

# GOD AND CHRIST (PART II): CHRIST THE CREATOR COLOSSIANS 01:16–17

## *Introduction: Creation*

This passage concerns the creation of the universe. It deals with such questions as...

- What is the origin of the universe?
- How did the world come into existence?
- What was the force that brought the universe forth?
- Is there more than one world or universe? More than the physical dimension of being? Are there invisible worlds in other dimensions?
- What is the purpose or end of things or of creation?
- What holds things together? What is the cohesive force that gives order to the universe? What is the power behind the laws of nature such as gravity?

There are basically three views of creation.

First, there is the secularist or humanist view, the idea that the world just happened by chance. No force or power created the world. No power stands behind the world. There was nothing, and then by some means and in some way some gas or some element of some sort just appeared...

- out of nothing
- out of nowhere

Then through eons of ages, the single gas or element became two elements and the evolutionary process began until eventually the world was created. Of course, there have been and always will be various ideas as to how the evolutionary process happened (see the present idea of the Big Bang theory that is somewhat popularized). However, the essence or seed of the secularist or humanist is that the world or universe began out of nothing and out of nowhere.

Second, there is the view that some god did create the world, but he is far off and removed from the world. The far off god is thought of in various ways:

=> Some see him as good; others as evil.

=> Some think he created the world himself; others that he used intermediary forces.

This was the view of Gnosticism, the false teaching that had seeped into the church at Colosse. It is also the view held by men in today's society. They just *feel* that God is far away, completely removed from the world. If they think about creation at all, they cannot see God as having created the world, for He is too far removed from it. He therefore must have used other forces or beings, other intermediaries or some other way to make the world.

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Third, there is the pure Christian view, the truth that God Himself, the Sovereign Majesty of the universe, created the world in the person of Jesus Christ. This is, of course, the discussion of this passage. As it is studied, note the force of its proclamation: it declares in no uncertain terms how the cosmos or universe began. Note also how the proclamation destroys all false teaching and how much more logical and understandable the truth is in comparison to the false beliefs. Christ is the Creator of the universe.

- I. Christ created all things (v. 16).
- II. Christ created all things for Himself (v. 16).
- III. Christ is before all (v. 17).
- IV. Christ holds all things together (v. 17).

### **I. *Colossians 01:16 Jesus Christ, the Creator***

Jesus Christ created all things. This is a matter of fact declaration, yet note how profound the truth is and how much is covered in the verse.

1. The words *by Him* (en autoi) mean *in Him*; that is, creation took place *in* Christ, *within* His very being.

- => The heart of Christ desired the world.
- => The mind of Christ planned the world.
- => The will of Christ destined the world.
- => The Word of Christ created the world.

The creation of the world took place within Christ, within His personality and being. The world was born within Him.

- => It was the *love of Christ* that moved His heart to create the world.
- => It was the *knowledge of Christ* that aroused His mind to plan the world.
- => It was the *riches of His grace* that stirred Him to will the world.
- => It was the *power of His Word* that energized or brought the world into existence.

The universe exists because of Christ and because of Him alone. The idea for the universe was born *in Him*, and the actual creation of the universe took place by His own energy and effort. Jesus Christ Himself brought the universe into existence.

2. The words *all things* (ta panta) are very significant. They mean...

- “all things” collectively, that is, all the things within the universe were created by Christ.
- “all things” individually, that is, every single detail of creation, was created by Christ. Each particle and thing, each being and element has come into being in Christ and in Him alone.

The point is that nothing exists that was not created by Christ. All things were made by Him, even the very details of every single thing.

3. The words *were created* (ektisthe) are in the Greek aorist tense which simply means that creation was an historical event. Creation actually took place in this way. Jesus Christ Himself *created* the world. There was a time, a day, an hour, a moment when He spoke the Word and all things in their intricate detail came into being.
4. The creation of Christ includes all the worlds of all the dimensions of being. This is what is meant by the statement, “things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities.” Note how all inclusive the statement is:  
=> If there are other *visible and living planets and beings* in outer space, Christ created them.  
=> If there are invisible worlds and beings in other dimensions, Christ created them.

It does not matter what kind of world or creatures they may be — thrones, powers, rulers or authorities — Christ created them all. There is nothing in existence that He has not created.

=> no planet            => no vegetation            => no star            => no mineral  
=> no creature            => no element            => no dimension            => no thing

***John 1:3*** *Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

***1 Cor 8:6*** *Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.*

***Eph 3:9*** *And to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.*

***Col 1:16*** *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*

## **II. Colossians 01:16 Purpose of Creation**

Christ created all things *for Himself*. Think for a moment: if Christ really created all things, to whom would creation look? Who would creation praise, honour, worship and serve? The answer is obvious: creation looks to its Creator. Creation owes its existence to its Creator; therefore, creation is to exalt its Creator. Creation finds its end and consummation in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ created the universe...

