

## Series: Cosmic Christ

### “Before All Galaxies”

December 3, 2023 A.M.  
West Side Church of Christ  
Searcy, Arkansas  
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Text: Hebrews 1:1-4

[Begin with video montage of rocket leaving earth, morphing into loop of space]

0:45-1:17 [rocket lift off] [sound continues until 1:55]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuYoYl5kyVE&ab\\_channel=Famiko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuYoYl5kyVE&ab_channel=Famiko)

First 37 seconds: [leaving earth] [using sound from first video]  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfQjG4t4M08&ab\\_channel=VideoFromSpace](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfQjG4t4M08&ab_channel=VideoFromSpace)

Fade into Space loop

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztVV54sPOns&ab\\_channel=RelaxationAmbientMusic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztVV54sPOns&ab_channel=RelaxationAmbientMusic)

The stars tell a story. When you go outside tonight and stare up into the night sky, look for the dimmest light. The farthest star. With the help of the Webb space telescope, we can see the most distant star in the universe discovered just last year. This sounds sci-fi, but it sits “near a ripple in the fabric of space” (I kid you not). The star is lovingly called Earendel (which is Old English for “Morning Star.”) You can already guess it’s far. But we might need help to fully grasp *how* far.

First, we need to go the speed of light. The speed of light is really, really fast. I mean *really* fast. Like 671 million miles per hour fast. If you could get in a spaceship, and go the speed of light for 1 second, you could go all the way around the globe...7 times! And change! Now, we know the Sun is quite a distance from us; but going the speed of light, you could get to the sun in 8 minutes. But what about Earendel? If someone were

to stand on that star and turn on the world's most powerful spotlight, that light would shoot toward earth at 671 million miles per hour and reach our eyes...28 billion years later.

While you take that in, listen to these words:

*“I alone am God. I am the First; I am the Last. It was my hand that laid the foundations of the earth; the palm of my right hand spread out the heavens above; I spoke and they came into being” (Isa 48:12-13 TLB).*

*He measured the oceans in the palm of his hand, and with the width of just one hand he measures out the limits of the sky (Isa 40:12 EXB).*

*God is high above the heavens. Higher than the highest stars are (Job 22:12 GW).*

Could it be? Could it be that there is one greater and farther than all we can see or imagine? Infinitely greater and infinitely farther? And could it be that this same one who holds the heavens in the palm of his hand, came to us as a babe in Bethlehem?

Come with me on a journey back before all galaxies. There is only one God—there has always been only one God. But we also know that God is love—and love is something given and received. God is beautiful, but beauty involves a beholder. This is why Christians speak of one God but 3 persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. That's good, but it makes more sense after we know the story. We experience God as Son when he arrives in Bethlehem, or when he is pronounced such at his baptism. But what we experienced in flesh was there before all worlds. And we need language for it. The Apostle John will give us language for it.

*In the beginning was the one  
who is called the Word.  
The Word was with God  
and was truly God.  
From the very beginning  
the Word was with God.  
And with this Word,  
God created all things.  
Nothing was made  
without the Word.  
Everything that was created*

*received its life from him,  
and his life gave light  
to everyone.  
The light keeps shining  
in the dark,  
and darkness has never  
put it out. (John 1:1-5 CEV)*

The spoken Word. The first creative action in the Genesis story, after introducing the formless, nameless void over which the Spirit would hover. The text says, “And God *spoke*.” (See also Wisdom 9:1)

The Word was with God. But his word was not created. His word *did* the creating. This is why the Word was with God AND God *was* the Word. Or, as one translation puts it: “What God was, the Word was” (NEB).

There, in the beginning, the spoken Word thundered, “Let there be light!” And there was light.

By his word he made creatures—oh so many creatures. As a gift of pure love, God made the creatures. And to crown his work, He made you and me. He made man first, then woman; after all—you save the best for last. And the language there is so telling. Everything in all creation formed in response to the voice of God by the Word of God.

You and all of creation—we were formed by the Lord of Life who would later touch a blind man’s eyes and wipe a grateful widow’s tears.

What I’m telling you is a Christian story. THE Christian story. Not a story centered on a world, but a story centered on Christ.

The famous sculptor, Michelangelo, once gave a glimpse of how he went about sculpting such beautiful angels out of marble. He said, “I saw the angel *in* the marble and carved until I set him free.” It takes fresh eyes to see it. The mighty oak tree that lay within the tiny acorn, or the professional ballet dancer within the heart of your tutu-wearing 1 year old. But it’s there—more than meets the eye. The end product is in full view to those who have eyes to see it.

For centuries, when Israel told the story of creation, it looked and sounded like a story about us. Creation was about a world, over a period of days, with humans as the crowning achievement.

But that was just the marble.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, through his servant John, begins with these familiar words: “In the beginning.” Only now the center of the story is not a world; it’s the Word. The Word that is with God and was God. All things were made, yes. But they were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

There’s life and light in the creation story. But John tells us “In HIM was life. And the life *was* the light of men.” It is he who shined in the darkness. He, the true light, which enlightens every man who is coming into the world.”

