

THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE IDENTITY OF GOD-IN 2 PARTS

by [Rotherham](#) » Wed Oct 14, 2009 11:49 am

The Body of Christ and the Identity of God-PART 1

The scriptures warn of those who would pretend to be representative of the body of Christ but would in fact be impostors. Jesus spoke of such ones when he stated:

(Matthew 7:15-23) 15 "Be on the watch for the false prophets that come to YOU in sheep's covering, but inside they are ravenous wolves. 16 By their fruits YOU will recognize them. Never do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, do they? 17 Likewise every good tree produces fine fruit, but every rotten tree produces worthless fruit; 18 a good tree cannot bear worthless fruit, neither can a rotten tree produce fine fruit. 19 Every tree not producing fine fruit gets cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Really, then, by their fruits YOU will recognize those [men]. 21 "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will. 22 Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?' 23 And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew YOU! Get away from me, YOU workers of lawlessness.

The Apostle Paul also warned of such ones:

(2 Corinthians 11:12-15) 12 Now what I am doing I will still do, that I may cut off the pretext from those who are wanting a pretext for being found equal to us in the office of which they boast. 13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for Satan himself keeps transforming himself into an angel of light. 15 It is therefore nothing great if his ministers also keep transforming themselves into ministers of righteousness. But their end shall be according to their works.

And:

(2 Peter 2:1-3) 2 However, there also came to be false prophets among the people, as there will also be false teachers among YOU. These very ones will quietly bring in destructive sects and will disown even the owner that bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves. 2 Furthermore, many will follow their acts of loose conduct, and on account of these the way of the truth will be spoken of abusively. 3 Also, with covetousness they will exploit YOU with counterfeit words. But as for them, the judgment from of old is not moving slowly, and the destruction of them is not slumbering.

And:

(Galatians 1:6-9) 6 I marvel that YOU are being so quickly removed from the One who called YOU with Christ's undeserved kindness over to another sort of good news. 7 But it is not another; only there are certain ones who are causing YOU trouble and wanting to pervert the good news about the Christ. 8 However, even if we or an angel out of heaven were to declare to YOU as good news something beyond what we declared to YOU as good news, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said above, I also now say again, Whoever it is that is declaring to YOU as good news something beyond what YOU accepted, let him be accursed.

The obvious question becomes; How can one discern who is truly the body of Christ? How does one identify the body of Christ apart from the counterfeits?

Simply put, we have to let the scriptures identify for us who it is that would be truly representing the body of Christ. But, how do we let the scriptures help us in that regard?

As most any Bible student knows, there are teachings which are explicitly stated within the Bible where there is no ambiguity as to what is taught. For example:

"There will be a resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous."
Acts 24:15

No one can deny the explicit nature of that statement. They may debate over the implications and purpose of that resurrection, but they cannot deny the explicit element within that statement that unambiguously declares that there will be a resurrection for both the righteous and for the

unrighteous.

There are numerous explicit statements and teachings within the Bible that most will agree upon. Such as: Jesus Christ is the Son of God. God is Almighty. God is the Creator. Jesus Christ died and was resurrected. Jesus Christ provided the ransom for the salvation of mankind.

Other teachings are not explicit in nature and present ambiguity to one degree or another, such as: prophecies, parables, symbolic language. It is not the purpose of this article to explore the ambiguous elements found within the Bible.

It can be said that when it comes to the explicit teachings found in the Bible, the body of Christ would never find itself in contradiction of such. The body of Christ would unquestionably be led by the spirit of God and therefore would not find itself contradicting explicit Biblical statements and teachings. For instance, they would clearly never teach that Jesus Christ was not resurrected. To do so would immediately disqualify them from any claim of being the body of Christ for that could not be the result of God's spirit upon them, but rather the opposite.

Therefore, we can use the scriptures to help us to identify who would be the true body of Christ on the earth today by comparing explicit Biblical teachings with what those groups who claim to represent the body of Christ are teaching. If a group or individual contradicts explicit Biblical teachings, or even a single explicit Biblical teaching, then they could not qualify as the body of Christ, for such an error would surely not be the result of the direction of God's spirit upon that body. True, the body may reinterpret ambiguous elements on occasion as clarity is achieved through time and or better understanding of words and phrases found in the original languages of the scriptures, (1 Cor. 13:12) but when it comes to explicit teachings, they could not be found in contradiction of such and it still be possible that they represent the true body of Christ. They would be counterfeits.

