

1.

## **Body**

1.

### **Jesus is Lord over all Creation 15-16**

1.

First in vv. 15-16, Paul tells us that **Jesus is Lord over all creation.**

1.

**Colossians 1:15-16** 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things were created through him and for him.

2.

### **Divinity & Priority over all creation 15**

1.

#### **“Image of the invisible God” - Divinity 15a**

-

In v. 15 Paul tells us two things—1) Christ is the “**image of the invisible God**,” and  
2) Christ is “

the firstborn over all creation.

” Christ’s being “

the image of the invisible God

” emphasizes His

**full divinity**

; His being the “

firstborn over all creation

” emphasizes His

**priority over all creation**

.

-

This word “**image**” is the word “icon” in Greek. We might think an “**image**” is empty of real substance, like the way a paper photograph does not actually *contain* the objects of which it is a picture. But this word “icon” has a different meaning in this passage. It doesn’t mean Christ is an *empty*

picture of God, but rather that He is *full* of the being of God.

-

**Example:** I have in my hand a small piece of stone that came from a church which sent bishops to the Council of Nicea. It’s a piece of a carving in the ruins

of a church building in Susita (aka Hippos) in Galilee.

[1](#)

The church building was toppled by an earthquake in the 600's, right before the controversy over iconoclasm. The reason this is such a small piece of stone is that "iconoclasts"—which means icon-breakers—came with hammers and beat the church of Susita's religious decorations—its "icons"—to bits.

You see, the Greek churches from the 300's to the Eastern Orthodox churches of the present day, believe that we should venerate pictures of Christ, pictures of saints, because those pictures connect us to Christ, to those saints, and thereby to God, because Christ, the saints, and God are present through their representation in those pictures. Through those "icons." The iconoclasts, remembering the Second Commandment: “

Thou shalt not make any graven image

,” rejected the worship of icons, and beat them to bits.

[2](#)

The Eastern Orthodox claim from this verse that because Christ is the “*icon*

” of God, it is right to make “icons” of God.

[3](#)

The iconoclasts, and the Reformers after them, claimed from this passage that because

## *Christ*

is the “icon” of God, we should not look for any other representation of Him than those representations which God has appointed in His word—which are especially the image of God in man, and the sacraments. For Christ Himself is the fully sufficient revelation of all of who God is, for Christ is Himself fully and truly God.

-

**Hebrews 1:3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,

-

**John 1:18** No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

-

**John**      **14:9** **Whoever has seen me has**  
**seen**      **the Father.**

-

**Nicene**      **Creed**

-

“God      of God, Light of Light, very  
God of very God; begotten, not  
made, being of one substance with the  
Father, by whom all      things were  
made.”

-

*Christ* is the “icon” of God. We don’t need to look to a carving, to a stone, to see God. We need to look to Christ.

-

This stone gives us a *physical* connection with a distant place and a distant time, an *historical* connection with the saints of the ancient church, but *not* a *spiritual* connection with God’s grace which

is to be found  
*in Christ alone*  
!

-

Christ presents the fullness of God to us, because He is in fact fully God.

-

**“Firstborn over all creation” -**

## Priority over all creation 15b

-

Because Christ is fully God He has the right of ownership over all creation, like a firstborn son in the OT had the right to inherit his father's wealth. And so in **v. 15b** Christ is called the “**firstborn over all creation.**”

” This shows that He has a divine **priority over all creation**

. He is greater than all creation, more deserving of praise, of reverence, of worship, than all created things.

-



In fact, He owns you, and He owns me. Therefore He has a *right* to receive our worship. He is the “  
firstborn over all creation.”

-

**Because He created all things**  
**16**

1.

Christ's divinity and priority are expressed in and demonstrated by the fact that He created all things. We see this in **v. 16**.

-

**Colossians 1:16** “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities- all things were created through

him and for him.

”

-

**Comprehensive      *Extent* of  
Christ’s Lordship over  
Creation – “all      things”**

-

**In      every (metaphysical)  
realm - “in heaven and on**

**earth”**

-

**Under every  
(epistemological) aspect -  
“visible and invisible”**

-

**Over every (ethical) power -  
“whether thrones or dominions  
or rulers or authorities”**

-

Spiritual powers, highest angelic or demonic forces, greatest earthly kings or nations—all were created by Christ. “Every knee will bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

-

We see then that Christ is Lord in every area of being,

thought, and activity.

-

Abraham Kuyper - “There is not one square inch of God’s creation over which Jesus Christ does not declare, ‘It is mine!’”

-

# **Covenantal      *Endpoints* of Christ's Lordship – Origin & Goal**

-

**“By      Him”**

-

All      things come from Him.  
There is nothing you can see

around you,        nothing you  
own, which did not come from  
Christ its Creator.

