

Leader's Guide

Session 2: Colossians 1:15–23

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: Since Jesus is supreme over all things—creation, authorities, the Church. Through Christ, we are reconciled to God, we can stand firm in our faith, rooted in the hope of the gospel and Christ’s supremacy.

Head Change: To know Jesus is supreme over everything in life—creation, authorities both spiritual and not, and the Church.

Heart Change: To feel secure in Jesus’s authority over all things and rooted in the hope of the gospel.

Life Change: To stand firm in our faith—faithful to God and obedient to His Word—regardless of any circumstance.

OPEN

How do we use the word “supreme” in our culture?

(supreme pizza, the Supreme Leader in Star Wars, the Supreme Court, etc.)

With those examples in mind, how would you say our culture defines supremacy? How do you think that compares to the biblical definition of supremacy?

(Cultural defines supremacy as the best or highest or something that has the most. Biblical supremacy refers to God’s authority, rulership, and power over all creation.)

Louie Giglio has already mentioned the supremacy of Jesus so far in this study of Colossians. The passage we’re studying today talks specifically about Jesus— His supremacy, authority, and power. Before we begin, let’s pray that the Spirit would deepen our love and understanding of Jesus as we go through this session.

READ

Read Colossians 1:15–23.

WATCH

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Louie’s teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how Louie answers the following questions.

What is Jesus supreme over?

How does Jesus’s supremacy and the sufficiency of Jesus relate to our worth and purpose?

Show Session 2: Colossians 1:15–23 (12 minutes)

DISCUSS

Before we dive into this session, let’s review what we’ve already discussed in Colossians. Remember that Paul wrote this letter while in prison with Timothy. He penned this letter to encourage and correct the church in Colossae. This church had added to the gospel in several ways—and we’ll talk more about the specifics of what they added later on in this series.

Louie summed up the theme of this book—it’s all about the supremacy of Jesus over all things. **How did the supremacy of Jesus apply to the verses we studied in the last session?** (Jesus is supreme over our salvation. He rescued us from sin and death by His own death. We’re now in His kingdom. See Colossians 1:13–14 for a refresher.)

As Louie walked through verses 15–23, he pulled out three characteristics of Jesus. Jesus is the originator, sustainer, and leader. **What other initial observations about Jesus do you make in these verses?**

Verses 15–20 are actually a hymn. Some of your Bible translations might even format this part of the text differently, like a poem or the lyrics to a song. It’s as if Paul pauses for a brief moment to exalt Christ by worshipping Him. This section begins by saying Jesus is the image of the invisible God. **How did Jesus display the character and nature of God while He was on earth?**

Horizontal lines for writing answers to the questions.

GO DEEPER

Read more about the image of God in Scripture in these verses: Gen. 1:26–27; Exod. 20:4–6

According to these verses, how would you describe a biblical definition of “image”? (An image is someone or something that represents God. Humans were made in God’s image—in His likeness. Idols attempted to make a physical representation of God on earth.)

Why do you think God didn’t want images made of Him? What about a human-created image is insufficient? (A created image isn’t God. God didn’t want a tangible representation of Him on earth that misrepresented who He is. He also wanted Israel to have faith in Him.)

Why, then, is it okay that Jesus is the image of God? (Jesus is God. He is the physical representation of God on earth. He images God by being fully God and fully human.)

In verse 15, Paul says Jesus is the “firstborn over all creation.” **Does saying Jesus was “firstborn” mean He was created? Why not?**

Some people take this verse to mean that God created Jesus since Paul calls Jesus “firstborn over all creation.” The early church councils deemed this view heretical, but we still see it pop up among groups such as Jehovah’s Witnesses. Paul isn’t saying Jesus was created. Rather, the term “firstborn” refers to Jesus’s position of privilege. He exercises authority over all creation because, as we see in verse 16, all things were made through Him and for Him.

How does verse 16 describe Jesus’s authority? (He is over heaven, earth, the visible and invisible, thrones, powers, rulers, and authorities because He created them.)