One might think at the outset that all religions who claim to be Christian already agree on the explicit statements so there is no real way to use explicit statements to affect a differentiation.

However, such is not the case. In fact, it is proposed in this multi-part article that there is a glaring error on the part of many who claim to be the body of Christ, and that has to do with what one could easily refer to as the very foundation of Christianity, the identity of God. Is God three persons? One person? Or two? Is the Son of God the Almighty God himself? The following parts of this article will be addressing those questions by concentrating on different statements and teachings in the Bible which are, in the final analysis, unmistakable.

This is clearly at the heart of the belief system of any religious body that identifies itself as representing the body of Christ. If they are regarding the Son of God as God Almighty and are therefore worshipping him as God Almighty, if he is not God Almighty, but a creation, then they are committing a sin condemned by scripture, by rendering ultimate worship to a creature.

(Romans 1:25) 25 even those who exchanged the truth of God for the lie and venerated and rendered sacred service to the creation rather than the One who created, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Although not contextually speaking of the identity of God, the principle rings loud and true. One does not present absolute worship to the creature, but rather brings absolute worship (see footnote)* only to God.

The author of Hebrews also states for us that one of the foundation elements of Christianity is "faith toward God."

(Hebrews 6:1) 6 For this reason, now that we have left the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying a foundation again, namely, repentance from dead works, and faith toward God,

Clearly the body of Christ would not be guilty of rendering absolute worship to the creation rather than to the Creator. So, the question is: Do the scriptures explicitly teach the Son of God to be created? Do the scriptures identify for us who is the "only" true God? The purpose of the remaining parts of this article is to demonstrate that this is indeed the case. This has great bearing upon who it is then that could be representing the body of Christ in the world today. If it is true that the Son of God is indeed a creation, then the Trinitarian believers and promoters cannot be representative of the body of Christ and should be rejected as counterfeit. This would mean that, by necessity, it could only be from among those religious organizations that teach the Son is indeed a creation of God, and is not the "only" true God, that one might potentially find an organized effort to qualify as the body of Christ in the world today.

This would be a huge differentiation as far as numbers and choices. Since the Trinitarian religions represent by far the majority of all claimed "Christian" religions, this would negate a large portion of the "Christian" population. It would necessitate a focus upon those religions which teach the truth about God, his Son, and who they are, eliminating the rest of the world of Christendom.

*Absolute worship is the worship that is offered to God alone. However, the same word that often designates worship to God (proskuneos) can also designate a relative "worship" or obeisance to persons other than God. We have a perfect example of this difference between absolute and relative worship in the LXX rendition of 1 Chronicles 29:20, where worship (proskuneos) is offered to

both Jehovah and the Israelite king. Clearly, the same degree of worship (proskuneos) would not be rendered to both Jehovah and the king, demonstrating the unquestionable difference between absolute and relative worship.

THE SON OF GOD-A CREATED BEING-PART2

by [Rotherham](#) » Fri Oct 30, 2009 10:21 am

In Part 2 of this article, two scriptures in particular will be examined as to what they unmistakably reveal to us about the Son of God, Revelation 3:14 and Colossians 1:15.

(Caveat: This article is subject to being reviewed and edited for grammar, punctuation, spelling and further considerations as are deemed necessary)

If we allow scripture to interpret scripture and scripture to add to scripture before venturing outside the scriptural record to determine the meaning of a word or phrase or particular syntax, then we are in effect allowing the word of God to interpret the word of God. This article is written from the position that the scriptures are the infallible word of God as long as they are rendered correctly from the original languages. Whenever we can rely upon the inspired record to determine the meaning of a word or the intent of a certain phrase or syntax, we are allowing the word of God to interpret itself, rather than being unduly influenced by the thoughts of men.

This is similar to the point made by Daniel Wallace in his popular exegetical grammar (Beyond The Basics), which is as follows:

1. Sufficient Data Base

Any significant statements as to the semantics of a given construction must be based on a large number of examples. Statements such as "every clear instance of this construction in the NT means X" are worthless in and of themselves. To argue, for example, that "there is apparently no instances in the New Testament of the Aorist Indicative of the direct form" or "(evous) here (Heb 6:4) as elsewhere, (means) to know experientially (as opposed to a mere taste)" is meaningless if there are only two instances of the word or construction in question. This is not too far removed from saying something like, "All Indians walk single-file. At least the one I saw did." In the least, such statements can be misleading because they are often assumed to be intrinsic to the construction at hand."

