

Introvert Extrovert Christover

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[0 : 00] Well, tonight we're going to turn back to Colossians 1, but as we look at Colossians 1 we're also going to refer to a couple of verses in Revelation 21.

And in Revelation 21 we have this great description of the new heavens and the new earth, and we're going to read together from Colossians 1, 28 to 29, and then we're going to pick up Revelation 21, 22 and 23 as well. So Colossians 1, 28, 29, it was the last two verses that Myrtle read and where it said, 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. And then the verses from Revelation 21 that I want us to keep in mind where it says, this again is a picture of the new creation of heaven, the new heavens and the new earth, where it says, I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord, God the Almighty and the Lamb, and the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light and its lamp is the Lamb. Last week we looked at the topic of work and rest and tonight I want to explore in more detail a topic that relates to some of the issues that we raised when we considered that last week and it's a topic that has a massive impact on our day-to-day lives yet it's one that we don't really talk about much at all. Tonight I want us to think about our energy. And as we do that I've chosen a slightly unusual title, introvert, extrovert, Christopher. Now the first two of these I hope are familiar terms, the third one is a word that I made up, but I hope that is going to be helpful as we look at it together. As I said the first two words are familiar, the introvert, extrovert distinction is a common way of classifying people and I'm sure everyone here has heard of this being used at various points and maybe at times you thought about which one you are. An introvert is somebody who generally prefers a quieter environment, someone who's very comfortable in their own company or among a small group, somebody who maybe tends to prefer to listen rather than to talk, someone who likes to think through their own ideas, their plans, and someone who generally doesn't enjoy being in a busy place or in a big crowd. An extrovert is the opposite, it's someone who thrives in a crowd, someone who enjoys socializing, someone who interacts easily with others, they can absorb information quickly, they love new ideas, love new opportunities, but they're not as comfortable if they're on their own or if they're in quiet or isolated settings.

Introvert, extrovert, which one are you? Maybe you're very clearly one or the other or maybe you might feel like you're more one than the other or maybe, and some people are just a fairly even mixture of both, and I think that that can sometimes depend on the setting, you can be an introvert or an extrovert depending on the different settings, you very often see that with children, you will find children that if you go and see them in their own home they are the life and soul of everything that's going on, you take them out in public, they won't even look at people, let alone talk to them, and so it can depend a lot on your setting. Another example is you know you might meet somebody who you think oh they are so quiet, they're an introvert, and then you go and watch football with them and you realize oh they're not as quiet as I thought, so a lot can depend on the setting and sometimes we can actually misjudge what people are. If I ask myself the question am I an introvert or an extrovert, I actually don't know the answer, I don't know if I'm an introvert or an extrovert, what I do know is that I like talking and I spend a lot of time talking, but I also know that the more nervous I am the more I'll talk, so sometimes you might see me in a setting and I'm talking a lot and it might be because I'm very comfortable in that setting, but other times you might see me and I'm talking a lot, but it's actually not a sign that I'm comfortable, it's a sign that I'm nervous because the more nervous I get the more I tend to speak and likewise you might know somebody who is very very quiet and they might not speak very often, but they still far prefer to be in a crowd and they don't enjoy being on their own and so even though they don't say much they feel much much more comfortable socializing with other people, so introvert extrovert and introvert is more comfortable on

their own company and their own thoughts and extrovert prefers interaction with other people and that's captured in the terms that are used, intro in this context is a prefix that means inwardly, extro is the opposite, a prefix that means outwardly and the vert part is from the Latin word that means to turn and so you can see what we're saying is captured very very well in these words and that's very helpful for us to think about our energy levels because both of these terms are talking, are describing where we draw our energy from so an introvert gets more energy from turning inwardly to their own company their thoughts their ideas they're energizing for them and and conversely a lot of interaction with other people is tiring and extrovert gets more energy from other people from talking to people from being in busy stimulating environments and for them too much time alone will leave them drained now for us as Christians it's okay to be an introvert or an extrovert I think if you look in the Old Testament I think David loved to be around people I think

