

Jesus our Centre (Colossians & Philemon)

Week 2: Jesus our Lord

WELCOME

Spend time relaxing and sharing together.

It is often said that all faiths lead to God? How do you respond to that?

WORSHIP

Colossians 1:15-20 is a hymn or poem. You could use it to praise the Lord or sing a hymn or worship song inspired by it.

Above All Powers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6cifVFVP7s>

Jesus is Lord, Creation's voice proclaims it

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HHYt40whHQ>

WORD

Read Colossians 1:15-20

1. What does it mean to say Jesus is 'the image of the invisible God'?
(vv15) Refer to John 14:6,9-11; John 1:1-5;

2. What does it mean to say Jesus is 'the firstborn over all creation'?
(v15) Does it mean Jesus was created? Refer to Psalm 89:27;
Hebrews 1:6; John 3:16-17

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WHAT NEXT?

The poem/hymn is in three sections. They can be paraphrased as follows:

1. Jesus is the image of God; the firstborn; for in him is the power of God (vv15-16)
2. He is before (ahead of) all things; holds all things together; the head of the body, church (vv17-18a)
3. He is the beginning; the firstborn; for in him dwells the fullness of God (vv18b-20)

The first section is mirrored with the third section. The middle section holds first and third sections together looking back to the first and forward to the second. Together they reveal the centrality and supremacy of Jesus Christ. Paul uses the words 'all' or 'everything' eight times to underline the supremacy.

Paul shares this poem with the Colossians because he wants them to know that to grow as disciples of Jesus they need to recognise the supremacy of Jesus. He has no equals. Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6). All other deities have been created, whether made of wood, metal or human flesh.

7. What does Jesus' supremacy mean for us in our daily lives?
8. Jesus is also supreme in redemption. In what ways is your life different since you changed from being alienated from God to being reconciled through Jesus' death?

Study notes for leaders

Questions 1.

This means that the glory of the invisible God has been made known to people through Jesus Christ. The Father and the Son are one and work as one. Jesus is Lord.

Question 2

The term firstborn is commonly used to mean 'supreme' or 'sovereign', having the rights of the firstborn. In Psalm 89:27, by appointing him to be the firstborn, David is given an exalted status of privilege and power – 'the most exalted of the kings of the earth'.

Jesus is the incarnation. God became flesh, in that God assumed a human nature and became a man in the form of Jesus Christ. He was not created, rather he came into the world. God '*gave his one and only Son*'; God '*sent his Son into the world*'. See also the Nicene Creed.

Question 3

Jesus has the full power and authority of God. He is the Creator (he existed before anything was created and created everything), the Sustainer (he holds all things together) and he is Lord over all (everything was created for him and he rules supremely).

Question 4

'The church' refers to all Christians (from all denominations and none), in all nations and in all ages. Jesus occupies the supreme position in the church, just as he does in all things.