In light of the above, it is a good thing to remember the very first statement under Sufficient Data Base that states, "Any significant statements as to the semantics of a given construction must be based on a large number of examples". If that sufficient database can be found within the pages of the Bible, then we can make significant statements based upon those divinely inspired examples. If the Bible supplies a large database of a particular grammatical or semantic construction, and that construction consistently portrays a certain characteristic in every instance, there is no reason for one to go outside the Bible to find an alternative application to that construction found plentifully and consistently within the Bible. Doing so would be putting man's understandings and usages above that of God's, for God caused the Bible to be written the way it is written for setting matters straight and for teaching. (2 Tim. 3:16)

As Joseph declared "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (Gen. 40:8) We are also admonished to "TEST the spirits to see IF they originate with God". We can "test the spirits" by testing our interpretations against the revealed words of God, not the revealed words of men. If we have a sufficient and consistent database in the scriptures that reveal the meaning and or usage of a grammatical or semantic pattern, it would be setting ourselves up for human error if we were to ignore that and look elsewhere outside the Bible for a way to make that word or construction mean something else. How would that be testing the spirits with the word of God? It would basically be denying the word of God in favor of the words of men, denying inspired writings and their indicators for the uninspired and fallible indications of men.

However, if one is left with none or very few Biblical examples to shed light on the meaning of words and the understanding of grammatical or semantic constructions, one could look at both secular and religious writings for help in the determination of what those words might mean. On the contrary, when one has a sufficient and consistent database already in the Bible, such searching outside the Bible to try and overturn the natural and precedented meaning is playing the words and ideas of men over the words of God and how he had them consistently used in his inspired writings. To do so would be a certain method for setting oneself up for error.

In view of the above, let us first take a look at Revelation 3:14 and the phrase "the beginning of the creation by God." We shall look at the relevant database contained in the scriptures and see what it tells us about the Son of God.

Rev. 3:14 (KJV) And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

Concerning the phrase "the beginning of the creation of God":

Here we have 'arche' followed by a genitive phrase "of the creation". The words "of" or "of the" is characteristic of genitive phrases. Greek has five cases—nominative, genitive, dative, accusative and vocative. How a word is spelled can vary depending on the case in which it is used. In Greek as well as in English the genitive case can imply a number of different relations or connections between the word in the genitive case

and the person or thing that it modifies. In the Christian Greek scriptures, and in the Septuagint (Greek LXX) translation of the Hebrews scriptures (LXX), wherever arche is followed by a genitive phrase "of the ...", that which is called the "arche" is ALWAYS "partitive", which means that it is always a "part" of the class, group or thing implied by the following genitive noun. In each and every case, regardless of what genitive classification is argued arche retains the meaning of something that is "partitive", the beginning or first part of the thing implied by the following genitive noun, or beginning or first part in relation to time.

It could be successfully argued that in every case, the genitive phrase that includes arche is a partitive genitive classification, which means that the arche would be, in some fashion, PART of the class or PART of the thing that is found in the following genitive noun. But regardless if one were to take exception to that observation, such as arguing that they are not NECESSARILY all partitive genitives, it can not be escaped that the arche itself is always PARTITIVE, which, as stated before, means that it is in some fashion PART of what is implied by the following genitive noun. This is the significant semantic statement that can be made when all examples of arche in a genitive is found within the scriptures.

It can also be argued that in every case where arche is found, whether it involves a genitive phrase or not, including the LXX, arche always has an implied partitive aspect. A word study of arche in both the Christian Greek and the LXX scriptures unmistakably reveal that to be the case.

The following is a list of every place in the Christian Greek Scriptures where arche is included in a genitive phrase, which parallels Rev. 3:14.

Matthew 24:8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

The beginning was PART of the sorrows.

Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

The beginning was the first PART, in relation to time, of the world.

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

The beginning was the first PART of the gospel according to Mark.

Mark 10:6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

The beginning was the first PART, in relation to time, of the creation.

Mark 13:8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

The beginnings was the first PART of the sorrows.

Mark 13:19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

The beginning was the first PART, in relation to time, of creation.

John 2:11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

The beginning was the FIRST miracle, PART of miracles of Jesus.

Philippians 4:15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

The beginning was the first PART, in relation to time, of the gospel.

Hebrews 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

The beginning of their confidence was PART of their confidence. (see footnote)*

2 Peter 3:4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

The beginning was the first PART, in relation to time, of creation.

