

Coastal Community Church Vision

Hope beyond our brokenness

Trust in our Risen Savior

Restoration for our city, nation, and world

Today... I choose to be changed by Jesus, I choose to seek Jesus first, and I choose to join Jesus in His resurrection work.

Ear Tug. Ask Permission

Last week we talked about how Jesus has rescued us from the dominion of darkness, the slavery of our self salvation projects and rebellion...and now we are free.

Colossians. 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

We are saved from slavery...and saved into the Kingdom of the Son. The Kingdom of the Son is a way of operating, living, behaving, and speaking with Jesus at the center of it all. I speak love because Jesus loves me. I live with faith in Jesus because He is so trustworthy. My strategies are not for my gain, but for others gain. I forgive because Jesus forgave me. When I am crushed, feel apart from God, betrayed, hurt...I have Jesus by my side and I know he's gone through all of that and will never leave me...and that's now how I live. Paul then explains:

Colossians 1:15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Now, when we read this you need to understand a couple of things. First, this is one of the many exceptionally clear passages in the New Testament that in plain words affirm the deepest of all truths: Jesus is God. God the Father is perfectly made manifest, real, imaged, reflected, show in Jesus. There's no space between the two. Your Heavenly Father suffers for you, is full of forgiveness and love, abounds in mercy, has never left your side, and pursues you with grace and gentleness. Jesus is fully God and accomplished God the Father's desire for you...to forgive you, to redeem you, to pull you out of the darkness and back into Eden... the Heaven on earth of walking with God, knowing God, and making life grow.

Second, you need to understand the second half of the verse: the firstborn over all creation. What does this mean? It's the legal language of inheritance rights. Paul talks about the Kingdom and the 'firstborn' to help you understand Jesus and your own place a lot better. Jesus is the the firstborn over all creation...which means Jesus has 'inherited' all of creation as His own. The Father gifts everything that is to Jesus. Now listen carefully: Jesus claims us as his own; we are now part of His body; we are coheirs with Jesus; we are made sons and daughters of the King

of Kings. Do you realize what this means? We are included in Jesus' inheritance!

His power is ours. Thus when we pray miracles small and large abound. His peace is ours, His love is ours, His Kingdom is ours. When we forgive...it is forgiven. When we bind and cast out the enemy, they leave. When we share the hope of the gospel, hearts are changed. When we worship the glory of God fills this place. You have a profound purpose, an essential role, an glorious inheritance that starts now and lasts for all eternity. And the purpose of your ridiculously large, exponentially eternal, never running out inheritance...it's to include more people in it. Bring more sons and daughters home out of the darkness into this kingdom of love, mercy, generosity, and joy. Paul continues...

Colossians 1:16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

Jesus is the firstborn over all creation because Jesus created all things. In Genesis chapter 1 it says God created the heavens and the earth by speaking them into existence...with a Word. We read in John chapter 1 that Jesus is the Word. Jesus literally is sovereign over all things, all situations, and all things are created for him. What does that mean 'created for him'?

Why is it that when the Father and Son created the fish...they put them in a sea? That when the Father and son created trees and plants... they put them in soil? It's because every living thing requires a place, an environment, in which to live. Take a fish out of water...it dies. Take a plant out of its soil...it dies. What's our environment? We were created to live in a garden with Jesus. The environment where we live is united, bonded, connected with God. If you remove a human being from God...they die. That's what it means that all things have been 'created for him'. We are literally created for Jesus...to find our life in Him, our healing in Him, our joy in Him, our purpose and plan in Him.

But when our own spirit are hurt and broken, we are tempted to believe what the Dominion of Darkness says about us: we are worthless, unloved, unwanted. We don't call our cars broken when they're out of gas. They just need to be filled up. We don't call our phones worthless when they're out of battery. They just need to be plugged in. The same goes for you and me. You are not broken beyond repair just because you're exhausted. You are not worthless because you're drained. You're worth healing, worthy of rest...and your design is to find your rest and life and love in the presence of Jesus himself.

What do you need to do this week, each day, to find your rest and life in Jesus? Do you need a walk on the beach and to pray? Do you

need to cook a meal and worship? Do you need to cuddle with the love of your life and just rest in being loved? Do you need to read Scripture and drink from the waters of hope and truth and love? All of the above?

