

In him all things hold together

Read: Colossians 1:9-20

Message: Colossians 1:17, "In him all things hold together"

William Occam (d 1347) once wrote: *I don't really understand anything at all until I know God.* A person can become very knowledgeable about some area of science - lets say he knows all about Monarch butterflies - but if he doesn't know God, he doesn't really know anything because he cannot answer the most important question: Why? Why do these butterflies exist?

We have science because humans are curious. We want to understand things. We want to know *how?* but even more important, we want to know *why?* How is just about mechanics, but why is about existence. Why does it do that? Why does it exist?

Isn't it strange that the most important question is the one most people can't answer? They don't know why we exist. Why am I the person I am? Why do i experience life the way I do? Why do things happen to me this way? Why was I born? Why? Why?!!

Occam said: we begin to really understand the creation when we believe in God. He created it for his own glory. I was created by God for his glory. I live to honour God. I reach the height of my humanity when I live for God. I will never be happier then when I live to bring honour to him.

Paul is even more specific. He says that we exist for Christ. Verse 16: all things were created through him and for him. If you don't know Christ, how can you understand the world? It is like trying to understand the behaviour of a young man with a woman. He always goes to her house - sometimes every day of the week. He brings flowers. He brings chocolates. He holds her hand when they walk. He kisses her! He spends all his spare time with her. What's that all about? Why does he do these things? Why?

If you don't know about the emotion called "love", then his behaviour is very strange. But when you realize that he loves this woman, then you understand why he does these things. Love is the answer to that relationship.

So how can you understand creation if you don't know Jesus? We can understand some aspects of creation, why they happen. But the overall reasons are impossible to understand. To understand the world, we need to see know that he created it:

- Vs 16 By him all things were created.
- Vs 16 All things were created through him and for him

Jesus has a very strong emotional tie to the world. The Father created the world through the Son. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are each passionate about creation because they were all deeply involved in bringing it into existence.

So when sin came, it grieved God. It was like the loss of something very precious to God. You can imagine what it's like to lose a newborn child, or maybe a beautiful and talented son or daughter. So all things in heaven and earth, things visible and invisible, both thrones and

dominions and rulers and authorities - they were all created by God and were full of wonder, power, promise and beauty. He longed for so much from them.

So when sin came and the shadow of death came upon all he loved and brought all this under the threat of utter extinction, his passion was aroused. He would not stand by and allow it to fail. He cares about the world so very very much.

Therefore he redeemed it. He did what he had to do. The problem of sin seemed to us to be too terrible and too powerful to be fixed. But Jesus is the great troubleshooter. The Father sent the Son to become a human, and as a human, God the Son did the work to save the world.

The how is a wonderful story in itself, but the why is what Paul is concerned about here. Jesus did what he did because he is the Creator and he was in love with what he had made. The result was a people, his church. It is so important that he calls it his body. This is what he is most proud of - his church.

There are few people who understand this. They study the world but they don't know why it exists. They don't see that it was created in Christ nor that it was saved from the brink of utter destruction by Christ. But you know and you understand all this. And that give you considerable power. If you want to fix a problem, you know how better than anyone. Because you know why you exist. You can go to Jesus in prayer and ask for his healing power. But you know that you exist for his glory - so you need not only to pray for healing, for wisdom, for patience etc., but you need to live in obedience to him. He is preeminent over all things - over the stars and the storm, and he will is preeminent in you. He wants to be glorified by your love, your gratitude, your praise, your obedience, your devotion..

He is God and he deserves your total devotion. When we learn to bow before him we will experience our lives bound together into the great symphony of his creation bringing glory to God. He fixed the world. He fixed you so that you will enter into glory - his glory and yours.

You understand. So keep yourself together in Jesus Christ.