The Hebrew equivalent of "arche in a genitive phrase" is the word "reyshith" in what is called the Hebrew "construct". Looking at the Hebrew, "re-shyth" is the word that corresponds to the Greek "arche" and the English "beginning". LXX examples amply prove that "re-shyth" to a Jewish LXX translator meant "beginning".

In Hebrew, which does not have an actual genitive case, a genitive phrase is formed by what is called the 'construct', which is a situation where two nouns are juxtaposed rather than separated. Whenever we find re-shyth juxtaposed with another noun, it always means "beginning OF ... (whatever it is juxtaposed with), and the beginning is always in relation to time or a series of things.

Significantly, the LXX translators saw each Hebrew construct example of reyshith as meaning BEGINNING OF and rendered it accordingly with "arche" in a genitive phrase. This parallels the exact same way that the Christian Greek authors viewed and used arche in a genitive phrase.

Notice the following examples:

Gen. 10:10

And the beginning (arche) of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh were PART, the first part of Nimrod's kingdom.

Gen. 49:3 Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my children, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:

Reuben was the beginning, the first one of Jacob's children

Deuteronomy 11:12 A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

The beginning of the year was PART, the first part, in relation to time, of the year.

Deuteronomy 21:17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his children; the right of the firstborn is his.

The firstborn was the beginning, the first one of his children.

Ruth 1:22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest.

The beginning was the first PART of the harvest.

2 Samuel 21:9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.
21:10 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

The beginning was the first PART of the harvest.

2 Kings 17:25 And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them.

The beginning was the first PART of their dwelling.

Daniel 9:23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

The beginning was the first PART of the supplication.

***These examples clearly demonstrate the manner in which the phrase "beginning of the creation" at Revelation 3:14 should be understood. As in all the other Biblical examples the "arche" is a part "of the...". This therefore establishes Christ as a PART of the creation of God, FIRST either in time and/or in the series, confirming him to be a created being if we allow scriptural precedent and pattern to establish the meaning of the phrase in question.

Trinitarians have tried to defend their position in Revelation 3:14 by claiming that "arche" can take the meaning of "ruler", therefore making Christ the ruler of creation. Although "arche" can mean ruler, it must be noted that the Apostle John NEVER uses "arche" in this manner. There would be no database available to establish John's use of "arche" in this way. On the other hand, he consistently uses "arche" in the sense of "beginning", in relation to time or the beginning of a series. (more on this below)

It should be noted as well that of the 11 times "arche" is used to designate "ruler" in the NT (which numbers 11 times), 10 of those occurrences either have the word appearing in the plural form or else a plural sense is signified by the inclusion of the word "every" or "all" along with it. The 11th time (Luke 20:20) it is again used in a collective sense referring to government power. So it can also be stated that arche in a singular sense is never used to designate a "ruler" in the Christian Greek Scriptures. To do so does goes against the Scripturally precedented pattern of usage.

So regardless if there is an appeal to the word meaning ruler, which has no supporting evidence that the Apostle John ever used it that way, what must be remembered is that the "arche" is still a part of the group over which they rule, and in the case of Revelation 3:14, that would be creation.

Any word study in the Greek will clearly verify what has been stated ABOVE.

Trinitarians have also tried to claim that the word "arche" can mean "source" or "cause". This claim however cannot be substantiated in the LXX Septuagint or NT. There are no examples (outside of our verse under discussion) within the scriptures where "arche" means "cause" or "source". As well, one should keep in mind again, that John never used "arche" except in the sense of "beginning". No Bible writers can be shown to have used "arche" in the sense of "author" or "source".

A word should be said, however, when one examines the usage of arche by Greek philosophers, such as Anaximander and Aristotle. The meaning "source", in the sense of a "first principle" can be supported, but this also ends up carrying a partitive meaning. For example, "first principle" is used in the sense of the elementary stage of something, something that everything else derives FROM, such as the beginning MATERIAL. Some Greek philosophers thought that water was the "first principle" and all things issued forth from water. Anaximander argued that it was not water but was more or less what we would refer to as God, an infinite thing, but even at that, all that came from God was figured as PART of God by Anaximander. Aristotle offers no example of a non-partitive source in his writings either, and any claims to a non-partitive meaning stand without any examples that are truly non-partitive. The examples given in supposed support of Aristotle's non-partitive (non immanent) meaning are actually partitive, such as, a son from his parents. Any examples from the early church fathers also exhibit the same inconclusive characteristics. So in each case, it can be argued that this meaning of "source" was a partitive source, not a non-partitive source. Trinitarians can not appeal to a "partitive source" for arche at Rev. 3:14 since this would mean that all created things are made from the SUBSTANCE of the Son, which is an untenable position for them in regard to EX NIHILO, which teaches that all creation is made out of nothing.

