

¹³ He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.



¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

¹⁹ For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, ²⁰ and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled ²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

On Sunday morning, we looked at what it meant to walk “worthy of our calling .”That means we’re to walk in a way that lines up with what we say we believe. Another way to express that would be to say that we are to “walk the talk.”

v.13 & 14 It is essential to understand that we don’t “walk the talk” in our strength but rather through the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Paul is stating that in these verses. He is saying that you and I are delivered from a force that once controlled us; the power of the flesh. God took us **FROM** something to take us **TO** something. He took us from the “power of darkness” with all of its deeds of the flesh and delivered us to the Kingdom of “the Son of His love .”That is the Kingdom of Jesus. “*For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*” (Romans 6:14 KJV) We should also remember that Jesus died, and His blood was shed for us. We were “redeemed.”That means “bought back .”We were bought out of the slave market of sin.

v.15-19 These are some of the most important verses in the Bible. Since Jesus lived, died, and rose again, people have come along who have tried to attack the Deity of Christ. Jesus was not just a “son of God .”Jesus was not just a spirit (as the Gnostics claimed). Jesus was all God and all man. Most cults we are familiar with today deny one or the other. Christians have often defined a cult more narrowly, such as “a religious group that denies one or more of the

fundamentals of biblical truth.” A cult holds views that are unorthodox and spurious. It claims to be part of a religion yet denies essential truths of that religion.¹

Before we look at some of the problems with cults that are out there, let’s look at what these verses tell us.

In these four verses, we see Jesus described: (1) in His relationship to God (v. 15); (2) in His relationship to creation (vs. 16, 17); and (3) in His relationship to the Church (v. 18).

Jesus is described as **the εἰκών** (pronounced “icon”) **image of the invisible God**. This word carries with it at least two ideas. First, it conveys the thought that the Lord Jesus enabled us to **see what God is like**. God is Spirit and is therefore invisible, but we see the fullness of God revealed in this Man Jesus. In Jesus, man gets an up close and personal glimpse of the God of the universe. Jesus is the physical manifestation of an invisible, infinite God. Jesus said, *“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; (John 14:9 KJV)*

The word **icon/image** also conveys the idea of “representative.” Christ is also **the firstborn of all creation**, or “of every created being.” This does not mean that He was created. There are several different meanings of this in scripture. A literal, figurative, and superior sense is carried in the expression. In Psalm 89:27, the word “firstborn” speaks to the supremacy and uniqueness of the “firstborn.” That is the exact thought of Colossians 1:15. Jesus is the Firstborn **OVER** all creation. He existed **BEFORE** creation (John 1:1) and was present at creation. This is a title of priority of position and not of time sequence.

1:16 False teachers use verse 15 (especially in the KJV) to teach that the Lord Jesus was a created being. They go down that rabbit trail because the KJV doesn’t use the word **OVER** but instead says that “he [was the] firstborn **of** every creature:” I don’t want to give a Greek grammar lesson, but the Greek says neither “over” or “of,” but uses a genitive case ending denoting possession. But the sense of the word usage is that Jesus was and is supreme over all that is created. Any misuse of the word is clarified in what follows.

Verse 16 states conclusively that the Lord Jesus is not a creature, but He is, in fact, the Creator. In this verse, we learn that **all things** (that means everything in the universe) **were created** not only **by Him** but **through Him and for Him**. Think about that for a minute. They were all created for His pleasure and His glory.

This language makes the Deity of Christ unequivocal. Don’t fall for any cult ideas that suggest anything different than that. Jesus was not created, and He didn’t just make a few things. He was the divine architect that designed and built it **ALL**.

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mormonism-cult.html>

Paul states that the Lord's creation included things **visible and** things **invisible**. The word visible includes all that we see; the earth, the heavens, and all that is physical, but it also includes the invisible. Paul explains that a bit by listing thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers. This includes all that we cannot see but yet exists.

I mentioned on Sunday the cult of the Gnostics. They believed that there were classes of spiritual beings. Some of these beings were supposedly involved in creation. The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that before Jesus was born, He was Michael the Archangel, a created being. Curiously, both Mormonism and the Jehovah's Witnesses try to relegate Jesus into a class and level that is less than God Himself.

Mormons teach a more elevated Jesus, but He is still just the offspring of a Father God and mother God in heaven. He is brothers with Satan. He lived a perfect life, and in that, He is a model for us to "do better" and, over time, become gods ourselves. The cult begins by diminishing the character and essence of Jesus as Yahweh in the flesh.

Paul vigorously refutes these absurd notions stating that Jesus Christ Himself is not a reconstituted angel, but instead, He IS THE CREATOR OF THE ANGELS THEMSELVES.

1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. Paul is saying, "Jesus is before all things," not just that "He was before all things." The present tense is often used in the Bible to describe the timelessness of Deity. Jesus said, for instance: "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). And God is Himself referred to as the "I AM."

Another scripture reference to the timelessness of Jesus is found in the statements of John the Baptist, ³⁰*This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'* (John 1:30 NKJV) John is saying that Jesus is superior to Him and that He was before John chronologically.

The second phrase, "in Him all things consist," literally tells us that Jesus is the "glue of the universe ."He holds it all together, and He keeps it all going. We can't understand this because we are like ants trying to understand the internet when we try to understand all of the mysteries of God, but Jesus is the LOGOS. He is the energy force that holds it all together and keeps it all going. (translated in Irish Gaelic "brí" meaning energy or being) How great is our God!

1:18 The dominion and power of Jesus are not only OVER the natural universe, but as mentioned a moment ago, it extends to the spiritual realm. It is important to remember in terms of the Church that Jesus is the head of the Church. I am not the head. Pastor Larry is not the head. We are the spiritual leaders of the Church, but He is the head. When we studied prophecy, I mentioned that we are now in the Church Age. God works in and through His Body here on earth, the Church, to work out His divine will.

He is alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. The text tells us that He is **“the firstborn from the dead.”** Jesus wasn’t the first to rise from the dead, but He was the first to rise again, never to die again.

Alfred Mace, a great Plymouth Brethren pastor, said it well:

Christ cannot be second anywhere. He is the “firstborn of every creature” because He has created everything (Col. 1:15, 16). He is also firstborn from the dead in connection with a redeemed and heavenly family. Thus, creation and redemption hand the honors of supremacy to Him because of Who He is and what He has done; “that in all things He might have the preeminence.” He is first everywhere.²

So tonight, I’d like to ask, “Does Jesus have preeminence in your life?”

Mormonism, for example, claims that Father God is a God in heaven married to a mother god. It argues that Jesus is one of many physical sons of Father God; hence satan and Jesus are brothers. One has gone wrong, and the other is good.

As believers, we know this:

There is only one true God. (Deut 6:4, Isa 43:10, Isa 44:6-8)
He always existed, and He will always exist. (Deut 33:27, Psalm 90:2, 1 Tim 1:17)
He was not created, but He is the Creator. (Gen 1, Psalm 24:1, Isa 37:16)
He is perfect in every way. None is His equal. (Psalm 86:8, Isa 40:25)
God is Spirit. (John 4:24)

These truths and many others let us know that whether or not JW’s or Mormons are good moral people, they are wrong. They are not part of the Church. They are not orthodox Christians. The great author CS Lewis says that we all must make a decision about Jesus.

You must make your choice: either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. – CS Lewis

Let us pray.

² <https://www.brethrenarchive.org/people/alfred-mace/>