

Turn to the first chapter of the Gospel of John. Under the preexistence of Jesus Christ, we are going to study five subjects. The first of which is His position over all creation. The second subject is His power to create all things. The third subject will be His providence in controlling all things. The fourth subject is His presence in Old Testament times. There is actually quite a bit involved with that. Finally, we will look at His preeminence over all things.

The first topic pertaining to the preexistence of Jesus Christ is His position over all creation. The apostle John lived longer than the apostles and took care of the mother of Jesus. In fact, both of their tombs are in the same place: the city of Ephesus. John the Apostle was in exile on the Isle of Patmos, then was released back to Ephesus where he died and was buried. Mary was buried there many years before, but she would have had a lot of interesting conversations with John about Jesus. Ninety percent of John is not found in Matthew, Mark or Luke because John primarily focuses on Christ's deity and gives us quite a bit of information around the final week, which the others do not.

Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the synoptic gospels. *Optic* means "eye." *Syn* means "with." It is to look with the eye as though you are surveying the whole thing. As you look at Matthew, Mark, and Luke you are looking at the gospel from different perspectives. Matthew looks at it from the perspective that Christ is king; Mark, Christ as a servant; and Luke, Christ as the Son of Man. Technically, John's Gospel is set aside.

First of all, John's Gospel is set apart from the other Gospels by time because the Gospel of John was written probably 60 years after the time of Christ. So there is a lot a time that goes by. Plus, John knew Christ better than any of the others. He leaned on His breast at the Last Supper and was the one to whom Christ committed the care of His mother. John was also known as the theologian of the early church—not Paul (which is sort of surprising). The early church fathers spoke of John as the theologian because he talked in theological terms. He likes to teach by contrast, which is a bit different than Paul who is a teacher's delight because he gives reasons and causes and purposes and outlines it all very well. Therefore a lot of preachers like to preach the Epistles of Paul. They are much more easier to put together. John's are a little tougher. He teaches by contrast, which is very Jewish (the same way in which the Proverbs are organized: "The way of the wicked is like this; the way of the fool is like that.").

For instance, the familiar contrasts of John are light and darkness. His epistles reveal the same thing. First John 1:5 says, "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." He does the same thing in the opening chapter as he discusses who *Yeshua ha Masheach* is. Who is this one? He is going to do it by contrasts. Another great contrast in John's writings is life and death, or love and hate ("He who hates his brother, does not love Him....") There is also the contrast between sin and righteousness.

Interestingly you will find more words in John using the term, "believe" than any other book. Actually, the purpose of John is that you really believe who He is, for that is what is critical to the entire argument.

The Gospel of John begins very differently than the other three Gospels. "In the beginning was the Word, 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 anything made that was made. In Him was life.” Notice the relationship with all those terms of contrast which are often blended together in comparisons. “In Him was life and the life was the light of men.” When John says, light and darkness, light represents life and darkness represents death. Light and life represent righteousness. Death and dark represent sin. There is a connection in all these contrasts that he used.

“In Him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not,” or did not overpower it. For it had no power to squelch it. “There was a man sent from God whose name was John.” This, of course, refers to John the Baptist. “The same came for a witness to bear witness of the light.”

Now we know that the light and the life and the Word all refer to a person. “That all men through Him might believe. He was not that light.” That is, John the Baptist was not that light. But he was sent to bear witness of that light, Christ. That was the true light that lighteth every man that come into the world. How is a man enlightened? How do the lights get turned on in a person’s life, whether he is a believer or not? John 1:4 yields the answer. “In Him was life.” There are certainly two kinds of life: physical and spiritual. All men have the light of God in them when they come in the world because they all have life from God. “The breath of the Almighty has given my life.”

In Genesis 2:7, when God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life, the Hebrew word is plural. Literally meaning, “the breath of lives.” Now there are two kinds of life that God breathed into man: physical and spiritual. When God said to Adam, “In the day you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall surely die,” we know in the Bible’s account that Adam did

not physically die that day, but he did spiritually die. That is why you can write to people who are physically alive and say, “You are dead in your trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1).

