

SMALL GROUP RESOURCE

Colossians 1:1-20, 2:6-7

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The West has experienced significant cultural shifts with the rise of secularism and individualism; what Charles Taylor calls the 'buffered self'. Our culture has closed off the previous pillars that informed our way of being: the transcendent and the community. However, this vision of reality has been disrupted by the externality of a pandemic. People are beginning to realise that the 'buffered self' is not sufficient when pressures rise and normality collapses. How is the Church to speak into this situation?

If ever there was a letter that needs to be passed around the Churches and read aloud, then the letter to the Colossians is it. The Western 'powers' have made a claim about how we are to live; Colossians subverts those claims and offers an alternative vision of life under a different King. If anything, the letter argues that Christianity is not anthropocentric (human centred), much like our culture; it is Christocentric.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

What are the wider pressures or 'powers' currently that hinder us from being the church in the world?

READ Col 1:1-20 together

Can you think of any times or seasons in your life when this has been true for you?

In some ways we could argue that, in the West, Jesus has become simply another offering similar to the self-help industry for wellbeing. Therefore, Christ is simply the means to some utopian life of riches and happiness, rather than the goal of the Christian life. Or we could say that Jesus is restricted to our personal saviour, where we get our ticket into heaven and we just have to hold on and keep our noses clean until we get there. However, Paul seems to have a different picture of who Jesus is.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

What vision of Jesus does Paul present in Colossians chapter one?

READ Col 2:6-7 together

In both chapter one and this passage Paul uses gardening imagery to make the point that we are in Christ, we have deep roots in Him, and those who are in Him are bearing fruit throughout the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

What do you think it means for us to bear fruit in the world, especially in the times we are living in?

PRAY for one another and for Ukraine