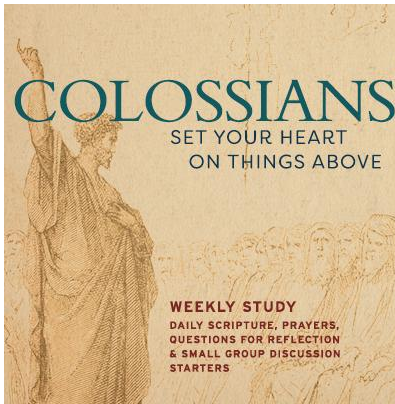




WEEKLY STUDY

Colossians - Week 3

In week three of our study of Colossians, we'll spend time slowly examining the claims it makes about Jesus Christ. These lines may sound familiar to you, if so, try reading them like it's the first time. Meditate on a short verse each day throughout the week and let it produce gratitude for God's pursuit of us through his Son!

For those of you continuing to pray through the Psalms daily, you will read Psalms 127-133 this week.

Please note our prayer focus for the week in the box below. Join us in seeing what God will do as we unite in prayer.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections and consider the Group Discussion questions below. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for the Christian church around the world. Pray that the truth of who Jesus Christ is would overwhelm every heart and lead to wide-spread worship.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.15-20 (NIV)

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

- This great passage is thought to be a hymn of the early church. Spend a minute underlining or highlighting every description of Jesus Christ. Much of our Christology (words about Jesus) find their origin in this passage. We learn that Jesus was not only present at creation (Genesis 1 and 2), but all things were created through him. Are there parts of creation that you may have undervalued? How does Christ's role in creation impact the way you view the ongoing creation around you?

- **Prayer Prompt: And I will appoint him to be my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth. (Psalm 89.27)**
- *God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, your gift of creation was no random act. It was (and is) an outpouring of your love for us. Thank you God. Amen.*

TUESDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.15 (NIV)

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

- Many world religions use images to represent their understanding of their god(s). But Christianity is the only one where God actually came to earth and dwelt with his people. So much about God is mysterious, we can't fully comprehend his ways, yet in Christ, we have seen him. He is over all creation. What's more—we were created in the image of God. Are there ways in which you can make God visible to those around you?

- **Prayer Prompt: No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. (John 1.18)**
- *Jesus, you are the Son of God who has come to make visible that which was invisible. The deepest longing of my heart is to see God. So I look to you to show me the Father today. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.17 (NIV)

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

- Paul's use of the phrase "over all things" includes the cosmos. When you look up at the night sky or read an article about the vastness of space, dark matter, or black holes, consider that Christ holds all of that together. He also holds your heart (which can seem vast or full of black holes at times!). Our finite minds can not comprehend what it means that something existed before anything existed. Jesus was there before there was a "there". His perspective on our little moment in time and space is far greater than we can imagine, and yet he cares about us in our little piece of history as if we were the only ones. Spend a moment sitting in that truth. Let the love of Christ reach you where you are and write any response you have.

- **Prayer Prompt: His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, (Ephesians 3.10)**
- *God, I am amazed at the scope of your creation. You have made your Son to rule over all of the heavenly realms. May he rule in my heart today. Amen.*

THURSDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.18 (NIV)

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

- God sent Jesus to create a path for humanity to relate with the Divine. Jesus Christ wasn't created (he always existed—before time, before creation), yet for us he became human. He was born into the very creation that came through him. He became one of us who face death, and defeated it for all of us. In response, we lift him high. He is supreme and over everything. How do you see your role in the body of Christ, the church? What is your response to the supremacy of Christ?

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- **Prayer Prompt: and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 1.4)**
 - *God, I see your Spirit at work in your church. When Jesus is the head of the body, the body is strong and well positioned to live under his reign. Amen.*

FRIDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.19 (NIV)

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,

- God understands when we stumble around for language to describe him. God is the Father, but his fullness resides in the Son, and from them flows the Holy Spirit. We don't have earthly categories for this! The category we do have is faith. What are some of the implications of the fullness of God walking around on earth in Jesus?
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- **Prayer Prompt: I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3.17-19)**
- *Almighty God, your fullness once walked around on earth. And because we have seen you in him, I have faith in your great mercy. Amen.*

SATURDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.20 (NIV)

and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

- We have pictured what it means for Jesus Christ to hold all things together. Now we have this image of God using that position over creation to bring us all back to himself. God is making peace for all creation (things on earth or in heaven) possible through the blood of Jesus on the cross. What is your response today to God's gift of reconciliation in Christ?
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- **Prayer Prompt: All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5.18)**
 - *God, I confess that I can lose sight of the work you have already done in Christ to reconcile all things to yourself. I receive that gift and want to live a life worthy of it. Amen.*

GROUP DISCUSSION

Use the questions below to guide your conversation.

1. Colossians 1.15-20 gives us several descriptions of Jesus: the image of the invisible God, creator and sustainer of all things, head of the church, firstborn from among the dead, and the one through whom God reconciles all things. Which description most captures your attention? What does it reveal about Jesus that you may not think about often?
2. Paul says all things were created through Jesus and “for him.” How does seeing your life as something created for Christ challenge the way we naturally think about our plans, priorities, or purpose? Where is that truth comforting, challenging, or both?
3. Verse 17 says, “in him all things hold together.” Where are you most tempted to believe that everything depends on you? What might trusting Jesus as the one who holds all things together look like in that area of your life?
4. Is it possible to believe that Jesus is supreme while still allowing something else to become central in our daily lives.? What are some things that can begin to take that place in our lives? How can we recognize when a good thing has begun to occupy a place that belongs to Jesus? How can we pray for you?