- that in the ages to come He might show the riches of His grace and kindness (Eph. 2:7).
- that He might reveal His glory (Rom. 8:18).

Simply stated, the universe was created for Christ, that it might be His...

- to love
- to receive
- to bless
- to save
- to redeem
- to receive

Therefore, creation owes its praise and honour, worship and service to the Lord Jesus Christ. The universe exists for its Creator.

*1 Cor 15:28* When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

*Eph 1:10* To be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfilment – to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

*Col 1:19-20* For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

*Heb 1:2* But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

*Heb 2:10* In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

*Rom 11:36* For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

### III. *Colossians 01:17 Jesus Christ Is Eternal*

Jesus Christ is before all things. This is a critical point; it means two things.

1. Jesus Christ was before all things in time. Before the first thing was ever created, Jesus Christ was already there. He is not a created being; He is the Creator. There was nothing existing in the universe when He created. Before the beginning of time, before the universe ever existed, He was there. He alone is eternal.

*Psa 90:2* Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

*Prov 8:23* I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began.

*John 1:1* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

*John 17:5* “And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”

*Phil 2:6-8* Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a

*servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!*

**Rev 22:13** *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.*

2. Jesus Christ is before all things in importance, supremacy, and pre-eminence. Nothing is superior to Him. He alone is the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. He alone stands before all as Supreme; all else — every single thing — stands under Him owing their existence, worship and service to Him.

**Rom 9:5** *Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.*

**Col 1:15** *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

**Col 1:17** *He is before all things.*

**Thought 1.** This point destroys all ideas that Jesus Christ is only a great teacher, only one among many great men who can lead us to God.

#### **IV. Colossians 01:17 Jesus Christ, Creator**

Jesus Christ holds all things together. Wuest quotes Lightfoot as making an excellent statement on this point:

*[Jesus Christ] is the principle of cohesion in the universe. He impresses upon creation that unity and solidarity which makes it a cosmos (an ordered system) instead of a chaos (an unformed mass). Thus (to take one instance) the action of gravitation, which keeps in their places things fixed and regulates the motions of things moving, is an expression of His mind (Ephesians and Colossians, Vol. 1, p. 185).*

Barclay, as is so often the case, is descriptive in his exposition:

*...it is the Son who, as it were, holds the world together. That is to say, all the laws by which this world is an order and not a chaos are an expression of the mind of the Son. The law of gravity and all the so-called scientific laws are not only scientific laws; they are divine laws. They are the laws which make sense of the universe. They are the laws which make this a reliable and a dependable world. Every law of science and of nature is, in fact, an expression of the thought of God. It is by these laws, and therefore by the mind of God, that the universe hangs together, and does not disintegrate in chaos (The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, p. 144).*

The point is clear: Jesus Christ is what holds the world together. It is His love and power...

- that keeps the universe from flying apart and disintegrating
- that keeps all creatures from utterly destroying themselves through savagery

All things are held together by Jesus Christ, by His...

- energy
- unity
- force
- solidarity
- power
- cohesion
- order

**Col 1:17** *He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

**Heb 1:3** *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

**Thought 1.** Jesus Christ is eternal. This says several important things about Christ.

- (1) Christ reveals the most important Person in all the universe. He reveals all that God is and wants to say to man. Therefore, Christ must be diligently studied, and all that He is and says must be heeded to the utmost (see Jn. 5:24).
- (2) Christ *reveals* God perfectly. He is God; therefore, when we look at Christ we see God (see *Jesus the Truth*, Jn. 14:6. See Jn. 14:9.)
- (3) Christ reveals that God is the most wonderful Person. God is far beyond anyone we could have ever dreamed. He is loving and caring, full of goodness and truth: He will not tolerate injustices: murder, stealing, lying, cheating, abuse, mistreatment, ignoring and neglecting of husband, wife, child, neighbour, brother, sister or stranger. God loves and is working and moving toward a perfect universe that will be filled with people who choose to love, worship, live and work for Him (see Jn. 5:24-29).

**Thought 2.** The very nature of Christ is...

- to exist eternally
- to exist in a perfect state of being, knowing nothing but eternal perfection
- to exist in perfect communion and fellowship eternally (see 1 Jn. 1:3)

Note: it is the very nature of Christ that shall be imparted to believers; therefore, all three things will become our experience.

**John 14:20** *On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.*

**Rom 8:29** *For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

**2 Cor 3:18** *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

**Phil 3:21** *Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

***2 Pet 1:4** Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

***1 John 3:2** Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ■*