Is everybody still with me? This is really heavy stuff. It is simple, but heavy. Yet that is typical John for you. When you learn Greek, the first book you will translate is 1 John because the words are so simple, however, trying to understand the theology is very heavy. Every man has physical life, but look at this:

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (John 1:10-11)

This refers to the Jewish people.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power [*exousia*] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 12-13)

Then John takes us right back to verse 1 by saying, “And the Word” because John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word.” The Greek word is *logos*, which is used in English all the time. This course is called *Christology*. It has the word *logos* in it. The study, or the word about Christ. There is also *archaeology*, the study of archae or “old things.”

“The Word [this *logos*] was made flesh.” Notice that it did not say, “the Word was made flesh dwelt among us. We beheld His glory. The glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.” Well let me tell you something. We just got a barrage of theological problems sent to us in a very simple verse.

First, in verse 14 when it says “the Word was made flesh,” some translations say, “the Word was flesh.” The Greek word is *ginomai*, which means “to become.” It means a change of condition. It assumes a previous existence. Listen carefully to me, class. The preexistence of Jesus Christ is taught in John 1:14 when it says, “the Word became flesh.”

Does it say that back in John 1:1 when it says, the Word was God? That He became God? No. It does not. It says He was God, and there is a big difference. In John 1:14, however, this Word, “became flesh,” which means that He was in existence before He became flesh and that He was not flesh before He became it. So what was He before He became flesh?

John 4:24 says, “God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [him] in spirit and in truth.” He is first spirit, then He becomes flesh, but He is described as being the Word, the revelation of God. Whatever God is, the Word, the declaration of that is what Jesus is. Is Jesus a revelation of the invisible God? Absolutely.

The first point that I am talking about right now, is His position over all creation. Under that, I want you to see three things. There are three things under the subject of His position is over all creation. First, He is the revelation of the invisible God. Look down at John 1:18, “No man hath seen God at any time.” He is invisible. He is the only begotten (there is that term again). You say, “What does that mean?” Hang on, because I will tell you in a minute. “The only begotten Son

which is in the bosom of the Father.” That is an interesting statement. “He hath declared Him.”

The word declare means “to manifest,” or “to let it be known,” or “to reveal,” as we would say in English. He is revealed Him. The first thing that we say as we look at His position over all creation, is that He is the revelation of the invisible God.

Paul gives his testimony and tells how Jesus Christ chose him to show longsuffering and a pattern for those who would believe in 1 Timothy 1. Then he says:

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise
God, [be] honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (1
Timothy 1:17)

That is a testimony to Jesus’ deity, by the way, but He is called invisible.

By faith he [Moses] forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the
king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. (Hebrews
11:27)

One of the reasons that Jesus came into this world was to show us what God is like, because God is invisible. With your physical eyes you cannot see God. With the eyes of faith you can see a lot about God, and one day God is going to give you the privilege of looking on the face of His incarnate Son. Revelation 22 tells us that we will see His face. He is the invisible God. The word “invisible,” is used five times of Him in the Bible.

Turn to Colossians 1. What are we talking about? He is the revelation of the invisible God. He reveals who God is.

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 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: And he is before all things [preexistence], and by him all things consist [They hold together]. 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. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. (Colossians 1:15-19)

That is an incredible passage. Every image is a likeness, but every likeness is not an image. An image is an exact reproduction. If you see two twins, you would say that they look alike, but one is not the image of the other. Why is a son in the image of his father? When Adam begat sons in Genesis 5 it says they were in the image of Adam. This is genetically true. Your DNA is in the image of your parents. Let me say it again. Every image is a likeness, but not every likeness is an image.

In the case of Jesus, “He is the image of the invisible God.” He is the revelation of the invisible God, but, number two, He is a complete representation of the invisible God.

In John 14:8-9, Philip said, “Show us the Father and it sufficeth us.” In other words, “We’ll be happy if you just show us the Father.” What an audacious, arrogant statement that was. Jesus turned to Philip and said, “He that has seen Me has seen the Father.” He is the complete representation of the invisible God.

In Hebrews 1:3, another very important passage, it says of Him, “Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person.” The New American Standard Bible translates it as “exact reproduction.”

Let me give you an example. If I had some clay up here and I had an instrument like a stamp. If I pushed the stamp into the clay and pulled it out, what is left is the image. It is the exact reproduction. It was the exact thing that was implanted in that. Now, if I have a piece of paper and try to just draw out of my mind what that image looks like, my drawing is a likeness, but it is not the image. The image was planted in the clay. Jesus Christ is not simply a likeness, but the image of the invisible God. That is quite a statement.

