



JESUS: WORTHY OF WORSHIP BIBLE STUDY - LESSON 1

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Lesson 1



Lesson 1: Jesus, the Creator



Bible Verses:

Colossians 1:15-17,
Genesis 1:27-18, John 1:1-5



Bottom Line:

Jesus is worthy of worship because the world was created through him, and he continues to hold the world together.



Topic: Worship, Creation, Joy, Jesus

SERIES PREP

This series requires little preparation, but if you would like to read it, NT Wright has an excellent commentary on Colossians called Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters. This commentary explores the background of Colossians and talks about what Paul is doing in this specific passage with clarity and specificity.

INTRODUCTION

If you've grown up in church at all, or even if you haven't, you've probably heard of Jesus.

You know, the Jewish Rabbi who walked around and did a lot of cool stuff in Israel about 2000 years ago – stuff that is so cool that we are still talking about it today, 2000 years later...Yeah, that guy.

He's kind of a big deal.

People know him.

In fact, it would be hard to argue against the claim that Jesus is the most famous person to have ever walked the earth.

So, what's the deal?

What is it about Jesus that has given him so much staying power?

Could it be because of all the amazing things he did?

I mean, let's think about it.

Let's think about the things Jesus did.

Jesus taught some transformative lessons, and he gave great sermons, no doubt.

Jesus healed people.

And Jesus rose from the dead.

But it's the meaning behind these events that keeps us talking about Jesus.

The person and stories of Jesus have transformed our world for two thousand years because Jesus is worthy of more than simple remembrance...

Jesus is worthy of worship.

Jesus is worthy of our adoration, praise, devotion, and love.

He is worthy of being the sun to the solar system of our lives, the thing that every part of us is centered upon and shaped by...

That's what it means to worship Jesus.

So what is it about Jesus that makes him worthy of worship?

There's an ancient hymn, an ancient worship song, that some of the very first Christians sang, and it answered this question.

They would sing about who Jesus is and the role he played in the world.

Paul wrote it down in a letter that he sent to a growing church in the first few decades after Jesus ascended into heaven.

That letter is the book of Colossians in our Bible, and that hymn can be found in Colossians 1:15-20.

We remember Jesus because of the things he did, but this hymn shows us that we worship Jesus because of who he is.

Over the next few weeks, we're going to look at this hymn and what Paul said it meant for us.

We are going to see that Jesus is worthy of worship because Jesus is creator, teacher, and peacemaker, and we are going to talk about what all of that means for us now and moving forward.

So let's get into it.

LESSON

How connected is God to the world?

How important is Jesus to the day-to-day rhythm of life?

Or here is another way to ask it: ‘

If God were to go on vacation for two weeks, do you think we would notice?

It’s an interesting question to think about, and there are a lot of ways people answer it.

Some of us believe that God isn’t involved in what goes on in today’s world.

Maybe some of us don’t believe there is a God at all.

Or maybe some of us believe that once God created the world, God took His hands off the wheel and let it do its thing.

This is like viewing God as a watchmaker, and the world is a watch.

Once the watchmaker makes the watch, it runs on its own – no need for the watchmaker to stay involved.

Some of us may say that we believe God is connected to the world, but when it actually comes down to it, we really only consult Him on the “big stuff.”

I mean, it kind of makes sense, right?

We don’t really ever see God, and the world just keeps ticking along.

It can be hard to imagine that God would be involved in the mundane stuff, like riding to school on a Tuesday morning, or studying for your AP U.S. history test, or eating Chipotle.

But the Bible paints a different picture of God's involvement in the world He created.

The Bible tells of a God who is intimately connected to the world and plays an integral role in day-to-day life.

And who is the key to that connection?

Colossians 1:15-17 has an answer.

Discussion Questions

1. If God were to go on vacation, do you think you would notice? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever thought about God's involvement in day-to-day life? What do you think about this topic?
3. Have you ever had an experience where it felt like God was involved in your life? If so, what was it like?
4. Why do you think it's so easy and normal to believe that God really isn't all that involved in the world?

Read **Colossians 1:15** (New Living Translation) - Christ is Supreme

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.

This is the opening two lines of the ancient hymn about Jesus, and it starts with Jesus' relationship with creation.

So what do we see?

Do we see a picture of a God that is disconnected from creation?

We don't... but why?

Okay, first, we learn that Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God.

But what is this verse actually saying?

Remember we talked about how one of the reasons it's easy to believe that God isn't involved in the world is because we don't really ever see God?

The first thing that this hymn says is that Jesus was the visible image of God.

In other words, Jesus is God that we can see.

Okay, maybe not that we can see – unless someone here is WAY older than I would guess – but that humanity could see.

And those who saw were able to record who Jesus was and what Jesus did in the world for those who came after – that's us – to be able to see Jesus through their eyes.

Jesus was God's physical, visible, tangible presence in the midst of the world.

That is intimate... up close... in the thick of things.

Not only was Jesus God's visible and intimate presence in the world, but because of this, Jesus is supreme over all creation – now, currently, both this day and forever.

What does that mean?

To answer that, we have to go way back to the beginning of the Bible, because this song is saying something very clever that we could miss if we're not careful.

But before we go back, let's answer some questions.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever wished that you could have seen Jesus? If so, what would you like to have seen?
2. If you were able to see Jesus like the disciples did, would you ask him any questions? If so, what would they be?
3. God was willing to come down to our dark world. What does that say about who God is?
4. Is there any comfort in the idea that Jesus is God we can see? Why or why not?
5. What do you think it means for Jesus to be "supreme over all creation?"

