

So, we offer another targum, another extended translation and expansion that attempts to read the world through the eyes of the text, allowing the Scripture to resonate with and confront our changing cultural reality. Since our targum is on the poem found in **Colossians 1:15-20**, it takes a poetic structure.

In an image-saturated world,
 a world of ubiquitous corporate logos
 permeating your consciousness
 a world of dehydrated and captive imaginations
 in which we are too numbed, satiated and co-opted
 to be able to dream of life otherwise
 a world in which the empire of global economic affluence
 has achieved the monopoly of our imaginations
 in this world

Christ is the image of the invisible God
 in this world
 driven by images with a vengeance

Christ is the image par excellence
 the image above all other images
 the image that is not a facade
 the image that is not trying to sell you anything
 the image that refuses to co-opt you

Christ is the image of the invisible God
 the image of God
 a flesh-and-blood
 here-and-now
 in time and history
 with joys and sorrows
 image of who God is

the image of God
 a flesh-and-blood
 here-and-now
 in time and history
 with joys and sorrows
 image of who we are called to be
 image-bearers of this God



He is the source of a liberated imagination
 a subversion of the empire
 because it all starts with him
 and it all ends with him
 everything
 all things
 whatever you can imagine
 visible and invisible
 mountains and atoms
 outer space, urban space and cyberspace
 whether it be the Pentagon, Disneyland, Microsoft or AT&T
 whether it be the institutionalized power structures
 of the state, the academy or the market
 all things have been created in him and through him
 he is their source, their purpose, their goal
 even in their rebellion
 even in their idolatry
 he is the sovereign one
 their power and authority is derived at best
 parasitic at worst
 In the face of the empire
 in the face of presumptuous claims to sovereignty
 in the face of the imperial and idolatrous forces in our lives
 Christ is before all things
 he is sovereign in life
 not the pimped dreams of the global market
 not the idolatrous forces of nationalism
 not the insatiable desires of a consumerist culture

In the face of a disconnected world
 where home is a domain in cyberspace
 where neighborhood is a chat room
 where public space is a shopping mall
 where information technology promises
 a tuned-in, reconnected world
 all things hold together in Christ
 the creation is a deeply personal cosmos
 all cohering and interconnected in Jesus



And this sovereignty takes on cultural flesh
 And this coherence of all things is socially embodied
 in the church
 against all odds
 against most of the evidence
 In a "show me" culture where words alone don't cut it
 the church is
 the flesh-and-blood
 here-and-now
 in time and history
 with joys and sorrows
 embodiment of this Christ
 as a body politic
 around a common meal
 in alternative economic practices
 in radical service to the most vulnerable
 in refusal of the empire
 in love of this creation
 the church reimagines the world
 in the image of the invisible God

In the face of a disappointed world of betrayal
 a world in which all fixed points have proven illusory
 a world in which we are anchorless and adrift
 Christ is the foundation
 the origin
 the way
 the truth
 and the life

In the face of a culture of death
 a world of killing fields
 a world of the walking dead
 Christ is at the head of the resurrection parade
 transforming our tears of betrayal into tears of joy
 giving us dancing shoes for the resurrection party

And this glittering joker
 who has danced in the dragon's jaws of death ¹
 now dances with a dance that is full
 of nothing less than the fullness of God



this is the dance of the new creation
 this is the dance of life out of death
 and in this dance all that was broken
 all that was estranged
 all that was alienated
 all that was dislocated and disconnected
 what once was hurt
 what once was friction
 is reconciled
 comes home
 is healed
 and is made whole
 because Grace makes beauty out of ugly things ²
 everything
 all things
 whatever you can imagine
 visible and invisible
 mountains and atoms
 outer space, urban space and cyberspace
 every inch of creation
 every dimension of our lives
 all things are reconciled in him

And it all happens on a cross
 it all happens at a state execution
 where the governor did not commute the sentence
 it all happens at the hands of the empire
 that has captured our imagination
 it all happens through blood
 not through a power grab by the sovereign one
 it all happens in embraced pain
 for the sake of others
 it all happens on a cross
 arms outstretched in embrace
 and this is the image of the invisible God
 this is the body of Christ

• Brian Walsh & Sylvia Keesmaat, *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), pgs. 85-89.

¹ Bruce Cockburn, "Hills of Morning" from the album *Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws*, 1979.

² U2, "Grace" from the album *All That You Can't Leave Behind*, 2001.