The third thing I would mention under His position over all creation, is that He is the special reason for the creation. Imagine creating it all for yourself. That is exactly what God did. You see, Colossians 1 tells you that. Have you ever asked yourself, “Why did God make us?” You can ask a lot of why questions. “Why did God make us?” Some people say, “Well, He needed somebody to love.” No, He did not. The Father loved the Son. You are no improvement. Thank God He does love us, but that is not the reason He made you. “Well, He needed fellowship. He was lonely.” No, He was not. The Father fellowshiped with the Son, and the Son with the Father, and the Spirit with the Son. What is the big deal here? Well then why did He make us? To glorify Himself. He did it because He wanted to. That is the only reason I exist. To glorify God.

That is why the Westminster Catechism asked, “What is the chief end of man?” Its answer: “To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.” This is the reason.

Colossians 1:15 says, “He is the firstborn of every creation.” The word “firstborn” is the word *prototokos* in Greek, and is used nine times in the New Testament. Now when you read “firstborn,” what do you think? You think it is the one born first, right? You say, “I am a firstborn son. I was the first child my parents had.” That is not the meaning of *prototokos*. Let me give you an example. In Romans 8:29, Jesus Christ is called “the firstborn among all the believers.” Well, He was not the first one born from a standpoint of time. All of this in this room have been born after He was. It has to mean something more than that. Today’s class is preparing you for those guys who come by your house wearing white shirts and ties and riding bicycles. In case you did not know. Hebrews 1:6 says, “Again when He bringeth in the first begotten into the world.” It is literally “firstborn,” *prototokos*. He says, “Let all the angels of God worship Him.” This is certainly an unusual firstborn child. How many of you are firstborn? Well, then you obviously want to be worshipped. How many of you are not firstborn child? Do we want to worship them? No way.

It does not refer to the one who was born first. *Prototokos* is talking about the position. That is why this whole point is called “His position over all creation.” He is the firstborn of all creation. He is the pre-eminent one. He is the priority. No one takes His place, and that is why God says, “Let all the angels of God worship Him.” The Bible says that He who is the head of the church is the firstborn. No one deserves to be mentioned in the same breath.

Now in Revelation 22:8-9, the angel that was bringing God’s message, acting as an emissary or a servant boy for God. John is so excited that he falls down at the feet of the angel. The angel stops

him and says “No, no, no, no. Worship God alone.” But wait a minute. In Hebrews 1:6, it says of the firstborn that the Father brought into the world, “Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

There is only one conclusion. He is God, because otherwise He cannot be the firstborn over all creation. The only one who designed everything to praise Himself, the only one who designed all to glorify Himself, was God. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” If He is God, I understand this. If He is not God, the whole thing is crazy, and it does not make any sense at all.

It is another testimony—another way of looking at the testimony of the Bible to the deity of Jesus Christ. He is the firstborn over all creation.

What have we learned about His position over creation? He is the revelation of the invisible God. He declares, shows, and reveals who God is, because God is invisible. He became visible to show us what God is like. Second, He is the complete representation of the invisible God. You do not need to say, “Well you know, I did look at Jesus, but I’m kind of into Mohammed and Maimonides and a lot of other people. I would like to see all the aspects of who God might be.” No! You have the wrong message. The message of the Bible is that when you come to Jesus, you have arrived. There is nothing else to learn. “All the fullness of God dwells in Him.” “In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). Do you understand?

How stupid are all the churches that do not speak of Jesus. There is a church group that said this to me that, “Well, we worship the Father. That’s the only one you’re supposed to worship and we believe it’s blasphemy to worship the Son.” No, it is not. The Father told you to do that.

Every father understands this. When you honor the son, you honor the father. People ask, “Can you honor Jesus too much and ignore the Father?” No way. He who has seen the Father sees it in Jesus. This is a problem. Is Jesus the Father? No. He is the exact representation of Him. You say, “My head hurts. It’s lunch. It’s going to get worse. We’re just warming up. It’s the first day. I want to go into underwater basket weaving. I don’t want to study this. I want something simple, man. I want to preach the gospel but I just don’t want to study and think.”

This brings us to the second subject under preexistence. It is not only His position over all creation, but His power to create all things. Again in Colossians 1:16 it says, “For by Him were all things created.”

“How many things were created by Jesus Christ?”

“All things.”

