

INTRODUCTION.

CURRENTLY IN OUR STUDY OF COLOSSIANS, ~ WE ARE MAKING OUR WAY THROUGH Paul's discussion ~ about the Person and work of Jesus.

▶▶ This paragraph, ~ as we noted, ~ is one of the most, ~ if not the most, ~ definitive passages on the Person and work of Jesus in all of Scripture.

AS WE KNOW, ~ FALSE TEACHERS ~ WERE ATTACKING AND DISTORTING ~ THE Person and work of Christ.

▶▶ And in this paragraph, ~ Col. ~ 1: ~ 15-20, ~ Paul lays out the truth about the Person and work of Jesus, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ in order to counter ~ this assault on and misrepresentation of ~ Jesus' Person and work.

▶▶ Paul presents ten profound and sweeping assertions ~ about Jesus' Person and work.

OF COURSE THERE ARE MANY FALSE TEACHERS IN OUR DAY AS WELL.

▶▶ And just like those in Paul's day, ~ they attack and distort the biblical teaching on the Person and work of Jesus. ⇨⇨ So we see a big part of the relevance of this passage for us.

LAST TIME WE LOOKED AT THE FIRST TWO ASSERTIONS ABOUT JESUS.

▶▶ Jesus is the visible expression of the invisible God. ~~ And he is supreme over all creation.

TODAY, ~ WE'LL LOOK AT THE THIRD ASSERTION. ¶¶ 1/13

PAUL'S 3rd ASSERTION ABOUT THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS IS IN VERSE 16.

JESUS IS THE CREATOR.

▶▶ 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.

▷▷ Quick trans. note: ~ some, ~ "by." ~ Greek prep. here means "through."

IN ADDITION TO BEING THE NEXT ASSERTION, ~ ~ ¶¶

▶▶ grammatically this statement in [verse 16](#) ~ explains why Christ is preeminent over all creation.

▷▷ The word "For" could be translated as "Because."

▷▷ The idea here is: ~ "He is the firstborn over all creation, ~ because ~ all things were created by him.

▷▷ Jesus is preeminent over creation ~ by virtue of the fact ~ that he is the sovereign Creator of it.

▶▶ So [verse 16](#) ~ serves a dual purpose.

▷▷ It gives an important fact about Jesus ~ and also provides a reason why he is supreme over all creation.

▶▶ Puts a nail in the coffin of the false teaching that Jesus is the "first created."

▶▶ Furthermore, ~ since only God can be the Creator, ~ it means that Jesus is God.

OK, ~ LET'S UNPACK VERSE 16. ¶¶ 2/13

THE GREEK VERB FOR "CREATED" ~ DOES NOT REFER TO MAKING SOMETHING FROM preexisting materials.

▶▶It means to make or create something ~ which has not existed before.

▶▶In the NT, ~ the word is used exclusively ~ of God's activity in creation.

▷▷Reinforcing the truth that Jesus is God.

▶▶Jesus did not use preexisting materials when he created everything.

▶▶Like we would have to in order to build a house.

▷▷We have to use preexistent materials ~ because we do not possess the creative power of God.

▶▶But Jesus, ~ being God, ~ called into being that which had not existed before.

▷▷Heb. 11:3, ~ LEB ~ By faith ~ we understand the worlds were created by the word of God, ~ ¶¶

↳↳in order that what is seen ~ did not come into existence ~ from what is visible.

▷▷In Ps. 33: ~ 6, ~ LEB ~ the psalmist writes, ~ ¶¶

↳↳By the word of Yahweh ~ the heavens were made, ~~ and by the breath of his mouth ~ all their host.

↳↳The Lord merely spoke, ~ and the heavens were created.

→→He breathed the word, ~ and all the stars were born.

▷▷And God said, ~ "Let there be light," ~ and there was light. ¶¶ 3/13

THE ALL-ENCOMPASSING PHRASE ~ "ALL THINGS" ~ IN VERSE 16, ~ LEAVES absolutely nothing ~ beyond the scope of Jesus' creative power.

▶▶ The repetition of the phrase ~ emphasizes and expresses ~ absolute universality.

▶▶ IOW, ~ as John says in Jn. ~ 1: ~ 3b, ~ LEB ~ "and apart from him ~ not one thing ~ came into being that has come into being."

