

# Colossians 1:15-23

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 15 September 2024

Preacher: Eric Morse

[ 0 : 0 0 ] thank you worship team matthew for leading us in the reverence of christ this morning and let me tell you i'm excited for this passage because it is the height of decorum when it comes to the person of jesus christ so if you don't know me my name is eric i'm one of the pastors here and i get the privilege of teaching on most occasions on most sundays and it's our pleasure to open up the word of god each and every time we gather and the reason we do that is we believe that the word of god contains all that we need for life and godliness and that through seeing the word of god and reading it and studying it and knowing it we will be directed in one direction and that direction is toward jesus christ to that end we're in the book of colossians and in this book we are studying the splendor of jesus i don't believe there's a book in the bible that is more explicit about this topic than colossians the whole bible the whole council of god's word points to this amazing person but this book in particular was written for a specific purpose it was written by a man named paul who was an apostle of christ that means he saw jesus face to face and jesus claimed him for his own that you will be my minister what that means is that paul devoted his entire life to one cause and what is that cause well he says at the end of our passage here that the gospel that has been proclaimed that's what i became a minister of in other words making the good news of what jesus has done known and today we're going to continue our series in colossians and we're going to do the same thing we're going to spend our morning just looking at the splendor of jesus and we get to do that in a very special passage this morning in verse 15 paul makes a sharp and decisive turn in the epistle now if you were here with us last week you know that we spent the first 14 verses to talk about the gospel the good news of what jesus has done for us but if you weren't here i'm going to really really briefly kind of summarize what we learned last week in the first 14 verses of this book paul takes a really long beautiful section to say one thing and it's this that through repentance and faith in jesus we have been delivered from the domain of darkness which symbolizes death destruction depression all of the brokenness of the world that we could experience because of our sin we've turned against god that's the domain of darkness paul says we have been delivered from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of his beloved son that jesus himself the goodness of the gospel is that jesus has come to live a perfect life die a sacrificial death raised victoriously from the dead that he might deliver those who believe in him unto his kingdom which is light life and that's what we learned last week and here's what paul's gonna do i love this right off the hinges of that beautiful gospel message he's gonna now make a really sharp beautiful turn and here's the turn we've talked about the gospel the good news about jesus christ now i want us to dive a little deeper we've already dug this beautiful hole into the into the mine that is the gospel the riches and glories of knowing god through what jesus has done but now we've come we've dug in this mine and now we've found the greatest jewel in this mine and that jewel is jesus himself here's what paul's gonna do in this section let's turn and i want everyone's eyes let's just focus in on

this beautiful jewel forget the cave for a minute just focus on this jewel let's look specifically from verses 15 and 23 at nothing else other than the person of christ so this morning that's what we get to do but here's what i want us to think about for a second what does it mean to center our lives around something i know for me when i look over the 31 years that i've lived on this earth i can look back almost with perfect accuracy and look and see the moments in my life where i centered my life around certain things early on in my life i centered my life around ability that if i'm really good at sports and i'm really good at the school that i am devoting myself to if i get those grades i will impress people and i will be an impressive person so i'm going to center my my life around it's really myself but i'm going to center my life around my achievements later on in life i found that i was centering my life around not just achievements but later i centered my life my life around my desires and my wants that i have these aspirations to do this and that and my career is going to make me

happy so i'm going to put that at the pedestal of my life a happy satisfying career and then later on in life i ended up taking that off the pedestal and i put something new on the pedestal and this is going to sound weird for a second but hear me out i've put my children on the pedestal of my life that there's nothing more important than even my children and that is everything i've centered my right my life around my children and you might say aren't those good things to center your life around those are all seem like good things right but we're going to learn today this is what paul wants the colossians to hear and this is what i believe we need to hear today is that jesus is the centerpiece of all things and thus should be the centerpiece of our individual lives this section of scripture one modern scholar called this section a christ hymn meaning the way that it's worded the beautiful language the poetic terms the cadence of this passage it's been called a hymn by many people in fact there's even a sort of a old ancient rumor that this was a song that the church took and adapted and said we're just going to start singing this so we just sing three amazing songs that are very christ-centered i'm grateful for our worship pastor josh who does a great job picking songs that focus around jesus that's what we're about here at this church but here's what the the historical churches and they've taken this section and said this is worth singing that we would make a worship song about this passage another scholar calls this passage a sweeping pleasant melody of christ's glory to the ears of the believer another scholar calls it one of the christological high points of the new testament why am i sharing all this paul's focus here is so clear that we cannot possibly miss it there are times when you read the bible and there are passages that we will study where we may have to do some work to really understand what's being said here the bible's clear it always teaches truth but sometimes we have to work a little bit to figure that out there's very little work needed here here's what paul wants us to come away with again jesus is the centerpiece of all things i'm going to read this passage before we kind of break it down and i'm going to give you two sections here we're going to work through i want to read this again but before i read i want to give you this to

