

Raised with Christ || A series through Colossians

Jesus our Champion

Sermon Synopsis: Jesus is preeminent over all

Colossians 1:15-20 (ESV)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. **16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. **17** And 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, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. **19** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

There is today an unhealthy degree of self-adulation.

Superiority Illusion: the belief that you're better than average in any particular metric

- 32-42% of software engineers think they are in the top 5% in their field
- In a study at Uni Nebraska, 90% of students rated themselves as above average
- 93% of motorists described themselves as above average drivers
- In a study of 800,000 HS students, only 1% considered themselves below average in social skills

Narcissism epidemic

The belief that one is extraordinary! (even if you are not)

I'm not here talking about moms, who are extraordinary (but may think they are not)

But to those to whom Paul would say, "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think" (Romans 12:3)

- *leads to entitlement*

But we're not as awesome as we think

- And we're seeing the breakdown: Housing bubble, gov't bailouts, student debt, jobs, social media, etc.

But what if disappointment in ourselves is precisely what we sometimes need?

Maybe that's why Paul drops a hymn that has nothing to do with us.

We were made for God.

Acts 17:26-28, NLT

From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. **His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him**—though he is not far from any one of us. **For in him we live and move and exist.**

But how do we access this extraordinary God?

Jesus is what God is like

He is the **image** of the invisible God...For in him all the **fullness** of God was pleased to dwell (Colossians 1:15a, 19).

And he is before all things (Colossians 1:17a).

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being (Heb 13:3, NIV).

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. (John 14:9)

Everything you need to know about God is found in Jesus Christ.

Jesus is what we were made for

The firstborn of all creation...For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:15a, 16)
And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (Colossians 1:18)

Everything you need to live is found in right connection to Jesus Christ.
and in him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:17b)

Therefore the main problem with the world is in placing ourselves at the center of our lives.

Jesus came to bring God back to the center of all things—include our lives.

and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:20). But how does he do this?

Peacemaker “was applied to Roman emperors and generals who established peace” through military power and strength. Here, Paul is robbing Caesar of that term and applying it to Jesus, who brings peace, not through weapons and control, but by death and self-sacrificial love.

Jesus breaks the power of our self-adulation by...giving himself up for us. Extraordinary.

illust: big thunderstorm in SB — I didn't run out pondering my greatness. I was in awe.

What narcissistic souls need most is to turn from self to something truly extraordinary.

Paul calls Jesus extraordinary (i.e., *preeminent, firstborn, head*)

How should this inform our lives?

Image of Caesar vs. Image of God (Luke 20:24)

- Jewish audience would have recalled Genesis 1:26 “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”
- On a denarius at that time: “Emperor Tiberius Son of the Divine August”
- Image = ownership (Who is on the Denarius? Who's image do you carry?)
- Give Caesar his 18 cents. Give God everything. Found in the call to discipleship.
 - What is the Biblical solution to self-adoration?

Die to yourself; be renewed in image of your Creator.

A disciple is someone who has given up their lives in order to follow His

With Jesus

1. Learning from Jesus
2. Becoming like Jesus

Which one of these is lacking in you? Let's approach them not with guilt and shame, but awe and worship.

Jesus is the Messiah. (John 1:41)

Jesus is the Righteous One. (1 John 2:1)

Jesus is the One with all authority in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:18)

Jesus is the bread of life. (John 6:35)

Jesus is the beloved of the Father. (Matthew 3:17)

Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone. (Ps. 118:22)

Jesus is the One who delivers us from the wrath to come. (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

Jesus is Faithful and True. (Revelation 19:11)

Jesus is a just Judge. (Revelation 19:11)

Jesus is the great High Priest. (Hebrews 4:14)
Jesus is the Head over the Church. (Ephesians 1:22)
Jesus is Immanuel, which means "God with us." (Isaiah 7:14)
Jesus is the light of the world. (John 8:12)
Jesus is the good shepherd. (John 10:11)
Jesus is the door. (John 10:9)
Jesus is the way. (John 14:6)
Jesus is the true vine. (John 15:1)
Jesus is the One who came to seek and to save the lost. (Luke 19:10)
Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)
Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:10)
Jesus is our advocate with the Father. (1 John 2:1)
Jesus is the One Mediator between God and men. (1 Tim 2:5)
Jesus is the One who sets us free. (John 8:36)
Jesus himself is our peace. (Ephesians 2:14)
Jesus is risen! (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life. (John 11:25)
Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2)
Jesus is the victorious One. (Revelation 3:21)
Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8)
Jesus is immortal (1 Timothy 1:7)
Jesus dwells in unapproachable light (1 Timothy 6:16)
Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. (Revelation 5:5)
Jesus Christ is Lord. (Philippians 2:11)
Jesus is the One Who is and Who was and Who is to come. (Revelation 1:8)
Jesus is the Almighty. (Revelation 1:8)
Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega. (Revelation 22:13)
Jesus is the First and the Last. (Revelation 22:13)
Jesus is the Beginning and the End. (Rev 22:13)
Jesus is the Judge of the living and the dead. (Acts 10:42; 2 Timothy 4:1)
Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting...Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)
Jesus is the Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.
(Revelation 17:14)
Jesus is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:3)

And if He can hold the universe together with his words, he can certainly hold your life together. But healing, deliverance, joy do not come from looking to your own resources, but looking outward to Christ. The extraordinary One. Our Champion.