

KAINOS MOMENT

Each week, set aside some time to reflect on this devotional as you prepare for your *Kainos* commitment.

TRUSTING GOD TO DO A NEW THING WITHIN US

Many of us are familiar with the powerful worship song called "Oceans." It was written a few years back, but its words are very powerful still today, as with many timeless worship songs and hymns based on Scripture. This piece is a beautiful worship song that so eloquently illustrates God's calling up on our lives and our response to Him. Let us be reminded of a few of these challenging lyrics.

*You call me out upon the waters
The great unknown, where feet may fail
And there I find You in the mystery
In oceans deep
My faith will stand*

Verse 2 continues with:

*Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sovereign hand
Will be my guide
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me
You've never failed, and You won't start now*

Both of those verses describe what the Lord does for us. Then the pre-chorus and the chorus begin to declare what we will do in reaching out to Him.

*So I will call upon Your name
And keep my eyes above the waves
When oceans rise
My soul will rest in Your embrace
For I am Yours, and You are mine.*

Not only is the writer of this song declaring to call upon the name of the Lord in the midst of these unknown waters, but he then goes to the bridge; and in the bridge, he goes BEYOND that declares that he SEEKS to be led into a NEW place where his trust is without borders. As in, he is ASKING, he's DESIRING to be taken to this new, deeper, and unknown place...

He writes,

*Spirit, lead me where my trust is without borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever You would call me
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander
And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Savior*

The original writers of these lyrics did not come up with this concept of trusting God into new and deeper places on their own. In fact, even this notion of SEEKING to be led into the new and the unknown is something that isn't new with the writing of this song. It goes back quite early, to the father of our nations, to the father of our Church, to the birthplace of so much off the descriptors and directives of how man should relate to God.

It is found in the story of Abram (Abraham)...

Reflect on this passage of scripture, Genesis 12:1-3:

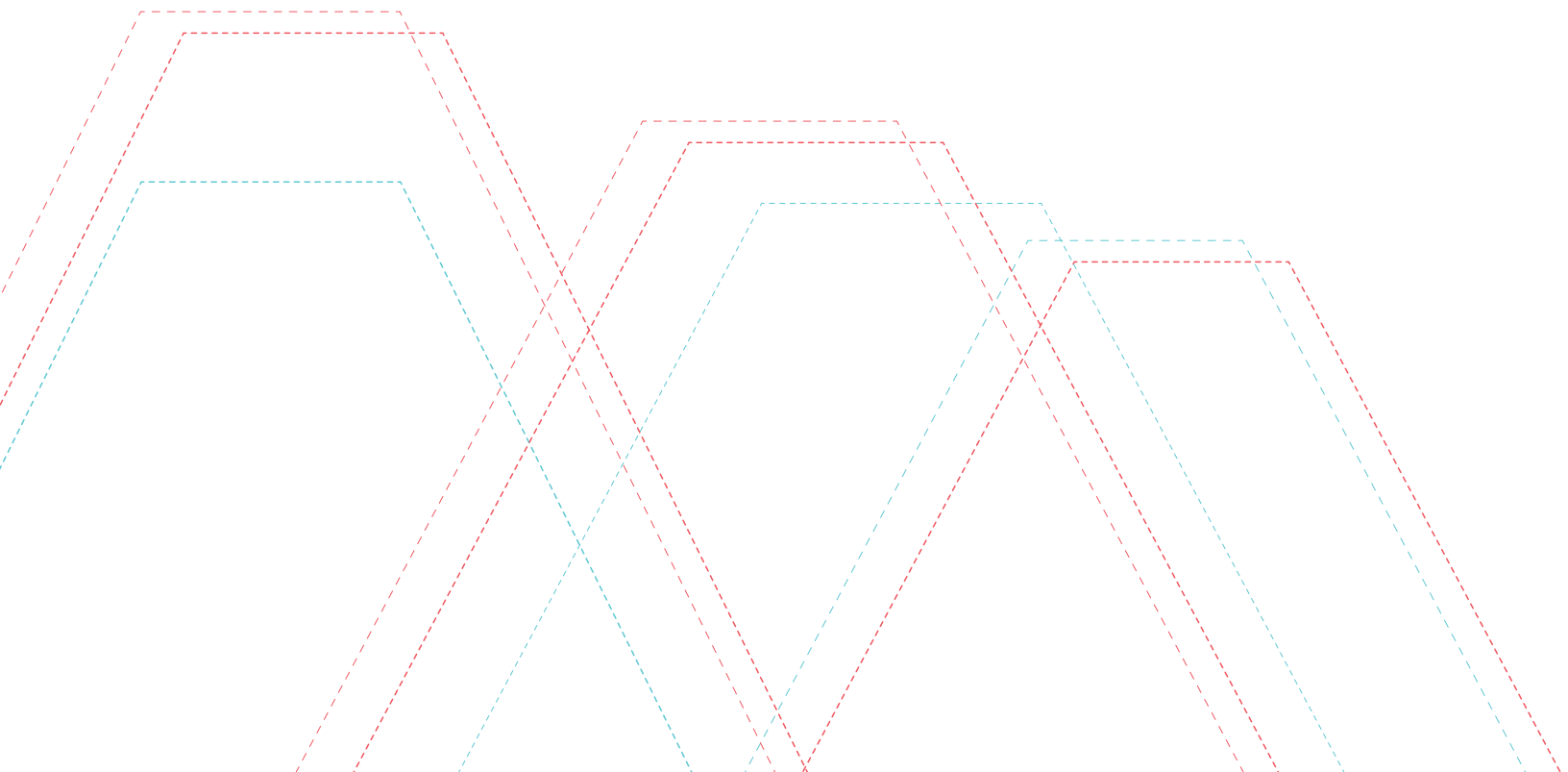
"The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Now, in order to understand fully the power of the beginning of Abraham's story, it is important to note what occurred in chapter 11, just prior to chapter 12. The world was in a very dark time spiritually. Genesis 11 is about the Tower of Babel, which symbolized humanity's rejection of God, their rebellion, and their wholesale worship of idols. There was one family line that belongs to God, the descendants of Shem, but it ends in chapter 11 with them living in a place of idolatry, consumed by the place. The final person in this line, Terah, has one son, Abram, and Abram is childless; his wife is barren. Terah's name literally means "mon," which is a Hebrew metaphor for "the end." In other words, as Genesis 11 ends, the last candle has flickered out. The darkness is about to swallow up the light.