-

**“For        Him”**

-

And        so who are you not to  
use these things **for Him**,        in



service to Him?! Who are you  
to claim that your  
**property**

is completely for you to  
**do with as you please**

?! Who are you to claim  
that you are the  
**creator**

, the  
**origin**  
and

**goal**  
of the things around you?!  
Who are you to take such a  
high view of

**money**

, to put your trust in the

**worldly knowledge**

you have amassed, to claim  
you grasp the

**basic principles**

of the world?! Who are you

to claim you are

**Lord of your life**

?

!

-

I have news for you. I tell you the truth, you are not your own, but ***Jesus Christ is Lord***. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

-

# Conclusion: Jesus is Lord of Creation, and Lord of Salvation 17-18a

1.

This is the conclusion Paul is driving us to in this whole passage. ***Jesus Christ is Lord***. He is the Master, the Owner, the Ruler, of all things. He is the Lord of

the universe, and Lord of the church.

2.

Paul summarizes this conclusion in the central two verses of this passage, which both begin with the words “**and He is.**

”

3.

# Lord of Creation 17

1.

**Transcendent eternal  
preexistence - “before all  
things” 17a**

-

Christ is “before all things.”

This means He has a  
**transcendent, eternal**

# preexistence.

-

**Arius** misunderstood this verse when he argued that “there once was a time when [Christ] was not.”

Arius took passages like the above, “**he is the firstborn over all creation,**” and

**Prov. 8:22**

— “

God created me at the beginning of His work,

”

4

to teach that Christ was the first creature, and did not exist eternally before creation.

—



**Hilary of Poitiers** in  
his book titled  
On the Trinity

, or  
De Trinitate

,  
[5](#)

demonstrated that  
Scripture  
*does*

teach Christ's eternal  
preexistence and divine  
nature.

-

**I AM.** This is what Christ told the Jews when He claimed the divine name YHWH, which means “ **I AM** ,” and which we translate “Lord,” in **John 8:58** - “

before Abraham was, I  
AM.

”

-

Christ is in fact the  
true, eternal, supremely  
exalted *God* of the  
OT and the New, even  
from all eternity past

■

-

**Immanent  
sustaining providence  
- “in Him all things  
hold together” 17b**

-

“In [Christ] all things hold together.” This means there is nothing that is not held together in its existence by the **immanent sustaining providence** of Christ. He holds all

things in His hand.

-

**Lord of Salvation**  
**18a**

1.

Because of Christ's preeminence over all creation, as its Creator and Sustainer, He alone can have the position of complete preeminence in our salvation. No one else

can save us as He can.

Only God, only the  
Creator, only the  
Sustainer, can save His  
fallen creation. So  
just as Christ is Lord of  
Creation, so He is **Lord  
of Salvation**

. He is Lord of the  
first creation, and of the  
new creation. Lord



of Heaven and Earth,  
and Lord of the Church.

2.

Paul summarizes  
this point in **v. 18a**

“

;

He is the head of the  
body, the church.

” He elaborates it in what follows. Vv. 18b-20 are the second main section of this passage, which is evident in the Greek because 18b begins with the same phrase with which 15 began: “

He is

”

▪

**3.**

**Lord of Salvation  
18b-20**

1.

# **Production of Reconciliation 18b**

1.

# **Foundation/Fountain head – Beginning**

-

In v. 18b, we see  
that **Christ is**  
**Lord of the**  
***production***  
**of our salvation**  
**, from its**  
***beginning***  
**to its**

*end*

▪

—

He is its *beginning*.  
In His Person, His  
divine and human  
natures, He is the  
source, the

foundation, the  
fountainhead of our  
salvation.

-

**Firstborn – End**

-

He is the *end* of the production of our salvation. His resurrection fully accomplished His victory over our sin and its consequence of death. He is



already completely  
victorious; there is no  
more battle yet for  
Him to win in regard to  
producing our  
salvation, because  
He has risen from the  
dead. This is what it  
means that Christ  
is the “  
firstborn from the

dead.

” We in our old hearts were dead in our sins, and our bodies will die. But because He has risen, He is fully able to raise our hearts to new life, and we await the certain hope of Him raising our bodies

from the dead when  
He comes at the end  
of the age.

-

So Christ tells us  
in **Revelation**  
**1:17-18** “Fea

r not, I am the first  
and the last, 18 and  
the living one. I died,  
and behold I am  
alive forevermore,  
and I have the keys of  
Death and Hades.

”

-

# **Product of Reconciliation 19-20**

1.