You say, “Oh well what about the galaxies?”

“It says ‘in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible.’”

“What about demons?”

“He did that too.”

“What about the angels?”

“He created all the angels too.”

“Jesus?”

“Yeah. He’s not the brother of Michael, or the brother of Satan which is the worse argument, or that He is Michael the archangel. No, He created the angels. All principalities and powers.

Everything that you have ever seen or cannot see was created by Him.”

Colossians 1:16 says, “All things were created by Him.” The Greek word is *dia*, meaning “through His agency.” Romans 11:36 says, “For from Him, out of Him, and through Him and unto Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.” Everything comes from His creative hand, and it exists because He made it. All things are being worked after His own power. He is sustaining it all, and all things have their ultimate objective to glorify Him and praise Him. He is the God of all things. Everything that He made are not only made “by Him,” but they are also “for Him.” You were made for Jesus. I like that. You will never be complete, fulfilled, satisfied until you understand that your sufficiency is of Christ. You do not need anything else.

I get amused. Pastors all the time get mail from people who are offering things. Our radio ministry gets tons of stuff like that. It is just amazing to me. Everybody believes that you are not quite what you should be. They got something that will help you be what God wants you to be. Now that is the basic marketing strategy of most things that are Christian. “You need to attend our seminar or seminary in order to be the most fulfilled person. All of your dreams, ambitions, and your meaning and purpose in life can really be clarified in our special video series. It is only \$29.95. And if you will send for your prayer hanky we will...”—on and on it goes. You know, I look at all this stuff and I say, “You know the whole marketing principle is wrong. The strategy is

all wrong, because I already got everything in Jesus Christ my Lord.” If you want to help me know more about Him, I would be interested in talking to you, but I am not interested in anything else because nothing is missing.

The other day a man asked me after church, “Have you received the second blessing?”

I said, “Yes sir.”

“Oh, praise the Lord.”

Then I said, “And the third and the fourth and the fifth.”

He said, “Oh no.”

I said, “Oh yes. Ephesians 1 says that I have been blessed with all blessings in Jesus Christ my Lord.”

I have got everything. I have it all. It is amazing. By the time we are done with this course, if you do not love Jesus, then I have failed. This is the most wonderful person you have ever known in your entire life. He is that God that made you. He is the God who wants you. He loves you. He wants you to glorify Him, and He will fulfill your deepest needs. You can say it. It is okay.

In John 1:3, just to back it up, it speaks of His power to create all things. It says, “All things were made by Him.” Listen to this one: “Without Him was not anything made that was made.” Well, how was it all made? Go back to Hebrews 11 and it tells you, “Through faith we understand that

the world were framed by the word of God” (Hebrews 11:3). It is another statement of His deity. Connect the passages. How did all things come into existence? By the word of God. He simply said it. In Genesis 1 you read multiple times, “God said, Let there be light.” “God said, let the trees breathe.” “God said, let there be light and an ocean and all that.” God just has to say the word. And there it is.

The worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. I see this glass. Here is another glass. I will bet this was created from this. No, the Bible says that whatever came into existence, was not made from what it appears. Whatever you see in the physical, material universe had nothing to do with created the physical and material universe. Now that is not the way evolution! That is what we call creation *ex nihilo*, which is simply Latin for “out of nothing.” In the beginning God created. The Hebrew word is *barah*. There was nothing. Evolutionists, even when they honor God, like theistic evolutionists do in certain Christian schools, are denying a clear statement of the Bible, that somehow God created the first thing and the process, but then it develops and becomes all of this. No! That is wrong.

I remember sitting in a class one day as they were trying to explain to me about why the sun, moon and stars only appeared on the fourth day. They could not have been created on the fourth day. I am listening to it. Their reason for that, is that we have to have the sun and stars to have the vegetation on the third day. Here you have got vegetation. You have trees bearing fruit on the third day of creation, but you do not have the sun, moon and stars until the fourth day. They were doing a number about it. They felt the sun, moon and stars just appeared. There was some sort of foggy up in the ozone or whatever, you know. So it just appeared then. But they had to be in existence or you could not have the plant life. We all know that. Really? They said they just appeared. Yet God said He made them and put them in the sky on the fourth day. I am sitting here