So in the midst of this great darkness, God calls Abram and gives him this promise — that He wants to do a NEW thing within him — God promises Abram that He will bless him and give him a family. Furthermore, He promises that this family will become a blessing to the whole earth.

So what is God asking of Abram here? He says, "Go from your country, your people, and your father's household to the land I will show you." He is basically asking Abram to leave everything he has ever known so that He can do a NEW thing within him. He is asking him to trust God — without any type of reservation, without any type of restriction — and to allow God to lead him into this new place He will show Abram.

See, this whole *Kainos* initiative is birthed out off a strong belief, a strong conviction we have as followers of Christ that God still has promises for us as His people that are yet to be fulfilled — that He is always doing a NEW thing not simply THROUGH us but IN us. Reflect on this truth as we begin this *Kainos* journey together. God seeks to do something THROUGH us, and He also seeks to do something IN us. What might He be seeking to do IN you?



THE GOSPEL'S POWER

SUN, OCT 17, 2021 | COLOSSIANS 1:1-23

MEMORY VERSE

"He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son He loves. In Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Colossians 1:13-14 CSB

READ: Colossians 1:1-23

INTRO:

Colossae was located about one hundred miles from Ephesus. It was a meeting point of East and West, as an important trade route passed through here.

All kinds of philosophies could be found in this area. There was a large Jewish community in Colossae, and there was also a constant influx of new ideas and doctrines from the East. This was fertile ground for religious speculations and heresies.

The Colossian church began from the growth of Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus. This was an extremely important time in the history of the early church, as beliefs and accounts of Jesus' ministry were first being transferred from one generation who had known Him on earth to the next who had not.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

Paul wrote this letter to the church in Colossae because a crisis had occurred that was about to destroy the ministry of the church.

Some new doctrines were being taught in Colossae that were invading the church and creating issues. So, Paul wrote this letter to the Colossians to refute these heretical teachings and establish the truth of the gospel of Jesus.

