

Introduction

I grew up constantly receiving care and love from my parents. I would often ask for things and as I grew up it increasingly become money. There came a day when I was asking for money to get a thing when I realised that I was asking a person separate from myself to supply my needs as though it was there duty to me. It was like I saw myself in that moment in their shoes; a person demanding money from me as though I owed it to them. I didn't really think of where they got their money from, I had grown up demanding what I believed to be my rights.

As children we generally grow up believing we are the centres of the universe. It is very much a natural way of thinking. I even sometimes used to wonder in my mind if I was really the only real person on the planet and everyone else was fake, and I was in some little game made by God to test me, the only real person. Similar to the Truman show.

Today we will be looking at how our natural self-centeredness is so very far from the way God wants us to think and be. Every created thing, from stones to animals are very aware that the central theme of the universe is our Lord and saviour Christ Jesus, except us.

Colossian 3v1-4

1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, **where Christ is seated** at the right hand of God.

2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3 For you died, and your life is now **hidden with Christ in God**.

4 When Christ, **who is your life**, appears, then you also will appear **with him** in glory.

Self-Centeredness: the way of the world

Definitions of 'self centred'

- Preoccupied or engrossed with ones self and one's own affairs.
(Mac and <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/self-centered>)
- *In psychology*, egocentrism is defined as the tendency to perceive, understand and interpret the world in terms of the self.
- *Egocentric*; Holding the view that the ego is the centre, object, and norm of all experience.

The way of the world is self-centeredness...

- **Television:** Ricky Lake show solution to relationships - She would casually say 'if your not happy then leave'
- **Social Networking sites:** Myspace, facebook, twitter - such sights cater for our self-centeredness, many choose to indulge in everything about themselves.
- **Poets:** often self indulgent
- **Young People:** Young people get so many free bees, and so much funding to help them go to trips that they start to think it is there right. They complain without saying thank you.
- **Churches:** Seeker friendly churches have bowed down to this system of thought and present a gospel that about self-improvement, self-aspirations, self-love, and 7 more ways to be selfish.

There is no room for self-centeredness in God's economy. The world and creation was not created for your pleasure but His pleasure. Colossians highlights our Colossal Crime of being self-centred. It paints a majestic all encompassing, elevated, supreme and centralised picture of Christ our Lord.

This looking to self, as natural as it is to us, is the crime that resulted in Lucifer being kicked out of heaven. Self-centeredness in its purest expression is pride. Christ centeredness is coming in line with reality, it isn't you making him centre it is rather you understanding that he is central.

The picture of Christ in Colossians 1v15-20

Colossians 1v15-20

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** over all creation.

16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created **by him and for him**.

17 He is before all things, and **in him all things hold together**.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the **supremacy**.

19 For God was pleased to have all his **fullness** dwell in him,

20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Christ the image of God:

Col 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God,

Vrs19, God was pleased to have his fullness dwell in Him

God is made known to us through the person of Christ.

Christ the first born:

Col 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** over all creation.

17 He is before all things

And verse 18- ...the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the **supremacy**.

First born speaks of His status. The respect due to Him. There is nothing before him

Christ the creator:

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities

Christ the purpose:

;16 ...all things were created **by him and for him**

Christ the joiner (the glue):

17 ...and in him all things hold together.

Christ the reconciler:

20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

After the fall things were scattered, order was lost, but Christ through his blood draws all things back to himself.

If we continued to read the book we would see more pictures of Christ, E.g. Christ the reality, Christ the mystery, Christ the sufficient and many more. and each one is worthy of more than one sermon to begin to grasp. But I'd like to focus on one which I feel captures very strongly how Christ should be viewed. Christ the head.

Christ the Head?

The world does not revolve around you. Not only does it not but it also should not especially if you're a believer in Christ Jesus. All we do must be for Him, by Him, through Him, and to Him.

Colossians 1v17-18

17 He is before all things, and **in him all things hold together**.

18 And he is the **head of the body**, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the **supremacy**.

Colossian 2v16-19

16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.

17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

19 He has lost **connection with the Head**, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

What is the head?

1. The **central place of operation**- *this is best demonstrated in the brain. all signals (millions) are sent to the brain and it responds to all of them for the good of the body...*
2. **The boss** / The CEO (Christ Exalted Overall)– *Christ has the supremacy*
3. **The highest point**. *The toe can trust the head to see as it has a better vantage point.*
4. The part you are recognised by. – **Our identity is now hidden in Christ**

Colossian 3v10-11

10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

11 Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

When we loose connection with the head 2v16-19

1. All our navigational senses are lost.
 - We cannot dispher. The tongue disphers taste, the hears discerns sound, the nose discerns smell, the eyes guide us. ('false' humility)
 - Many so called Chrsitians are like headless chickens, running nowhere and everywhere whilst slowly dieing
2. We have no more life. We are dead (he has lost connection)
3. We cannot fellowship with a diverse mix of believers as we have no common identity (from who the whole body is supported and held together)
4. We become prideful as we may begin to see ourselves as head (his unspiritual mind puffs him up)
5. We form strange doctrines on false foundations. This is linked to loosing our thinking faculty. (idle notions)
6. We cannot grow (as God causes it to grow)
7. We begin to turn other things into idols. Man always worships something. (worship of angels)

Living a Christ Centred life

All earth and all the universe knows that God is the centre of all. They all know that he holds them together, all heavens declares the glory of the risen Lord. God is exalted high above all, he is the celebrity of all creation (the celebrated one) Psalm 148 speaks of the sun moon and nature worshipping God. But we humans seem more stubborn than the rest, we along with the devil desire to be the centre of attention.

Christ is not waiting for you to crown him Lord over your life, he already is lord of all things, he is waiting for you to recognise his headship. The question is have you fallen in line with the rest of creation? Is He, from your perspective, Lord of your life? This is the contract you sign when you say you are a Christian. You are saying He is lord of your life. He is the centre. That means:

1. You live a Christ centred life. Living for him
2. It means you recognises he is worthy. This breeds understanding which results in receiving more from Him *E.g. child and adult friendship, when child crosses boundaries...*
3. It means you die to your will for His will
4. It means you are enlisted in his army ready awaiting his command and leading
5. It means you are recognised by Him
6. It means other recognise you as one of his *e.g. like woman changes her surname*
7. It means you will take His word very seriously
8. It means he becomes your single most obsession and concern. Like being in love
9. It means he becomes your source for inspiration and your motive for action. *E.g. returning ladies phone.*
10. It means our life actions and words point people to Christ *e.g. like street signs pointing to the city centre*
11. It means we are connected to the source, and become channel of His blessing, love and expression
12. It means in our preaching he is the central theme (after all all Scripture testifies of him- you diligently study the scripture). Charles Spurgeon once said "*The motto of all true servants of God must be, "We preach Christ; and him crucified."* A sermon without Christ in it is like a loaf of bread without any flour in it. No Christ in your sermon, sir? Then go home, and never preach again until you have something worth preaching."
13. It means you see him in all things, e.g. **1)** in each *other e.g. God judgment of the sheep and the goat* **2)** In nature e.g. the butterfly **3)** Your aware of his expression in even the little things *e.g. drinking water*

Christ is longing for a people of this Kind, that will give Him His worth and "live a life worthy of the lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God- *Col 1:10*

Colossians 1v2:6 ...Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Study Groups

Colossians 1v15-20

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** over all creation.

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1. What is your understanding of Christ from this passage?
2. What does being Christ centred mean to you?