

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide SB 12.12.2021

HOLDING IT ALL TOGETHER: COLOSSIANS 1:15-18

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

These are challenging times. "Russia said on Thursday that escalating tensions over Ukraine could lead to a repeat of the Cuban missile crisis, when the world stood on the brink of nuclear war" (Jerusalem Post). Additionally, China said they "will heavily attack U.S. troops who come to Taiwan's rescue" if a war between China and Taiwan breaks out, a possibility that is increasingly likely as the Communist regime readies its war machine on Taiwan's borders" (Washington Free Beacon). Similarly, the Maccabees, in 164 BC, also faced challenging times. Antiochus IV persecuted the Jews and outlawed the central tenets of Judaism. He defiled the holy Temple by erecting an altar to the god Zeus, allowed the sacrifice of pigs, and opened the shrine to non-Jews. Many Jews had been seduced by the virtues of Hellenism, but God, through a small remnant of Jews named the Maccabees, fought, and won their liberation. In 587 BC, Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego also faced challenging times. When they refused to bow down and worship Nebuchadnezzar, they were bound and cast into a fiery furnace. But then, the Son of Man was with them, and they were unharmed to the astonishment of Nebuchadnezzar. History continues to demonstrate there is nothing our God can't do. From the seemingly impossible, God makes the possible through Jesus, our Creator who literally holds ALL things together. Let's get into our study.....

1. Have you ever tried to juggle? If so, how many objects could you juggle in the air while handling the others? Jesus holds ALL things together.
2. Under the reign of Antiochus, many Jews had been seduced by the virtues of Greek culture. But God, through a small remanent of Jews, fought and won their liberation. How has our Christian culture been seduced by the virtues of paganism?
3. What stood out to you during this week's study?

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ COLOSSIANS 1:15-16

Paul first described Jesus as "the image of invisible God." Jesus is the perfect, exact likeness, and the complete manifestation of God. He or she who has seen Jesus has seen the Father. Paul also described Jesus as "the Firstborn over all creation." "Firstborn" does not imply that Jesus is part of creation, but rather indicates His priority and sovereignty over all creation. Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He existed before creation, all things were made through Him, and all things were made for Him.

1. What does Paul mean in verse 15 when he says Jesus is the "the image of invisible God"? (John 14:9)
2. Jesus is the perfect image (eikon) of God. Is there anything we can know about God outside of Jesus Christ? (Heb. 1:3)
3. Jesus is described as "Firstborn." In this context, what does "firstborn" mean (Psalm 89:27).
4. All things were made through Jesus for Jesus. Why were we created for Jesus? (1 Cor. 10:31)

Visitation/Restoration in 2021

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ COLOSSIANS 1:17

Stuff is made of atoms. And every atom is a nucleus orbited by electrons. Every nucleus is built of protons, but there you reach the end of the line. Inside the proton lies the deep, unsettling truth: Stuff is made of nothing, or almost nothing, held together by atomic glue, lots of glue. Without this glue to hold the atomic particles together, matter could not exist. The Bible says, not only did Jesus always exist (John 1:1, 8:58), but He holds all creation together (Colossians 1:17).

5. There are four fundamental forces of nature to include: the strong nuclear force, the weak nuclear force, electromagnetism, and gravity. The strong nuclear force is described as atomic glue. What are your thoughts behind the force that holds all creation together?
6. Stuff is essentially made of nothing. How can something be created from nothing? (Genesis 1:1)
7. Without the “glue” that holds all things together, matter could not exist. How does this fact influence the way you look at creation?
8. Read Jeremiah 18:6. If stuff is made of atoms, can you envision atoms as the clay referenced in Jeremiah 18:6?
9. Read Zechariah 14:4. If stuff is made of atoms, how easy will it be for the Creator of the universe to split mountains?
10. What comfort comes from knowing that even in the invisible spiritual realities and everything else in this world are under Christ’s power, even if it doesn’t feel like it?

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ COLOSSIANS 1:18

Jesus is our everything—Creator, Sustainer, Head, Beginning, Firstborn and has preeminence or supreme over all life (Rom. 11:36; Eph 1:20,21). He is supreme over natural creation, and over the Church, which He is Head. He is supreme in the spiritual realm as well as the material realm. He is the “beginning,” “firstborn,” and the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He deserves our full recognition as the Preeminent One.

1. Are you facing some “challenging times”? Taking into consideration who Jesus is, how will you overcome these challenges? (Psalm 8:9-10)
2. Jesus is the Preeminent One (Col. 1:18). Where do you take Jesus’ absolute authority in your life for granted?
3. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the narrow Door and He is our everything. Who will you share this revelation of Jesus with this week?

PRAYER

Lord, thank You, that in these challenging times, You are the Preeminent One. You are completely in control. You are our Creator, Sustainer, Head, Beginning, Firstborn, and You literally hold ALL things together. Lord, may we keep our eyes fixed on You and not take Your authority for granted. In all we do, may we bring You glory. For Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:2)