

The *Eikon*
Colossians 1:15-17

INTRO: The verses before us teach us the absolute truth that Jesus Christ is the Icon, Greek *eikon*, of Almighty God. The *Oxford Dictionary* says that an icon is “a person regarded with particular admiration or as a representative symbol.” In Hebrews 1:3, we read of Christ, “who being in the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Christ is the image, and He is the essence of Jehovah God. It is in Christ that we see God. John 14:9: “...He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” By receiving Christ, man, once again the new man gains the image of Christ. “For whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image [*eikon*] of his Son....” (Rom 8:29). Christ, the God man, the man God, made real man’s destiny to be God’s image in the flesh. Sin that marred us is now forgiven in the perfect sacrifice. Only He who is God can be creator. Verses 16-17 tell us that Christ, the *Eikon*, is the creator of all things.

- I. VS 15, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE FATHER
 - A. An image, *eikon*, can be two things that merge into each other. William Barclay says of *eikon*: “It can be a representation; but a representation, if it is perfect enough, can become a manifestation” (116). Christ is the *eikon*, but He is more than that. He is more than like God; He is the perfect expression of God. Jesus Christ is the personification of God- He is God.
 1. Jesus Christ is the perfect manifestation of God, that is what Paul is saying and that is what the Bible teaches. If you want to see what God looks like, look to Jesus.
 2. The Father God is invisible, but Christ the Son, the *eikon*, reveals Him to us (Jn 1:14, 18).
 - a. God demonstrated His love to us in His Son who became flesh and died for our sins (Rm 5:8).
 - b. Christ bore sins on the cross as the Son of God, the only worthy substitute for sin (II Cor 5:17). He did not do this as a ghost or a spirit, He did it as a man, the God man.
 - c. It is in Jesus Christ that the invisible God (I Tim 1:17) becomes visible to us.
 - B. “Firstborn” is the Greek word *prototokos*. Firstborn here does not

refer to time, but to place, status, highest in rank.

1. Jesus is not a created being; He is God; He is the pre-eminent one— of highest rank.
 2. In Psalm 89:27, we have an illustration of the high rank of the Messiah, of His being the firstborn, the pre-eminent one: “Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.”
 3. Exodus 4:22 and Jeremiah 31:9 calls Israel God’s firstborn. They were not the first people born; but in the sight of God, they hold first place, an honored position.
- C. The Scripture nowhere teaches that Jesus had His beginning at Bethlehem.
1. Micah 5:2 tells us that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem; but that He came forth from everlasting. “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”
 2. Isaiah 9:6 tells us: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. . . .”
 - a. The child is born.
 - b. The Son is given. He came out of eternity and took upon Himself our humanity.

II. VSS 16-17, THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO CREATION

- A. Vs 16, “For by him were all things created.” He created all things. That clears up the question of His being creature or Creator. He is the one who did the creating.
1. Christ is the Creator (Jn 1:3, “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made”).
 - a. “All things.” The whole universe of things were created by Christ.
 - b. “were . . .created.” A definite historical event; not evolution. There were six literal days of creation.
 2. “That are in heaven, and that are in earth.” Classification by locality.
 3. “Visible and invisible.” Classification by essences.
 4. “Thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.”
 - a. This refers to holy and fallen angels, to demons and man.

- b. This is aimed at the angel worship of the false teachers at Colossae. These creatures that the false prophets made so much of are just mere creatures created by the Creator– Jesus Christ.
- 5. “Created by him and for him.”
 - a. The mere existence of these creatures depends upon Christ.
 - b. Created by and for Him. The moon and stars are where He wants them; and so are we.
- B. Vs 17, He is eternal God. He is before all things; He is the pre-existent one. When there was nothing, He is the “I am.”
 - 1. “By him all things consist.” “Consist” is the Greek word *sunistemi* “to hold together, cohere.” J. Vernon McGee said: “He is the super glue of the universe.”
 - 2. He rules supremely (Heb 1:3).

CONCLUSION: Jesus Christ is God; He is the God-man. In His body, He went to the cross and suffered.

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