



Week 1

The Kingdom Life vs. The Quarantined Life Colossians 1:15-20

We're going to spend today, and the next five weeks in the Book of Colossians. So, let's dive in!

[Read Colossians 1:15-20]

1. Jesus is Lord of all. (1:15)

Paul explained that all the thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities of both the spiritual and physical worlds were created by and are under the authority of Christ himself. This includes not only the government, but also the spiritual world that the heretics (people who spoke untruths about Jesus) were so concerned about. Christ has no equal and no rival.

If someone is "Lord," they are in charge. Ever hear someone say, "You're not the boss of me!" (Or, ever say that yourself?) If you call Jesus Lord, you are saying, "You are the boss of me." And, if He's the boss of you, you better do what He says. If He's truly in charge, He needs to be "supreme over all creation" in your life. That affects your time, money, priorities, friendships, family, school, etc. You may call him "Lord" but is He?

2. Jesus holds everything together - including us. (1:16-17)

God is not only the Creator of the world, He is also its Sustainer. In Him, everything is held together, protected, and prevented from disintegrating into chaos. Because Christ is the Sustainer of all life, none of us is independent of Him. We are all His servants who must trust Him daily to protect us, care for us, and sustain us.

Do you ever think about Jesus being at creation? We read Genesis 1 and forget that Jesus was there. He was participating with God in the creation of the world. That's why I don't think it's an accident that when Paul writes in another letter, he says the Bible is "inspired by God" or "God-breathed." He uses the same phrase that Moses did in Genesis when he said God "breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils." (2 Timothy 3:16; Genesis 2:7)

If Jesus was part of making everything, then He's more than capable of helping keep it all together! It's only when our world starts to fall apart that we recognize and call on this ability of Jesus.

[Think about it. When you have plenty of food, you occasionally thank God for it. But being in lockdown now and with food and toilet paper and paper towels and pretty much everything being sold out, you REALLY start to pray and trust that God will provide. Discuss this together as a family.]

When you have a beautiful home to live in and parents who love you, you occasionally thank God for them. But, if you are homeless and on your own, you pray to ask God to protect you and care for you.

This is a reminder that the same God who keeps everything under His control when things are going well is the same God we notice more often when things are hard. Moreover, the Jesus that we worship on the weekend is the same Jesus who cares what happens during our everyday lives as well.

3. Jesus is in charge of the church and should be in charge of our lives. (1:18-20)
Christ is “supreme over all who rise from the dead.” Jesus was raised from death, and His resurrection proves His lordship over the material world. All who trust in Christ will also defeat death and rise again to live eternally with Him (1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:14). Because of Christ’s death on the cross, He has been exalted and elevated to the status that was rightfully His (see Philippians 2:5-11). Because Christ is spiritually supreme in the universe, surely we should give Him first place in all our thoughts and activities.

The head controls the actions of the body. Paul uses that metaphor to describe what Jesus’ role is for the church - the group of people known as believers, Christians, or Christ-followers- all over the world and throughout history.

He took charge of our biggest challenge - sin - when He died on the cross to offer us forgiveness through His grace.

The Kingdom Life is a life where God is Lord, He’s the Boss and you follow and trust Him. The Quarantined Life is one where our thoughts, actions, and feelings are controlled by the virus and our culture. Which life are you living?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Paul says in verse 15, “Christ is the visible image of the invisible God,” is that helpful or confusing to you?
2. Re-read Colossians 1:15-16. We don’t usually think about Jesus being at creation. Paul reminds us here that since God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - all three were part of creation.

How does knowing Jesus helped create our world shape your thoughts towards Him? How does that affect Him being Lord - or in charge - of everyone and everything?

3. Re-read Colossians 1:17. Since Jesus is holding everything together, we should be able to trust Him to protect us, care for us and help us through our everyday lives in both the big and small things. Is this easier to say than to do? What makes it hard to go from talking about trusting Jesus to actually trusting Him? How are you trusting him now?

4. Re-read Colossians 1:18-20. Jesus is described as “the Head of the Church.” There are many people in the world today who say things like, “I like Jesus, but not the church.” If the church was so important that Jesus died for it and is in charge of it, how do we deal with the difference between God’s view of the church and people’s views? In other words, how can the church be a group of people who are important to you instead of just a place you go on the weekends?
5. If Jesus is “first in everything,” that should include our lives. If you were to evaluate your life right now honestly, what would be the top 3-5 things that take up the most significant amount of your time or are your highest priorities? What step can you take this week to move Jesus up to get more of your time and focus? Or, if He is first in your life, how do you keep Him there and prevent other things from taking Jesus’ place?
6. Re-read Colossians 1:20. Talk about why Jesus’ death on the cross was so important. If your son or daughter has been baptized, have them explain what that means to them.
7. Create an action step to help us put into practice what we learned or were reminded of today. Give one action step - something specific you will do in the next seven days.