***Angels (incomplete)

Colossians 1:15-20

COL-119***

**© Berean Memorial Church of Irving, Texas, Inc. (1995)**

Our subject is "Hymn in Honor of Christ," segment number nine in Colossians 1:15-20.

We have seen that false teachers in the city of Colossae were denying the deity of Jesus of Nazareth. They viewed Him as a superior, created angel who was in human form. Satan always tries to deceive sinners about the deity of Jesus Christ, so that they will not be saved. This is the problem with all the religions of the world. Jesus is something less than divine. And that is a very great subtlety. It happens all the time. Every religion that Satan puts together in the world always focuses on degrading Who Christ really is. If Jesus Christ were not God, He could not have been sinless, and so He would not have been qualified to bear the sins of mankind, and to pay the penalty of death in our behalf.

The apostle Paul declares that Jesus Christ, however, is both God and that He is the Preeminent Person of all the created universe. There is no superior prophet. So, I don't care if Islam is the fastest growing delusion religiously in this country. Their basic belief is wrong. Their basic belief says that: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohamed is his prophet." There is a considerably greater God than Allah. Allah was the name of the moon-god of the Arab world that Mohamed was told to select as *the* God. And Mohamed is not his prophet. The Prophet of the living God, the final voice of prophecy, is our Lord Jesus Christ. That's why I'm stressing this for you – to be aware of this attack upon the person of Jesus Christ, and about our being participants in treating Him, and dealing with Him, even in religious activities, that denigrates His person as a member of the Godhead. We need a new respect and a new devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a great loyalty, because the world is moving toward the world of the antichrist. And when that happens, we will basically be gone. But in the preparation, we Christians are still going to come under fire. Jesus is Very God of Very God, and He is true humanity. There is nobody above Him. He is the Preeminent One in all of the universe.

So, in Colossians 1:16, we have read, "For in Him all things were created." It declares that Jesus Christ was the Creator of the universe. All that was created originated in the mind of Jesus Christ, Who is the designer and the maker. And last Sunday, we blew your mind by just relating to you some of the things about creation. And I could see in your very eyes, you just shook your head. Some people did shake their heads, as it was incomprehensible what is out there in God's creation. Where did it all come from? The mind of a great designer, the Person of Christ.

That's what Paul means when he says, "For by Him." And that should be translated: "In Him, all things are created." The sheer size and the complexity of the created universe testifies to the deity of Jesus Christ. What is out here took power that is omnipotent.

**Creation vs. Evolution**

Furthermore, we pointed out to you that when Paul used the word "created:" "All things by Him were created, this word indicates a non-evolutionary, instant bringing into existence by the spoken Word of Jesus Christ, which declares to us that matter is not eternal. It had to be made. And Christ made it. And that word "created" in the grammar indicates that it was an instantaneous act – out of nothing. It was just the spoken Word of Jesus Christ. The material universe and the life forms on earth did not evolve from eternal matter over vast periods of time by blind chance.

So, you have two alternatives to consider, and only two: Either the universe is the product of the creative work of Jesus Christ as God by His spoken Word in an instantaneous production; or else, you have the explanation of the unbelieving scientists who say that matter is eternal, and what we see gradually evolve by chance over billions of years. They like to describe evolution as science so that you will think that it is not a matter of faith. But evolution is as much a matter of faith as creation, for the simple reason that you can't take it into a laboratory and reproduce it. Nobody can go into a scientific laboratory and reproduce creation. Nobody can go into a laboratory and reproduce evolution.

So, both of these are accepted on faith. And faith, as you know, has no merit itself (no value). It's only what you put your faith in that determines the value of that faith. So, you will either put your faith in the revelation of Scripture concerning the origin of the universe, or you will put it in unbelieving scientists – one or the other. But it's an act of faith either way. We do know that the laws of science, in fact, the most basic fundamental laws of the first and second laws of thermodynamics, for example, do not support evolution. And the scientists know that. But they pretend that it is true anyway, in order to escape having to recognize the authority of Jesus Christ, the Creator over them. And if they recognize the authority of Jesus Christ as the Creator, then where do the rules come from? He is the Quarterback Who calls the plays. And doctrine is the plays that he calls.

So, the scientific world knows that evolution is scientifically impossible, but that's the best that they can come up with because the alternative is to have faith in Scripture, and thus, to have faith in Christ. Well, I think it makes a whole lot more sense to believe that God designed it, and did it rather than that chance brought all this about on its own. And certainly that's what the apostle is saying: "For in Him all things were created."

