

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And 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, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20





COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

We All Have A Christology

Christ is the best safeguard against most forms of heretical teaching.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

The First stanza (Strophe) v.15-17
celebrates the role of Christ in creation

The Second stanza (Strophe) v.18-20
celebrates his role in New Creation

Notice "firstborn"

Christ is the agent

CREATION
from primeval
work of
creation

REDEMPTION
accomplished

**NEW
CREATION** in
which divine
purpose is
consummated

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

Chiasm

A chiasm

- is a writing style that uses a unique repetition pattern for clarification and emphasis.
- is a repetition of similar ideas in the reverse sequence.
- organizes themes much like a sandwich

The Chiasm of Colossians 1:15-20

- A 1 **He is** the image of the invisible God, (1:15a)
2 **the firstborn** of all creation. (1:15b)
3 **For by him all things** were created, **in heaven and on earth.**
Visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or
rulers or authorities-**all things** were created **through him**
and **for him.** (1:16)
- B **And he is** before all things. (1:17a)
C and in him all things hold together. (1:17b)
- B' **And he is** the head of the body, the church. (1:18a)
- A' 1 **He is** the beginning, (1:18b)
2 **the firstborn** from the dead, that in everything he might
be preeminent. (1:18c)
3 **For in him all** the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through him to reconcile to himself **all things,**
whether on earth or **in heaven,** making peace by the blood
of his cross (1:19-20)

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities —all things were created through him and for him.

Two titles and three prepositional phrases.

1. Image of invisible God (preeminence)
2. First born of all creation (priority)
3. Three Prepositional phrases **by** him, **through** him, **for** him

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

V.15-¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

- He is the image (the icon).
- What does this mean? a picture? Copy of the original? Created being?
- Platonic thought: How can God be known?

Jn 14:9⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

In 1:17-18 ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

The nature and being of God have been perfectly revealed.

The invisible has become visible

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

V.15- ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation.**

What does it mean to be the first born? (1st of all created things). The oldest? Does first born have any importance in the Bible?

Gen. 15:4-7

⁴ And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." ⁵ And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ⁶ And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness. ⁷ And he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess."

Ex. 4:22 ²² Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son, ²³ and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me." If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.'"

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

Ps. 89:26--28 ²⁶ He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'

²⁷ And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.

²⁸ My steadfast love I will keep for him forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

Heb. 1:2 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Firstborn is describing

- Preexistence
- Position/rank/heir

Paul finds in Christ "the key to creation"

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

So how and why does Jesus get to be the ruler? What makes him King?

V.16- ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

"All things were created" (in Heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, thrones or dominions, rulers or authorities) highest order of angelic realm.

By/In Him

•"In" Dative of Sphere

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

So how and why does Jesus get to be the ruler? What makes him King?

V.16- ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

"All things were created" (in Heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, thrones or dominions, rulers or authorities) highest order of angelic realm.

By/In Him

- "In" Dative of Sphere
- Everything owes its existence in him.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

So how and why does Jesus get to be the ruler? What makes him King?

V.16- ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

"All things were created" (in Heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, thrones or dominions, rulers or authorities) highest order of angelic realm.

By/In Him

- "In" Dative of Sphere
- Everything owes its existence in him.
- Significant because that means he was before everything was created.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

So how and why does Jesus get to be the ruler? What makes him King?

V.16- ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

"All things were created" (in Heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, thrones or dominions, rulers or authorities) highest order of angelic realm.

By/In Him

- "In" Dative of Sphere
- Everything owes its existence in him.
- Significant because that means he was before everything was created.
- This distances him from creation as its means and end.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

Through Him

Christ is doing the creating.

Character of creation is trinitarian.

Importance: Consider the early centuries
Things and Stuff did not create. A Person Did!

Conclusion

If Jesus is the agent of creation then that means God is distinct from his creation.

The creator is to be worship because he is not creation.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

For Him