listening to this. Earlier he said the dry land appeared. So if he wanted to say the sun, moon and stars appeared, why did he not use the same word? Why did he say he made them on the fourth day? Why did he not just say they appeared on the fourth day and we would all be happy? The reason being is because He made them on the fourth day. They were not in existence in Genesis 1:1, when he said, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” No, it did not include the sun, moon and stars. People say, “Wait a minute. You have to have light in order to have vegetation because they are in their adult mature forms and if he planted the seeds, they would have to grow.” No, that is not what the Bible says. The Bible says, “The first day He said, ‘Let there be light.’ And there was light.” We do not need the sun, moon and stars for light. In the eternal city, the New Jerusalem in Revelation we will no longer have the sun, moon and stars for the Lord God will be all the light we need. There will be no night there, that is what I call light! People say, “Wait a minute. Light travels at 186,000 miles a second, it would have to go through space, and it would take 24 billion years to arrive at this planet.” Oh I do not think so at all. When God said, “Let there be light,” He diffused light in the whole system at once. “Well, that would be a miracle.” That is true.

My blessed Lord Jesus Christ is the one who did it. All things were made by Him. It was His word and nothing that I see came out of previously existing materials. It was all *ex nihilo*, created out of nothing by my Lord.

When He did not create something out of nothing, He said so, but whatever He created the next thing out of He created first to start with. You say, “What are you talking about?” Well, take man’s body for example. He formed man’s body out of the dust of the ground, but He had already created the chemical elements of the dust. That is why when you die, your spirit leaves you, and you, in fact, return to the dust. Your body decays. Why? Because you are nothing but dirt. Amen.

Might as well look at each other right now and say, “Do you know you are nothing but dirt? But God loves you anyway.”

The Bible says that the Father pities His children (Psalm 103:14), because He is ever mindful that we are nothing but dust. That is chemically true. These chemical elements that are in the body that forms the body, where did they come from? From the soil.

“Who made the soil and those chemical elements?”

“God did.”

“What did He use to make it?”

“Nothing.”

“How can you explain that?”

“Through faith.”

“Oh, we are just supposed to believe it?”

“Yes, because God said so.”

“Well, that’s in the Bible. It was written by men.”

The third issue is His providence in controlling all things. This one who came into the world as a baby in Bethlehem had been around through all the ages of time. He is working continually. As a matter of fact, He is controlling all things in the universe.

In Colossians 1:17 it says, “By Him all things consist.” They hold together. Why do the world’s not clash? How do you explain orbiting of the planets? What is going on here?

In Hebrews 1:3, we read, “Upholding all things by the word of His power.” You know one day that the Lord is going to let it all crash. The stars in the heaven will fall. The elements of the earth will melt and the whole thing is going to be blown sky high. Why is that going to happen?

Because He will not hold it together anymore by His word. But by His word, He will destroy it with fire. He will cause the most gigantic explosion the world has ever seen. There is no movie theater that could possibly create in our minds the explosion that is going to happen. Words are used of thermonuclear destruction are in 2 Peter 3. The whole place is going to be blown sky high. Do not get real excited about Earth Day.

He sustains all the laws of the universe by His own power. He has been working night and day. The idea that He is taking a nap since Creation, because it said, “He rested,” is wrong. He just ceased from His work of creation. He does not cease from His work of providence. He is still controlling. Providence means the control of all things. There is not anything that our Savior is not controlling, and has been long before He became a baby in Bethlehem.

The next subject is heavy duty: His presence in Old Testament times. We are not going to get into that, but I am simply going to tell you what we are going to study. First, we are going to study the

uniqueness of the Angel of the Lord. We are going to tell you that we believe the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament is nothing but the pre-existent Jesus Christ.

Secondly, we are going to discuss the understanding of the term, “Lord of Hosts” (Lord of Armies), which is used 236 times in the Bible. We are going to show you that the Lord of Hosts is none other than our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, before He ever became a baby in Bethlehem.

We will also take a look at the use of plural pronouns in the Old Testament concerning the person of God. We will discuss the unity of New Testament writers as they discuss the relationship of Jesus Christ to the Father and His work previous to becoming a baby in Bethlehem.

Father, thank You for Your many blessings. Thank You for Your Word. Help us, Lord, as we study the person of Jesus Christ to once again fall in love with Him, to commit our lives to Him, to do what He wants, to reflect His glory. Help us to constantly praise Him. Thank You, Lord. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

You are dismissed.