

COLOSSIANS

ABOVE ALL



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Paul writes to the church at Colossae to show that Jesus Christ is greater than Caesar and what they already have in Christ Jesus is sufficient and supreme. Jesus truly is above all other rulers. His kingdom reign is above all governments. His work is above all other accomplishments. And all who are in Christ can live a life above all that the world offers. And that greater life can be experienced and expressed in everything we do, everywhere, every day.

PART 4: CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY

Read the text: Colossians 1:24—2:5

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in

love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

After writing to them about Jesus Christ “above all”, Paul now writes to tell the Colossians that Jesus Christ is “in you.” The same Jesus who is Lord of all and in whom the fullness of God dwells is pleased to dwell in us. For Paul, this then changes everything. It changes how we suffer and give ourselves away. Our suffering is an opportunity to know Jesus more deeply, who gave Himself for us, and also to help others see Jesus more tangibly, who gave Himself for them. It also changes the goal and purpose of our life. Not that we have been united to Christ, the ultimate goal of our life is that we become like Him. And last, it changes how we relate to one another. Because Christ is in us, we are “knit together in love.” We have a supernatural unity with one another and must be careful to not unravel it.

Discussion Questions:

These questions are written for DNA groups, but you can use them in any setting, including missional communities. Because they were written for the intimacy of DNA friendships, you may need to adjust for larger groups.

1. Have you experienced moments when “Christ in you” felt very tangible and real and made a difference in your lived experience? What happened? What was that like?
2. How does “Christ in you” change how you suffer or how you give yourself away? Have you experienced this kind of intimacy with Jesus when suffering?
3. If “Christ in you” means that the new goal of your life is to become like Him, do you think that is reflected in your

current life? What would people who know you well say is the goal of your life?

4. "Christ in us" creates an incredible unity and love for the church. We are, as Paul says, "knit together in love." What are ways you see this unity being unraveled in the church? How have you been a part of that?
5. What does "knowing Christ in you" look like in your daily life? How do you pursue intimacy with Jesus who is in you?