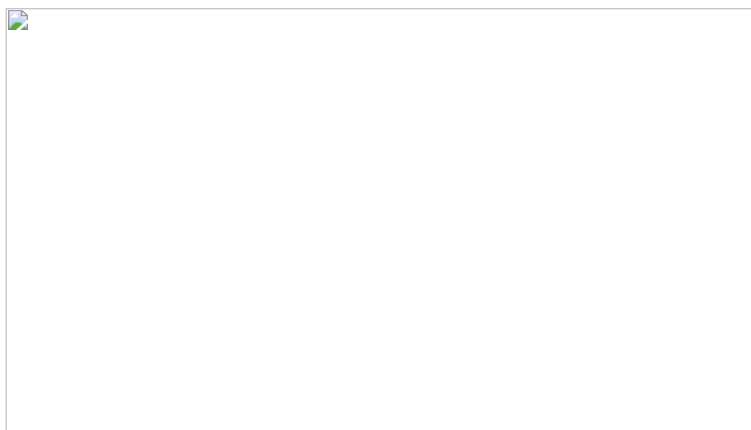




## GLOBAL IMPACT MINISTRIES

A Defense of the Apostolic  
Christian Faith

### The Firstborn of all Creation - Colossians 1:15-18



"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16For in (Greek prep. "en" means "in") him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through (Greek prep. "dia" means "by" or "through") him and for him. 17He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18He is also the head of the body, the church; and he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he himself will come to have first place in everything. 19For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in him, 20and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself ..." Colossians 1:15-20

In the Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament; Colossians and Philemon; Colossians 1:15, p. 39, Dr. Harris wrote:  
The Son is "... (*the image*," *the visible image* [NLT], *the visible representation*) [Cassirer]) although *anar*. An *eikōn* is a "*likeness*" or a "*visible expression*." The degree of resemblance between the archetype and the copy must be determined by the word's context but could range from a partial or superficial resemblance to a complete or essential likeness. Given 1:9 and 2:9, *eikōn* here signifies that Jesus is an exact, as well as a visible, representation of God...The invisible God, who dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6:16), is visibly expressed in his Son (cf. John 1:18; 12:45; 14:9)." (Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament; Colossians and Philemon; p. 39)

According to Dr. Harris, the Greek text in Colossians 1:15 indicates that Jesus is the "visible image", the "visible representation," and the visible "copy" of the invisible God. If words mean anything, a visible "image," "representation," or "copy" of the invisible God the Father could not be a timeless image, representation, or copy. Therefore the Son had to have had a beginning via his virgin begetting in order to be the visible image or copy of the invisible Father.

David Bernard wrote, "...God predicated the entire work of creation upon the future manifestation of the Son. God foreknew that man would sin, but He also foreknew that through the Son man could be saved and could fulfil God's original purpose in creation. As John Miller stated, 'Though He did not pick up His humanity till the fullness of time, yet He used it, and acted upon it, from all eternity'" (Essentials in Oneness Theology; p. 21, by D. K. Bernard).

God the Father predicated all of His creation in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ within His own preconception and planning because Jesus Christ is God's reason and purpose for all of His creation. Hence, God first preconceived all that He was going to create through Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ is God's reason and purpose for the ages of all human history.

Ephesians 1:4-5 (BSB), "For He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His presence. In love He predestined us for adoption as His sons through Jesus Christ..."

Scripture informs us that God chose Christ as His chosen servant (Isaiah 43:10; Micah 5:2) within His foreknown mind and plan, and then He chose His elect in Christ "before the foundation of the world." God did not literally create His elect in Christ "before the foundation of the world" because Ephesians 1:5 goes on to say that "He predestined us for adoption as His sons through Jesus Christ." To be predestined as sons through Jesus Christ is not the same thing as being literally created before the foundation of the world. Therefore we know that God first preconceived all things in His own mind and planning through Jesus Christ as the central purpose of the entire creation before the actual creation ever took place.

Anyone who carefully looks at the context of Colossians 1:15-20 should see that Paul addressed the Son of God as the man Christ Jesus being "the firstborn of all creation" rather than being an actual agent in creation. For God as God cannot be a coequal God the Firstborn. Likewise Colossians 1:18 calls the Son, "the beginning (arche), the firstborn from the dead." Here we can see that Jesus was already "the beginning" in the sense of being the "firstborn from the dead" as the first in the mind and plan of God to be "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). For Acts 15:18 says, "... known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."

Jesus as a child born and son given was clearly "the firstborn of all creation" just as Revelation 3:14 says that he is "the beginning (arche) of the creation of God." God as God cannot be "the beginning OF the creation OF GOD." Since Jesus as a son could not have been literally born and slain twice before the world was actually created, we know that these things had to have been written about the "foreknown" son (1 Peter 1:20) as "the firstborn" who was later brought into the world (Heb. 1:6) in God's detailed prophetic plan. Therefore, when we connect Colossians 1:15 to Colossians 1:16 we must first understand that Paul was addressing the Son as "the firstborn of all creation" in God's expressed thought (His expressed word, the logos of John 1:1).

Most Trinitarian translations (including the KJV) erroneously translate Col. 1:16 as "For BY him all things were created." Yet the Greek preposition "en" literally means "in" while the Greek preposition "dia" means "by" or "through." Since not one jot or tittle of God's word should be changed, Trinitarian translators erred and misled people by using the word "by" in Col. 16.

