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**For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. Colossians 1:16**

The word "For" here is given as an explanation of the previous verse. There it said, "He is the image of the invisible God." In order to explain what that means, these words are now given. It is not that Jesus Christ is merely a knock-off copy of God, but that He is God, wholly and completely. This is now substantiated by the words, "For by Him all things were created." This takes us right back to Genesis 1:1 – "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." In that verse, the term "the heavens and the earth" are meant to be taken as an all-encompassing statement. Elohim created all things.

Elohim is the Creator; Jesus is the Creator... not hard to figure out what Paul is telling us. Further, the words "all things" (in Greek *ta panta*) given a collective sense – "the all." This then signifies the entire universe which includes all things. From the atoms to the galaxies, all things were created by Him. Without the article in Greek, it would mean all things individually, but the article shows that it is all things collectively. He created, and all things came to be.

It is the same message written by John at the very beginning of his gospel, and it is the same message which is repeated in various ways and by various writers in both Testaments of the Bible. Logically, there can be only one Creator. Anything created by Him is then a contingent being. A contingent being cannot create anything. And yet, man has done everything possible to deny the deity of Jesus Christ in order to separate Him from what is said about Him. They have even added words into this verse in order to change the meaning of it in order to obscure what God has done in and through Jesus Christ (see below).

The words "were created" are in the aorist tense. This then denotes a specific, definite event which occurred in history. It wasn't that there was a creation, and then a re-creation. Nor were there things created, and then later other things were created. Rather all things were created and they remain as the creation to this day.

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Going on, and as if what Paul said in his opening words was not enough, he continues with “that are in heaven and that are on the earth.” Again, this is an all-encompassing statement concerning the totality of creation. Paul’s words take us right back to Genesis 1:1, showing us that everything created by Elohim was created by Jesus. Elohim is God; Jesus is God... not hard to figure out what Paul is telling us. But to ensure that even the dull of mind can figure this out, he adds in the words, “visible and invisible.” We are to understand that “all things in heaven and that are on the earth” also includes those things which cannot be seen, such as spirits. Everything which is in the material world, and everything which is in the spiritual world, is included in Jesus’ creative efforts. No angel exists apart from His work of creation.

This is further defined by the term, “whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.” Within both the spiritual and the earthly realms, there are levels of authority which govern the affairs of sentient beings. These were all created by Christ Jesus, and none exists apart from His authority in creation. All things, and all levels of authority, are subordinate to Christ Jesus. As a qualifier to this statement though, Paul says this in 1 Corinthians 15 –

For “He has put all things under His feet.” But when He says “all things are put under *Him*,” *it is* evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. <sup>28</sup> Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

-1 Corinthians 15:27, 28

It may be worth your time to refer to the commentary on those verses to understand what is being relayed there. Jesus Christ is not above the Godhead, but is a member of it.

To finish up this verse, Paul gives the thought, “All things were created through Him and for Him.” He repeats the words *ta panta* or “all things” in order recapitulate what he has just said. They are to be taken collectively once again – “All things, collectively, were created through Him and for Him.” However, Paul changes the tense of the words “were created” from the aorist to the perfect tense. In so doing, it reads more literally, “All things have been created through Him and for Him.” Nothing is left undone, and His creative efforts are all-inclusive. The scholar Lightfoot says, “The latter describes the definite, historical act of creation; the former the continuous and present relations of creation to the Creator.”

Paul’s words of this verse are so clear, so meticulously presented, and so obvious as to what they are relaying that even a dolt, nay – a sub-dolt – can figure out what he is saying. Paul is not merely implying that Jesus is God, rather his words make the claim

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explicit. But this doesn't not fit with the theology of heretics, and so they must actually change the word of God in order to deny what Paul is saying. And so to understand the depths of hatred towards God that some are willing to go to in order to deny Jesus Christ His rightful position within the Godhead, this verse is translated by the aberrant cult, the Jehovah's Witnesses, as –

“because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and on the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him.”

The word “other” is inserted twice by them in an attempt to obscure the truth of who Jesus Christ is. Without any Scriptural support at all, they have changed God's word, thus bringing upon themselves eternal condemnation for their deceit. This is not an argument concerning a variation in a Greek manuscript, but rather a purposeful act intended to deceive the world about the truth of God in Jesus Christ. Do not allow yourself to be sucked into their web of deceit, but stand on the truth of Scripture which teaches that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man.

Life application: Stand on the truth of the Word of God. Jesus Christ is God and it is to Him that we are accountable for our life and doctrine. Should someone come to you with any other teaching, do not even greet them, lest you share in his wicked work.