q anon okay how do we know this passage is all about christ the radiating gem that he is well the pronouns he him or his possessive pronoun those three he him and his are used 17 times here's what we're going to do i'm going to read i think this will have more impact than anything i could honestly say to prove this we're just going to read 15 to 23 all again and i'm going to emphasize those pronouns for us that we can be convinced that this is all about christ so let's read it again he is the image of the invisible god the firstborn of all creation for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth visible and invisible whether thrones or dominions or rulers authorities all things were created through him and for him and he is before all things and in him all things hold together 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 for in him all the fullness of god was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things whether on earth or in heaven making peace by the blood of his cross and you who were once alienated and hostile in mind doing evil deeds he has now reconciled in his body of the flesh by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him if indeed you continue in the faith stable and steadfast not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven and of which i paul became a minister do we see that jesus is the centerpiece of all things so i ask us to come to the word this morning with the utmost reverence for what we will see and the utmost excitement for what we will learn in talking about jesus as the centerpiece of all things i'm gonna have two sections for us that we're gonna work through together the first section is gonna be verses 15 through 17 i'm entitling that section jesus is the centerpiece of creation he's the centerpiece of creation and then you've got the section from 18 to 23 which is about jesus is the centerpiece of reconciliation jesus is the centerpiece of reconciliation now you might be saying well i thought it was i thought the the big idea here is jesus is the centerpiece of all things one way that paul defines all things in this section is creation and the work of reconciliation from the start of all things to the end of all things that's what that spans think of creation reconciliation as a bridge that spans from way beyond even the beginning of the universe because god has always existed we're going to see that bridge goes all the way to the end of time it never ends this bridge and that bridge is made up of the parts of creation and reconciliation so when paul says all things he breaks it down to these two categories so let's talk first about creation jesus is the centerpiece of creation we see in verse 15 it says this that he jesus is the image of the invisible god the firstborn of all creation this opening statement serves to teach us that jesus is very very special that jesus is very very special that before christ came to earth there was nothing nothing like him what do i mean by that i think paul is pretty clear he says he is the image of the invisible god this opening statement serves to teach us

