

“The Infinite Sacrifice of the Invisible God”

Col. 1:15-23

Knowing Him and Making Him Known

The extent of our forgiveness is in direct proportion to the nature of the sacrifice. The nature of the sacrifice shows us the fullness of our forgiveness and His cross work.

I. A description of the sacrifice offered (vv. 15-19)

A. The sacrifice offered in relation to deity (v. 15a)

He is the image of the invisible God (v. 15a). Jesus and the Father are one in essence, but distinct in function (John 10:31).

B. The sacrifice offered in relation to creation (vv. 15b-17)

1. He is the firstborn of every creature (v. 15b)

The idea of ‘Firstborn’ in verse 15 and 18 speaks of position and status not origin or made.

2. He has created all things (v. 16a).

a. All things were created by **(en/ dia)** Him

b. All things were created for **(eis)** Him

c. He is before all things (v. 17a)

d. All things by **(en)** Him consist (v. 17b)

To have Him and nothing else is to have all things. To have all things without Him is to have nothing. Without God actively holding things together the worlds would dissolve.

This is the same language used throughout the New Testament to describe both God the Father and God the Son in the creative activity (Rom. 11:36 and John 1:1-3).

Continued on the other side...

C. The sacrifice offered in relation to the Church (v. 18a)

1. He is the head of the body (v. 18a)

What is the significance of identifying Christ as the head?

2. He is the beginning (v. 18b)

All things find in Him their source of and purpose for existing.

3. He is the firstborn from the dead (v. 18c)

The New Testament consistently identifies our Lord as being the first one to have been resurrected from the dead and not to have died again (Acts 26:23; 1 Cor. 15:20-23; Rev. 1:5,18).

II. A description of the salvation secured (vv. 14, 20, 21)

A. He has redeemed all things (v. 14)

Redemption is the releasing of an object based on a payment. We are released from the debt of sin because of the payment of His blood. As a consequence of this payment we now enjoy the forgiveness of sin. We have been released from sin's penalty.

B. He has reconciled all things (vv. 20,21)

Reconciliation always implies two warring factions. Reconciliation always has two groups that are at odds with each other. And in this case it is finite man and infinite God.

The redemptive activity of Jesus Christ silenced the wrath of God, satisfied the justice of God and thus enabled man to be reconciled to God.