However, regardless of how Greek philosophers may have used the term, this has no bearing on how the term is used within the Scriptures. We do not use Greek philosophy to interpret scriptural pattern and precedent. We use Scripture whenever possible. Relying upon the meaning of a

word taken from Greek philosophy and extra-biblical sources and trying to shoehorn it into a Biblical text in order to support a particular teaching, when all other Biblical examples teach something else, is taking the words of men above the words of God. One can hardly claim that they are allowing “God” to be the interpreter by such practice. One can hardly claim with such practice that they are allowing ‘scripture’ to be beneficial for teaching.

It should also be kept in mind that when the LXX translators rendered the word *reyshith* as *arche*, they could not have had the meaning of “source” in mind in any example. This is true because “source” is not even found within the range of meanings given to the Hebrew word *reyshith*.

Recent attempts to circumvent the clear meaning of Revelation 3:14 is for the Trinitarian to admit that Jesus is a creation, but not in the same manner as a normal creation, but what they may refer to as an uncreated creation. Naturally, this is an oxymoron and violates the meaning of the word “creation”. They derive this explanation from the fact that they believe that God the Son became man and when this happened, God the Son entered the created order by taking on flesh. They then appeal to the meaning of “ruler” of creation rather than “beginning” of creation since God the Son, now of the created order, is the ruler of all that created order.

How does this explanation hold up under investigation? As already mentioned, the Apostle John does not use the word “arche” for ruler anywhere else in his writings. John often spoke of singular and plural rulers and always used the word “archon” or its plural. This can be seen by examining the following scriptures:

(John 3:1) 3 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, Nic•o•de´mus was his name, a ruler (archon) of the Jews.

(John 7:26) 26 And yet, see! he is speaking in public, and they say nothing to him. The rulers (archon pl.) have not come to know for a certainty that this is the Christ, have they?

(John 7:48-49) 48 Not one of the rulers (archon pl.) or of the Pharisees has put faith in him, has he? 49 But this crowd that does not know the Law are accursed people.”

(John 12:42) 42 All the same, many even of the rulers (archon pl.) actually put faith in him, but because of the Pharisees they would not confess [him], in order not to be expelled from the synagogue;

(John 14:30) 30 I shall not speak much with YOU anymore, for the ruler (archon) of the world is coming. And he has no hold on me. . .

(John 16:11) 11 then concerning judgment, because the ruler (archon) of this world has been judged.

(Revelation 1:4-5) . . . , 5 and from Jesus Christ, “the Faithful Witness,” “The firstborn from the dead,” and “The Ruler (archon) of the kings of the earth.” To him that loves us and that loosed us from our sins by means of his own blood—

Here is how John consistently uses the word “arche”:

(John 1:1) 1 In [the] beginning (arche) the Word was. . .

(John 1:2) 2 This one was in [the] beginning (arche) with God.

(John 2:10-11) . . . ” 11 Jesus performed this in Ca´na of Gal´i•lee as [the] beginning (arche) of his signs, and he made his glory manifest; and his disciples put their faith in him.

(John 6:64) 64 But there are some of YOU that do not believe.” For from [the] beginning (arche) Jesus knew who were the ones not believing and who was the one that would betray him.

(John 8:25) 25 Therefore they began to say to him: “Who are you?” Jesus said to them: “Why am I even speaking to YOU at all? (or: just as I have said to you from the beginning (arche))

(John 8:43-44) . . . 44 YOU are from YOUR father the Devil, and YOU wish to do the desires of YOUR father. That one was a manslayer when he began, (arche) . . .

(John 15:27) 27 and YOU, in turn, are to bear witness, because YOU have been with me from when I began. (arche)

(John 16:4) 4 Nevertheless, I have spoken these things to YOU that, when the hour for them arrives, YOU may remember I told them to YOU. “These things, however, I did not tell YOU at first, (arche)because I was with YOU.

