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The Missing Piece

There is a key fact that is missing in most Christians' understanding about Jesus. It is clearly in the bible. It was written about by the early Christians and the Church Fathers. The Reformers make reference to it and many churches allude to it in their statement of beliefs. It even appears in children's Sunday School songs.

It's not a fact that is lost, or is new; it is simply an idea that most Christians do not take seriously or include fully in their understanding of who Jesus is.

It is the understanding that all creation, and therefore all humanity, lives and moves and has its existence in relationship with Jesus, the Son of God (Acts 17:28.)

We all know the song, "he's got the whole world in his hands," but we have not believed that truth as fully as we need to in order to understand the awesome good news of what Jesus has accomplished with humanity.

Let's start with a quick review of scripture. In John 14:11 Jesus tells us that he is not only with the Father, he is "in the Father" and the Father is in him. This relationship of intimate connection and inseparable communion is what makes the Triune God just one God and not three different gods. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one because they are "in" each other, not just "with" each other.

The amazing grace of the gospel is that humanity has been created in this image of living *in* God (and each other) and not just *with* God (Gen. 1:27.) So, the New Testament writers are inspired by the Holy Spirit to make bold claims about humanity's connection to Jesus, who is God the Son in the flesh. Here are a few:

"...in him we live and move and have our being..." Acts 17:28

"...he fills everything in every way..." Ephesians 1:23

"...in him all things hold together..." Colossians 1:17

When we understand this intimate, unbreakable connection between the Son and humanity it opens our understanding to the good news of humanity's salvation in Christ. If everyone lives, moves and exists in the Son then it makes sense that wherever he goes, and whatever he does, we go with him and do with him.

So, for example, when he dies, we die (2 Cor. 5:14;) when he rises we rise, and when he ascends to the Father we ascend with him (Eph. 2:6.) All humanity is recreated (Eph. 2:15) and given life (Rom. 5:18) in the Son's incarnation because we are all filled with him (Eph. 1:23) and held together by him (Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3.)

We have not fully understood how good and amazing the gospel is because we have not fully understood this simple, biblical truth about who Jesus is. When we finally see him as the source and sustainer of all creation we will finally begin to see how his redemptive work includes the whole world (Col. 1:19-20.) ~ *Jonathan Stepp*