▷▷ In the Greek text, ~ "not one thing" is emphatic. ~~ This trans. ~~ Brings out emph.

▷▷ John was driving this point home. ~~ "Apart from Jesus ~ not even one thing ~ came into being that has come into being."

BACK TO VERSE 16.

▶▶ We have two categories of creation here.

▷▷ Jesus in relation to the physical universe. ~~ And Jesus in relation to the unseen world. ⇨⇨ Jesus created both.

1st CATEGORY. ~~ JESUS CREATED ~ EVERY INCH OF ~ AND EVERYTHING IN ~ the physical universe.

▶▶ Recall that when we started Colossians, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we noted ~ that much of the heresy endangering the church at Colossae ~ probably was an early form of Gnosticism.

▶▶ Remember, ~ one of their notions was that ~ spirit was good and matter was evil.

▷▷ This notion led to the belief ~ that God could not have created the world ~ ¶¶

⇨⇨ since it was matter and matter was evil. ¶¶ 4/13

▷▷ Therefore, ~ a series of intermediary spirit beings, ~ or angels, ~ emanating out of God was postulated, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ each one being less God than the one preceding.

▶▶ The false teachers at Colossae viewed Jesus as the first and most important of these angels.

▷▷ But they were convinced ~ ¶¶

↳↳ it had to be a lesser being much farther down the chain ~ who eventually created the material universe.

▷▷ Paul rejected that false notion, ~ insisting that Jesus is God, ~ and He created the material universe.

FURTHERMORE, ~ SCRIPTURE CLEARLY REFUTES THE NOTION THAT MATTER IS EVIL.

▶▶ Over and over in the creation account in *Genesis*, ~ as God was creating, ~ we read that he "saw that it was good."

▷▷ And then when God was done, ~ Moses writes, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ "And God saw everything that he had made, ~ and behold, ~ it was very good."

▶▶ In 1 Tim. 4, ~ warning against false teachers, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Paul points out that God created all food to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

▷▷ And everything God created is good. ~ Nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.

▷▷ You can look that up and get the full context. ¶¶ 5/13

▶▶ Now, ~ the physical creation is under the curse, ~ as Paul points out in Romans.

▷▷ But the material universe, ~ including our physical bodies, ~ is good in and of itself.

AND SPEAKING OF CREATION, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ it gives silent testimony of the glory, ~ power, ~ knowledge, ~ wisdom, ~ and intelligence of the Creator.

THE UNIVERSE ALSO STRONGLY INDICATES THAT IT WAS INTELLIGENTLY DESIGNED and created, ~ and did not evolve or come about by blind chance.

▶▶ Scientists now speak of the Anthropic Principle. ~ Anthropic > ἄνθρωπος.

▷▷ The AP states that the universe is especially suited for the well-being of humanity.

→→ TPID, ~ the universe ~ appears to have been fine-tuned for our existence.

▶▶ Our existence in this universe ~ depends on numerous cosmological constants and parameters ~ ¶¶

▷▷ whose numerical values must fall within a very narrow range of values.

↪↪ If even a single variable were off, ~ even slightly, ~ we would not exist.

▶▶ Consider these examples.

▷▷ If the earth's magnetic field was much weaker, ~ our planet would be devastated by cosmic radiation.

↪↪ If it were much stronger, ~ we would be devastated by severe electromagnetic storms. ⇨⇨ Perfect for our existence.

▷▷ If the earth was much farther from the sun, ~ our planet's water would freeze. ~ If we were much closer, ~ it would boil. ⇨⇨ Just the right distance. ¶¶ 6/13

▷▷ If our solar system were too close to the center of our galaxy, ~ or to any of the spiral arms at its edge, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ or any cluster of stars, ~ for that matter, ~ our planet would be devastated by cosmic radiation. ⇔⇔ **Just the right position.**

▷▷ If the moon was closer to the earth, ~ tides would be greatly increased.

↳↳ Ocean waves could sweep across the continents.

→→ The seas themselves might heat to the boiling point from the resulting friction.

▷▷ On the other hand, ~ a more distant moon would reduce the tides.

↳↳ Marine life would be endangered by the resulting preponderance of stagnant water.

↳↳ Mankind would also be in trouble because the oxygen in the air we breathe is replenished by marine plants.

↳↳ We can conclude that the moon is in the "correct" position for man's well-being.