(1 John 1:1) 1 That which was from [the] beginning, (arche)which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have viewed attentively and our hands felt, concerning the word of life,

(1 John 2:7) 7 Beloved ones, I am writing YOU, not a new commandment, but an old commandment which YOU have had from [the] beginning. (arche)This old commandment is the word which YOU heard.

(1 John 2:12-14) 12 I am writing YOU, little children, because YOUR sins have been forgiven YOU for the sake of his name. 13 I am writing YOU, fathers, because YOU have come to know him who is from [the] beginning. (arche) I am writing YOU, young men, because YOU have conquered the wicked one. I write YOU, young children, because YOU have come to know the Father. 14 I write YOU, fathers, because YOU have come to know him who is from [the] beginning. (arche) I write YOU, young men, because YOU are strong and the word of God remains in YOU and YOU have conquered the wicked one.

(1 John 2:23-24) . . . 24 As for YOU, let that which YOU have heard from [the] beginning remain in YOU. If that which YOU have heard from [the] beginning (arche) remains in YOU, YOU will also abide in union with the Son and in union with the Father.

(1 John 3:8) 8 He who carries on sin originates with the Devil, because the Devil has been sinning from [the] beginning. (arche) For this purpose the Son of God was made manifest, namely, to break up the works of the Devil.

(1 John 3:11) . . . 1 For this is the message which YOU have heard from [the] beginning, (arche) that we should have love for one another;

(2 John 5) 5 So now I request you, lady, as [a person] writing you, not a new commandment, but one which we had from [the] beginning, (arche) that we love one another.

(2 John 6) 6 And this is what love means, that we go on walking according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as YOU people have heard from [the] beginning, (arche) that YOU should go on walking in it.

(Revelation 21:6) 6 And he said to me: “They have come to pass! I am the Al’pha and the O•me’ga, the beginning (arche)and the end. To anyone thirsting I will give from the fountain of the water of life free.

Note:(God is the first and last member of the class of Almighty-in a class of his own)

(Revelation 22:13) 13 I am the Al’pha and the O•me’ga, the first and the last, the beginning (arche) and the end.

Note:(God is the first and last member of the class of Almighty-in a class of his own)

In each and every case we can see that John uses the word arche as meaning the beginning of something, either in relation to time or to a series or class of things. He does not use the word for the meaning of ruler. Therefore, to appeal to the meaning of ruler for arche in Revelation 3:14 is without any precedent or Biblical example for the writings of John. The scriptural database does not support such an interpretation.

Another attempt made by Trinitarians is to once again acknowledge that the Son is a creation, but in the sense of a “new creation” as spoken of by the Apostle Paul, and that the Son is the beginning of that “new creation”, the first one in the series.

This attempt also lacks any scriptural precedent for support. For instance, in each and every case, the titles supplied to the Son in the introductions to the congregations in the book of Revelation, are sourced from other places in the scriptures.

The titles for Ephesus are sourced in Rev. 1:13 and 16.

The titles for Smyrna are sourced in Rev. 1:17.

The titles for Pergamum are sourced in Rev. 1:16

The titles for Thyatira are sourced in Rev. 1:14 and 15 and the title “Son of God” is sourced from numerous places of the Bible in reference to Jesus Christ.

The titles for Sardis are sourced in Rev. 1:16.

The titles for Philadelphia can be sourced in the following places; “holy” (John 6:69 and elsewhere) “true” (John 14:6 and elsewhere) “has the key of David” (Isaiah 22:22)

The titles for Laodicea can be sourced in the following places; “Amen” (2 Cor. 1:20) “faithful and true witness” (Rev. 1:5) and then we come to the last phrase “the beginning of the creation by God”. Where do we find the source for this title? The only candidates are Colossians 1:15 or Proverbs 8:22, which are verses which are not speaking of the “new creation”, but NORMAL creation. Since the Son of God is never called a “new creation” in the scriptures, what is stated in Rev. 3:14 can not be a reference to him as a new creation for there would be no source as there is in every other case of the titles to the churches. Once again, such an explanation ends up without any database for support.

What this leaves us with in regard to Revelation 3:14 is a preponderance of evidence that if we rely upon Biblical pattern and precedent, it confirms the conclusion that the Apostle John reckoned Jesus Christ to be a "creation" of God in the sense of a created being. If one relies on the Biblical database of information which bears upon the phrase “the ARCHE of the creation” there is no other way to interpret these words. Revelation 3:14 would then explicitly teach that the Son of God is a created being.