that jesus is the god

man which means that in plain terms he is fully god and fully man how could that possibly be maybe in here today you might be saying you know what i look around me and i see all of these people in my life and i i look at them and i say there's absolutely no way that any of them could be anything close to a god that's supposed to be perfect and holy or maybe you're more inward focused you're inward looking you're saying there's no way i know that that can't be true because i know i could never be perfect and holy how in the world could a human being take on the godness of perfection and purity well here's what paul says he says this term he says he is the image of the invisible god and if you're like me maybe you're thinking of another question are we also told that mankind is made in god's image so clearly paul must just be saying here okay just like we were made in the image of god we share his likeness so too jesus shares the likeness of god actually no it's not that simple here's what this word image means it means a sane likeness or reflection in the greek we are made in god's image yes which means we take after his essence and we resemble him and this is not a sermon about how we are made in god's image but i want to speak quickly that means that we take on the attributes or many of the attributes of the one that made us the capacity to feel to love the fact that we have an eternal soul these things yes we take after our god who made us but here's what it means when it says when paul says jesus is the image of the invisible god he's saying this that jesus is not doesn't just take after god jesus is the exact essence of god in other words the total essence of god is bound up in one human being or as one person said in my life god in the bod that's what it means that god is fully man he's come to earth and he exists in a body to hone this in and to really drive this home i wanted there's a cross reference a cross passage if you will in scripture encourage you to read it if you're interested in this passage it's hebrews 1 1 2 about verse 9 it talks about some very similar things i'm just going to focus on verse 3 hebrews 1 3 the author of hebrews tries to make a similar point that jesus is the centerpiece of all things and here's what he says talking about jesus he is the radiance of the glory of god and the exact imprint of his nature what does that mean the author of hebrews and paul are actually saying the same exact thing in a little different language so let's take this term here that the author of hebrews says that he's the exact imprint of his nature i want you to think quickly of some clay imagine i have some clay in my hand and i've got a quarter and i'm holding the quarter on this hand and i hold the clay up and you notice that there's a quarter indent you see a circle that's got this colonial looking guy who looks the whole like george washington maybe with some words on it and some dates and maybe a d you know i'm talking about okay if i hide the quarter and i pull that clay out you're going to look at that and you're going to say i know what happened there right there was a court someone pressed a quarter into the clay and that's why there's an imprint of it the term exact imprint for the author of hebrews means this imagine someone takes some metal molten metal and they pour it into that mold they let it cool and they pull it out now you have a physical manifestation of that which was once a mold that's what the word imprint

or exact imprint means in other words i want you to think of it this way jesus paul is saying the same thing the image of the invisible god the firstborn of all creation he's saying this that jesus is the physical manifestation of the invisible god he's not lesser than god he's not almost god he's not 50 god 50 man he is the exact imprint of god himself why is this so important because in the day of the colossian church when they were living and doing their lives together paul knew that they were starting to get into some weird theologies we're going to get there in another section paul deals with more specifically that in another section but we have to understand the background here quickly the colossians were starting to hear of some alternate doctrines and theologies of christianity and one of those doctrines was this that there were some false teachers coming to the church and they were basically saying this i'm going to summarize what they were saying again it's in chapter two but this is essentially what they're saying there is more to the christian life than just the gospel in jesus okay that was great you received that yep that's all true you got in through the gospel that's great but there's more to the life of a christian than just christ and they talk about a bunch of different things worshiping angels honoring the spiritual realm disciplining your body even like self uh self disciplining your body and beating it into submission to not sin there's a lot of things that they're going to falsely say these are really important as equal as christ but in so doing here's what the false teachers have done they've taken christ and they've said you're not the center you're a big part but there is no center all of these things are equally important that's essentially what the colossians the false teachers in the colossians were saying so here's what paul does he comes in and here's what he does he goes jesus christ i'm going to make a case a really compelling case that

jesus is the centerpiece of all things starting with creation to the point where i want us to understand that jesus is literally god and that's kind of a full stop argument god himself lived on this earth ruled and reigned died on a cross to save us and he drops this line the firstborn of all creation which i want to talk about in a second what does this mean well firstborn of all creation has led to a lot of false doctrine in the history of the church there's a historical heretical view called arianism and there's this guy named arian he read this passage this very verse and here's what he said clearly the bible teaches that jesus was part of creation because it says he's the firstborn of all creation and he did that in doing that he said god okay created jesus as the first part of creation and then he made everything else so therefore jesus was created he hasn't eternally existed he's not actually a holy eternal part of the trinity called arianism was a heresy in the old test or in the in the in the ancient church but here's what here's what paul says about this issue it's not just that jesus is fully god it's saying this he's the firstborn of all creation and this term means this that he has always existed and creation has not but that he preceded creation and it's a it's a statement of value and rank not necessarily of time the title of firstborn is also given to the nation of israel in the bible god wasn't necessarily saying that israel was the first literal nation but that they were god's supreme priority

