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## Sermon Discussion Guide

### Truth in Tension - Christian Lindbeck

February 28, 2021

#### Leader Preparation

1. Take some time to look over these questions ahead of time. Choose the ones that you want to make sure you cover with your group. We have highlighted what we think are **key questions by bolding them.**
2. Pray for your group and your time together as you prepare. This is so helpful!
3. When meeting online you as the leader will need to be more directive than in person. Don't be afraid to invite everyone to answer a question, invite them to share by name, and thank them when they finish. The online format requires a little more intentional orchestrating than an in-person group.
4. Try to start the gathering by getting everyone talking at least once to begin. The Hook section is great for this. When in doubt, have people share stories about their past. (How the week was, favorite memories about the topic for the day, etc). This is a great way to help your group continue to get to know one another.
5. Next, look at the Scripture and what it means. We believe Jesus is discipling people through this Word. Get people into the Scriptures and the Scriptures into people!
6. Finally, end with what God is saying to people and how God is inviting them to respond. These aren't just ideas to know but realities to live in!



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#### Hook - Getting to know one another

- How is everyone doing this week? This could also be an icebreaker question related to the topic for discussion.
  
- 1. What paradoxes in life or in scripture drive you nuts? Make you excited or curious? Frustrate you? What do your thoughts do in the face of paradoxes, scientifically, in the natural world, or in scripture? Do you try to smooth them out, explain them, run away, or rejoice?
- 2. The following video is a timelapse of a bridge being built. Note the time it takes just to set the piers, the main supports off of which everything else is built. What other takeaways can you see here regarding the building of a bridge compared to the Christian life?
  - a. <https://youtu.be/7BC5GmT--l8>

#### Book - Scripture

- Read the scripture, and discuss a few questions to understand **what the text is saying**.
  - **Key: Colossians 1:15-20**
  - **Luke 1:35**
  - **John 1:1-18**
  - **2 Corinthians 5:21**
  - **Revelation 13:8**
  
- 3. Focus on the Colossians passage. It is full of paradoxes and moments of tension as Paul describes Jesus and his ministry. Identify and talk about them. Talk about what it means that Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God, that all things were created by Him and also for him... etc. What can we learn about Jesus? God?



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#### Look - Connections to our world today

- This section focuses on implications about **what this text means** about what's wrong in the world, about trusting God, about who God is, etc.
- 4. How has the church tied down paradoxes, smoothed them out, or ignored them? (explaining away evil, redefining death and sin)
- 5. How could leaning into the paradoxes of the Christian faith bridge gaps in the secular world? How could that open conversations within our community, our neighborhoods, our cities, etc?

#### Took - Personal Application

- This application focuses on **how God is calling us to respond**. This could be personally, as a family, small group, or church. It could be something to believe, to meditate on, to say or do this week.
- 6. Which of the paradoxes that Paul writes of in Colossians do you struggle with? Has it shaped your faith in any way? (Make sure that we work on empathizing here instead of trying to explain how we have reasoned it out)
- 7. What has formed your bedrock, the piers of your suspension bridge? God is love, omnipotent, etc.
- 8. How can we change the way we respond to difficult passages in scripture like "In order to find your life you must first lose it" or "the first shall be last and the last shall be first" or "the image of the invisible God." What would it look like to live in the tension of these passages?

#### Time of Prayer