The heresy that threatened the purity of the Colossian church was a combination of Eastern philosophy and Jewish legalism, with elements of what Bible scholars call Gnosticism. Gnosticism comes from the Greek word *gnosis*, which means "to know." An agnostic is one who does not know. The Gnostics were the people who were "in the know" when it

came to the deep things of God. They were the "spiritual aristocracy" in the church.

This heresy promised people that spiritual fullness could be theirs only if they embraced the teachings and ceremonies prescribed. There was also a "full knowledge," a spiritual depth, that only those who participated could enjoy.

Added to this was a form of Jewish legalism. The teachers taught that the Old Testament law, especially the dietary laws, was also useful in attaining spiritual perfection. Definite rules and regulations told them what was evil and what was good.

This type of teaching undermined the very foundations of Christian faith, as these heretics attacked the person and work of Jesus Christ. To them, Jesus was merely one of God's many "forms" and not the very Son of God come in the flesh. The Incarnation means God with us; however, these false teachers claimed that God was at a distance from us.

Knowing this background, we can look at Paul's letter to the Colossians and get an overview of what he wrote.

Paul was a great encourager, and this letter is a good example of the grace of thanksgiving. In this section, he gave thanks for what Christ had done in the lives of the Colossian Christians. When you recall that Paul wrote this letter while in prison, his attitude of thanksgiving is even more astounding.

Once Epaphras had been saved, he shared this thrilling news with his relatives and friends back home. He multiplied its effect. Perhaps it would have been exciting for Epaphras to stay with Paul in Ephesus, where so many wonderful things were taking place. But his first responsibility was to take the gospel to his own home city.

Likely no section of the New Testament contains more focused doctrine about Jesus than this one passage. Because of the teaching of the false teachers during this time, people viewed Jesus as equally as they did other “spirits” flowing from other gods. The teachers said Jesus could be prominent but that He certainly wasn’t preeminent. So, Paul sees his role as not only telling believers the truth about the gospel but also about the truth of Jesus Himself – and how in fact He IS preeminent.

Paul talks about Jesus being “the firstborn over all creation” (1:15). In these days, the firstborn means more about rank than it does time or sequence. The firstborn has a right to priority. This was the coveted position in the family, but it didn’t necessarily

always go to the firstborn from a time perspective. Jesus is the firstborn – the highest rank – in all of creation, even though others preceded Him in time.

Because Jesus is the Creator, Jesus has absolute supremacy over all creation. This literally means He is over everything. He is before all things. This was quite contrary to what the heretics believed, so Paul takes this portion of the letter to strongly proclaim the preeminence of Christ and all that means for the believer.

EXPLORE AND APPLY

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

KEY POINTS, PART 1 – vs. 1-7

- The gospel centers in a person, Jesus Christ.
- It is the word of truth.
- It is the message of God’s grace.
- It is for the whole world.

vs. 1-7

1. Why was Paul so intent on planting churches in new locations? (1:2)
2. What kind of fruit does God expect His children to bear? (1:6)
3. What did Paul focus on as he prayed for the Colossian believers? (1:3-7)

KEY POINTS, PART 2 – vs. 8-13

- Paul prayed for others and not for himself.
- The requests of Paul’s prayers center on spiritual blessings, not on material or physical things.
- Paul prayed for spiritual intelligence.
- Paul prayed for practical obedience.
- Paul prayed for moral excellence.

vs. 8-13

1. How did love motivate both Paul and the Colossians? (1:4, 8)
2. Identify three qualities Paul desired for believers. (1:9-11)
3. How do patience and long-suffering result in joy? (1:11, 15)

KEY POINTS, PART 3 – vs. 16-23

- Christ is the Creator of all things.
- Christ existed before creation began.
- All things exist for Christ.
- Christ holds all things together.
- Christ is the head of the church.
- Christ is the beloved of the Father.
- Christ redeemed and reconciled us.

vs. 16-23

1. How did Paul describe Christ in this passage?
2. As Savior, what did Christ do for us? Why is this so important?
3. What does preeminence mean, and why is it so significant that Christ was preeminent?
4. Compare our former state (before Christ) with our reconciled reality. (1:20-23).

