

An Open Letter to the Pastors / Continued III ~

Colossians 1:15 – 18

~ Our Spiritual Safari is an expedition through the entire Word of God. We search for the Lord Jesus Christ on every page of Scripture – Old Testament and New Testament alike. Well, we have found Him now – in the church at Colosse. More correctly, He found us in Paul's little epistle to the church in Colosse. It isn't often that we come to such a high and lofty mountaintop of exalted truths in the government of God. Our subject now is the Person of Christ Jesus; Who is Personally moving along with us — directly in our midst! We cannot say too much about Jesus; we'll never fully comprehend Him in all His glory and wonder; and we'll never become too familiar with Him, either....

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

~ This single verse answers every cult, false religion, and ism that denies the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. To understand this verse is to understand exactly how wonderful Jesus really is. Remember, Paul is helping the church at Colosse with an answer to the Gnosticism and other heresies that were creeping into the congregation. We talked about Gnosticism in our last report, and if you haven't read that report, I suggest you go back and do so now. Another heresy to come along at this particular time was Arianism. Their religious philosophy ultimately concludes Christ to merely be another creature. The first Council of Nicea answered this in rebuttal about three hundred twenty-five A.D. by saying, *"....the Son is very Man of very Man, and very God of very God."*

Gnosticism was perpetuating myriad heresies by the time in which we are studying; such as, Jesus was not God – He was just another prophet. They didn't see a need for a Savior from their sins; because they didn't see any sin in themselves. That crowd still holds the theory that mankind is not totally depraved by original sin; they erroneously believe that they are made sinlessly perfect in their own flesh — irrespective of what they do or how they live — and, today, they usually believe the earth is flat, too, for

some reason. Not always. But these are the basis for all cults and false doctrine; and it abounds.

Well, Christ Jesus is superior to all men from all ages. He is so completely different from any man that ever lived – and, of course, there has never been another Jesus. Naturally, that poses the conversation ending question for the evolutionist: if man is getting better, where is the next Jesus? Why hasn't another perfect man shown up?

"Image" in verse fifteen means *"icon;"* and Jesus could only be the image of the invisible God if He was God. Jesus is God. John said, *"....in the beginning was the Word and the Word was God...."* – and that's a beginning that has no beginning! Jesus had no beginning. Yet, *"....the Word became flesh."* That's the Christmas story beginning in the Gospel of John – and it is how Jesus became *"the image of the invisible God."* Because He is God, friends! He is the firstborn of all creation, but His birth was not His beginning. That reveals His direct and inseparable relationship to the everlasting Father throughout all ages of eternity. Remember, Paul is answering Gnosticism in this section of Scripture. Jesus was the only begotten from the dead. Verse eighteen says Christ is the firstborn from the dead. That's what the writer of the second Psalm meant when he said, *"....this day have I begotten Thee...."* - begotten from the dead. That's also what Paul said in his sermon in Antioch of Pisidia in the Galatian country in the Book of Acts, chapter thirteen, Paul said, *"....begotten from the dead."* That's what it means; irrespective of whether you agree with that, accept it, like – or not....

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

~ The Lord Jesus Christ has top priority and preeminent position in all things; because He is the Creator of all things. It's wonderful and important, and extremely difficult, to fully grasp and comprehend these depths. Christ was the Son of God before He came into the world to perform His earthly

ministry. He created this earth, and then Personally ministered to it! We're going to develop our understanding concerning the invisible and visible creations later in our Spiritual Safari; but, right here we have revealed different gradations of spiritual powers in the angelic host. We already know there are Seraphim, Cherubim, arch-angels, and common, everyday, vegetable-variety angels on the side of truth and righteousness. We were instructed on the enemy's perspective in Ephesians. We'll deal with this a little too closely for comfort in the prophecy of Daniel; and, by the way, our Spiritual Safari begins our prophetic expedition in Isaiah as soon as we complete this epistle to the Colossians. That's going to be a long, long ride, I promise you that.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the glue that holds everything in this universe together; from the physical atoms that comprise everything we touch and see, to our deepest emotional and psychological feelings and conceptions. Christ created all things for Himself. We're joint heirs with Him. I think we're going to be very busy in eternity – but we won't be earthlings – so we had better get busy preparing. If you don't prepare, you'll be one of the virgins who had no oil. The only way to prepare is through a proper, correct and complete Bible study.

Travel through God's vast universe with no gravitational restrictions will be awesome, yes, but we can't even conceive of the good stuff. Down here, let's just keep it real: if you want to know why a certain type of tree has a certain type of leaf on it, you can know very definitely that it's because that's the way Christ wanted it. We're going to be an integral part of His entire universe someday. That's what we are going to enter into for an inheritance. We don't dwell much on that in this safari because it's highly speculative, completely spiritual, and we, frankly, cannot even begin to conceive that type of fulfillment of spirit. Even so, I, personally, have to wonder; and I do....

18 And he is the head of the body of believers, the church: He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence ~

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