There's always a great battle in the educational world about teaching both evolution and creationism. The National Education Association, the liberal labor union that is the cause of our disastrous public school system, does not want both taught, because every time they do it, the contrasts are so ridiculous and so obvious to every kid in the class – that it all happened by itself, over against the fact that the power of God planned it and created it. So, when you put the two models up one against another, the children almost laugh out loud.

Some years ago I was showing a movie in summer camp, which we do every evening before we go out to campfire instructional things. And this particular movie was very interesting. The kids were glued to it. And the speaker said, "50 million years ago, this condition developed on the earth," and the place exploded in laughter. And I looked and I thought, "Did I miss something? What was so funny?" I almost hit the reverse button to see what I had missed. And then I realized that to these kids, for somebody to say that 50 million years ago, this is what developed on the earth as part of evolution, they burst out laughing. To them it was a ridiculous asinine statement. And I thought, "God bless Berean Christian Academy, and the Berean Youth Clubs, and all the ministries of Berean Church that made that very clear to these kids. When you put the two together, evolution is ludicrous. The Bible is the truth.

Now, the extent of this creation follows in verse 16. He says, "Both in the heavens and on the earth." First, it was in the heavens, and please notice that it’s plural. This refers to the three heavens. There is the first heaven, which is the atmospheric heaven that we live in. There's the second heaven, which is the interstellar space that we looked at a little bit last week. And then there is the third heaven, which is the throne room of God Himself. And when it refers to "the heavens," it is referring to the fact that all three spheres above this earth, and everything in it, was created by the Lord Jesus Christ. Heaven is a place – a very definite place. It is where God is present with His saved people.

In Ephesians 6:9, we read, "And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening (that is, their servants), knowing that both their master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him." This, of course, is referring to the proper handling of servants and slaves in those days, and that to be aware that there is a superior Master Who is God, Who is in heaven.

**Positional Truth**

Then Ephesians 2:6 also says, "And raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This is a declaration of positional truth. You are already, as a Christian, in heaven. You are positionally seated there, and you can never be dislodged from that place in heaven. Someday, you'll be actually (physically) there with a human body. But you're as good as there now. It's a done deed. And this is an important verse: "He raised up Jesus Christ, and He seated us with Him." Where is he? He's in the third heaven. And we are there in Christ. Therefore, we are positionally with Him in heaven.

Positional truth is very important truth, rarely spoken about in church groups. The average Christian you speak to would look at you with glazed eyes if you talked to him about positional truth. They don't understand that. They don't understand that God has done something for you – the fulfillment of which is yet to come. Yes, we have salvation which is past. Once you believe in Christ as Savior, you're in the family of God. But we also have salvation in the present. And that salvation is being developed as we are entering into the significance of being a human being, indwelt by Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit, and becoming more in the image of Christ day-by-day. That's salvation in process now. Then there is ultimate salvation – "When we stand in His presence," 1 John says, "we shall be like Him." When we see Him, we'll be exactly like Him. We will have no more sin; no more sin nature; no more capacity to do evil; no more tears; no more sorrows; no more agonies; and, no more physical defects. We shall be in the perfection of Jesus Christ.

So, positional truth is very important, because that determines where you're going to be. And once you understand positional truth, then you understand how foolish it is to speak about losing your salvation. Paul says that creation is everything in the heavens, but it's also, he said, "Everything on earth." And this, of course, refers to the planet Earth and the whole universe. Everything was created by Jesus Christ. Matter was not eternal. It was brought into existence by the spoken Word of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The awesomeness of the earth and its universe, obviously, requires a cause that is great enough to produce such a creation. And when the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ is that cause, it demonstrates the fact that He is God. The Bible indicates that the universe itself proves, in fact, the existence of God. Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than His creation as God. He's not just some created super angel.

Then Paul buttons this down by using the words "visible" and "invisible." "Everything visible" refers to the things that are on the earth. "Everything invisible" refers to the things which are in the three heavens.

**Ranks of Angelic Beings**

Then he zeros in on what was probably attack in Colossae against Christ. The message that the false teachers were giving was that He was a super created angel. So, God the Holy Spirit leads Paul to zero in on angelic beings. When he uses the word "invisible," he zeros in on a category of invisible beings. He calls them: "thrones, dominions, rulers, or authorities." These refer to angelic beings. Elsewhere in the Scripture, these are categorized in a very similar way. One of the things we cannot explain, just from the words, is exactly what these words mean. What they refer to are ranks. They had various ranks when they were created. And with every angelic rank, as in an officer corps in a military unit, there comes certain authority, and certain privileges, and certain powers that you may exercise.

