

GOAT, PART 1: FIRST PLACE

In the world of Sports there is often a debate over who the "greatest of all time" would be in a specific sport. And throughout history, there's always one. One that rises to the top of the class. One that outranks, out-performs, out-shines all the others. One that is the G.O.A.T.: the greatest of all time.

Jesus is exactly that—the greatest of all time. Jesus is God who creates and holds the entire world together. And when we give Jesus His proper place in our lives, He will hold our world together as well.

BIG IDEA: When you make Him first in your life, He will hold your world together.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What draws you to certain people? What qualities draws you in? Repels you?
- 2. With your Bible or YouVersion, read Colossians 1:3-9.

We always pray for you, and we give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 4 For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all of God's people, 5 which come from your confident hope of what God has reserved for you in heaven. You have had this expectation ever since you first heard the truth of the Good News. 6 This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God's wonderful grace. 7 You learned about the Good News from Epaphras, our beloved co-worker. He is Christ's faithful servant, and he is helping us on your behalf. 8 He has told us about the love for others that the Holy Spirit has given you. 9 So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. 10 Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.

Colossians 1:3-9 (NLT)

- 3. Paul hasn't met these believers yet (2:1), yet he is grateful for them. Why? What qualities of this church would attract you the most?
- 4. In verses 4 & 5, we see that faith, hope, and love produce fruit in verse 6. What does this fruit look like? Feel like? Act like?
- 5. How does your prayers compare to Paul's prayers in intensity? Thankfulness? In clarity? In faithfulness?
- 6. Chris said, "When your beliefs are a little off, then your life and actions will be way off." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- 7. The Bible has a wonderful way of refocusing our lives. In a world that is adrift? Priorities get muddled and boundaries get blurred. Read Matthew 6:33.

But seek **first** his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

8. When we get our priorities right, everything else just falls into place. "Seek *first*... Jesus." His plans. His ideas. His priorities. Why do priorities affect everything that we do—our actions, our thoughts, and our attitudes? How are your priorities right now?

When our priorities and beliefs are a little off, then our lives and actions get way off. The Colossians had fuzzy ideas about Jesus and who He was. The church of Colossae began to allow wrong beliefs to influence their values and their actions. The wrong beliefs of Gnosticism (coming from the Greek word for knowledge) had infiltrated the church and they began to mis-understand who Jesus was. He wasn't just a man or a good teacher or the imparter of wisdom. Jesus is God—the second person of the trinity—who created everything all the way back to Genesis 1:1.

- 9. Share a time when you first realized that reality was much bigger than just your limited perspective. What opened your eyes to that? Where were you? Who was involved in opening your eyes?
- 10. With your Bible or YouVersion, read Colossians 1:13-18.

For he has **rescued** us from the kingdom of darkness and **transferred** us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, 14 who **purchased** our freedom and **forgave** our sins. 15 Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is **supreme** over all creation. 16 Christ is the one who created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through him and **for him**. 17 He existed before anything else. He is before all things, and **in him all things hold together**—even all of creation holds together. 18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Colossians 1:13-18

- 11. How does Paul describe our salvation in verses 13- & 14? What 4 things to God do for in in these verses?
- 12. Those 4 things God did for us—rescued, transferred, purchased, and forgave us—Jesus did for us. Starting in verse 15, how were the beliefs of the young church at Colossae off about Jesus? (Look at what Paul talked about Jesus in the above verses.)
- 13. What are some of the characteristics that Paul gives us about Jesus starting in verse 15? (example: God the Spirit is invisible, yet Jesus is visible image.)
- 14. In verse 15, Paul describes Jesus as supreme over all creation. Synonyms of supreme consist of highest, best, ultimate, absolute, extreme, top, greatest, matchless, untouchable, unbeatable, unmatched. "He is supreme over all..." He already is first. He is the Boss. He is the person in charge. Is He the One in charge of your life? Does He have first place in your life?
- 15. In verse 17 we see that Jesus holds all things together. Have you ever tried to keep it all together on your own? How have you failed at keeping your life held together?
- 16. How have you seen the power of Jesus hold all things together when you cannot? Do you trust that HE can hold all things together? What is an area of your life that you need to relinquish to the power of Jesus because you can no longer hold it together on your own?
- 17. What do you need to do "widen" your view of reality to realize that Jesus is supreme, not you?

MOVING FORWARD

In what areas of your life is Jesus not first place? Is He your Lord? Your Boss? Is He supreme in every area of your life—finances, values, priorities, entertainment choices, relationships, dating, family?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Challenge yourselves as a group to read through the book of Colossians every week during this series. It is only 4 chapters! You can do it! Schedule out four days of each week where you will read one chapter of Colossians (Or decide on your own reading plan in order to read all of Colossians each week for the next few weeks).

