

DON'T GO QUIET

Hey OHC / guests ... my name is Jesse / glad your hear //
online peeps.

We are in Colossians 1:18-19 today in case you're an O.G.
like me and have your Bible with you and like to read
along.

If you've been with us the past couple of weeks you will
have noticed how much Colossians talks about Jesus.

That is why we love this little letter.
Small but like 120 proof ... its strong.

We are in a part of the letter where quite possibly the writer
broke out into song // // its almost as if he forgot he was
writing and just started praising Jesus.

I'm picking up on the middle part of that in verse 18 and 19.

Colossians 1:18-19

**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,**

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What is Paul getting at ... [what is the big idea]

When it comes to gods / spiritual beings / spiritual power ...

Jesus is the G.O.A.T.

we love to rank everything...

kids ask Dad, who did it better?

people magazine deliberates on “who wore it better?”

sports ... “who is the best ... Jordan or Lebron or _____?”

What do we base it on?

- performance / objective measure
 - Jordan vs. _____ → stats make it debatable ...
 - subjectively I will always vote for Jordan
- No one person's performance makes them a unanimous G.O.A.T. → we will always debate ...

in Paul's day they didn't have a vast field of sports figures to debate over, but they did have a vast field of gods.

And Paul isn't just saying Jesus is the best of that field ... he is saying Jesus is in a field of his own.

Colossians 1:18 “...that in everything he might have **preeminence.**”

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Paul uses a particular word here.

He doesn't just say Jesus is the greatest or highest. Lots of words for that.

He uses the word preeminence ... that is loaded with meaning:

- surpassing all others
- highest in rank and influence
- first in kind or pattern
- before and above the rest of its kind

If you were to try and distill preeminence down to a simple idea ... I think you would come to the idea of "author".

Now that doesn't sound that impressive.

But let's tease this out some more.

To Author is to create ... to give birth to something.

Before truth, beauty, wonder can emanate from a book or song or canvas ... it first had to emanate from an author.

The author is its BEGINNING!

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And that is what Paul is getting at here. [why he is caught up in worship]

Jesus is the BEGINNING ... not that he had a beginning ...
But that in him all things have their beginning.
He is the author ... of all ...

Which means ...

Jesus should be worshipped above all things.

I have a friend who isn't a believer.

He once told me that his problem with God is that he seems like an ego-maniac.

We don't like people like that ... right.

Always needing the attention. (look at me x2).

We don't have a problem giving SOME people a LITTLE of our worship.

But the fact that God says He alone should be worshipped above everything ... that kind of rubs us the wrong way.

Sounds like a character flaw more than anything right?

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Well let's think about this ...

If Jesus is the AUTHOR of ALL THINGS ...
we are saying he is the ultimate author.

Let's pursue this further.

Books/songs/art can never transcend their creators ...
b/c without them they wouldn't exist.

We get that ...

When I read LoTR I cared about who the author was. I
praised Tolkien.

When I first heard the Tribe Called Quest's *Scenario*, I
wanted to know who the author was ...

Why? B/C when we experience something exceptional ...
we want to know the author.

Why do we want to know the author?

- 1. Someone deserves the praise ... [credit]
- 2. What else did they create that I can enjoy!!!

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And in case you don't think we give them praise ... we do ...

How you might ask?

We pay loads of money to see them live, OR
in the case of paintings we pay \$Millions\$ sometimes to own their creation.

We even create award shows to recognize and praise the artists who give life to the art we love.

What I'm getting at is that we give praise to many kinds of authors/creators.

It's actually pretty natural.

It only seems fitting that we should recognize greatness.

“Game recognize game.” :)

Now, it is one thing to give praise to the artist as consumers of their art.

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Consumers get to stand back and pick and choose which artist's work we like most.

The power to give praise is in our hands. [we choose]

But with Jesus it doesn't work that way.

We are commanded to worship him.

So the question is why is that different?

It's b/c Jesus' church has a different kind of relationship with Him as an artist.

We aren't consumers of Jesus' art ... we are his art.

We are His song, His painting, His masterpiece.

Our very existence is to glorify him.

Colossians 1:18 (NOTE: ignore colors and [text])

18 And he is the head of the body, the church. [people not buildings] He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

The church exists to worship Jesus above all things.

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Many of us hear that and think of coming together on Sunday and singing songs.

And that is a part of it ... but there is more to worship than that.

(We have some ground to take in singing with more passion, thankfulness and gratitude. Another sermon though).

Worship is the response of all we are to the revelation of all God is.

Worship is all of our life lived out of the power and presence of Jesus.

Jesus is our head ... which not only means that he is above us in rank // that is true ...

More importantly it means he is our life-source.

And so we must remain in him.

John 15:5 talks about abiding in Jesus.

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

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There isn't any other way to interpret this except that we have to remain in Jesus.

He is our life source.

A branch can't blossom or bear fruit if its cut off from the vine.

[if you break off a branch the vine doesn't die ... the branch does ... the vine goes on living ... it is the life source]

So it goes with Jesus' body, each one of us, when we aren't connected to our head.

Jesus authored the church ... he sustains the church.

We don't start with him and move on to something else.

And we don't need anything else in addition to Him.

It's not Jesus started the church and we need to reach outside of Him to make sure it continues.