Angels are divided into various categories. The highest one we know is called the archangel. It used to be Satan. Now it's Michael. And these angels work within spheres of their own authority, and God uses them accordingly. This statement is a blow to the false doctrine in Colossae – that Jesus Christ was a high-level, created angel Himself, because what it says is that He did the creating of these angel authorities with all their various ranks.

**Angels**

Now please remember that these include both those angels which remained loyal to God, and those which rebelled against Him (the demon angels). Within the demon ranks, there is this same kind of level of authority of angels. Paul recognizes the reality of angels as part of the creation of Jesus Christ. Angels are for real. There's a lot of ignorance about angels, but I also notice that there are a lot of books coming out on the market because people are being interested in angels.

One of the children in the academy recently, the kids were discussing something, and he turned to me and said, "Dr. Danish, when people are saved, and they go to heaven, do they become angels?" And many people think that. They think that when you get to heaven, you become an angel. They even think that you have wings. And they think that you will float around on a cloud, and take harp lessons from the angels. Angels are very real beings, and they are dramatically important in your life. It is too bad that people don't know what the Bible really teaches about angels. But one thing is very clear. The apostle Paul says that angels are a reality – part of the creation of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:20-21: "Which He brought about in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all (and here we get the angelic ranks again) rule, authority, power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come."

**The Holy Angels**

So these created beings are out there in various ranks of authority. We find from Scripture that they break down into the categories of: first, the holy angels. We sometimes refer to them as the elect angels.

1 Timothy 5:21, "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality." Paul is instructing Timothy on the basis of the fact that he operates in the presence of God the Father and of Jesus Christ. And he says: "His chosen angels," because those of us who who've gotten into salvation did that by being chosen by God for eternal life. The angels who remain loyal were also chosen. And these chosen angels bear a great deal of impact and influence on our lives. Therefore, we operate with respect in their presence.

**The Demon Angels**

There are, of course, the demon angels – those who rebelled against God, and went along with Satan. Ephesians 6:12: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against (here again are categories of angels) the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places." Outer space is filled with demonic beings – demonic beings of various ranks of authority and power. Angels, of course, have no power apart from their Creator Jesus Christ. They wouldn't even exist if it were not for Him. Holy angels can only serve God by the power from Jesus Christ, their Creator.

Angels are not the Christian source, however, of grace and spiritual power. We don't worship angels. We don't pray to angels. Our grace and blessing and spiritual power comes from Jesus Christ. A believer out of temporal fellowship is in a terribly bad condition. And as I pointed out to you, while a demon spirit cannot indwell a believer (only unbelievers), nevertheless, a Christian who is out of temporal fellowship can be demonized, though he cannot be separated from his salvation. Romans 8:35-39 make it very clear that nothing can separate you from your salvation. But do not forget that Satan is described as presenting himself as an angel of light, so that he looks attractive, and like he's got something that is from God. And he goes about as a lion. And lions are cats. And cats walk very pussyfoot-like, so they can creep up on their victims and devour them. And the Bible is very clear that Satan and his demons are constantly on the prowl to get a Christian. They are in rebellion against their Creator. However, we have to remember that they have all been defeated at the cross.

Colossians 2:15 says, "When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities (angel categories), He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him." Like a general in the Roman army, coming back from a conquest: trailing behind him are all the people that he has defeated (the enemy), with their chains, and under the guard of the Roman soldiers, making a public display of them. That's what God the Father did with all these demons, once Christ defeated them upon the cross.

So, these demons, while still very powerful, cannot touch you unless you decide to let them do it. How can you do that? The best way is to stay home from church. Let the spiritual fires burn low during the week, when you're not in the Word of God. Your mind will become so distorted and so disoriented, you won't know how to do anything right, from rearing your children, to preparing your meals, and what to buy at the grocery store. You'll be out of sync with divine wisdom all the way down the line, because you have opened yourself up to demonic ideas. And our world is filled with it. You cannot watch any public media communication without being impacted with the ideas of demons. But Colossians 2:15 says, "They have been neutralized in their power over you.

So, the Christian who walks with God, and who stays in the Word of God, and who keeps his known sins confessed – that Christian is untouchable. He is absolutely untouchable by the forces of Satan, and by the demonic world.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

[**Back to the Colossians index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/colossians.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)