[ 20 : 14 ] after which all the nations of the world would be blessed israel ranked number one to god and they proceeded with that blessing so to christ is the number one priority of god the father and from him comes all things which leads us to our next verse look at the very next verse for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth i wish arian had read verse 16 clearly he did not or did not understand it what did just paul just say from what this human being everything was created which means time started and everything came into existence in order for that to happen he's saying jesus pre-existed that if everything came into being and jesus was already there and it came from him he had to pre-exist it and this is where we get a really good picture of christ and it's a picture that for me in my life i think i had a very poor understanding until i got into around my my 20s for me jesus jesus was as simple as this and as watered down as this he's the guy that the father sent to be the scapegoat on the cross and he was necessary but that was basically what he did and then he went back to heaven and we just kind of forget about jesus thank you you did that that's great okay now i'm going to go back to just my life and recognizing the father and that was how i lived my life for a very long time and if the colossians are not careful they will fall into this as well but i want us to notice in this next section it's talking about jesus as the centerpiece of creation so we have some prepositional statements i want you to focus on four words here okay by through for and in let's read it together and then we'll break those down for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth visible and invisible whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things were created through him and for him there's three of them there's one more in verse 17 and he is before all things and in him all things hold together this is super super important here's what paul is teaching that when it comes to thinking about the entire universe and everything that exists there's something that binds it all together and stands in the midst of it on that pedestal and it's jesus christ so let's work through this together first we see that paul says all things were created by him this is a prepositional statement by means that it has a acting purpose in what is to come so in other words this is what paul is saying all things originate in jesus all things every single thing that exists today originates in him they were created by him some people have even gone as far as to say as when you talk about the trinity and their different roles that one of the responsibilities and roles of jesus was to create everything perfectly paul is simply saying here that anything that is has existence today has origination in this person but then secondly we see this that all things were created through him and what this is talking about is that he is the agent through which god's delight radiated out so god the father in all of his eternal wisdom and power decided to create when you read the first chapter in genesis you see this right in the beginning god creates out of an excess of love and delight and beauty he creates all things but here's what paul is framing for us he wants us to reread genesis with this lens when you read genesis from now on for the rest of your life genesis 1 and 2 when you read those beautiful passages that talk about the absolute wonder of god making all things

out of nothing in his sublimity and power when you read those two chapters from now on here's what paul wants you to do take that lens like benjamin franklin had those lens that had the multiple colors he would just flop on right when he reads something close they call them the first bifocals he wants you to flip the lens when you read genesis 1 and 2 from now on and here's what paul has just

said just take christ now and put him as the delight of creation that when god created all things he had his son in mind and we'll see why in a minute but then we see this not just that everything was created through him but now that everything was created for him and this is talking about the purpose of all aspects of creation beginning and ending in jesus this means that the from the blue whale to the ant from the great mountain peak to the daisy from the pesky yellow jackets that hover and try and eat your meat outside on a beautiful sunny day when you're saying just get out of here right every single piece of creation finds its ultimate purpose and meaning in christ and even more that every single part of creation glorifies him even the pesky yellow jacket in order to see this truth as true all we need do is take a walk encourage you take a hike this week while the weather is still decent you could even just have some people over to your house and enjoy food and fellowship and conversation and community with them regardless of what it is that you experience you are experiencing creation everywhere we go everything we do in this life on this earth we are experiencing the very thing that god made and here's what paul says when he says that it was created for jesus that every single time creation does what creation should do when the dog chases the ball when the flowers give way to a beautiful bloom when you and i love one another with selfless love regardless of what it is we were made for a specific purpose to do a certain thing and that is to respond to god our creator and love and choose life and when we do that or creation does what it's created to do it glorifies jesus and i want to encourage us this morning that we live in a created world and when we see the created world around us and we recognize it as something unique and beautiful like it is that we got to remind ourselves this was all made for jesus and then finally we have the final preposition here in verse 17 he is before all things and in him all things hold together when you notice the theme of the passage all things is used five times in this whole section so while we're talking about creation right now what paul's really saying is all things he uses creation and reconciliation as sort of placeholders to help us understand all things but really when paul says all things he's talking about for every single thing that has existed irrespective of size or value but when we see verse 17 i want us to read this again he is before all things and in him all things hold together i don't know about how you guys did your family meals but growing up we had the longest dining room table with like six leaves in the middle and mom would put all in every time we'd get together i come from a family of about nine and when the girlfriends and boyfriends started coming in that table would expand every time we had them over to like 15 i remember a lot of big dinners at our house with grandparents and significant others and cousins and all that and my mom specifically bought the biggest dining room table i think i've ever seen so that she could accompany all of us but here's what i remember about the dining room table we weren't the family that ate at the dining room table every single night or even most days of the week maybe once a week maybe even once every other week we ate at that table but here's what i remember about our dining room table still to this day my mom took the time to buy certain dishes to buy certain napkins to buy certain cups that reflect the season that we're in and she would always decorate the table with beautiful so in christmas time holly leaves red dishes red napkins you get it right thanksgiving more of the fall colors with a lot of that foliage all over the table and it was always something that i took for granted until i go back home to this day and we have a meal there and i'm like mom you put unbelievable amounts of time into making this table look spectacular that's just one of the things she loves and she has separate drawers where all the stuff is stored away but here's one thing i always remember about my mom on that massive table there's one thing on the table that was always just the absolute glory of the table and what was it the centerpiece and my mom would always change out the centerpiece of the table and it always contained candles it always contained incredible designs and additions to it that she would add on it would just be this big towering thing in the middle it's almost so big you couldn't see across the other side of the table but she loved the centerpiece and it was really important to her here's what paul is basically saying in verse 17 christ is the centerpiece of the dinner table but even more so if you take that centerpiece out of the table my mom did that today when we had thanksgiving and she takes it off all of us kids are gonna be like mom where's the centerpiece there's no candles there's no mom where is it we're gonna long for it because it brings the whole table together and it's the most glorious piece of the table but here's here's the truth of what paul is saying when he says in him all things hold together what he's saying is that the sovereign power of jesus literally metaphysically physically upholds the existence of all things just as they are and if you take that centerpiece out everything completely crumbles jesus is the centerpiece of all of creation and if he is taken out of that place everything falls apart in the old