Elijah preferred to be alone in the New Testament I think Peter thrived in busy dramatic environments whereas Paul even though he was a very effective preacher he speaks a lot about how nervous and weak he felt when he was doing that so and you can be either and the key point I want to think about tonight is that regardless of whether you are an introvert or an extrovert or a little bit of both above all as Christians we want first and foremost to be Christaverts now what do I mean by that well I mean that the primary place where we should find our energy should be in Jesus and that's because Jesus is energizing Jesus is the source of all our energy and as Christaverts we want to turn Christward to him and in him to be renewed and strengthened and energized for the week ahead and for the rest of our lives and as we think about that and

I want us to recognize and remember that when you think about energy you have to remember that energy needs to be sourced it needs to be harnessed and it needs to be enjoyed a great example of that is Pete the Pete's you have to source them out in the mood you have to harness them by cutting them drying them and transporting them home and then you have to enjoy them as you put on a fire when the wind is howling outside and you're safe and warm these are our three headings as we think about what it means for us to be Christaverts source harness enjoy so the first thing that we're going to get about is this word and it's bringing up what is an obvious but often a very neglected theological truth the fact that the ultimate source of all energy in existence is Jesus Christ he is the source of all energy that's what we're told in Colossians 1 but by him all things were created in heaven and on earth visible invisible whether thrones dominions rulers or authorities all things were created through him and for him the creative work of God is accomplished through God the Son through

[9:07] Jesus Christ and that phrase all things that appears twice it's so deceptively simple because you can whiz past it and yet the truth is that's one of the most astounding statements that's ever made everything that exists all matter all motion all time all forces all interactions all processes all beauty all intelligence all energy all of it finds its source in Jesus that's why his birth in Bethlehem that's why him being laid in a manger is so utterly astonishing because the Creator and source of everything became one of us and because he did that because he came alongside us to be one of us when we think of Jesus often we tend to see him and think of him in terms where he's clothed with the same limitations that we have and that's one of the amazing things that you see in the Gospels you see that he shares our human nature he experiences the weaknesses the tiredness the suffering that we have but we must never forget that that weakness was a clothing if you like that Jesus willingly put on in order to be our Savior and that's how we generally see him in the Gospels but there are moments when you get glimpses of what Jesus is really like there's moments where if you like the the veil of of weakness is just it's just taken away for a moment and we see what Jesus is really like it happens on the mount of transfiguration Jesus took Peter James and John they went up a hill by themselves he was transfigured before them his face shone like the Sun and his clothes became white as light it happens on the road to Damascus when Saul came to faith when he was confronted by Jesus Saul was on his way approaching

Damascus suddenly a light from heaven shone around him he fell to the ground I heard a voice saying why are you persecuting me and he said who are you Lord and he said I am Jesus whom you are persecuting and we get another glimpse of it in Revelation 21 where it says that that the city of God the new creation has no need for sun or moon to shine in it for the glory of God gives it light and its lamp is the lamb these passages are giving a glimpse into what Jesus is really like and they all have one thing in common they're all revealing Jesus in terms of bright strong light so much so that these verses in Revelation make it explicit that the brightness of Jesus makes the Sun

unnecessary now this is a really interesting statement because it's a version the Bible that modern physics gives us an even deeper understanding of so I did a little bit of physics research and I went to the wonderful reliable source of Google but thankfully that took me to a university which I think is much more reliable and the University of Calgary's education energy education site told me how much of the earth's energy comes from the Sun how much do you think if you think of all the energy that is on the earth how much of the earth's energy originates with the Sun you can pick a percentage in your head the answer is 99.97% in other words almost all of it and that means that if Jesus makes the Sun unnecessary it just shows us what a colossal source of energy he is and that actually makes perfect sense because he's the creator of everything that is he's the creator of the Sun all the energy in the Sun finds its origin in him and so when Paul writes in Colossians that he's the one through whom all things were made it all makes sense it all comes from him when Paul writes that he's upholding everything by the word of his power that in him all things hold together as we've got here it's telling us that all the energy we ever need is coming from him and all of this is showing us that our view of

