

Hope Church September 7th, 2025

Rooted connections: Christ-centered worldview

Colossians 1:15-20

New series – **Rooted connections**. Roadmap for following Jesus in the messy beautiful world we live in.

Oak tree as a metaphor:

- **Roots**: worldview.
- Trunk: non-negotiable values.
- **Fruit**: habits.

Today we're talking about our root system when we follow Jesus.

What is my WORLDVIEW?

A WORLDVIEW is the way we see our world. It's the way we make sense of our world.

It's how we *understand life* and **people** and **everything that happens to us**.

Whether we are aware of it or not, our WORLDVIEW shapes every single thought and action. It is always running in the background of our hearts and minds and emotions. Just like an app you never close.

It is the reason

- It is the reason why we think the way we think.
- It is the reason why we feel the way we feel.
- It is the reason why we connect with others the way we do.
- It is the reason why we live the way we live.

It guides our choices. It guides **our relationships**. It guides *our beliefs and our actions*.

The **first followers of Jesus** WORLDVIEW were Jesus Christ.

- They lived in a world where the Caesar was treated as god. **Everyone** had to confess that 'Caesar is Lord'.
- The first Christians **refused to worship Caesar**. The Roman WORLDVIEW didn't become their WORLDVIEW.
- The first Christians WORLDVIEW was built a core confession: **Κύριος Ἰησοῦς** (Kýrios Iēsoûs) – Jesus is Lord.
 - ⇒ When you greeted someone – Jesus is Lord.
 - ⇒ When someone **decided to follow Jesus** – Jesus is Lord.
 - ⇒ When they were persecuted – Jesus is Lord.
 - ⇒ When they **were on trial** – Jesus is Lord.

⇒ Moments before they were killed for their faith – Jesus is Lord.

- They accepted the risk. Following Jesus could cost them their jobs and their freedom and even their lives. But even with *all that pressure*, they **stayed faithful to a Christ-centered WORLDVIEW**.
- A life built around Jesus – being CONSUMED BY JESUS – was worth more to them than **comfort and safety and staying alive**.

What is a Christ-centered WORLDVIEW is?

Why do we need to have a Christ-centered WORLDVIEW?

We are reading today one of the first worship songs of the Christian faith. You can open your Bibles at **COLOSSIANS 1**.

- Colossae was an ancient city in what we would call **modern-day Turkey**.
- Most of the people in the church were Gentiles who had come to believe in Jesus.
- There were a lot of *competing voices* in the city of Colossae:
 - ⇒ There were **temples dedicated to false gods**.
 - ⇒ Greek philosophies were present everywhere.

⇒ Some people in the Colossae church got *pulled into worshipping* Roman gods and Greek gods and even angels — **Jesus was seen as just one more option to believe in.**

⇒ Furthermore, the Jewish Christians were pressuring Gentile believers to follow *the way of the Old Testament* — telling them what they could eat and how they had to worship.

- This led to a **very confused church!** People didn't know what to believe. How to live.
- It was into that mess that Paul writes his letter.
- In **COLOSSIANS 1** he writes a beautiful worship song about Jesus.
- *Most scholars* think Paul may have taken a **Jewish hymn and reshaped it** to remind the church about the truth of Jesus.

Let's read:

Verses 15-17

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Paul is REMINDING the church of **who Jesus really is**.

- Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God. If you've ever wondered what God is like you don't have to guess anymore — look at Jesus. He makes the **unknown God known**.
- Then Paul gives us three little phrases: in Him (ἐν αὐτῷ), through Him (δι' αὐτοῦ), and for Him (εἰς αὐτόν). What does that mean?
 - ⇒ It means **everything in the universe** — every star in the sky and every mountain and every ocean and every single life — **was created in Him, through Him, and for Him**.
 - ⇒ Jesus didn't just create everything. *Jesus made it for Himself*.
 - ⇒ All of creation points back to Him. All of creation puts His glory on display.
- Paul addresses the believers' fears. Remember, many of these believers were surrounded by neighbors who worshipped Roman gods and Greek gods and angels and all kinds of spiritual powers.

- Paul reminds them not to be afraid. **Jesus is above every ruler and every power and every so-called god.** He reigns over all of them.
- Paul reminds them of the promise that Jesus holds all things together. What keeps this world from collapsing? What keeps your life from falling completely apart?
 ⇒ It's not Greek philosophies. It's **not human wisdom or clever ideas**. It's *not our own strength*.
 ⇒ Jesus Christ is the glue holding creation — and even your life — together.

Verses 18-20

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:18-20 NIV

Paul continues by showing the church in Colossae who Jesus is. **Why Jesus matters.**

- Jesus is the *head of the church*. Jesus is the source and the authority and the one who keeps His people united.
- Our FAITH COMMUNITY doesn't get its life from culture or from politics or from a human leader — not even from an emperor. **Our life comes from Christ alone.**

- Paul uses this powerful word in Greek: **πλήρωμα** (pleroma). It means 'FULLNESS'. It means that the **complete and total fullness of God** — everything that God is — *lived in Jesus*. Was present in Jesus.
- When Jesus walked this earth, He wasn't half God or partly divine. He was fully God in the flesh.
- *When Jesus was nailed to the cross and shed His blood for us*, it was **God Himself paying the price for our sin**.
- Remember: believers in Colossae were tempted to think of Jesus as just another god or one more spiritual being they can pick from.
- Paul is clear — Jesus isn't *one of many*.
- **Jesus is the one and only God**.
- Paul ends the worship song with the Good News: through his death and resurrection, Jesus restores what's been broken.
- He *reconciles* us to **God**.
- He *reconciles* us to **one another**.
- And He even begins *reconciling* us to **creation** itself.

