

Proverbs 8:23

I [wisdom] was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began.
(NIV)

Occasionally, a Trinitarian will use this verse to try to support the Trinity and the pre-existence of Christ by saying that “wisdom” was appointed from eternity, Christ is the “wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:24) and, therefore, Christ was from eternity. This position has not found strong support even among Trinitarians, and for good reason. This wisdom in Proverbs was “appointed” (literally, “set up”) by God, and is therefore subordinate to God. Carefully reading the verse and its context shows that wisdom was “brought forth as the first of His works” (v. 22). If this “wisdom” were Christ, then Christ would be the first creation of God, which is an Arian belief and heretical to orthodox Trinitarians. Therefore many of the Church Fathers rejected this verse as supportive of the Trinity, among them such “heavyweights” as Athanasius, Basil, Gregory, Epiphanius and Cyril. We reject it also, but for different reasons. Taking a concept and speaking of it as if it were a person is the figure of speech *Personification*. *Personification* often makes it easier to relate to a concept or idea because, as humans, we are familiar with relating to other humans. *Personification* was common among the Jews, and the wisdom of God is personified in Proverbs. Christ is considered the wisdom of God in Corinthians because of what God accomplishes through him.

Racovian Catechism, pp. 73-75

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