Why do you think it matters that all things were made by and for Jesus?

What specific things does Jesus have authority over in your life? (Some answers include: your job, family, boss, salary, friendships, president/representative, spouse, habits, natural disasters, etc.)

What areas of your life are difficult for you to view as under Jesus’s authority? Why?

What do you think it looks like to live in such a way that reflects Jesus’s authority over all things?

Reread verse 17. Louie talked about a protein called laminin—a cell adhesion molecule, which means it holds human body cells together and is in the shape of a cross. Louie used laminin to remind us that Jesus does hold all things together—quite literally.

GO DEEPER

Read more about the deity of Christ in these verses: John 1:1–5, 18; Heb. 1:1–4; Phil. 2:5–11

What truths about Jesus do we learn from these verses?

How do these verses contribute to the discussion of Jesus’s supremacy?

How are these verses similar to what Paul says about Jesus in Colossians 1? (In John and Hebrews, it mentions Jesus is the agent of creation. Philippians talks about Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection.)

Jesus is fully God. Scripture clearly states it as fact. In His deity, Jesus rules with authority and power.

Because Jesus is fully God, He could bring reconciliation between God and us through His sacrifice on the cross. He became the perfect sacrifice needed to reunite us with God.

What is it like to be alienated from God?

Leader: *Encourage your group to share their stories as they answer the question above. Ask them to explain what their lives were like before knowing Jesus. If they came to Christ at a young age, ask them to talk about how different their lives would be today if they hadn't met Jesus.*

Being alienated from God leads to destruction, chaos, and ultimately death. But in Christ, we have been reconciled to God and are presented as holy before Him. **What's been the biggest difference in your life experience between knowing Jesus and not knowing Him?**

How does it feel to know that you're presented "without blemish and free from accusation" before God because of Jesus?

How does Paul describe the proper response to what Jesus has done for us in verse 23? (He says to continue in faith, to stand firm, and to not move from the hope found in the gospel.)

Paul says faith, perseverance, and hope mark a believer who understands who Jesus is. **What do you think it means to live a life that reflects Jesus's sacrifice and supremacy, practically speaking? How would this perspective of Jesus change the way someone faces suffering or encounters blessing?**

In what areas of your life do you need to remember Jesus's supremacy? What's one way you could trust Him with that area this week?

LAST WORD

Jesus reigns supreme over all creation. All things were created through Him and for Him. He rules over the seen and the unseen—the physical and the spiritual world. From the foundation of the world, He has authority over the created realm. By defeating death, Jesus rules over it and made a way for us to be reconciled to God. His sacrifice solidifies His supremacy. From your salvation to your work to your inner thoughts, Jesus has authority over it all.

We live under Jesus’s supremacy. His rule changes everything for us. As we learned from Colossians 1:13–14 in the last session, we now live in His kingdom—the kingdom of light. We’ve been freed from sin and death and have been presented as holy before God. We owe our lives to Jesus for what He’s done for us. Are we living in a way that reflects that truth? This week, take time to consider whether or not your live reflects the supremacy of Jesus. A life surrendered to His authority isn’t ruled by fear or swayed by opposition. Instead, it is characterized by faith, perseverance, and hope.

LIVE IT OUT

Pray: Ask God to reveal the areas of your life that need to submit to Jesus’s authority. Pray that the Spirit would guide you in surrendering those things to Jesus.

List: Read back through Colossians 1:1–23 and list all the attributes of Christ mentioned in these verses. Take a few minutes to reflect on who Jesus is and revisit the list throughout the week.

Share: Write out your testimony this week. Focus on what life was like before you knew Christ and how He’s changed your life since. Share your story with someone this week.

Create: Make something to remind yourself that Jesus is supreme over all creation. Display your creation so you can see it and remember this passage throughout the week.

Worship: Choose a praise song that exalts Jesus. Listen to that song in the margins of your life this week to remind you of His supremacy over all things.

Horizontal lines for writing notes.

