

College Group Discussion Guide



PREPARATION

STUDY

Spend the week studying Colossians 1:13–23. See the commentary provided in the Adult Small Group Discussion Guide for additional information.

LANDING POINT

Believe who Jesus is. Receive what He has done.



INTRODUCTION

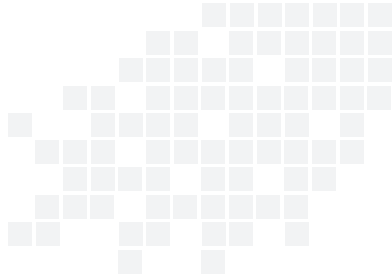

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

WORSHIP JESUS ALONE

We were created to worship. C.S. Lewis wrote that people spontaneously praise whatever they value, and they even invite other people to praise it, too. “Isn’t that Porsche amazing?” “Wasn’t that food incredible?” Or as a friend once said to me, “Let me tell you about this new hairdryer I got. It changed my life!” No lie.

Our English word *worship* comes from an old English word *worthship*, which means to proclaim worth to something you consider precious and supremely valuable. Every day, we worship a thousand tiny little things instead of the Creator, the gifts instead of the Giver. If we value Jesus above all things, we should worship Him above all things. We should spontaneously praise Him all day long. Instead of just, “Wow, what a gorgeous sunset!” it should be “Wow, what an incredible God to make that sunset!”

If we were really, truly in love with Jesus, we would be praising Him all day long. We would worship Him alone as the Giver of all good gifts, the King of all kings, our Savior and our Redeemer. As Lewis wrote, “We must



suppose ourselves to be in perfect love with God—drunk with, drowned in, dissolved by, that delight with that delight which, far from remaining pent up within ourselves as incommunicable, hence hardly tolerable, bliss, flows out from us incessantly again in effortless and perfect expression.”¹


When we truly see the supreme value of Christ, we can’t help but worship Him. Our passage today tells us *why* we worship Jesus alone, why there is no other like Him, no one else worthy of our worship. First, because of who He is, and then because of what He has done.

Enlist a group participant to read Colossians 1:13–23. Instruct the group to make two lists as they listen: 1. Who Is Jesus? 2. What has He done?

As you discuss the lists, make sure to include the following:

LIST 1: WHO IS JESUS?

1. He is God. Anyone who says anything less than that about Jesus really doesn’t understand who Jesus Himself said He is. Over and over in the Gospels, Jesus claimed to not only be the Son of God, but to be God Himself. It’s why people so often wanted to stone Him for blasphemy. In addition to the more subtle ways He alluded to his divinity, Jesus explicitly said, “I and the Father are one,” (John 10:30), and “If you had known Me, you would know My Father also. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him” (John 14:7).
2. He is the *image of the invisible God* (v. 15). Jesus doesn’t just tell us who God is, He shows us who God is. Because He is the “exact expression of His nature” (Hebrews 1:2) and “the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15), Jesus was God in a form that we could see. This is one of the reasons that Jesus came, so God could show us firsthand what He was like. In Jesus, we see how God would handle a woman who was caught in the act of adultery. We see how God would handle religious leaders who nitpicked the law but mistreated people. We see the types of people God would pick as His disciples. We see how God would treat the sinners and the outcasts. God had been telling His people who He was for thousands of years. Now He was going to show them. If we want to know who God is, we look at Jesus. If we want to know how God would handle a particular situation, we look at Jesus. If we want to know what God would say or do, we look at what Jesus said and did.
3. He is the *firstborn of all creation* (v. 15). One of the very first official councils of the Church, the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., was convened to settle a dispute about Christ’s relationship to the Father. Arius, a church leader in Alexandria, was teaching that Jesus was not eternal but had been created by God before the world was made; that Jesus was not actually God but His special first-created son of God. The Nicene Creed countered this false teaching by describing Christ as “begotten not made” and being “of one substance with the Father.” *Begotten* means that Jesus comes from the Father but was not created by Him.



Firstborn of all Creation does not mean that there was a time when Jesus was not and then He was born or created. Jesus has existed forever, just like the Father (John 1). He is not a creature like we are; He is divine. *Firstborn* means He has the status of a firstborn son—the heir. He is above all Creation in status. Nothing in Creation compares to Him. He has no rival. He has no equal.

4. He is the *Creator and Sustainer* (v. 16–17). Paul agrees with the introduction to the Gospel of John that all things were created by Jesus and through Jesus. Jesus is the Word of God, and God *spoke* the universe into being (John 1:1–2). And in Him all things hold together. Because the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—created the universe and sustains the universe, He is the *only* person or thing worthy to be worshipped. Paul writes in Romans that we commit sin when we worship the creature instead of the Creator. When we center our lives around money or power or pleasure or anything other than Jesus, we are worshipping something God has created rather than the Creator Himself. We elevate the gift rather than the Giver (Romans 1:18–25).
5. He is the *head of the Church* (v. 18). Jesus is the Head of the Church, the body of Christ. Not just the leader of the Church, but the *head*—the true and only source of life for the body.

LIST 2: WHAT HAS JESUS DONE?

1. *He has rescued* us from the domain of darkness (v. 13).
2. *He has redeemed* us from slavery to sin (v. 14).
3. *He has reconciled* us to God the Father (v. 20–22).

In Christ, God has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of light. He has redeemed us—bought us back—from slavery to sin with His precious blood (1 Peter 1:19). Therefore, we no longer belong to ourselves. We have been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20). We are now His people, His kingdom. We belong to Him. Jesus has changed our citizenship; we are now citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20). Therefore, we worship Jesus alone as our King.



QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions as a group. Remember to be respectful by not talking down to or over others.

Q: How does this discussion drive you to want to worship Him?

Q: How have you personally experienced freedom in Christ?

Q: What are some reasons we should want to worship Jesus, both qualities about Him and things He has done?

Q: Choose one area of your life—your classes, your residence hall, your sorority, your sports team, your job, your family, etc. How can you use that part of your life to glorify Jesus?

Q: Describe someone you know who lives a lifestyle of worship. What are they like? What do they do? What don't they do?

Q: What is one specific thing you can change right now to honor Jesus as King over your life?

End in prayer.

ENDNOTES:

1. C.S. Lewis, *The Joyful Christian* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1977), 118-120.