

Edgemont Bible Church
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Colossians

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Intro:

IV. The Pre-Eminence of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ in Relation to God – vs 15

1. How to answer the Heretics (Arians/Gnostics)
 - a. They viewed Jesus as one of a series of created lesser spirits descending in sequential inferiority from God.
 - b. They needed this because in their thinking because matter is evil and therefore God could not take on flesh.
2. Paul's answer refutes that believe with two powerful descriptions of who Jesus is
 - a. He is the image of the invisible God, - **eikon** - a likeness, statue, profile, or representation, resemblance, image.
 - i. Where we get the word "icon" referring to a statue
 - ii. Used in Mt 22:20 referring to the image of Caesar on a coin
 - iii. Though man is the eikon of God (1 Co 11:7; Gen 1:26-27)
 - the fall marred that image
 - Made like God in that we have rational personality, Intellect, will, and emotion
 - Not like God in morality or His non-communicable attributes
 - iv. Christ is the perfect absolutely accurate image of God
 - Did not become the image at the incarnation but was from all eternity
 - Heb 1:3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person,
 - **Character** - a graver (the tool or the person), i.e. (by implication) engraving ("character"), the figure stamped, i.e. an exact copy or (figuratively) representation):--express image.
 - By using eikon,
 - Paul was saying that Christ was both the representation and the manifestation of God
 - He is the full, final, and complete revelation of God – Jo 1:18
 - b. the firstborn over all creation. – **prototokos** - first-born (usually as noun, literally or figuratively):--firstbegotten(-born).
 - i. Heretics say this proves their point (1)
 - Ignores context
 - misunderstands the sense of **prototokos**

ii. Although it can be use in the chronological sense -

- Refers to position or rank
- Deals with the son who had the right to inheritance
 - Esau born first, Jacob received the inheritance
 - Israel was God's firstborn son didn't mean that they were the first nation but held first place in God's heart

iii. If Christ was the firstborn – first begotten, how could he be the only-begotten – **monogenes** - only-born, i.e. sole:--only (begotten, child).

iv. If Christ is the firstborn of Creation, why didn't Paul use **protoktistos**, which means first created?

v. The idea that Christ is created disagrees with the context

- Paul just said that Christ was the perfect representation and manifestation of God;
- in the next verse Paul says that he created everything

B. Jesus Christ in Relation to the Universe – vs 16-17

1. Three reasons for Christ' primacy over creation

a. He is the Creator – Jo 1:3; Heb 1:2

- The heretics believed
 - Christ was the first and most important of the emanations of God
 - since matter was evil, it had to be created by a much lesser emanation
- Creation gives testimony of the wisdom and knowledge of its creator
 - The Anthropic principle – the universe seems to have been created with the well-being of man in mind
 - Distance of sun from the earth, the earth's axis and rotation around the sun
 - Distance of moon from the earth, too close, tides would destroy everything
 - The evidence of intelligent design – systems that work together and with order

b. And He is before all things, -

- at creation, He already existed – Jo 1:1-2; 8:58
- Anyone who existed before creation is eternal

c. and in Him all things consist.

- He maintains the delicate balances necessary for life's existence
- Laminin - a fibrous protein present in the basal lamina of the epithelia.

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C. Jesus Christ in Relation to the Unseen World – vs 16b

1. Various ranks of angels

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| a. thrones | b. or dominions |
| c. or principalities | d. or powers. |

2. Instead of being an angel as the heretics taught, He created the angels
3. He is also over them in position - Heb 1:7-8; Eph 1:21; 1 Pet 3:22

D. Jesus Christ in Relation to the Church – vs 18-19

1. Christ is the Head of the Church
 - a. And He is the head of the body, the church,
 - b. not like the head of a company
 - The church is a living organism
 - inseparably tied to the living Christ
2. Christ is the Source of the Church
 - a. who is the beginning,
 - b. **arche** - a commencement, or chief:--beginning, corner, (at the, the) first (estate), magistrate, power, principality, principle, rule.
3. Christ is the Firstborn from the Dead
 - a. **Prototokos**
 - b. the highest in rank of all that will be resurrected
4. Christ is the pre-eminent one
 - a. As a result of His death and resurrection He has first place in all things He may have the preeminence.
 - b. The summary of the argument - For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,

