

Colossians #5

Christ, The Firstborn Of All Creation

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation: for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. 1:15-17). In these verses five things are affirmed of Jesus: 1) He is the image of the invisible God, 2) He is the firstborn of all creation, 3) all things were created in him, 4) he is before all things and 5) all things consist in him.

Jesus is called the image of God in this passage, as also in 2 Corinthians 4:4, Hebrews 1:3. Is He the image of God in that He only reflected a likeness of God or is He the image in that He is the exact nature and essence of God? This latter is true. He is God in essence and creation. Why then is He called the "Firstborn of all creation?"

He is not called such because He is a created being as Jehovah Witnesses (and others) suppose. The scriptures deny that He is a creature. John 1:2f says that "all things were created by him and without him was not anything made that hath been made." Since "all" things were made by him, He was not "made." Yet he is called the "Firstborn of all Creation."

Jesus is the firstborn of all creation in that he is in an eminent position and all creation should give glory and honor to him for the position he occupies. This is the often connotation of the word "firstborn." We see this word used of Israel, David and Ephraim (Ex. 4:22; Ps. 38:27; Jer. 31:9). In each instance, reference is made to a special relationship each of these sustained to God.

This context shows that it is power and honor that is Christ's or due him when he is called the "firstborn of all creation." The word "for" follows this statement. He is "firstborn" for "in him were all things created, ...all things have been created through him and unto him; ... he is before all things and in him all things consist," "And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence" (1:16-18). Just a casual reading of the preceding verses show that the term "firstborn" does not refer to Christ's being created: the word signifies the honor that is due him. He is Creator. He is before all things. All things consist or stand together in him. He is

the head of the church. He is the beginning (of all things). He is the firstborn from the dead. In addition to these things, he offered his own self for redemption of lost mankind. Because all these things are true, it is but right he should be the "firstborn of all creation" that in all things he might have the preeminence!

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