

MR. UNIVERSE
—CHRISTUS VICTOR WEEK 9—
Colossians 1:15-20 (NIV)

I. THE _____ OF _____ IN _____

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.

II. THE _____ OF _____ IN _____

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.

THE BOTTOM LINE

____ your _____ on Christ _____,
and let this _____ in your ____.

On the Audacity of this Passage (Scot MckKnight, *Colossians*, 167)
The claims of this hymn are astounding and, apart from sharing Paul’s faith, which means grasping the reality of God in the cross and resurrection of King Jesus, one could conclude the man was imbalanced. What the apostle claims here is that the whole created order finds its only lasting peace in the ignominy of a bloody act of execution at the hands of violent Romans, an act God unzipped and reconfigured by raising his Son from among the dead. But let the note be emphasized: the whole of creation finds reconciliation in the death of this one solitary man, King Jesus, and it was the resurrection that generated that kind of faith. As Dunn frames it so well: “The vision is vast. The claim is mind-blowing.... In some ways still more striking is the implied vision of the church as the focus and means toward this cosmic reconciliation—the community in which that reconciliation has already taken place (or begun to take place) and whose responsibility it is to live out (see particularly 3:8-15) as well as to proclaim its secret (see 4:2-6).”

On the Universality of 1:20 (Douglas Moo, *Colossians*, 136-37)
Colossians 1:20 teaches, then, not “cosmic salvation” or even “cosmic redemption,” but “cosmic restoration” or “renewal.” Through the work of Christ on the cross, God has brought his entire rebellious creation back under the rule of his sovereign power. Of course, this “peace” is not yet fully established. The “already/not yet” pattern of New Testament eschatology must be applied to Colossians 1:20. While secured in principle by Christ’s crucifixion and available in preliminary form to believers, universal peace is not yet established. It is because of this work of universal pacification that God will one day indeed be “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28) and that “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:10-11).