



Phil. 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him **a name which is above every name:**

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for **there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**

Prov. 18:10 **The name of the LORD is a strong tower:** the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

During this Christmas season, it was appropriate that we focus specifically on passages that contain various names related to the Lord Jesus Christ related to His birth. This afternoon, we look at another passage that reflects a different beginning and a different aspect of being “the firstborn.” The Lord Jesus is called “...the beginning, the firstborn from the dead...”

Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

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:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: **who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;** that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

“The Beginning, The Firstborn From The Dead”

What does it mean to be “the firstborn from the dead?” We will consider the context of the passage and its meaning.

I. THE PERSON OF GOD REVEALED, 1:15

A. The Image of the Invisible God, 1:15a “Who is the image of the invisible God...”

❖ The Incarnation manifested “the image of the invisible God.”

B. The Implications of the Incarnate God, 1:15b

“...the firstborn of every creature:”

- ❖ Via the Incarnation, the Lord Jesus is first in the series of new creatures, i.e. 2 Cor. 5:17.
- ❖ The term “firstborn” was a reference regarding rank of privilege (Ishmael/Isaac, Esau/Jacob, etc.)

II. THE POWER OF GOD REVEALED, 1:16

A. The Lord Jesus Christ Created the Universe,
1:16a “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...”

❖ The Greek word for “by” in verse 16 is “**ἐν**” and some critics of the King James Bible point out such a “scholarly” fact.

❖ The NIV and ASV translate the verse as follows:

New International Version

For **in** him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

American Standard Version

for **in** him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him;

<https://biblehub.com/colossians/1-16.htm>

❖ Yet, the NASB translates it as...

New American Standard Bible

for **by** Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. <https://biblehub.com/colossians/1-16.htm>

❖ If “in him” is correct, that would mean that *in* Jesus would possess demons, “thrones, or dominions,” etc. The correct translation is “*by.*”

B. The Lord Jesus Christ Claimed the Universe,
1:16b “...all things were created by him, and
for him:”

❖ The last part of verse 16 and all of verse 17 are
self-explanatory.

C. The Lord Jesus Christ Controls the Universe,
1:17 “And he is before all things, and by him
all things consist.”

III. THE PURPOSES OF GOD REVEALED, 1:18

A. Who Christ is in these Purposes, 1:18a

1. He Heads a New Body, 1:18a “And he is the head of the body, the church...”

❖ A local, visible church is to represent the Lord Jesus Christ on this earth.

2. He Heads a New Beginning, 1:18b-c

a. He Originated Life, 1:18b
“...**who is the beginning...**”

❖ As mentioned previously in Col. 1:16, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator and thus “the beginning,” also described as the “alpha and omega” and “the first and the last.”

Rev. 1:8 **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending**, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. ...

11a “Saying, **I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last...**”

Rev. 21:6 And he said unto me, It is done. **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end**. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Rev. 22:13 **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.**

(See also Isa. 41:4 and Isa. 44:6.)

b. He Overcame Death, 1:18c

“...the firstborn from the dead...”

- ❖ He that designed the womb, defeated the tomb.
- ❖ Man's inevitable appointment with death can be overcome by Him who is LIFE. (Jn. 14:6)

- ❖ Moses, Elijah, and three that Jesus rose from the dead were not resurrected.
- ❖ The difference in life being restored and life resurrected is that Jesus is the only one that was resurrected.

1 Cor. 15:44 **It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.** There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit.

1 Cor. 15:42 So also *is* **the resurrection of the dead**.
It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

❖ As “the firstborn from the dead,” the Lord Jesus established the principle and hope for believers regarding a future resurrection.

Jn. 11:25 Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection, and the life**: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Rom. 1:4 And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead:**

Rom. 6:5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, ***we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:***

Summary

- ❖ Because of the Lord Jesus Christ and all that He is, believers may rest in Him and His promises for the present and the future.
- ❖ The last part of 1 Cor. 1:18 is a wonderful summary of this passage:
 - B. Where Christ is in these Purposes, 1:18d "... that in all *things* he might have the preeminence."

Conclusion

1 Cor. 15:17 And **if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.**

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

19 **If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.**

20 But **now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.**

21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as **in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.**

23 But every man in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.**