Jesus has to be so much bigger but for some people this can be a stumbling block because when somebody like me stands up and says I want you to think about all the energy in the universe you're starting to think about an absolutely massive amount of energy and then I'm saying all of that comes from Jesus the baby who was born in Bethlehem the man who who walked around Galilee and who was nailed to the cross and who rose again you think I'm not I'm not sure some people struggle to see Jesus as the ultimate source of energy as the ultimate explanation of reality and that can be a stumbling block but you've if it is a stumbling block you've got to ask yourself the question what are your alternatives when you think of all the energy in the universe where does it come from what is its ultimate source is it is it a glorious magnificent pile of absolutely nothing is that where it all came from is it a glorious magnificent mystery some thing some force some something that we can never know or is it a glorious magnificent person God himself loving us and reaching towards us through his son Jesus Christ now I know you probably all think I'm biased probably am but to me honestly only one of those options makes any sense the first two are utterly depressing the first one is utterly absurd but the third one makes sense of everything and it's so worth remembering this because it means that every time you expend energy you are using something that

Jesus has given you and that applies to everything so whether it's cooking or exercising or traveling or turning on the lights or listening to music all that energy ultimately comes from Jesus and that means that every minute of every day as we even sit in here and we can see because the lights are on and we're warm because the heaters are on every single day in all of these ways we're experiencing the reality of the grace and genocivity of Jesus towards us and that means that at every moment we can be Christopher turning to him thanking him and praising him he's the source of it all but energy also needs to be harnessed that happens all across our lives every day whether it's turning on a tap turning on your phone starting up your car all of that involves harnessing the energy that has been created by Jesus Christ but I want to think a little bit that a little bit more and say that harnessing energy involves two aspects I think we can say that harnessing energy involves fuel and it involves a spark now let me explain what I mean by that in terms of energy there has to be fuel so whether that's diesel in your car or pizza beside your fire or whatever it may be there's got to be fuel and then there's got to be a spark something that ignites that fuel and I think that we can apply those two categories in a figurative way to our own lives in terms of our lives in terms of our energy we need fuel and that fuel is physical so there's lots of physical things that we need we need to eat enough we need to sleep enough we need clothes to preserve our heat we need air to oxygenize whatever you call it your your blood cells I don't know how it all works but you I just know you need it you need all of that physical stuff in terms of having energy the fuel is physical but the spark is spiritual spiritual now what I mean by that is that it's real but non-physical so if something's spiritual it's real but non-physical and it's crucial for igniting our energy so for example you might eat a bowl of pasta full of carbohydrates you might put on your running shoes you might even take out your phone and turn on your running playlist on Spotify or whatever it is you listen to but none of that gets you out the door the thing that gets you out the door for a run is desire it's the fact that you want to do it that non-physical reality of your desire to run to be fit to be healthy to have that sense of achievement that's the spark that energizes you and that puts all that physical fuel to use now this is very important for us to think about when we are considering where we draw our energy from as we've been saying introverts and extroverts will will draw energy in different ways and that should always reassure you that you know you might meet somebody and they are so energized by

something and you look at it and you're like I don't feel that at all and and that's to be expected we draw energy in different ways and the truth is the introvert extrovert distinction is probably too simple and in terms of a category framework and it's more complex than that in terms of how we are energized and and there's actually been lots of interesting research into the kinds of tasks that can energize