Jesus started OHC, He will sustain OHC, and if He wants to He can shut us down.

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Our job isn't to force fruitfulness ... Jesus alone does that.

Our job is to practice faithfulness ... remaining in Jesus our Head / life source.

That is our job ... that is what you and I are called to do.

And when we do that we reveal Jesus more and more.

Both to Christians and non-Christians alike.

Now, some of us follow Jesus like we can be connected to the head without being connected into the body.

I'm cool with Jesus, I just don't need the whole "church" thing.

But that doesn't compute in this body analogy.

Paul could have used a lot of different pictures here but he chose "body" and "head".

A body is made up of many different parts. But they are connected to one another, working together. [not in isolation]

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Which means this ...

- when I practice faithfulness, others benefit and are strengthened and thus the church is strengthened.
- when I DON'T the body suffers.

A couple examples:

1. **CG ... sharing testimonies ... like a sanctified truth or dare term ... some people divulged sins they committed but never told a soul except God. In those moments we got to look them in the eye and say, "God has forgiven you and accepts you and loves you; and so do I." → HUGE HEALING MOMENT ... DK WHY ... SOMETHING POWERFUL. AFFIRMING GOD'S FORGIVENESS AND GRACE. [2-3 witness let all be established].**
2. **In my 20's I was indulging in porn. Then the H.S. had a convo with me → "Jesse I can't use you to bless my people if you keep on this path."**

In example (1), I showed up [faithfulness], listened [faithfulness], applied the Gospel [faithfulness]. I got to be a channel by which God's grace flows to people.

In example (2), my "private sin" [unfaithfulness] would have inhibited God's grace flowing through me to others. [still saved]

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Neither of these things are easy to do.

But if we love something we are willing to hard things.

Jesus demonstrated this best which is why the church worships him as the G.O.A.T.

Colossians 1:18b

... He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead,

Jesus did what no one else could do.

A couple of verses before this Paul writes that Jesus is the firstborn over all creation.

Now he uses the firstborn imagery again, but this time he says Jesus is the firstborn “from the dead.”

We should ask, “Why is that necessary?”

B/C death reigns over this creation.

We know that to be true.

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Everything tends toward entropy.

-Geek Out-

2nd Law of Thermodynamics → everything is tending towards decay. (slowly dying).

- the sun ... will eventually die out
- our bodies ... breaking down
[flabby/wrinkled/balding/forgetting]

We can't stop it!

Until ... JESUS!!!

Firstborn from the dead!

He came and defeated death / broke the law of entropy.

Ahh but wait a second ... you might be thinking,
“Christians are still dying ... the sun is still slowly
burning out.”

[law of entropy still in play]

How can this be?

2 Corinthians 4:16

16 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

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This verse captures the essence of the paradox.

We are simultaneously wasting away and being renewed ...

Right now we live in this in-between moment:

- There is both Old Creation and New Creation

It is what is called the already-but-not-yet of Jesus' Kingdom.

We ALREADY live and experience the New Creation inwardly ... BUT we have NOT YET received it in full.

But!!! One day the old creation will give way to the fullness of the NEW Creation.

Jesus will have total victory over death and sin.

They will be no more.

All that will be left is the fullness of LIFE ... no more death.

And it is B/C of Jesus ... he defeated death.

Remember when we talked about using stats to debate who is the GOAT?

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This is one STAT that no one else can match... not even close.

And that is why Jesus is the G.O.A.T.

He alone is worthy to be worshipped ...

He alone is worthy to be obeyed ...

He alone is deserving of all our love and devotion.

And so we wait with great hope anticipating that day when we will receive the fullness of Jesus' kingdom in the New Creation.

But until then we don't have to feel like we are getting a sub-par experience of Jesus.

We haven't received the fullness of Jesus' Kingdom ... yet
But we live with the fullness of Jesus today.

Colossians 1:19

19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell

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Jesus is all we need.

What we are seeing here is that God did not hold himself back when he came to earth.

All of God came in the person of Jesus and walked among us.

He experienced our frailty, pain, sickness, temptations, trials.

All of God was on the cross standing under All of God's wrath.

Jesus gave ALL for us; so that ALL of him could dwell with us today and forevermore.

We get to experience ALL of His love, goodness, mercy, and grace.

Therefore Jesus is ALL we need.

That is why abiding in Him isn't some drudgery of a commandment we have to obey.

We are talking about the FULLNESS OF GOD!!!

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We get that!

And that is enough!

I can lose everything: money, health, family ...

But if I have Jesus I still have everything.

HERE NOT A CHRISTIAN

- Jesus isn't something you had to make life better.
- He is all you need.
- He paid it all for you by dying on a cross.
- He loves you that much.
- You can know the GOAT today ... pray and ask him to save you and be your Lord and Savior.

CHRISTIANS:

- Is Jesus your GOAT? [giving him glory / his canvas]
- Are you living life as if Jesus isn't enough?
- Jesus + American dream (house / 1.5 kids / money)
- Are you connected to Him ... abiding ... how?
- Are you connected to the body? How?
- What is Jesus calling you into today?

Call to Come: Communion & Giving

Communion reminds us that Jesus is our life-source.

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We are the church b/c of Him...

His body broken / blood shed.

Come and eat in thankfulness.

PRAY

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