

Strong Faith for Hard Times (5)
The God Who Holds You Together
(Colossians 1:15–20)

Introduction: We have come to the final Sunday of our August series, “Strong Faith for Hard Times.” But there is one more kind of hard time I want us to talk about today. Sometimes a hard time isn't just one problem. Sometimes it feels like everything is coming apart at the same time. **Charles Stanley once said,** “*When our worries become enormous, we often need a larger understanding of Christ rather than merely smaller circumstances.*” In Colossians 1 Paul takes us away from our little world for a moment and gives us one of the biggest pictures of Jesus Christ anywhere in the Bible.

I. The person of Christ — He reveals God(v. 15)

Before Paul tells us what Jesus does, he tells us who Jesus is.

A. **His revelation** – The invisible God is uniquely and perfectly made known in the Son. (Heb. 1:3; Jn. 1:18; Jn. 14:9)
If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus!

B. **His Rank** - In scripture, firstborn often carries the idea of *rank, privilege, supremacy, and inheritance.* (Jn. 1:3; Ps. 89:27; Jn. 8:58)

The Christ you are trusting today did not just show up yesterday. He perfectly reveals God and possesses the highest rank over creation.

II. The power of Christ — He rules creation (vv. 16–17)

A. **He created all things** – (Jn. 1:3; Heb. 1:2) Paul goes out of his way to even include “*thrones... dominions... principalities... powers.*” There is no corner of reality in which Jesus is merely a visitor.

B. **He claims all things** – (Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 10:31)

The question of Christian discipleship is not merely: “*How can Jesus fit into my life?*” The better question is: “*How does my life fit into the purposes of Jesus?*”

C. **He continues all things** – (v.17) *Christ is not merely creation's original cause; He remains its sustaining Lord.* (Heb. 1:3; Jn.10:28; 2 Cor. 4:8-9; Jude 24)

The same hands that hold creation are strong enough to hold you.

III. The preeminence of Christ — He reigns over the church(vv. 18–19)

Swindoll asks exactly the right question: *if Christ possesses supreme rank, believers should examine whether something else has occupied the first place that belongs to Him.*

A. **His headship** – The New Testament consistently uses this head-and-body imagery to teach the church's dependence on and submission to Christ; (Eph 1:22–23; 4:15–16)

Christians are the body and Christ is the Head—we follow His direction rather than inventing an independent agenda.

B. **His hope** - His resurrection is the firstfruits and guarantee of the final resurrection of His people. Romans 6:9 and 1 Corinthians 15:20–23 make that distinction explicit.

C. **His fullness** – (v. 19; 2:9) One of the great themes of Colossians: the total sufficiency of Christ and the believer's completeness in Him.
Does Jesus merely have a place in your life, or does He have first place?

IV. The peace of Christ — He reconciles the broken (v. 20)

A. **The separation** – Verse 20 is not describing a minor misunderstanding between God and basically good people (Rom. 3:23; Isa. 59:2)

B. **The sacrifice** – (1 Pe. 2:4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Jn. 10:18) At Calvary, the sustaining Lord of creation willingly endured the judgment our sins deserved. Why? So broken sinners like you and I could be brought home.

C. **The settlement** – (Rom. 5:1, 10; Col. 1:21-23; Rom. 8: 22; Rev. 21)

Maybe you thought your greatest need was for God to hold your circumstances together. *But your deepest need was for God to reconcile you to Himself. And Christ has made peace through the blood of His cross.*

Conclusion: “*In Him all things hold together.*” So when everything around you seems to be coming apart... hold on to Jesus. And even more importantly... remember that Jesus is holding on to you.