

Passage: (Colossians 1:15–23 NAS95)

1. **Intro:** Story of maintaining my image, asking my 13 year old son to shave my head while all the barbers are closed.
 1. Everyone of us has a mental image of Jesus, what picture do you have of our Compassionate Redeemer?
 2. When doing Evangelism around the world, the Jesus film from 1979 is shown in the local language and for millions, that’s the mental picture that they have of the Center of all their Hope.
 3. I recently enjoyed the mini-series of “Jesus: His Life” and I really enjoyed the portrayal of Jesus, probably my new favorite.
2. In this passage in Colossians, we view Paul’s mental image of Jesus as He explains it to the local church - and it’s powerful!
3. vv. 15-17 - Pauls exposition of the Pre-eminence of Christ: “He is the **image* of the invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation**”. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.” (Colossians 1:15–17 NAS95)
 1. ***Key Word: “Icon”.** Compare local mystery cults like the worship of Adonis. Show Picture of Jesus and explain the story of Ellen White seeing
 2. ****”Firstborn of all creation” (*prototokos*):** Wars have been fought over this aspect of Christ’s nature. Search [Arian Controversy](#) to see how much blood has been needlessly shed in history.
 1. Some think there was a time when Christ originated apart from the Father.
 2. Others believe that Paul refers to His resurrection...
3. “It seems best, therefore, to regard *prōtotokos* as a figurative expression describing Jesus Christ as first in rank, the figure being drawn from the dignity and office held by the first-born in a human family, or, more precisely, the first-born in a royal family.
4. Christ’s position is unique, authoritative, and absolute. He has been entrusted with all prerogatives and authority in heaven and earth.
5. Paul emphasizes the position of Christ because he is seeking to meet the arguments of the false teachers, who declared that Christ was created, and who denied His supremacy.” - SDABC
3. **Creator** - bold statement of Christ as a God/Man based on Jesus’ own claims - **John 14:8-11**
4. **“through Him and for Him”:** “Christ is the goal toward which all creation moves for its justification and very existence.” - SDABC
5. Regarding Verse 17: cross reference with Job
6. ““Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, Or loose the cords of Orion?” (Job 38:31 NAS95)
7. Constellations have inter-dependence based upon gravitation, and these two mentioned are “bound” together by gravity and God announced that to Job ~ 5,000 years ago?!
4. vv. 18-20 - Paul exalts Christ above every authority, as God has exalted Him through His sacrifice: “He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead*, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father’s good pleasure** for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether

things on earth or things in heaven.” (Colossians 1:18–20 NAS95)

1. ***“firstborn from the dead”**: Paul’s defense before King Agrippa - “that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”” (Acts 26:23 NAS95)
 2. See also “But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.” (1 Corinthians 15:20 NAS95)
 3. ** “Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness” - “Fullness” - “Pleroma” “The *Pleroma*, or fullness, must refer here to the Divine nature dwelling in the man Christ Jesus.” - Adam Clarke
 4. “having made peace” - “To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, ‘It is finished,’ had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ’s victory.” DA 758.2
5. vv. 21-23 - Paul’s affirmation of their positive doctrine: “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach* — if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.” (Colossians 1:21–23 NAS95)
1. ***“in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach”**:
6. **Key Positive Doctrines in Colosse**: The Priority of Christ Jesus as Creator, Redeemer, & Head of the church!
1. Reconciliation to God
 2. Salvation in Christ
 3. Righteousness by faith
 4. Living in Holiness
7. **Appeal Story**: Photo of Jesus thought of by Ellen White to be her mental picture of Jesus as seen in vision.