

Names & Titles 2021 Pt. 4

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, April 25, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us today! Whether you are here in person or watching via the livestream, you are most welcome. Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take some notes. We have much to cover in a relatively short amount of time.

SETTING THE STAGE

Today we conclude our series on the “names and titles” of Jesus Christ. As we have noted, the Bible employs an array of designations used in reference to Christ (i.e., each providing some insight into His nature and work). Moreover, each helps us to understand how we are to live in and before Him as Christians.

NOTE 1 – In recent weeks we have explored Jesus as the...

- 1) Almighty – He who is matchless in authority and boundless in power (the omnipotent ruler of creation).
- 2) Alpha and Omega – The source of creation and history—with all things culminating with His good purpose.
- 3) Amen – The sure and certain foundation upon whom the promises of God rest (i.e., the One who “fulfills”).
- 4) Immanuel – The “ever-present” God who ensures “ultimate” deliverance from and victory over all enemies.
- 5) Judge – The righteous Judge to whom we shall give ultimate account (i.e., the righteous evaluator of man).
- 6) Bright Morning Star – He who shall dispel the darkness of our night and herald the dawning of a new day.
- 7) Apostle – The chief representative and preeminent ambassador of God the Father (i.e., the “Emissary”).
- 8) Prophet – The divinely-appointed prophet who is “like unto Moses” (i.e., the preeminent messenger).
- 9) Advocate – He who “helps” us in the court of heaven (i.e., ever-pleading our case as our defender).
- 10) High Priest – He who mediates between God and man (i.e., divinely-ordained representative).
- 11) Forerunner – He who has gone before us into glory—“preparing the way” for our arrival.

NOTE 2 – Let us conclude this four-part series by exploring the following designations...

ONLY BEGOTTEN [ONE AND ONLY] SON

John 3:16 (KJV, Emphasis Mine)

16 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 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his **one and only Son**, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The phrase “only begotten” herein translates the Greek word *monogenes*. This designation has caused some controversy over the centuries as false teachers have used it to bolster their teaching that Jesus is not God, but a creation of God. What they fail to consider is that “begotten” is an English translation of a Greek term. As such, we must look to the original language...

Q. What does *monogenes* mean?

A. *Monogenes* has two primary definitions...

1) Unique in Relationship

Firstly, *monogenes* pertains to “being the only one of its kind within a specific relationship.” This is its meaning in Hebrews 11:17, wherein the author refers to Isaac as Abraham’s “only begotten” or “one and only” son. Abraham did, in fact, have more than one son (e.g., Ishmael), but Isaac was the only son he had by Sarah and the only son of the covenant.

FYI – Though God has many sons and daughters by creation or adoption, He shares a unique bond with Christ. God the Father and God the Son share a union that is “singular” among all others. Therefore, no one can “know” and/or “reveal” God the Father like God the Son...

Matthew 11:27

27 “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

2) Unique in Kind or Substance

Secondly, *monogenes* pertains to “being the only one of its class; unique in substance.” This is the meaning that is implied in John 3:16 (cf. John 1:14; 3:18; 1 John 4:9). John was primarily concerned with demonstrating that Jesus is the Son of God (see John 20:31), and he uses *monogenes* to highlight Jesus as uniquely God’s Son—sharing the same nature as God.

FYI – We may be sons and daughters of God by creation or adoption. Only Jesus is the “Son” of God by nature. God the Son possesses the attributes of deity that are beyond our capacity to mirror or mimic (e.g., omnipotence, omniscience, immutability, sovereignty, etc.).

KEY – Ultimately, when Scripture speaks of Christ as being the “only begotten” Son, it serves to spotlight His unique character and position. There is no one in or beyond the whole of creation that is on the same level as Christ (i.e., by nature or by relationship).

Q. How should we respond to this singular “Son” of God?

A. Perhaps we should heed His voice and obey His commands...

Matthew 17:1b–5 Emphasis Mine)

. . . Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

4 Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my **Son**, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. **Listen to him!**”

FIRSTBORN

Colossians 1:15–18 (Emphasis Mine)

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the **firstborn** from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

FYI – The title of “firstborn”—like “only begotten” above—is often used by cults to imply that Jesus is not God, but a creation of God. Once again, such an erroneous belief is rooted in a lack of insight into the language, culture and traditions of the ancient people of God...

NOTE 1 – It is important to understand the place and role of the firstborn son in the ancient Hebrew family. The firstborn received a double portion of the family estate (Deut. 21:17) and had the right to the blessing of his father (Gen. 27). The blessing the firstborn received included leadership of the family and a right to the intangible assets of the family (e.g., in the case of Isaac and Jacob, the intangible assets were the covenant promises that passed to them from Abraham and through them to their descendants). The firstborn, then, was the head of the family through whom material and spiritual blessings were channeled.

NOTE 2 – We can now begin to see the significance of this title when applied to Jesus Christ (Col. 1:15–18). Christ is the **a)** blessed of the Father who has **b)** preeminence and primacy as the leader (i.e., head) of the family of God. Moreover, Christ is the **c)** conduit through whom the blessings of God are channeled...

