**Christ: The Firstborn of all Creation**

Have you ever been tripped up by Colossians 1:15, “The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.” I have. Is Paul saying Jesus was created, what before the 7 days of Genesis? What does that mean for the Trinity if Jesus was made by the Father? Is Jesus the created creator?

Slow down there, Betsy.

To get what Paul is talking about here, we need to think like Paul, like a Jew. The Jewish world rose and fall on “birthright.” (Remember the Jacob/Esau drama). The word “firstborn” appears 108 times in the Jewish world of the OT and only 9 times in the Greek world of the NT. Just look at the genealogies in Genesis, phrases like Gen 22:21, “Uz the firstborn…” are common (I knew those genealogies would matter someday).

Paul, even though he wrote in Greek, was Jewish and thought like a Jew and probably dreamt in Hebrew. Put it all together for Col 1:15 and watch what happens. The son is the firstborn over all creation.

Jesus is the firstborn, the heir. Paul’s talking about a position, a title, an entitled legacy of ownership and responsibility; he’s not making a statement about Jesus' origin. Paul is saying, “Jesus is His Father’s heir, the legal representative, that he holds the managerial responsibility of all creation.”

Let that sit for a second.

If Jesus is legally responsible for our broken sinful world what would that mean? How could one man tend to or care for such a broken place?

“When I survey the wondrous cross.”

Do you see? The cross was the avenue by which the Heir of creation might right the wrongs of the world. To fulfill the duties entrusted upon Him as the firstborn, the Son had to endure the cross.

One last thought. If Jesus is the firstborn over all creation, what does that mean for us as His followers? Think about Jesus' words at the last supper, “ I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom…”
Or Paul’s charge in Romans 8:29, “For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

Jesus has passed on the responsibilities of the firstborn; He has tossed us the keys to the car and laid on our heads a new mantle of responsibility… the same responsibility that led Him to the cross. How will we handle this charge? Do we have what it takes to follow in His footsteps too, “take up our cross?” I pray that we do.