**Fullness –  
Beginning**

–

In vv. 19-20, we  
see that **Chris**

**t is Lord over the**  
***product***  
**of our salvation**  
**, also from its**  
***beginning***  
**to its**  
***end***

▪

—

The product of  
our salvation  
*begins*  
in Christ in Himself,  
who is all the  
fullness of God. All  
the incommunicable  
attributes of



God—His  
eternality,  
omniscience,  
omnipotence—are  
what we need to  
sustain us in our  
salvation, and all of  
His communicable  
attributes—His  
knowledge,

righteousness, and holiness—are the core of the benefits we receive from Him in salvation. John tells us that “  
from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.” (

# John 1:16

)

-

And so also Paul  
tells us in **Colossia**  
**ns 2:9-10,**  
“

9        For in him the  
whole fullness of  
deity dwells bodily,  
10 and        you have  
been filled in him,  
who is the head of  
all rule and  
authority.

”

—

# Reconciliation —

# End

—

The product of  
our salvation *ends*

through the finished  
work of Christ's  
reconciliation—it  
is through Him that

God is reconciling  
all things to  
Himself, by  
making peace  
through the blood  
of His cross,  
whether those  
things are in  
heaven or on earth.

-

You see, God is  
in heaven, and you  
are on earth. You  
have sinned  
against God, and  
deserve His wrath,



deserve the pains  
of Hell forever.  
You have no  
means of  
reconciling yourself  
to God, because  
apart from what He  
did in Christ you  
are guilty, period.

But in Christ is all  
you need to be  
reconciled to  
God—He died  
to take the  
punishment for  
your sins, and God  
promises to cover  
your guilty record

with Christ's  
righteous record, if  
you believe on  
Christ as the Lord  
of your salvation.

—

# Conclusion

1.

And so I must ask  
you today, do you  
recognize that  
Christ is Lord of  
all creation? He is.  
Do you recognize

that He alone is  
Lord of salvation  
as well? I tell you  
that “there is  
salvation in no one  
else, for there is no  
other name under  
heaven by which  
we must be saved

# ” (

# Acts 4:12

# )

2.

My friend who  
drives the tow

truck believes he  
can save himself  
by making sure  
his adult children  
are financially set  
for life, and then  
by taking his own  
life when he  
determines it is the



time for him to  
die. He trusts in  
his wealth, and in  
himself as lord.

3.

Jesus Christ,

Lord of heaven  
and earth, and  
the Lord of  
salvation, has an  
answer for any  
who trust in their  
own wealth to  
save their soul:

1.

“You fool! You don’t know whether this very night your life will be demanded of you.”

2.

“What does it  
profit a man to  
gain the world,  
and lose his soul?  
”

3.

Don't be fooled  
by the philosophy  
and empty

deception of this  
world, but look  
to Christ. Exalt  
Him in your  
hearts above all  
else, for He is  
Lord of all  
creation, and

# Lord of our salvation.

## 4.

# Let us exalt Him, and give

Him the praise  
that is due His  
name, for “God  
has highly  
exalted him and  
bestowed on  
him the name  
that is above



every name, 10  
so that at the  
name of Jesus  
every knee  
should bow, in  
heaven and on  
earth and under  
the earth, 11

and every tongue  
confess that  
Jesus Christ is  
Lord, to the  
glory of God the  
Father.

”

(

**Philippians**

# 2:9-11

)

1 The church's columns are still there, and a marketplace connected to the church remains visible.

2The iconoclasm controversy went from 726-843 AD.

3The Seventh Ecumenical Council, held in Nicea, 787, proclaimed: “We define that the holy icons, whether in color,

mosaic, or some  
other material,  
should be  
exhibited in the  
holy churches of  
God, on the  
sacred vessels  
and liturgical

vestments, on the  
walls, furnishings,  
and in houses  
and along the  
roads, namely the  
icons of our Lord  
God and Savior  
Jesus Christ, that



of our Lady the  
Theotokos, those  
of the venerable  
angels and those  
of all saintly  
people.

Whenever these  
representations

are  
contemplated,  
they will cause  
those who look at  
them to  
commemorate  
and love their  
prototype. We

define also that  
they should be  
kissed and that  
they are an object  
of veneration and  
honor (timitiki  
proskynisis), but  
not of real

worship (latreia),  
which is reserved  
for Him Who is  
the subject of our  
faith and is  
proper, for the  
divine nature,  
rendered τυπῆς

icon, is in effect transmitted to the prototype; he who venerates the icon, venerated in it the reality for which it stands.”

4LXX: e;ktise,n  
(ektisen)

“created me” (as  
the first creature);

MT:

ynln&quot;q'

(qanani)  
“possessed me”  
(as an instrument  
by which to  
create all  
creatures.) Arius  
& Hilary  
regrettably both

worked off the  
LXX, not the MT.

5Or perhaps  
more true to  
Hilary's intent, D



# e Fide or On the Faith

■