- That's why Paul can confidently say that the cross brings peace. Not religious traditions.
Not denominations. Not theologies or human efforts.
- **Peace comes only from Jesus** — through the brutality of His cross and His resurrection.

Paul makes it clear in **COLOSSIANS 1**:

- Jesus isn't just another god.
- He is the exalted Christ and the Creator and above all things.
- Jesus is the only one worthy of our devotion.
- Our WORLDVIEW – the way we that we see this world and live in this world - needs to be Jesus.

For first followers, the gospel Truth is Jesus himself. The heart of Christianity is not a cause but a Person. Not rituals or rites but relationship. It's not learning to follow a program, moral principle, or theological platform but learning to love a Person.

Leonard Sweet

Jesus cannot be just one part of our lives or one of the voices we listen to. Jesus needs to be the **foundation of our everything**.

- Jesus need to shape the way we think and feel and see the world. My race and my culture and my political affiliation and my career are always second.

- We need to follow Jesus in our thoughts and our emotions and our relationships and our choices.

But we live in a world where the world challenges us to downplay who Jesus is. A world that encourages us to water Jesus down. To minimize his impact on our lives. That we should only follow Jesus where it is **easy and comfortable**.

But for us as followers of Jesus, everything needs to begin and end with Jesus.

Paul challenges us in **COLOSSIANS 1** that we need to follow the complete Jesus in every part of our lives.

Jesus according to the worship song in **COLOSSIANS 1**:

1. **The pre-existence of Jesus** – Jesus was there before anything existed. He was not created.
2. **The necessity of Jesus** – We needed Jesus because nothing else could fix our brokenness or remove our sin—not the Ten Commandments, not the kings, not the

Temple, not even the prophets. None of our own good deeds or any religion. *Only Jesus could reconcile us with God.*

- 3. The birth of Jesus/incarnation** – God loved us so much that He went all-in — He became fully human in Jesus so we could truly know Him. Through the birth of Jesus God revealed His love and grace in a tangible way. Through the birth of Jesus God experienced what it's like to be human. With all our ups and our downs.

- 4. The life of Jesus** – We're not saved by how well we live. Only Jesus saves. The life of Jesus calls us to live in a new way.

⇒ To love like He does.

⇒ To choose kindness and honesty.

⇒ To care for others even when it's hard.

Living like Jesus means I'm aiming higher than just being "good" or "following the rules". *It means letting His love change me on the inside and outside.*

- 5. The cross of Jesus** – Jesus took our punishment so we could be set free. He carried all our failures, pain, and sins when He died in our places. He walked through death — a place where God had never gone — to rescue us from sin and give us hope for real life.

6. The resurrection of Jesus – Because Jesus rose from the dead, death is defeated and the punishment for our sin is completely washed away.

⇒ It brought freedom and hope.

⇒ It gave us a new identity — sons and daughters of God. Loved and accepted. Forever.

The resurrection is the beginning of God's new world, where Jesus is making everything new and inviting us to join Him in this renewal.

7. The ascension of Jesus – proving that there is life beyond this one and that our lives in this world have value. Eternity value. Reason that the Holy Spirit was poured out on us. To comfort and guide and transform us. Empowering us to share the good news of Jesus and serving the lost and the broken and the poor and the vulnerable.

N.T. Wright shared the following story:

- A beautiful painting was gifted to a COLLEGE. The only place with a wall big enough to exhibit it was in a rundown building. Lots of people came to see it.
- The painting was so beautiful that the college decided that instead of moving the painting or hiding it away, **they will tear down the old building around the painting.** They build a brand-new, beautiful building with the painting right at the center. The whole idea was that everyone would see that this building's purpose was to display the painting.

- In the same way that the college rebuilt its entire building to showcase that masterpiece painting, our lives should be rebuilt around Jesus.
- Jesus is the true masterpiece.
- *Everything — our relationships, our dreams, our priorities — should be centered on Him.*
- He's not just one part of our lives. He is the masterpiece that we showcase with our lives and relationships and personalities and talents.

Being risen with Christ, we are to seek the things that are above. Life does not suddenly become free of problems, but in the company of the living Christ we may be able to look at them with humility and faith, to cope with them with renewed strength and purpose, and to live our whole lives with holiness and hope.

NT Wright

Video – I believe in Jesus <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvI8Yx3EDTE&t=220s>

A CHRIST-CENTERED WORLDVIEW isn't just a belief system.

- We were created to do life in Christ.
- We were created to do life through Christ.
- We were created to do life for Christ.