**And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.** Colossians 1:17

Again, words of concerning the deity of Christ issue from Paul's pen. There are two clauses in this verse, both of which have the word “He” in the emphatic position. In English, we might say “He and only He.” As “He is before all things,” then nothing in time is before Him. As only God existed before all things, then Jesus Christ is God. He is the great I AM of Exodus 3:14, meaning the Lord, Yehovah, who is referred to throughout the Old Testament. He is self-existent and dependent on no other thing. Thus His claim of John 8:58 is more fully understood -

“Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

Paul's words here also confirm the words of the previous verse as well which said, “All things were created through Him and for Him.” If He alone is before all things, then He must be the Creator of all things. Only He is a necessary Being; all other things are contingent beings, dependent on Him for their existence and continuation. As only God is a Necessary Being, then Jesus must be God. This is then realized in the words, “and in

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Him all things consist.” The BLB translates this as, “in Him all things hold together.” Darby translates it as, “all things subsist together by him.”

The words here are restated by the author of Hebrews using the words, “...and upholding all things by the word of His power.” The universe, being contingent, was created by Him. However, it is also dependent on Him at all times for its continued existence. This shows us that He is God, who alone is absolutely necessary; He cannot not exist. All other things could simply not be. But God alone must exist. This is the Being that Paul says that Jesus Christ is. As the Bible teaches that God is also Father and Holy Spirit, then we are again being instructed in the doctrine of the Trinity. This is the inescapable result of accepting the words of Scripture when taken at face value.

Life application: One argument used by cults like the Jehovah’s Witnesses is that the Bible never uses the word “Trinity.” That is as stupid as a a football bat. The Bible also never uses the term “original sin,” and yet it is a doctrine which permeates Scripture. The Bible never uses the term “rapture,” but it is a doctrine which is found in several passages. Just because we use terms not specifically stated in Scripture, it does not mean that those terms are not taught in Scripture. Don’t be led astray by nutty arguments that have no basis in reality. Core doctrines can be explicitly stated or implicitly stated, but they remain core doctrines because they describe and explain what the Bible clearly teaches.

**And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. Colossians 1:18**

Paul continues on with his description of Christ. In the previous verse, he was seen in relation to the creation, He being before it and above it in all ways. Now He is shown in relation to the church, a body which came forth out of the creation, and which is based on what He has done in creation. Paul shows that “He is the head of the body, the church.” The word “He” is once again emphatic, just as it was when speaking of Him as being the image of God. The One who is the image of God, it is He who is the head of the body. There is parallelism running between the two thoughts which will be built on by Paul.

The people of the world are all a part of the creation, but because of the fall, and because of free-will within man, not all of those in creation have acknowledged God. However, within the stream of humanity, God has called out a group who do acknowledge Him, those in this group have become members of His body. Paul deals with this in the book of Ephesians, but there the stress is placed upon the unity of the body. Now he places the stress on the preeminent position of Christ within the body. Jesus Christ is the Head of this called-out group, the church.

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While speaking of Him, he says, “who is the beginning.” As He is the One who created all things, so He is the beginning of the new thing which God has done within the creation. In this body, which is called out of the world, Christ is the beginning of it, being “the firstborn from the dead.” This is where the parallelism finds its true anchor. It is between Christ’s position in relation to creation, and His position in relation to the church. He is “the firstborn over all creation” as was seen in verse 15, and He is “the firstborn from the dead.” The two thoughts place Christ Jesus in the preeminent position in all things.

However, there is a point which must be considered. Though Christ is the firstborn of both, His status in relation to the church differs from His status in relation to creation. He is the firstborn from the dead, having been One who was dead, just as those who come after Him also die; but though He is the firstborn over all creation, He is not a part of the creation. In other words, it shows the magnitude of what Christ, the Creator, was willing to do in order to identify with those He has called. He was willing to participate in the most humiliating aspect of all in order to fellowship with us. As death is the result of sin, He was willing to take our sin upon Himself and die. Having no sin of His own, He naturally had to resurrect. In His resurrection, He carried our sin away through His death, leaving it in death so that we might follow Him in life.

Because of this, He is the firstfruits from the dead, and the pattern for all who will afterwards arise from the dead. This is speaking of the resurrection, not a reanimation. Others have been reanimated to life – Lazarus for example, but Christ is the first of the resurrection, coming forth to eternal life. Death is conquered in Him, and so will be the case for all who are in Him.

Thus, whether in relation to creation, or in relation to the church, Christ is first so “that in all things He may have the preeminence.” The words in Greek read, “might become being first.” As Vincent’s Word Studies states concerning this, “He became head of the Church through His incarnation and passion, as He is head of the universe in virtue of His absolute and eternal being.” In all things, and in all ways, Jesus Christ is the first. He holds the position of absolute preeminence.

Life application: When we consider what God has done through Jesus Christ, we should be humbled to the very core of our being. It is impossible for us to truly imagine the value God has placed upon humanity when we consider the lengths He was willing to go through in order to bring us back to Himself. And He has done it in such a way that His glory radiates out in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, our Creator, our Savior, our Redeemer, and our matchless King.