Yeah, Andy, ok...I will plug in, I'll recharge. And I know connecting with Jesus regularly is a foundation to almost all of you. That's why you're here, why you're listening. So why do we stop? Why do we only go so far? I think a lot of us carry around the belief that we've screwed up too many times or we've made choices that have altered our future and that our future can never change. So, yes, we'll pray and forgive and worship...but there's a ceiling, a limit, we run up against and that limit is a lie from the pit of hell. And I understand that limit. I understand what it feels like to believe that maybe in heaven my heart will get healed...but not now...so I'll just do my best and wait. Yes, I'll pray, but there's a limit to what God will answer because of my past...so I'll just ask for decent days and I'll pray for others, but not for me. The limit we place on our lives is like...yeah, I was created for Jesus...but I'm not sure Jesus wants to use me after how bad I've messed up.

In the early 1400s, an artist in Florence, Italy, started to work on an 20 foot tall, 10 ton piece of Carrera marble for a sculpture. But within a few months, the artist gave up as he'd made too many mistakes...his chisel had created faults and cracks in the enormous piece of marble and

he abandoned it. It sat in the courtyard of a cathedral for a 100 years... nicknamed 'the giant'. That's like us. I've messed up. Other people cracked and broke me. What should have been beautiful now is just sitting...doing nothing. But then one day a young man asked to work on the piece and everyone laughed...sure, whatever. And when he was finished three years later the world was changed forever. For that young man was Michelangelo and that 'giant' was chiseled into David.

The question Jesus is asking you is this: Will you find your life in me? Will you let me work with the mistakes and the wounds in your soul, your habits, your loves, your priorities, your self imposed limits, your fears...will you give it all to me? Let me make something beautiful. Surrender. Trust me. You are made for me.

Will you? Then let's pray

Jesus, forgive me for choosing you last so many times, for trusting everything and everyone else but You. I'm sorry. Jesus, I invite you to be at the center of my heart again. I surrender my entire life to you. I take back my trust in You and my love for you. I choose to walk with you in every moment and through every event. I'm all yours, Jesus.

Thank goodness you don't do this alone. Would you be willing to ask one friend, your spouse, your kid, to hold you accountable to this prayer? Maybe the person sitting next to you? Let's keep reading:

Colossians 1:17 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.

Duh. Right? Of course. Duh. But what does 'duh' mean? It means this: Jesus is holding all things together in your life because you're connected to Him. He is over all things. He's already defeated the death and the pain that you're going through. He's supreme. Duh. But what does that mean in your life?

We trust Jesus when everything is going great. But when we get afraid, worried...when things go wrong...when things go REALLY wrong...sometimes we don't think 'Jesus will hold this, and me, together.' Why? Because we have an outcome in mind. You have any idea how many times I prayed for April and our marriage? You think I ever imagined this? No. But I'm not supreme. I haven't defeated death. I'm not reigning over all of the creation that I created. I'm not the one making my own heart alive. In our fear we insist that our so called supremacy must be honored before Jesus...so I want to control things and people, I want to make it happen right now, I want my assumptions and my opinions to be correct...even if 'making it happen' and my assumptions is the exact wrong move and wrong conclusion.

But Jesus is supreme!!! He's over all things, in all things, holding all things together. Jesus has something better for me and for my family than we could possibly imagine. But my outcome, what I think is an answered prayer, won't be what Jesus has in mind...because he's got something better in mind.

Now here's why Paul writes this to the church. In my sin, I want Jesus, and others, to listen me and tell me I'm right. There's something so sacred about being truly heard, that Jesus or anyone else would listen to and get me. **BUT then I want Jesus** and others to tell me: "Actually Andy, you're right...you're supreme, you're holding all things together, all those assumptions...correct...you've nailed it." That's not helpful.

What I'm learning in my life right now is that trusting Jesus means total surrender. He's got something better for me. So I surrender the outcomes. When I'm wrong, when I'm off, I need to know. And Jesus will tell me with all the love and gentleness and cold hard truth I need. Why? He's joined me to himself...I'm literally part of His body now. He's holding me together and supreme over all things. There's nothing he cannot do. So who am I to insist on my way? Who am I to argue with His timing? Jesus is the most trustworthy person I know. He's taken my mistakes and created a masterpiece. Will you trust Him with me?

Prayer

Table Talk

Pray for you