The Greek text more literally reads, "For IN HIM all things were created ..." Here we can see that all things were predestined in God's mind just as Ephesians 1:4-5 says, "He chose us IN (Prep. "en") HIM from the creation of the world." Then in Ephesians 1:5 it says that God "predestined us ... THROUGH (Prep. "dia") Jesus Christ." The same Greek prepositions for "in (en)" and "through (dia)" are used the same way in Colossians 1:16. Just as we were not yet actually born when God chose us in him (Christ) before the creation of the world, so Christ as a son was not literally born (*Gal. 4:4*) when God first chose him (*Isaiah 53:10; Micah 5:2*). Since "Christ" means "anointed one," it is hard to image a coequal God the Christ Jesus as a coequal Anointed One actually creating all things as a God the Anointed Son. For He who anoints is greater than he who is anointed.

Colossians 1:16 clearly states that all things were created in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ because Christ is the reason and purpose for all human ages. That is why Paul lists the "thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities" of all human history being already foreordained and predestined in and through Christ before the Genesis act of creation literally occurred.

Colossians 1:18 states that Jesus is "... the head of the body, the church..." But 1 Corinthians 11:3 states that "the head of Christ is God." Can God as God be said to have a head? Colossians 1:18 says that Jesus as a son "will come to have first place in everything." Can God as God be said to "come to have the first place in everything?" Here we can clearly see that Colossians 1:15-19 is not addressing an alleged coequal God the Son who created all things as a living agent in creation. We see a "foreknown" (*1 Peter 1:20*) son who was "the firstborn of all creation" in God's prophetic mind and plan. Therefore, all things were foreordained in God's Mind (*In God's expressed plan - logos*) in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ because Christ is God's reason and purpose for all human ages.

Isaiah 41:4 says, "Who has performed and accomplished it? Calling forth the generations from the beginning?" Here we can see that God called forth the generations of all human history before He actually created His physical creation. Likewise, God first called forth His Son in His expressed thought (*in His logos - Micah 5:2*) before calling forth everyone else. This is the precise meaning of Romans 8:29-30.

"For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified." (*Rom. 8:29-30*)

The Son was already "glorified" as "the firstborn among many brethren" before the actual creation ever took place. A "firstborn" implies that others had to be "born" after "the FIRST born." Hence, the context of Romans 8:29 proves that God's elect were also already born after the firstborn (Jesus). Since we did not literally exist before creation, so the son as a child born and son given did not literally exist when he was called forth and chosen in God's logos (*in His uttered thoughts - John 1:1*) before the world was created.

The Scriptures teach that there is only One true God the Father and one mediator between the Father and men, the man Christ Jesus (*1 Tim. 2:5*). The scriptures that reference the son of God in the Hebrew Bible reference him as being a future child born and son given (*2 Samuel; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 9:6*) rather than actually existing as a son during the lifetimes of the prophets.

Luke 1:35, Hebrews 1:3, Heb. 2:14-17, and 1 Tim. 3:16 prove that the Holy Spirit of the only true God the Father incarnated Himself to become the child born and SON given as a true man in order to save us. Therefore the One who became that child born and son given has always pre-existed as the great "I AM" (*John 8:24, 58*) and as the "Mighty God" and "Everlasting Father" (*Isaiah 9:6*) throughout eternity past.

Paul wrote in Colossians 1:16 that "in him (Christ) all things were created." Does the Bible ever state that God created all things in His prophetic mind and plan before they were literally created later on in time? The answer is in the affirmative.

In Isaiah 37:26, Yahweh spoke His prophetic Word against Senacherib through Isaiah saying, "Have you not heard? **LONG AGO I DID IT. Now have I brought it to pass** that you (Senacherib) should turn fortified cities into ruinous heaps."

When God said, "I DID IT," He meant that He already created it in His own Mind and Plan before the world was actually created. Hence, God pre-created Senacherib (through His pre-conception) to turn fortified cities into ruinous heaps. Although God foreknew and foreordained Senacherib's reign as king before the world began, God later "... brought it to pass ..." after Senacherib was physically born. This is precisely what God meant in Isaiah 41:4, "Who has performed and accomplished it, CALLING FORTH THE GENERATIONS FROM THE BEGINNING?"

The Scriptures clearly state that God already spoke His Word by "calling forth" all (human) generations from the beginning (*of creation - Ephesians 1:4*) before those human generations actual began. In like manner, Ephesians 1:4-5 states that God "chose us in him (in Christ) before the creation of the world" and "He predestined us for adoption as His sons through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will." Therefore God foreordained His elect "in" (Greek preposition "en") and "through" (Greek preposition "dia") Jesus Christ in His pre-conception before the actual creation took place. The same Greek prepositions for "in" and "through" Jesus Christ appear in Colossians 1:16 for all things being created "in" and "through" Jesus Christ.

The prophet Isaiah was very clear about the pre-creation of all things in heaven and earth before heaven and earth was actually created.

"I WILL PLACE the Juniper in the desert together with the box tree and the cypress ... the hand of Yahweh HAS DONE THIS and the Holy One of Israel HAS CREATED IT." Isaiah 41:19-20

Notice that God said, "I WILL PLACE" trees in the desert in the future but then God goes on to say that He already "HAS DONE THIS and (already) ... HAS CREATED IT" before He actually did it! Therefore, God's word affirms that God already "CREATED" things in His foreknown mind and plan before He actually physically accomplished them later on in time.

According to Hermas, the first century Roman Christians also believed that God first created His Elect Church before the world was actually created, "It is the Church." And I said to him, "Why then is she an old woman?" "Because," said he, "SHE WAS CREATED FIRST OF ALL. On this account is she old. And for her sake was the world made." (*The Shepherd of Hermas Vision 2:4*)

Since God's elect church was "created first of all" and "for her sake was the world made," we know that Jesus was "the firstborn of all creation" and that we were spiritually (not literally) born after the firstborn in God's foreordained plan (*Romans 8:29-30*).

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