There’s a man in the creation story. But it’s not Adam the first. It’s Adam the Second—who, all along, was Adam the prototype. The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. He came unto his own; and to those who would accept him, to them he gave the power to become Sons of God. Born like Adam—not of blood, or the will of the flesh, or the will of man, *but of God!*

John retells the whole creation story with Christ in the beginning, Christ as the light, Christ as the life, Christ as the Adam in whom is life. Creation is not primarily a story about you and me. It’s first a story about Christ. A story about the Word. For long before the Word of God came to earth to take on flesh, the Word of God came to earth to *create* all flesh.

*“God created the universe by his Son,”* begins the book of Hebrews, *“and everything will someday belong to the Son. God’s Son has all the brightness of God’s own glory and is like him in every way. By his own mighty word, he holds the universe together.”*

*After the Son had washed away our sins, he sat down at the right side of the glorious God in heaven...[who] commands all of his angels to worship him.*

*[It is] The Scriptures [that] also say,*

*“In the beginning, Lord,  
you were the one  
who laid the foundation  
of the earth  
and created the heavens.  
They will all disappear  
and wear out like clothes,  
but you will last forever.”*

*You will roll them up  
like a robe  
and change them  
like a garment.  
But you are always the same,  
and you will live forever.” (Heb 1:2b-14 CEV)*

“You are always the same” Hebrews begins. And how does it end? “Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb 13:8)

Did you hear that? *Yesterday*. Today. And forever.

And so it is that in this first lesson exploring the cosmic scope of the Christmas story—the creation-wide effects of God invading our world, that I’d like to leave you standing in your yard looking up at the night sky with three observations.

First, every single thing the light touches on its path from that distant star to you—every single, solitary, molecule, was made by the Word of God. “God created the universe by His Son” and he “sustains all things through His powerful Word” (Heb 1:2-3). Even the stars, says the Psalmist: “the starry host” were all created “by the breath of his mouth” (Ps 33:6). Don’t go by this point too quickly. Everything in all creation owes its very existence to the Word of God. If you were to travel to the farthest reaches of the furthest galaxy, you would find a sign that said, “I built that.” Signed by God. It makes me pause before I size anything, or anyone, up. If everything in all creation is the product of the Word of God, then now I understand Jesus’ words, “don’t call anything I made unclean.”

Second, this powerful Word that spoke then formed all of creation came to us in the tiny baby of Bethlehem. The God who spoke creation into existence back then, has in these last days “spoken to us” (the Word has come to us) “by his Son” (Heb 1:1-3). Christians believe Jesus was fully God and fully human, which means he was fully a baby. As he lay in the crib, the infant Jesus wasn’t looking up at the stars and thinking, “I remember when I made those.” No, he was gurgling like Henry. But it is also true that even in that moment, the fullness of God—the fullness of God—was pleased to dwell in him (Col 1:19). It’s no wonder the wise men from the East didn’t wait until Jesus was healing the sick or casting out demons to worship him. They didn’t wait until he died on the Roman cross and rose from the depths of the grave to worship him. They came to the baby boy and said, “we have seen his star, and we have come to *worship* him” (Matt 2:2). When I consider the heavens, the moon and the stars that God has ordained, when I gaze at the stars, I too cannot help but worship him. Him—who traveled through time and eternity to become one of us.

Third, the powerful creating Word of God, His only Son, not only came...he came “to us” (Heb 1:2). The Word became flesh and dwelt “among us,” and we beheld his glory” (Jn 1:14). He came to us! He dwelt among us! He became one of us. That changes how we see “us.” Because he made all creation, and he became one of us, every single thing and person declares the glory of God. There is no such thing as “secular” space and “holy” space. There is no such thing as a “pure saint” in whom God dwells and a “pure sinner” in whom is nothing worthy. Oh no. God has left his imprint all over creation, He wrote his name on every human heart, and on the canvas of the sky as he sailed by. Because God traveled the milky way AND because human blood ran through his veins, we see a glimpse of God in everyone and everything. If we are willing to look for it. And because he existed before all galaxies, there is nothing we can find that doesn’t bear the imprint of God. Psalm 147 tells us that God knows how many stars there are, because he gave every one of them a name (Ps 147:4). And if that's true, how much more valuable are you—for he not only knows your name, but wants to give you His name. For there will be a day when all of us will rise from our graves to meet the Lord in the air; and Daniel tells us the righteous will “shine like the brightness of the sky, glitter like the stars forever and ever” (Dan 12:3 ESV/TLB). Remembering that hope is important. It keeps us going. Peter encourages his readers to remember the words of the prophets, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts (2 Pet 2:19). These three observations—The Word created all things, the Word is the baby in Bethlehem, and the Word came to us, among us, as one of us—changes what we see everywhere we look.

It was God himself who took Abraham by the hand and said, “come out and look into the night sky. Look toward heaven and count the stars if you are able to count them. So shall your descendants be” (Gen 15:5; see Gen 22:17). The stars tell a story, says God. A story about a God who created them, created you, and is creating a people for his glory.

So go out tonight and stare into the night sky. Count the stars if you dare. See the work of his hands. He wants us to see it. And in it, he wants us to see Him. The stars are an ever-present reminder of Christ’s midnight ride—the one that came upon a midnight clear. Stop, and see how all of creation is commentary on his majesty. See Jesus who—long before Earendel, called himself “the bright and morning star” (Rev 22:16). And perhaps you will whisper softly under your breath, “Where is He that was born King of the Jews and of the world? For I have seen the stars that he has made, and I have come to worship Him.”