Before there was light, there was a cross

Colossians 1:15-23 · Giovanne Gabardo · June 28, 2026

The Christ of creation, the Christ of the church, the Christ who reconciles you

THE CENTRAL IDEA

"Christ isn't a part of our life: he is the foundation of all reality, and he reconciled you through the cross."

Colossae didn't deny Jesus; they just thought he wasn't enough. Paul answers with a lens that moves from the universe to the pe rson: the same Christ who created and sustains the galaxies is the head of the church and chose to bleed to reconcile enemies. Wh en he leaves the center, life falls into disorder slowly, like a clock that runs a little slow every day.

THE MESSAGE IN 3 MOVEMENTS

01 Christ and creation: in him, through him and for him.

"Image" (eikon) is a perfect reflection: to see Christ is to see God. He isn't a creature; he is the creator, the sustainer (like the threads holding a fabric together) and the final destination of everything. We were made t o worship him; without him, not even the void would exist.

02 Christ and the church: the head, not an accessory.

A church without Christ at the center still has talent, programs and liturgy, but loses the harmony that gives meaning to everything. All the fullness (pleroma) that the false teachers scattered in six directions is found in one person.

03 Christ and you: from "once" to "now".

We weren't only distant: we were enemies, building life as if God were a n obstacle. Through the cross (concrete, physical, substitutionary) we a re now holy, without blemish and free from accusation. The call is to r emain: fall, get up and keep Christ at the center.

READING THE TEXT · COLOSSIANS 1:15-23

Colossians 1:15-17 · Christ and creation

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn (the supreme one) over all creation. In him all things were created, visible and invisible, thrones and authorities; all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:18-20 · Christ and the church

He is the head of the body, the church; the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. All fullness dwells in Christ, and through him God reconciled all things to himself, making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:21-23 · Christ and you

Once you were alienated from God and enemies in your minds. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death, t o present you holy, without blemish and free from accusation, if you c ontinue in your faith and in the hope held out in the gospel.

QUESTIONS FOR THE GROUP

To open: what question about God, faith or the universe bothered you most at some point in your life? Does it still bother you?

1. The Colossians didn't deny Jesus; they just didn't think he was enough. Where have you been looking for "fullness" besides Ch rist: work, relationships, politics, spiritualities? What has that given you?
2. Paul says all things were created "for him". What changes in how you see your work, your body and your time if everything exists for Christ?
3. Christ leaving the center is like a clock that runs a little slow every day. What signs show that he is no longer organizing your life? How do you reset the clock?
4. "Holy, without blemish and free from accusation." Which accusation, yours or others', still weighs on you? What would it look l ike to live this week believing what God says about you in Christ?

KEY PASSAGES

John 1:1, 14, "In the beginning was the Word... The Word became flesh." The invisible God became visible in Jesus.

Hebrews 1:3, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory... sustaining all things b y his powerful word." The same Christ who holds the cosmos provided p urification for sins.

Romans 5:10, "While we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him t hrough the death of his Son." The turn from "once" to "now" of Colossians 1 :21-22.

TO CLOSE

A step for this week. Read Colossians 1:22 before bed every day and let "holy, without blemish and free from accusation" speak louder than any accusation you carry. And when a doubt comes, instead of piling up frustration, say: "I don't understand this, but I t rust you."

Prayer. Thank God that the Sustainer of the universe let himself be nailed to a cross for us. Ask for Christ to return to the center of everything (mind, schedule, affections) and pray for those still searching for answers.

Watch the message again: point your phone camera here.