I think we've made that clear, right? Let's continue.

Hebrews 1:3(A) (ESV)

3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power . . .

What child is this?

He radiates the *glory of God*. NOT *reflects the glory* – *Radiates the glory*. The moon *reflects* light. It has no light of its own – it reflects the sun's light. But the sun *radiates* light because it is its own source of light and Jesus Christ *radiates* the glory of God because Jesus is *the source* of that glory – *not the reflection*. And the word translated “*exact imprint*” here in verse 3 means *identical in nature*.

What child is THIS?

He is GOD in the *Flesh*

He is CREATOR of ALL

In Him ALL things *Hold Together*

He is the SOURCE of the *Glory of God*

He is IDENTICAL in *Nature to God*

and He UPHOLDS the Universe – *by the word of His power*.

That is who this child is and this child came to that manger – for you.

How do we make that jump from at least 100 billion galaxies to *you*? How does he come down to you? How does he come to the manger for you and for me? It doesn't make sense to us.

If we read the rest of Hebrews 1:3 – we see *why he came*.

Heb 1:3(B) – last half (ESV)

3 . . . After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

THE NLT SAYS - *When He had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.*

God the creator and sustainer of all, had to – *by himself* – *accomplish the way* for us to be cleansed of our sin.

Why did *God* have to become a *man*?? Why did the *God* of the universe have to go through all that *began there* in that manger?

Because it was the *only way* for the love of God to save us from the penalty of sin. The truth is – Jesus Christ was *born in the manger* so that he could *die on the cross* so that he could *pay the full penalty* for our sin.

That's why this great, indescribable God wrapped himself as a baby. He came to the manger to pay for your sin and mine.

God himself became a man to die in our place because only he – *himself* – could be the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for our sin, and because there was *no other way* for you and I to be saved from the wrath of God that *must fall* upon our sin.

Romans 3 says that God is both the just *and* the justifier of those who put their faith in Christ, because God must first be holy and just and righteous. And because he must maintain that character, then he *cannot allow* sin in his presence. He must pay the penalty. And because of his love he paid it himself on your behalf and on my behalf.

What child is this?

He is God – taking on the lowly state of Man in order to suffer, and to die – in *OUR place* in order to, *by Himself*, CLEANSE us from our sin Make a *WAY* for us – to live for eternity in the *Presence of God*

Just look down at Hebrews 2:14-15

Hebrews 2:14–15 (NLT)

14 Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death.

15 Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

Jesus Christ was born to take our place under *God's judgment* so we could share his place in *God's glory*. He made himself the perfect sacrifice to pay the full penalty for our sin so we could live forever with him in glory.

What child is this?

He is God in the flesh,
Creator and Sustainer of all that's been created.

He radiates the glory of God and the exact nature of God and he himself was the only one who could pay the full penalty for your sin and mine.

His role in paying the penalty for our sin is excruciatingly described in Isaiah 53.

Isaiah 53:4–6 (ESV)

4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

This is wrong in every possible way. This is only done by a God who loves us so much that he is willing to take our place to take his own wrath that's required upon our sin and to pay for it in full so he could share his righteousness with us for eternity. And it began in a manger. It began in a stable. It began as a baby. And maybe our culture isn't celebrating the significance of it, fully.

What child is this?

He is your Savior – if you will receive him as your Lord – by faith.

There are well over a hundred names for God – every name expressing something that he is on your behalf. It started with the manger, the cross and the resurrection. It started with this holiday we celebrate today.

Because of what Jesus Christ himself has done to pay the full penalty of our sin, in our place, Acts 4:12 says this.

Acts 4:12 says (ESV)

12 . . . there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Only in the name of Jesus!! Why? Because God is “narrow-minded?” NO! Because God is the only one who could take our place and pay our sin fully and completely and give us his righteousness to spend eternity with him. There is no one else who can do that. And so, salvation is in the name of Jesus *only*. *ONLY*.

And he asks you today . . .

Will you put your faith in him as your Savior?

Will you make him Lord of your life?

Because this child in the manger came
to make *you* a new creation
to forgive you of your sin and
to give you eternal life.

But you must receive his great gift and commit to follow him as your Lord. In the Bible, “to receive” means to take something into your life, to believe and act on it. You must *receive* it.

The greatest gift of all eternity is the gift of the forgiveness of your sin and the gift of eternal life through faith in *Jesus Christ*.

Let’s pray. *Lord Jesus, shake us to the very core with the revelation of who you are. For those of us who have committed our life to you, shake us with the revelation of all that you did to make our salvation possible. And for those of us yet to be saved, reveal to us your great love, the awesomeness of who you are and the unbelievable depths that you went to in order to save us.*

That covers everybody in the room. Those who have made Jesus Lord and those who have not yet. I would ask all of you to pray individually, personally, according to this Word. Grasping as much as you can who Jesus Christ is and responding. And if you’ve never committed your life to Jesus Christ, do that now. Receive the greatest gift of eternity. There is no magic prayer, but there is a commitment of faith that says, “Jesus, I believe.” You can pray it right now.

“Jesus, I believe. I believe you are who you say you are. I believe you did what you say you did. I believe you died on the cross to pay for my sins. And I receive that gift. And I receive you into my life and commit to make you my Lord. Lord come into my life and transform me. Fill me with your Spirit. Make me a new creation and reserve a place in glory for me. Thank you for saving me. In your own name, Jesus, amen.”