Colossians 1:15–18 (Emphasis Mine)

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and **through him** to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you **by** Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Q. How should we respond to Christ, the “firstborn”?

- A1.** Recognize that He is the blessed of the Father
- A2.** Recognize the authority and primacy He possesses
- A3.** Consider that He is the “fount” of all spiritual blessing

KEY – The following title or designation of Christ is closely related...

HEIR OF ALL THINGS

Hebrews 1:1–3 (Emphasis Mine)

1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed **heir of all things**, and through whom also he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

NOTE 1 – Hebrews 1:2 identifies Jesus as the “heir of all things.” Everything that exists belongs to and will ultimately come under the full control of the Son of God. This “inheritance” is the privilege of Christ as the “firstborn” (cf. Col 1:15–18). The day shall come when the Son of God takes full possession...

Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14

9 “As I looked,
 thrones were set in place,
 and the Ancient of Days took his seat.
 His clothing was as white as snow;
 the hair of his head was white like wool.
 His throne was flaming with fire,
 and its wheels were all ablaze.
 10 A river of fire was flowing,
 coming out from before him.
 Thousands upon thousands attended him;
 ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
 The court was seated,
 and the books were opened.

13 In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

NOTE 2 – The appointment of God’s Son as “heir of all things” is made by God Himself (see Heb. 1:2). Therefore, no force, power or being in the whole of creation can reverse the good purpose of the Lord. Christ shall take full possession of all that is due Him by inheritance!

Q. What application does this have for us?

A. Through faith in Christ, we are made co-heirs alongside of Christ (i.e., as an act of His mercy and grace). Once again, as the “firstborn” and “heir of all things” Christ has become for us the conduit and/or channel through whom the material and spiritual blessings of God flow.

Romans 8:17–18

17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. 18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

HEAD

FYI – It is one thing to revel in the blessings afforded you in and through Christ (i.e., as “firstborn” and “heir of all things”). It is another to properly respond to the authority, preeminence and primacy He possesses in these roles. This is why the apostle Paul identifies Jesus as the “head” in such passages...

Colossians 1:15–18 (Emphasis Mine)

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the **head** of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

Q. What does it mean that Christ is the “head”?

A. “Headship” speaks to both supremacy and leadership. Christ is to be the supreme source of all decision-making, authority and control in our lives (i.e., ind. & coll.). In addition to Jesus being the creator and sustainer of all things (v. 17), all believers are to operate under His dominion (v. 18).

Q1. To what degree is Christ your “head” (i.e., the one who rules)? Is His lordship welcomed?

KEY 1 – I posit that you cannot know Christ as Savior apart from receiving Him as Lord...

Romans 10:9 (Emphasis Mine)

9 If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is **Lord**,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be **saved**.

KEY 2 – Jesus Himself touched upon this principle with the following rhetorical question...

Luke 6:46

46 “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”

Q2. To what degree is Christ our “head” (i.e., the one who rules)? is His lordship welcomed here?

Colossians 1:18

18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

Ephesians 4:11–16

11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

LAST ADAM

Finally, Jesus is identified as the “last Adam” by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:45. In this and other texts (cf. Rom. 5:12–21), the apostle Paul compares and contrasts the “first Adam” of the Book of Genesis with the second or “last Adam” (i.e., Christ).

NOTE – We do well to ask the following questions...

Q1. In what way(s) are both figures similar?

A1. Both are progenitors and/or founders of races of men. Adam became the “father” of the human race. Christ became the “father” of a redeemed race of humans comprised of all who would trust Him as both Savior and Lord...

Isaiah 9:6 (Emphasis Mine)

6 For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Q2. In what way(s) are both figures dissimilar?

A2. Those connected to each figure receive very different inheritances...

KEY 1 – Those who are connected to Adam by birth experience the cost and consequence of his rebellion against God. Therefore, our heritage from Adam is one of sin, depravity, death and alienation. This is the tragic reality connecting all born to Adam!

KEY 2 – However, those who are connected to Christ by faith and through the “new birth” experience the blessing of His obedience before God. Thus, our heritage from Jesus (i.e., the last Adam) is righteousness, renewal, life and reconciliation! This is the glory of being connected to Christ.

FYI – It is best to think of Jesus as the perfect remedy for the failings of Adam (i.e., and every man). Whatever we have received from our connection to Adam can be undone by our union with Christ Jesus! Ultimately, you must answer the most vital of questions...

Q. To whom are you truly connected?

A. Are you connected to Adam or to Christ?

SUMMATIONS

As we have seen, Scripture is replete with “names and titles” regarding the person, nature and work of Christ...

Q. What impact do these principles have on your life and living?

Q. What impact should these principles have in your Christian experience?

A. These are questions only you can answer—yet I would encourage you to look to Him!

CONCLUSION

Thank you for joining us today. If you wish to give online feel free to do so at www.NewLifeBarre.org. If you wish to give in person there are offering boxes throughout the church facility. I close this service with the following blessing...

Numbers 6:24–26

24 ““The Lord bless you
and keep you;

25 the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;

26 the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.”