▷▷ Even such details ~ as the mass of protons and the strength of gravity ~ ¶¶

↳↳ have values that give stability to the universe ~ and thus reinforce the Anthropic Principle.

▶▶ Blind chance? ~ Or intelligent design?

▷▷ The Anthropic Principle ~ is evidence in support of the thesis that ~ the universe was planned and created by a divine Architect.

▶▶ Now, ~ if I understand this correctly, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ the "blind-chance" people try to get around this principle by proposing the "multiverse" theory. ¶¶ 7/13

▷▷ Their argument goes like this.

▷▷ "Imagine ~ innumerable lifeless universes existing at the same time, ~ in which one or more of the necessary variables ~ ¶¶

↪↪ fail to fall within the specific range of values required for life.

▷▷ The idea is ~ that nature would eventually get it right, ~ and apparently has done so ~ as evidenced by the fact that we exist.

▷▷ We are the lucky ones ~ whose universe blindly stumbled upon the right combination of cosmological values."

▷▷ That's their argument.

↪↪ They clearly reject God ~ in favor ~ of made-up human theories.

▶▶ Rom. 1:21-25, ~ has much to say about people like this.

▷▷ For although they knew God, ~ they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, ~~ but they became futile in their thinking, ~~ and their foolish hearts were darkened. ~~ Claiming to be wise, ~~ they became fools, ~ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God ~ for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. ~~ Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, ~ to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ~~ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie ~ and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, ~ who is blessed forever! ~~ Amen.

▶▶ The silent testimony of the universe to its Creator is clear, ~ as David proclaims in Ps. 19: ~ 1.

▷▷ The heavens declare the glory of God, ~ and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

▷▷ The testimony of nature to its Creator so clear ~ that it is only through willful unbelief ~ that someone could reject it. ¶¶ 8/13

▷▷ Paul writes in Rom. 1:20, ~ For his invisible attributes, ~ namely, ~ his eternal power and divine nature, ~ have been clearly perceived, ~ ever since the creation of the world, ~ in the things that have been made. ~ So they are without excuse.

▷▷ Like those who deny Christ's deity, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ those who reject him as Creator ~ give evidence of a mind darkened by sin and blinded by Satan.

BACK TO VERSE 16.

▶▶ As we noted, ~ we have two categories of creation here.

▷▷ Jesus in relation to the physical universe. ~ And Jesus in relation to the unseen world.

↳↳ Jesus ~ created both.

NOW WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO JESUS IN RELATION TO THE UNSEEN WORLD.

▶▶ For by him all things were created, ~ in heaven and on earth, ~ visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

▶▶ "invisible" is further identified as thrones, ~ dominions, ~ rulers, ~ and authorities.

▶▶ Now, ~ remember, ~ the false teachers plaguing the Colossians church ~ were teaching that Jesus was the first and most important of the angels.

▶▶ BTW, ~ in our day, ~ the Jehovah's witnesses believe that Jesus is Michael the archangel.

▶▶ But far from being an angel, ~ as false teachers claim, ~ Jesus created the angels.

▶▶ Paul makes a clear distinction between the angels and Jesus. ¶¶ 9/13

▶▶ The author of Hebrews does as well. ~~ Heb. ~ 1: ~ 6-8.

▷▷ And again, ~ when he brings the firstborn into the world, ~ he says, ~ "Let all God's angels worship him." ~~ Of the angels he says, ~ "He makes his angels winds, ~ and his ministers a flame of fire." ~~ ¶¶

↳↳ But of the Son he says, ~ "Your throne, ~ O God, ~ is forever and ever, ~ the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. ~~

▶▶ Paul also makes a clear distinction between the angels and Jesus in Eph. ~ 1: ~ 21, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Jesus has been exalted "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, ~ and above every name that is named, ~ not only in this age but also in the one to come."

▶▶ Peter reinforces this. ~~ 1 Pet. ~ 3: ~ 22.

▷▷ "who ~ [i.e., ~ Jesus] ~ has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, ~ with angels, ~ authorities, ~ and powers having been subjected to him."

▶▶ Scripture is crystal clear. ~~ Jesus is not an angel, ~ but the Creator of them.

▷▷ He is sovereign over angels, ~ who in fact worship him.

▶▶ Furthermore, ~ Jesus' relation to the physical and unseen worlds as Creator, ~ proves he is God.