testament the lord had about a million hebrews that came out of egypt and they crossed the red sea and they settled at the base of this place called this giant mountain mount sinai and they're assembled there and the lord tells mooses here's what i want you to do with all these people i want you to have them set up their camp at the base of the mountain and i want you to take all the twelve tribes i want you to put the tribes together and i want you to have them assemble their tents in a big giant circle if you read this section in exodus if you read it carefully you can actually map it out i encourage you to do it if you're interested you can map out all the directions that the tents and the tribes are supposed to lay their tents out we're talking a million people it's a lot of tents per tribe he had them situated that three tribes are facing east on this side three tribes are facing south three are facing north three are facing west but they're all laid out in a perfect circle but there's something interesting about what god did he said okay mooses now i want you to take the tabernacle which was the tent of worship it was a portable tent that they could set up and the glory of the lord would fill it in the holy of holies god's presence dwelling with his people that's what the tabernacle symbolizes and he took the tent and he said okay i want you to take that tent i want you to set it up in the very middle of the entire camp why well because it's easy to walk there if it's in the middle it's practical you can everybody goes in the middle it's super easy to get to i'll give you that sure yeah why why did was it so important to the lord that all of the camp is a giant circle and at the very middle is the presence of god because the lord knows that if he is not the center of his people they will befall great harm and so here's what the lord says to mooses i will dwell in your midst not just spiritually but actually with the physical layout i am the center of you and that principle has translated all the way to today and here's what paul's saying jesus is before all things and in him all things hold together he is the centerpiece of every single thing that has been made all of the trees all of the animals all of the people all of anything and everything in this universe the galaxies the stars the planets the distant planets all of it is like a giant circle of tents and at the middle of that creation piece is jesus standing there he's the center so now let's move to the second piece jesus is the centerpiece of reconciliation verse 18 says this and he is the head of the body of the church he is the beginning the firstborn from the dead that in everything he might be preeminent i want to focus on that word preeminent for a second the word preeminent means supreme or above all it's like paul chose what is the one word that would accurately convey the worth and glory of jesus above everything else he already tried he succeeded but he already used the word all the term all things five times and now it's like paul is like man how i already said he's the center of all things how do i elevate jesus worth and value even more i've got it and he uses this term preeminent so if we didn't understand it first in the creation piece that he's the center of all creation he's going to be more specific here and he's the centerpiece of reconciliation so here's what paul is saying here he is the head of the body the church so he's the centerpiece of the church which we'll talk about he's the centerpiece of the resurrection that's to come of all of those who have trusted him he's the firstborn remember he's the the first to come but he's also the the highest in rank he died a sacrificial death and then rose in victory we know this from the gospel account that we've been told so here's what he's saying that he because he died that death and rose that victorious resurrection all of those who believe in him which are called the church here he says this all of those people will discover one day if they didn't in this life fully realized that he is preeminent how in the world would we ever come to a more preeminent view of Jesus in this life Christian when we are raised in glory and resurrected on that day any deficiency we had of Jesus preeminence his centrality to all of life will be filled to the point where we just sang in a song a little bit ago someday in heaven we will stand at the feet of Jesus his light the light of his face will shine in all of existence and that will be enough for us to sing in his presence forever what would possibly cause an entire multitude of people to sing in reverence for one person for eternity it's the full realization that he is the center he is preeminent and I would ask today that we would fill the void as much as we can now there's no question that void will be filled in full we could never come to a full complete understanding of how truly preeminent he is but we as we gain a reverence for Jesus and a love for who he is and an understanding that he is the center not just of creation but even of our salvation that he would become all the more beautiful every single day if you remove the center he everything falls apart so here's what we have in 19 it says this for in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things whether on earth or in heaven making peace by the blood of the cross so again in verse 19 we see the fullness of God was pleased to dwell in him he is fully God but now it says that he is fully man that God has dwelled in his mortal body for the purpose of this the ministry of reconciliation what is reconciliation

