



TEXT SUMMARY

Reading one of the epistles is like listening in to one part of a conversation. We must discern the contours of the problem from how the writer responds to the problem. That is what scholars have done with Paul's letter to the church in Colosse.

In this week's text, [Colossians 1:15-16](#), we see the opening salvo in Paul's attack on the faulty Christology (doctrine of Christ) that was taking root in the fellowship in Colosse. Paul did not plant this church (indeed, he may have never met the believers there, see 2:1). But even though he didn't personally know the believers in Colosse, he knew that of all the doctrines, it is *most* essential that they get their doctrine of Jesus right. So, he wrote this letter to correct what was faulty in this vital doctrine.

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

1. Our text is the opening of the body of the letter. What are some key observations from the opening (v. 3-14)?
2. Paul wants to be sure his readers understand the absolute scope of the creative work of Christ. What categories does he use to describe that scope?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

1. The two verses in our text are both statements, but v. 15 is a declaration about the Person and nature of Christ, while v. 16 is an explanation (opening with the conjunction "for," which is short for "Why, you ask? Let me explain."). How does v. 16 explain v. 15?
2. Why is Christology such a central doctrine in Christian theology? How do errors in this doctrine undermine the whole system of Christian thought?
3. Why does it matter whether Christ was a created being (as the false teachers in Colosse apparently taught)?

A large vertical rectangular box containing 18 horizontal lines for writing or taking notes.