AT THE END OF VERSE 16, ~ PAUL NOTES TWO DETAILS ABOUT JESUS BEING the creator.

EVERYTHING THAT EXISTS ~ WAS CREATED ~ THROUGH JESUS ~ AND FOR JESUS.

THE 1st DETAIL: ~~ EVERYTHING THAT EXISTS WAS CREATED ~ THROUGH JESUS.

▶▶ We should understand that Scripture teaches us that ~ the eternal Son of God was active with the Father as his co-worker. ¶¶ 10/13

▷▷ Jn. ~ 1: ~ 3, ~ LEB ~ All things came into being through him, ~ and apart from him not one thing came into being that has come into being.

▷▷ And Heb. ~ 1: ~ 2, ~ but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, ~ whom he appointed the heir of all things, ~ through whom also he created the world.

▶▶ Jesus is seen here as ~ the Intermediate Agent in the work of creation.

▷▷ But is not here represented as a mere instrument, ~ a passive tool, ~ but as a cooperating agent.

▶▶ Paul sets out the precise nature of this cooperation in 1 Cor. ~ 8: ~ 6.

▷▷ yet for us there is one God, ~ the Father, ~ from whom are all things and for whom we exist, ~ and one Lord, ~ Jesus Christ, ~ through whom are all things ~ and through whom we exist.

▶▶ All that exists has its ultimate source in God the Father, ~ "from whom are all things."

▶▶ This happened, ~ however, ~ with the coordinate creative act of the Son, ~ "through whom" it was created.

▶▶ Together, ~ they made all things.

JUST AS AN IMPORTANT SIDE NOTE HERE.

▶▶ Gen. ~ 1: ~ 2 ~ gives us a fuller picture, ~ by showing that the Holy Spirit was involved in creating all that exists as well.

▷▷ The earth was without form and void, ~ and darkness was over the face of the deep. ~ And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

▶▶ The three Persons of our Triune God all actively participated in the work of creation.

▶▶ Now, ~ if you can figure all of that out, ~ please let me know. ~~ I would love to understand it as well.

▶▶ We are finite creatures. ~~ We cannot fully understand it.

OK, ~ NOW THE SECOND DETAIL PAUL GETS INTO AT THE END OF VERSE 16 ABOUT Jesus being the creator.

▶▶ Everything that exists ~ was created for Jesus.

▶▶ Most likely in the sense that everything exists ~ to display his glory ~ and to bring glory to him.

▶▶ Recall David's words. ~~ The heavens declare the glory of God, ~ and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

▷▷ Then recall that David goes on and says ~ that day after day the heavens and sky continue to speak.

↳↳ That night after night they make God known.

→→ They speak without a sound or word, ~ David says; ~~ their voice is never heard.

↳↳ Yet, ~ their message has gone throughout the earth, ~ and their words to all the world ~ proclaiming God's glory and craftsmanship.

▶▶ When Isaiah saw the Lord high and exalted and seated on a throne, ~ you can read about it in Is. 6, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ he noted that the seraphim ~ "called to another and said: ~~ "Holy, ~ holy, ~ holy ~ is the Lord of hosts; ~~ the whole earth is full of his glory!"

▶▶ Remember in Rom. 1:20 ~ Paul said that ~ ¶¶

▶▶ God's "eternal power and divine nature, ~ have been clearly perceived, ~ ever since the creation of the world, ~ in the things that have been made." ¶¶ 12/13

▶▶ And when Paul follows that up with **verse 21**, ~ "For although they knew God, ~ 77

▷▷ they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him," ~ 77

↳↳ one implication seems to be that ~ 77

→→ the creation is designed ~ to lead people to honor Jesus and to give thanks to him.

▶▶ Again, ~ the testimony of nature to its Creator so clear ~ 77

▷▷ that it is only through willful unbelief ~ that someone could reject it.

▶▶ So everything exists ~ to display Jesus' glory ~ and to bring glory to him.

CONCLUSION.

AND IN OUR LIVES, ~ MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, ~ 77

▶▶ are we honoring Jesus and giving thanks to him for his creation, ~ which includes us?

▶▶ And do we clearly see his glory in what has been made, ~ or have we fallen for the lie of evolution?

▶▶ Important questions for everyone to ponder this week.

LET'S PRAY 13/13