COLOSSIANS 1:15:

(KJV) 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

The phrase “firstborn of every creature” (or “firstborn of all creation” as many other translations read), consists of the word “prototokos” followed by a genitive phrase. The words “of” or “of the” are characteristic of genitive phrases. (see above)

Wherever in scripture, in both the Hebrew and Greek equivalents of the word 'firstborn', whenever it occurs in a genitive phrase, paralleling the same syntactical construction as Col. 1:15, the “firstborn” is always in some fashion a PART of the group or class of things indicated by the following genitive noun in the phrase. This is the exact same semantic statement that can be made about arche in a genitive phrase, regardless of whether one wants to view the genitive classification as partitive or not.

For example:

Genesis 4:4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

The ‘firstlings’ (plural of Hebrew bekowr or the LXX prototokos) were a part of the flock, specifically the first ones born to the adult members of the flock.

Exodus 11:5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

In each case the “firstborn” (Hebrew bekowr, LXX prototokos) was the one born first of the groups mentioned, therefore being a part of the group or class.

Exodus 12:29 And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

The result is the same as Exodus 11:5

Exodus 13:15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.

The same result occurs again.

Exodus 22:29 Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

The firstborn is a son among the sons.

Exodus 34:20 But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty.

The firstling and the firstborn (both words are the Hebrew bekowr or the LXX prototokos) are among the group.

Numbers 3:40 And the LORD said unto Moses, Number all the firstborn of the males of the children of Israel from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names.

The firstborn was a male among the children of Israel.

Numbers 3:46 And for those that are to be redeemed of the two hundred and threescore and thirteen of the firstborn of the children of Israel, which are more than the Levites;

The firstborn was a child of Israel.

Numbers 3:50 Of the firstborn of the children of Israel took he the money; a thousand three hundred and threescore and five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary:

The firstborn was a child of Israel, part of the group.

Numbers 8:16 For they are wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of the firstborn of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto me.

8:17 For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt. I sanctified them for myself.

8:18 And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel.

The firstborn were children of Israel, part of the group.

Numbers 18:15 Every thing that openeth the matrix in all flesh, which they bring unto the LORD, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine: nevertheless the firstborn of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem.

The firstborn was a man as was the firstling a beast, both part of their respective groups.

Joshua 17:1 There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh; for he was the firstborn of Joseph; to wit, for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had Gilead and Bashan.

The firstborn belong to the same group as Joseph and Manasseh. They are all human.

1 Chronicles 1:29 These are their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

The firstborn of Ishmael was human as was Ishmael.

1 Chronicles 2:3 The sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah: which three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess. And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the sight of the LORD; and he slew him.

Judah's firstborn was a human as was Judah.

1 Chronicles 2:25 And the sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron were, Ram the firstborn, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and Ahijah.

Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron, was human like his father. So, too, with Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel.

1 Chronicles 2:27 And the sons of Ram the firstborn of Jerahmeel were, Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker.

Same as above.

Nehemiah 10:36 Also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God:

The firstborns were all of the same group as the ones indicated in the following genitive noun of the phrases.

Psalms 135:8 Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.

The firstborn belonged to the group, Egyptians.

Within the Christian Greek Scriptures we seem to have but one example where firstborn is in a genitive phrase, which is our topic scripture, but much can be said about the word itself whether it is in a genitive phrase or not.

It can not be successfully denied that the word itself is naturally partitive, because of the inclusion of the word "protos", which is rendered as FIRST. If something is FIRST it is necessarily understood that it belongs to a potentially larger group. Otherwise, it would not be referred to as FIRST. Such examples are numerous and conclusive whether we are dealing with Hebrew, Greek or English and likely any other language. Why would one ever designate something as the FIRST of something if it could not at least potentially be part of a larger group?

What then are we to conclude from Colossians 1:15 and its use of prototokos? If we allow the sufficient Biblical database to speak for itself, and the natural partitive nature of the word "first", there can be no other conclusion. The Son of God is a member of the created order by being the firstborn of that created order.

An appeal is made that "prototokos" or the Hebrew "bekowr" does not always mean the first one born but can refer to the "preeminent" one, APART from being the FIRST one. This contention in itself is not supported by the natural partitive nature of the word as shown above, but, for the sake of argument, let us say that it can mean "pre-eminent". The one who is pre-eminent holds the "FIRST place". That's what preeminent means. That does not in any way remove it from the group of things referenced in the genitive. For if I tell you, that you are the pre-eminent of all men, that does not in anyway remove you from the class of men. In fact, it requires you to be a part of the group in order to be the pre-eminent one of that group.