it says this to reconcile to himself all things reconciliation means to mend a broken relationship and here's what's fascinating about this

[ 38 : 25 ] Paul doesn't just talk about sinners and God he doesn't just talk about humankind being reconciled from our sinful place to a place of acceptance with God he actually includes all of creation as well he says this reconciling all things whether on earth or in heaven and what he's doing is he's speaking to the cosmic reconciliation of all things and that is due because of the fact of the fall when Adam and Eve fell in the garden not just humanity fell but also all of creation now is an experience of brokenness the tree falls and dies our dogs our pets die the flowers that you you buy and you give to your wife on Valentine's Day what happens they wither away and die on and on we go the cycle of death is in our creation now and here's what Jesus has done through the cross through his sacrificial death to go to a cross and die every single thing that has been made broken will be made whole again and what's the peace or what's the word

Paul uses here it's peace that's what wholeness is we have been reconciled to a father who loves us deeply we are no longer enemies of God no longer destined for eternal judgment do his wrath but because Jesus has gone to the cross he has become the center of reconciliation through him we come to God peacefully but not only that this earth that is fading away will be recreated by Jesus when he reconciles it back to fullness so here's what Paul says to finish this passage verse 21 and you who were alienated and hostile in mind doing evil deeds he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him if indeed you continue in the faith stable steadfast not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven of which I

Paul became a minister here's what Paul says he's doubling down the reconciliation thing Jesus is the centerpiece of creation so we should respond to that but he's also the centerpiece of reconciliation we should respond to that as well and here's how he says this looks like for those who have been reconciled from death to life from sinner opposed to God to child of God here's what it looks like stable and steadfast verse 23 not shifting from the hope of the gospel that the person who has undergone that great transition they are somebody who has been made holy blameless and above reproach and now has a steadiness to their life they didn't have before and here's what centering does it steadies us the call I want to make to us this morning is that we need a Copernicus revelation of the soul this is a great term that I heard from somebody recently a Copernicus revelation of the soul what is that well Copernicus as you know he came into the science world and what did he do okay I think that all of our science has been wrong to this point I don't think that the sun revolves around us I think that we revolve around the sun what happened to Copernicus it's a great thought let's adopt him in let's give him a prize no he was persecuted for that but here's what Copernicus did he was able to see through that deception with eyes anew and Copernicus revelation of the soul means that we also make a similar discovery our sinful hearts want to make us and our priorities and our desires and our wants and our needs the center of our lives the Copernicus revelation of the soul realizes with new eyes I am actually not the center of my life well let's go beyond that actually I'm not the center of the universe I'm not the center of salvation or reconciliation I'm not the center of creation we all need this revelation but I think in our sinfulness here's what we're so quick to do like Indiana

