

**LESSON TWO** Colossians 1:15-20**Lesson Two, Day One** Jesus, the image of the invisible God

1. a. Read Col. 1:15, focusing on the first part. How does the dictionary define the word *image*?

b. In what ways have people, both past and present, tried to form an image to represent God?

c. Does humanity truly need an image of God? Why or why not?

2. a. What do these verses say about Jesus Christ in relationship to the Father?

John 1:1

John 1:18

Phil. 2:6

Col. 2:9

Heb. 1:3 (first clause)

b. From these verses, what would you say it means that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God”?

Lesson Two, Day Two Jesus, Creator of all things

1. Read Col. 1:15-16. Do these verses say that Jesus was first to be created or that He is over all creation? Explain.

2. a. From Col. 1:16, name some things not a part of the physical universe that were created by Jesus Christ.

b. What does this say about His authority over these things?

3. How does remembering that you were created for Him affect your thinking and your actions?

Lesson Two, Day Three Jesus, Sustainer of all things

1. Read the first part of Col. 1:17 with Micah 5:2; John 8:58; 17:5; Heb. 13:8. What do these verses say about Christ?

***** SYLLABUS CHAPTER TWO *****

- II. THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST 1:15 – 2:23
- A. The Person and Position of Jesus Christ 1:15-20
1. The Image of the Invisible God 1:15
 2. The Creator of All Things 1:16-17
 3. The Supreme Head of the Church 1:18
 4. The Great Mediator of the Universe 1:19-20

II. THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST**A. The Person and Position of Jesus Christ 1:15-20**

God is an infinite and eternal Spirit. We cannot possibly grasp all that He is with our finite minds. He is incomprehensible and invisible. Yet humanity yearns for a visible embodiment of Deity. God understands this need and longing, and He has given us the marvelous privilege of seeing Him in His Son. Christ reflects and reveals the Father. "He is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person" (*Heb. 1:3*).

1. The Image of the Invisible God 1:15

The Word is a divine Person, and that Word became incarnate in Jesus Christ (*John 1:1,14*). There is evidence of God all around us in creation, but Christ is the eternal Word, the perfect image, the visible manifestation, of the unseen God.

"No man has seen God at any time; but the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."

John 1:18

Christ is Deity. His wisdom, mercy, righteousness, and power are infinite. He is Immanuel—*God with us*.

2. The Creator of All Things 1:16-17

Jesus Christ is the first-born of every creature (v. 15). He existed prior to the creation and is pre-eminent in it.

The term "first-born" or "first begotten" (KJV) was frequently used among the Jews as a term of precedence and dignity. As applied to the Son of God, it means priority in rank in relation to all created things. That He is the first-born does not mean that Christ is the first creation. Paul is making clear the pre-existence of the Son. Time applies to a creature, but the Son of God precedes all time. Like the Father, the Son had no beginning and has no end. He is eternal.

Christ, the Son of God, is the acknowledged Head of God's household. He is Heir of all things. He is creation's supreme and absolute Lord. He was the instrument of creation. Out of nothing He brought all creation into being.

Paul wrote to prevent any misconception regarding the relation of Christ to the universe. He showed that He

could not be a part of creation, however exalted in degree. As Creator, Jesus is essentially distinct from creation.

Paul presents Christ, the Son of God, as the first cause, the beginning and the end of all created things. In fact, not only did He create it all, He maintains and controls it all. Christ is Himself the Creator of all things (v. 16). He was the first great cause. That is, the being, forms, limitations, and energies of everything stem from Christ.

What to create or not to create rested with Christ. In Christ we trace the great work of creation in its beginning, progress, maintenance, and end. The end, because "All things were created *for* Him," (*Col. 1:16*.) It all came from Him, and it all moves towards Him. He was the starting point. All created things gather their significance, dignity, and glory by their connection with Him. And He is unchanging.

"He is before all things" (*Col. 1:17a*). The expression *He is*, is emphatic in the Greek. The word *He* declares His personality: Jesus is a Person. The word *is* affirms His absolute existence. He is without beginning or end. Christ existed before time itself—that is, from eternity. Our finite minds cannot grasp this.

When we consider the way mere humanity entertains inferior notions of the Person of Christ, we wonder why He is so patient! The continued existence of creation depends on Christ! "And in Him all things hold together" (*Col. 1:17b*). He is the principle and power of cohesion in the universe.

"Thus, to take one instance, the action of gravitation, which keeps in their places things fixed and regulates the motion of things moving, is an expression of His mind."

John Lightfoot

The universe found completion in Him and is sustained and preserved every moment by His almighty power. All things hang on Christ. If He released His hold, even for a moment, every atom would fly apart. He sets the tides of the sea. He is the center of life, force, and motion. Around Him all things revolve.

Amid the change and imperfection in this world, He remains all-perfect and unchanged. His control is absolute and universal.

We must ask, why should He love us so? But He does. How can that be? It is because the love is in Him, not because of any worth in us. How wonderful that we are important to Him, that He knows us by name, and that He desires to have personal fellowship with each one of us!