people in other words and the the sparks that fire us into action and one interesting area of research is a concept known as work geniuses or working geniuses this is something that you can look up online and the basic theory of it is that there are six types of genius and what they mean by that is six different areas where people can excel areas that give us energy and inspiration and I wanted to share these with you so these are the six work geniuses that you have you can look them up online if you want to and number one is wonder so you see the potential in things and you you you that energizes you number two is invention and you see specific ideas that can take you forward that will enable you to get the job done discernment is where you where you don't necessarily think up the ideas but you are good at assessing them you like to see what's good what's bad what's strong what's weak galvanizing is when you rally others into action in order to take the ideas forward enablement is when you are helping other people to do the job so it's not so much you leading others like galvanizing enablement is more you just helping them to go forward and to take the lead themselves and then tenacity is when you are good at pushing ideas through to completion and the theory of this is that for everyone some of these will energize you and some of them will drain you and for some you'll be neutral and the theory is that for most people you're gonna be a combination maybe there'll be two that energize you to that drain you and to that you're neutral about and if you think about it I think it's true some people love new ideas some people hate them and you know they think oh new idea let's do it and other people are like oh new idea let's not do it and some people love starting things but hate finishing them so if you want to see an example of that genius come to my garden and some people love to to help others other people find it quite draining to have to work with other people's and they prefer to do things themselves some people love to think through and plan every detail carefully and meticulously some people love it when someone else gives them a task and they can then take it forward and we're all different and we're all be and we'll all find we relate to different things the key point is that all of this is describing the sparks that will energize us the sparks that will energize us into action and all of them are spiritual in other words they're not physical you can't go to the shop and buy any of those things wonder invention discernment galvanizing and even monstacity they're all non physical realities and yet they're all the things that we need to spark us into action now that work geniuses is just a contemporary secular leadership program and I think it's a very helpful one in that regard and what I want to highlight though is that you don't need to think about it for long to realize that all of this is actually rooted in what the Bible teaches all of these things wonder invention discernment galvanizing enablement tenacity all of these reflect the fact that we are made in the image of God we can invent and achieve and enable all because we are made in God's image every other animal [24 : 13] and it's not quite right every animal I'm not saying other animals we're not animals in the same sense but all the rest of the animals are to do that again you know what I'm trying to say animals they're just trying to survive they're not doing any of that stuff humanity is made for so much more humanity is made to thrive and this is true for all of us we all have different levels of energy and we'll all have different phases in life where where our energy levels might be higher might be lower sometimes there will be times when when when our energy levels are very good and strong within a setting our period in life where where there are many many things that make us thrive other periods of our life will come where our energy levels are much lower and sometimes that can be because of our health but sometimes it can also just because of the circumstances that we're facing and where we are not all going to be the same in terms of energy levels some people will have just a natural higher level of energy than others everybody is different in this regard but the key thing I want us to highlight is that if we are Christopher's if we're turning to Jesus in him we are going to find the sparks that truly energizes us so if wonder energizes you then turn to Jesus and marvel at the incredible potential that he brings into your life he's the one who's able to do far more abundantly than we can ask or think according to the power that is working within us if invention energizes you turn to Jesus and think of all the different ways in which we can reach out to the community around us with the gospel Paul said to the Jews I became a