Read **Genesis 1:27-28** (New Living Translation) – The Account of Creation

27 So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

28 Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."

So what does this random passage in Genesis about the creation of humanity have to do with Jesus?

Excellent question.

Do you notice anything familiar about this passage when you think about the opening lines of the hymn we just read in Colossians?

Jesus is the visible image of who?

God.

But in Genesis, who is made “in God’s image?”

Humanity.

Interesting...

But wait... there's more.

Jesus is supreme over all creation, right?

Well, what does God command newly-created humanity to do?

What role are they supposed to play in the world?

“Fill the earth and govern it. *Reign...*”

See the pattern?

Crazy, right?

Jesus does perfectly what humanity does imperfectly.

So let's think about this for a moment.

The hymn in Colossians is saying something incredibly clever.

It's saying that Jesus is *BOTH* the God we can see AND the perfect expression of humanity as we were made to be.

Jesus is the one and only, perfect meeting place between God and the world.

Discussion Questions

1. Does the fact that Jesus is the expression of humanity as it was “made to be” change the way you view yourself or those around you? Why or why not?

2. What do you think it means for humanity to be made in God's image?
3. How do you think we are to govern and reign over the world?
4. Why do you think God would create humanity in His image?
5. Does this idea change the way you think about Jesus and Jesus' relationship with you? Why or why not?

Read **Colossians 1:16** (New Living Translation) – Christ is Supreme

“For through [Jesus] God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.”

So we have already seen that Jesus is intimately involved in the world.

Jesus is the meeting place between God and humanity.

But then, if we look back at Colossians, the hymn gives us even more detail.

Jesus is not only the meeting place between God and creation, Jesus was integral to the act of creation itself.

“For through Jesus, God created everything...”

What an outrageous idea!

Think about the kind of person that Scripture describes Jesus to be: passionate, creative, just, kind, fierce, good, strong, and loving.

Now ask yourself: “What kind of world would a person like that make?”

It's an interesting question, right?

Because so many people, especially we Christians, have a tendency to look at the world around us and only see the brokenness.

But there is so much more to the world than that.

When we realize that the world was created through the person of Jesus, we begin to see little hints of this truth all over the place.

Discussion Questions

1. When you hear stories about Jesus, do you ever think about him as the creator? Why or why not?
2. Does this idea change the way that you look at the people around you?
3. What are some examples of things in creation that you know to be good, and how can they remind you of the goodness of Jesus?

Now you might be thinking...

"But there is still brokenness in the world."

"Sometimes it feels like darkness is all around us."

"And what does all this have to do with all that?"

Great question.

Let's look for an answer in the book of John.

Read **John 1:1-5** (New Living Translation) – Christ, the Eternal Word

1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He existed in the beginning with God.

3 God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

4 The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.

Ok, so who is this talking about?

Does it sound like someone we know?

The author of the book of John is talking about Jesus here.

(Perhaps, based on what we've talked about so far, that much is obvious).

He has given Jesus a cool nickname: "the Word."

In this passage, the author of John is making the same claim as the passage we read earlier – that the world was created through Jesus – but then it explains what that means for us today.

"The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone."

Life is a gift that was given to the world by Jesus, but what about all the stuff that doesn't bring life?

What about the brokenness and the darkness of the world?

Let's keep going.

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.”

There are few sentences in the Bible that bring as much hope as this one.

When we are surrounded by darkness, it can be hard to remember that Jesus created the world and that beautiful things like life, hope, joy, goodness, laughter, passion, kindness, justice, and more are echoes of the one who created them.

Because the sad reality is that there are times in our lives when it feels like there is more darkness than light.

We all walk through seasons like this from time to time.

And in those times, it’s easy to believe that God isn’t involved in the world.

It’s easy to feel, if there is even a God at all, that He has abandoned the world.

But then there are verses like these that tell us that no matter how dark it gets, the darkness will never extinguish the light.

It was through Jesus that the world was created, and no amount of darkness will ever be able to extinguish Jesus’ light.

In creation itself, there will always be echoes of the Creator Himself.

There will always be reminders of God’s closeness – God’s intimate relationship with the world.

The trick is to know where to look.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever had times in your life when it felt like there was more darkness than light? If so, what was that like?

2. What are some ways we can remind ourselves of the light when we are in a season of darkness?

3. Where do you look for hope when you are feeling down?

4. Are there people in your life who remind you of the goodness of the world around you when you are feeling low? If so, does it help?

5. How does it make you feel to hear that the darkness will never extinguish the light? Do you believe it?

Read **Colossians 1:17** (New Living Translation) - Christ is Supreme

"He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together."

This is as close as it gets.

Jesus not only created the world way back when, but Jesus is *actively holding together all of creation now*.

This means that God didn't just wind up the world, like a watch, and then let it go and do its thing.

Every moment of every day, Jesus is holding creation together.

This means that we can experience Jesus now.

When we hear echoes of Jesus' goodness in the world around us, we are experiencing little bits of Jesus.

Every hint of joy that you have ever experienced has been a gift given to you by Jesus.

All of the goodness in the world is a reflection of Jesus, who turns the world and holds all things together.

We started this conversation with the question: "What makes Jesus worthy of worship?"

We worship Jesus because he created ALL that is good.