Jones swapping out that golden statue for a bag of sand the second he does that the entire cave breaks down the stones roll the darts fly you get it everything crumbles and falls apart I think we're very much like this that pedestal is like our heart and we we know that Jesus is the center because we're told that he's the center of not just creation but also our salvation our reconciliation all of the work of Christ he centers every single thing in existence and we in our pride look and say I see that everything's great everything's pieced together yeah I'm going to swap that out I'm going to put me up there and the second we put our desires at the center everything crumbles and this is what Paul is trying to avoid in Colossae our feeble hearts are not made to be the center they cannot bear the weight of this that role belongs only to

[ 44 : 26 ] Jesus Christ only he brings life and existence into perfect harmony and cohesion like an infinite part symphony with every chord and note ringing out in perfect harmony Christ makes all things sing and he makes our hearts sing when we recognize him as the center so here's the call center your life around Christ that's Paul's call why is he giving this high lofty beautiful theology of Jesus Christ it's because he wants the Colossian church to do just this to see that Jesus is the center of the universe he is the center of reconciliation and that they would say Jesus is the center

of all things how fitting then is it for me to center my life around him who's already at the center what does this mean for us well it means first that we respond to our creator he made you and he upholds you every moment of every day we saw earlier that all things were created for him and through him in him and by him if he is the creator that means he made you and he knows you and he loves you a christ-centered life in that regard recognizes that he is creator and as creator he knows our greatest need centering our life around christ as creator means that we submit to his sovereignty his will for our life the things that we think we need maybe we really don't we should question those i think that i need this here's what it means to center our life around christ i'm going to ignore that and i'm going to instead say here's what jesus says i need that's a christ-centered!

life what does jesus say that we need we need the bread of life we need his word his truth his presence his peace centering our life around christ means denying ourself a place in the pedestal and allowing jesus to be there but then secondly we respond to the savior the reconciler and how we do that is we recognize this that jesus saved me and he gave me peace where once i was opposed to god spitefully in at odds with him jesus came and made peace by the blood of the cross and what it means to center our life around christ in this sense means that we deny ourselves every single opportunity to place faith in ourselves again who's the centerpiece of the table well maybe we take that centerpiece out of the table and we put something else in there and it's ugly and it's gross and everyone at the table is like why is that there get that rotting pumpkin out of here let's get the beautiful one that mom has saved just for thanksgiving so too when we trust in ourselves and we look to ourselves for salvation and help that we can make ourselves happy in this world it's like a rotting pumpkin at the centerpiece instead a

Christ centered life responds in this way Jesus you loved me enough to save me and if you loved me enough to save me and give me peace with God the Father then I will respond by loving you enough to allow you to be the Lord over my life Jesus Christ is the center of all things and here's what I would finish with is this for me the most painful times in my life bar none are the times when the Lord has had to remind me painfully that you've not centered your life around me instead you've centered your life around yourself and it hurts it's painful to come to that realization because all the things that I have built up as a pedestal for myself fall apart and

I'm left broken and empty and God promises to break us of our pride when we fall into that pattern but here's what I would ask us to do see the truth of the universe of reconciliation that Christ is the center and that as the center nothing will fall out of place not one star not one bug not one soul will fall out of place without his command that's the God we serve the one that upholds all things by the power of his word Lord we praise you this morning we recognize you as the center piece Lord there are so many temptations in this world that would beg us to place at the center of our lives and Lord I pray that when we think about our hearts that we remind ourselves that we are so quick and so eager

Lord to put something else on that pedestal but I thank you for the reminder of Paul that it has been made clear Lord that you have made your son Jesus to be the centerpiece of all things God may we be a church that recognizes that truth that in all of our conduct our words our actions our deeds our thoughts and everything that we are as a church and everything that we do as individuals Lord that it would be clear that the we may know in our lives so help us Lord to center around you to deny ourselves ourselves and instead choose you in we pray amen