Jew to the Gentiles I became like a Gentile I to the weak I became weak I became all things to all people in order to reach some and so if invention energizes you the Bible said go for it if discernment energizes you turn to Christ and feed off his wisdom don't be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that by testing you may discern what is the will of God what's good and acceptable and perfect if galvanizing energizes you then turn to Christ and be the best encourager that the people around you have ever met encourage one another and build one another up if enablement energizes you turn to Christ and serve alongside all of your brothers and sisters so that we're growing up in every way into him who is the head so that the whole body us together as Christians joined and held together is working properly growing building itself up in love if tenacity energizes you turn to Christ and hold fast your confession and press on and fight the good fight of faith and forget what lies behind strain forward to what lies ahead pressing on towards the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus we are all energized in different ways and by different things but if we turn to Jesus and look to him and listen to him we will find the sparks that will fire us up like nothing else and that's the key to living for Jesus and whether you're a Christian or not yet a Christian this is the key as we follow him that in every way on every day of our lives we are constantly relying on the energy and strength that he gives us that's why Paul can speak of struggling on with all his energy that he perfectly works within me now that word struggling doesn't mean kind of you know in the sense of failing or falling it means struggling in the sense of fighting it's the idea of competing for a prize battling forwards and we're doing all of that in the energy that he provides for us so how do you harness it you do it by being a Christopher by turning to Jesus every day by letting the great truths of the gospel be the spark that ignites you and different sparks will invite in ignite you at different times that's to be expected that's what experience shows at different seasons Jesus will motivate us in different ways for different tasks the key point is that we need to keep turning to him keep looking to him keep listening to him keep reading the Bible keep praying to him keep meeting together keep offering your life to Jesus as a channel for his powerful energy to be at work or maybe it's clear that if we think of it in the opposite way it's reminding us that we must never ever unplug ourselves from Jesus we must never unplug from him so easy to do that because there are a thousand things around us in plug into me plug into more money plug into social media plug into the way you look plug into a relationship plug into this and there you'll find energy and and these things aren't bad on their own necessarily but they can easily be a means whereby we pull the plug out of Jesus and plug into something else think it'll help us and it leaves us drained Jesus is telling us come back to me plug back into me and that's the amazing thing about him he's just opening his arms to us all tonight if we have drifted from him if we've unplugged if the plugs half out he's just saying look come back come back come back and plug into me and be strengthened by me we are harnessing our energy by turning to Jesus last of all energy is to be enjoyed being a disciple of Jesus involves a lot of energy it's a journey it's an adventure at times it can be a struggle but we always want their discipleship to be energetic we don't want to be lifeless we don't want our walk to be static and we don't want our relationship with Jesus to be draining but we've got to be honest and say that sometimes it can feel like that sometimes it can even become that sometimes it can feel as though our spiritual battery is down to one bar or five percent but when that happens and it happens to us all so often the reason it happens it happens is because we get the fundamental principle of the gospel the wrong way round this happens so so easily we get the core basic of the gospel the wrong way round and when we do that we tend to think of Jesus or we think of church or we think of our discipleship and we conclude that we need to feed energy into that relationship so we think of following Jesus and we think of church and serving and we think we think happens energy into that when that happens one of the ways you can tell that that's happening is when prayer becomes exhausting because you think oh I just need to fulfill this duty and I kind of need to sort of top up my spiritual acceptability with God because if I'm not praying God's not going to be happy so I must pray to make myself acceptable when we do this church becomes draining because we think oh you know I need to just fulfill my obligations I need to make sure I'm seen I don't want people wondering why I'm not there and and going to church just becomes draining and most of all and worst of all when we get this the wrong way round the gospel becomes depressing because we we hear the message of the gospel we look at ourselves we feel like we are not good enough we feel like we are not contributing enough and we feel like we don't have the energy to improve and to make ourselves good enough all of this can happen so easily all of it is when we are get is caused by getting the gospel the wrong way round because we've got to remember and never forget that

the gospel is never about us contributing anything of ourselves the gospel is about constantly relying on the grace of God in Jesus Christ grace is the principle that lies at the heart of the gospel and grace is God giving to you we are saved by his grace we're sanctified by his grace we serve him by his grace we are energized by his grace or to use the imagery of Revelation 21 think of it like this when do you ever go outside and top up the energy in the sun never what do you do you stand underneath it you bask in its warmth you recharge under its energy that is how we are to approach Jesus that is what Jesus wants to do for us we come not to give him our last bit of energy to try and impress him we come to receive from his endless energy Jesus is not calling you to come to him and drain your battery he's telling you to come to him and recharge to be refreshed and re-energized and that's one of the reasons why we come together at church each week that's one of the reasons why we seek to walk with Jesus every day of our lives we come together and we enjoy his energizing presence as we worship him and follow him together and do you know that's what we're going to spend eternity doing as Revelation tells us there there's no need for the Sun in the new creation and that's because we are going to be eternally energized by Jesus eternally energized by what's called the beatific vision the vision of God in Jesus that we will enjoy for all eternity it's going to be the most energizing sight that you will ever see and that is so exciting and it's telling us that forever and ever and ever we are going to be Christopher's turned towards Jesus and enjoying the beautiful energizing wonder of his presence and if you feel worn out if you feel worn out of life this is reminding us that the gospel is everything that you need and in this life we'll still battle on and there'll still be times when our energy is low in those moments we can turn to Jesus we can be Christopher's and be renewed and strengthened but ultimately if you're a Christian or if you become a Christian the day will come when you'll never be tired again and instead you'll just enjoy the radiant warmth and beauty of Jesus's love shining on you that's why being a Christopher is amazing and if you are not yet a follower of Jesus why the heck would you turn anywhere else? Amen.