It is true that Col. 1:15ff is stressing not just the "firstness" of the Son of God, but is stressing as well the fact that he is the "pre-eminent" one of those groups. Still, the entire argument that establishes his pre-eminence is based upon the very fact that he is the first one of those groups. He is the "firstborn from the dead", the first to be resurrected to immortal life and therefore also the pre-eminent among all those who have died and will be raised. He is the first, the beginning, of the congregation, and is therefore also the pre-eminent member of the congregation. Likewise, in regard to creation, he is the firstborn and therefore also the pre-eminent member of that group as well. The entire context of the passage in question establishes the "firstness" and the resulting "pre-eminence" of the Son of God.

Other attempts are made to try to change what the word prototokos or bekowr are designating. The argument is presented that in all instances the mentioned group is that which fathered the 'firstborn'. Since creation did not father the Son of God, it is argued, the context and meaning of prototokos at Col. 1:15 must be different than the "first one born".

The obvious fallacy of this argument, as mentioned before, is that the word in question literally means "first" and "born", not "fathered by". The very word "first" is partitive. In other words, one can not be the "first" of something unless that one is a part of the specified group of which they are the first. One cannot present an example otherwise. One cannot remove the element of "first" from the word "firstborn" regardless of what other connotation or connection they introduce to the word.

Therefore, one can't erase the element of "first" from the inherent meaning of the word. It is an intrinsic part of that meaning. If you let that element remain, - and there is no valid choice but to do so -, then the FIRST always has to be a part of the group of which it is the FIRST.

The expression at Colossians 1:15, is not the firstborn of God, but is rather the firstborn of creation. The words "first" and "born" are not semantically highlighting who fathered that firstborn but are semantically highlighting the group to which the FIRSTborn belongs. To change the word into "fathered by" is to change the meaning of what is meant by "FIRST" and "born" when used together.

Therefore, the only natural and precedented way to read Colossians 1:15 is to see the Son as a member of that group, the first one among the group of the following genitive, that being creation. If Jesus is the "first" of ANYTHING, that means he has to be part of the group of which he is the FIRST. There are no exceptions to that kind of occurrence.

Once again, all considered, the evidence confirms the conclusion that the Apostle Paul reckoned Christ to be among "creation".

To these two Biblical witnesses that firmly establish the Son to be a created being, we could also add the witness of Proverbs 8:22 and the surrounding context, but that will be held for another article to consider.

****please see referenced article here: [viewtopic.php?f=18&t=91](http://scripturaltruths.com/articles/ology/tipton/)**

Against this plain scriptural teaching, Trinitarians and others have offered scriptures which they believe must overturn the natural and precedented manner in which these considered verses must be understood. They have offered John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:16 (the verse immediately following one of our target verses above) and Hebrews 1:1-3. In all of those mentioned verses, there is nothing that can be established in any absolute manner whatsoever that shows the Son to not have been created. In fact, all of those verses can be shown to harmonize perfectly with the Unitarian view (that God exists as one person, the Father only, and that the Son of God is a separate and distinct being from the Father whom the Father used as an AGENT for creation).

For a consideration of Colossians 1:15-20 and Hebrews 1:1-3 please see the following information :

<http://scripturaltruths.com/articles/ology/tipton/>

For more information about the above, including John 1:1-3, please see the following pdf of an online book by Dave Barron, pages 37-44.

<http://scripturaltruths.com/book/gc.pdf>

Those who would contradict the explicit teaching found in the Bible, as demonstrated above, that the Son of God belongs to the created order, could not be representative of the body of Christ. The body of Christ would not be found contradicting a clear and explicit biblical teaching.

If anyone wishes to present a serious challenge to the information contained in this article, you may discuss this article on the Truethology Forum by submitting your request to challenges@truethology.net

*Some have argued that since "confidence" is an abstract noun, it can not be divided into parts. However, this is not the case because we often speak of abstract nouns as if they have parts to them. Such examples would include:

"When they started laughing at me I lost SOME OF MY CONFIDENCE."

"I felt I couldn't give her ALL OF MY LOVE until I trusted her completely. I felt like I had to hold back SOME OF MY LOVE and SOME OF MY TRUST along with it until I knew her better."

"When I saw what had happened, I felt SOME OF MY STRENGTH leave me."