

Christ and Creation

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In approaching this subject, we are brought at once to the doctrine of the Trinity. What a vital, foundational, sublime, mysterious, thoroughly biblical doctrine! So much rises and falls with it! It is imperative that we have clear views on the Oneness and the Threeness.

Christ is the eternal Son, the second Person of the Godhead, eternally generating from the Father, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is right that we focus on Him because He is the Mediator sent by the Father, and the One to whom the Holy Spirit bears witness.

We want to consider what the Scriptures tell us about Him specifically in regard to creation. Let us mark:

The Creation of All Things is Attributed to Christ the Son.

Several texts clearly state this truth:

- John 1:1-3,10: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. ...He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."*
- Colossians 1:16: *"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."*
- Hebrews 1:2: *"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he*

made the worlds." Note that Christ played a mediating role in creation. Also v. 10 refers to the Son: *"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands."*

- 1 Corinthians 8:6: *"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."* Again note the mediating position of Christ. We see the same in-

- Ephesians 3:9: *"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."*

Other texts show creation to be a Trinitarian work:

- It is the work of the Father: Isaiah 40:28: *"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"*

It is the work of the Holy Spirit: Job 33:4: *"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."*

Also, note the plurals in:

- Genesis 1:1: ...God (pl.) created (sing.).
- Genesis 1:26: *And God (pl.) said, Let us make man in our image (sing.), after our likeness (sing.).* When we talk about the Triune God, niceties of grammar do not always apply!

- Ecclesiastes 12:1: *Remember now thy Creator (pl.).*
- Isaiah 54:5: *For thy Maker (pl.) is thine husband.*
- Job 35:10: *But none saith, Where is God (sing.) my maker (pl.)*
- Psalm 149:2: *Let Israel rejoice in him (pl.) that made him.*

Sum: Without the doctrine of the Trinity we will get dizzy sorting out these passages! But the Trinity makes them more plain.

Christ Himself Was Not Created

1. The ancient heresy of the Arians (taught by Arius, c. 250-336 AD) was exactly this: that Christ was created, was a distinct substance from the Father. Athanasius correctly defended the biblical doctrine of the eternal Trinity at Nicea. At the time of the Protestant Reformation, Socinus taught that the Son of God did not exist until he was conceived in the womb of Mary. He and his followers called themselves "Unitarians" as opposed to Trinitarians. These same and similar heresies continue to this day under various names: Modalists (Sabellians), Unitarians, and every cult you can name (i.e. Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, etc.). All of them have some fatal flaws in their doctrine of Christ, which usually include the heresy that Christ was created.

2. What saith the Scripture?

- John 1:1-2: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."* When the beginning began, Christ was already there. Verse 3, *"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* He could not make Himself, so He must be eternally self-existing as God...which is precisely what v. 4 says: "In him was life."

- Consider Christ's many I AM statements.

- Consider His Alpha and Omega statements in Revelation 1. If He were a created Being, He would have to say "I am Beta and Omega"!

- Micah 5:2: *"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."* He is eternal!

- Proverbs 8:22-23: Wisdom personified speaks: *"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was*

set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."

3. There are two supposed "problem texts."

1) Colossians 1:15: "*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.*" But note that firstborn is not "first created"; there is a difference! Firstborn can signify highest in rank or authority. Geoffrey Wilson explains: "The term firstborn does not refer to temporal priority but to superiority of rank (cf. Psalm 89:27). 'What is meant is the unique supremacy of Christ over all creatures as the Mediator of their creation' (TDNT) As then all things were created through Christ, he stands over against the entire creation as its rightful Lord and Heir." A.R. Fausset says that the phrase of every creature is a genitive that designates point of view or in comparison to, but not of the same kind. In other words, the idea is the firstborn before all creation.

If all things were created by Him, as v. 16 affirms, then it means He Himself was not created, for He is a thing! Furthermore, v. 17 says He is before all things, i.e. eternally pre-existent. This text actually disproves that Christ was created!

2) Revelation 3:14: "*These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.*" The word beginning (arche) can mean "origin, source, that by which anything begins to be. Young's Literal Translation says, "the chief of the creation of God." In other words, Christ is the One who created all things. Therefore, He could not be created Himself

Far from being problem texts, these texts boldly affirm that Christ was not created, but that He created all things.

4. God could not create another God. If so, the original God would lose His supremacy over all things, because He would not be supreme over the new God. If He did maintain His supremacy over the new God, the new God would not really be a God at all!

5. A created being could not possess powers of creation, for as a created being he is necessarily finite and therefore limited in power.

Sum: It is a fatal error to reduce the eternal Son of God to a mere creature!

Christ Testified Concerning Creation.

We find our Lord making several passing references to creation:

- Mark 2:27: "*And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.*" He can speak with authority on this subject because He made both the Sabbath and man!
- Matthew 19:4: "*And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female.*" (Note the humility of the God-man not pointing to Himself as Creator, even though He was, as many texts say.) Then in v. 8, "*He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.*" He speaks with perfect knowledge of the beginning...because He was there!
- Mark 13:19: "*For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.*" Only He possessed perfect knowledge of the entirety of afflictions.
- John 8:44: "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*" Christ observed the devil's departure from truth and his murder of mankind in Adam in Genesis 3.

Christ Sustains Creation

He not only created all things, but He makes them to continue to exist.

- Colossians 1:17: "...by him all things consist." He makes all substances to hold together. Without His sustaining, all would disintegrate.

- John 5:17: "*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*" The Jews understood this statement better than the cults today—He was equating Himself with God! How? In the work of sustaining life; in this instance, the healing of a sick man.

- Hebrews 1:3: "...upholding all things by the word of his power." The powerful word that created still carries or bears everything along.

Christ Redeems Creation

Friends, this is the most amazing story ever told! God sent His Son who created all things into that very creation. John 1:14, "*the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.*" He who is above time stepped into time. He who created entered creation! He assumed a human body and soul in order to live the life we could not live and to die the death that we dare not die, for our redemption.

In this way He creates twice: (1) in the original creation, out of nothing; (2) in the new creation, out of worse than nothing—depraved humanity He is twice a Mediator in creative acts. The same term, create, is used to describe redemption:

- 2 Corinthians 5:17: "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.*"

- Ephesians 2:10: "*we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.*"

- Ephesians 4:24: "*...the new man...is created in righteousness and true holiness.*"

- Also note Colossians 1:18 as parallel to v. 15; Christ is first in rank and authority over those whom He regenerates, restores, and finally

glorifies. All who believe in Him will be with Him in new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2Peter 3:13). Romans chapter 8 promises deliverance for creation.

This was God's eternal purpose all along!

- Luke 1:68-70: "*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began...*"

- Acts 3:21: "*Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*"

It was all truly created by him and for him (Colossians 1:16).

Christ's attachment to creation will never end, for His glorified human nature lives forever. And we who know Him as Savior will see that glorified humanity in a state of glory ourselves!

How great is Christ's interest in creation! In Proverbs 8:31, Wisdom personified (i.e. Christ) was rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. Imagine His thoughts as He created the spot where His human nature would be born!...where He would feed multitudes, calm storms, raise the dead! ...where He would suffer and die and rise again for our salvation!

If the eternal Son of God delights in creation, let us also delight in it. If He delights in the redemption of creation, let us also delight in it. If He delights in us, let us also delight in Him!