



## Christ Holds It All Together (from The Message Translation)

**15-18** We look at this Son and see the God who cannot be seen. We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created. For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank after rank of angels—*everything* got started in him and finds its purpose in him. He was there before any of it came into existence and holds it all together right up to this moment. And when it comes to the church, he organizes and holds it together, like a head does a body.



**18-20 He was supreme in the beginning and —leading the resurrection parade—he is supreme in the end. From beginning to end he's there, towering far above everything, everyone. So spacious is he, so expansive, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding. Not only that, but all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe—people and things, animals and atoms—get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the cross.**

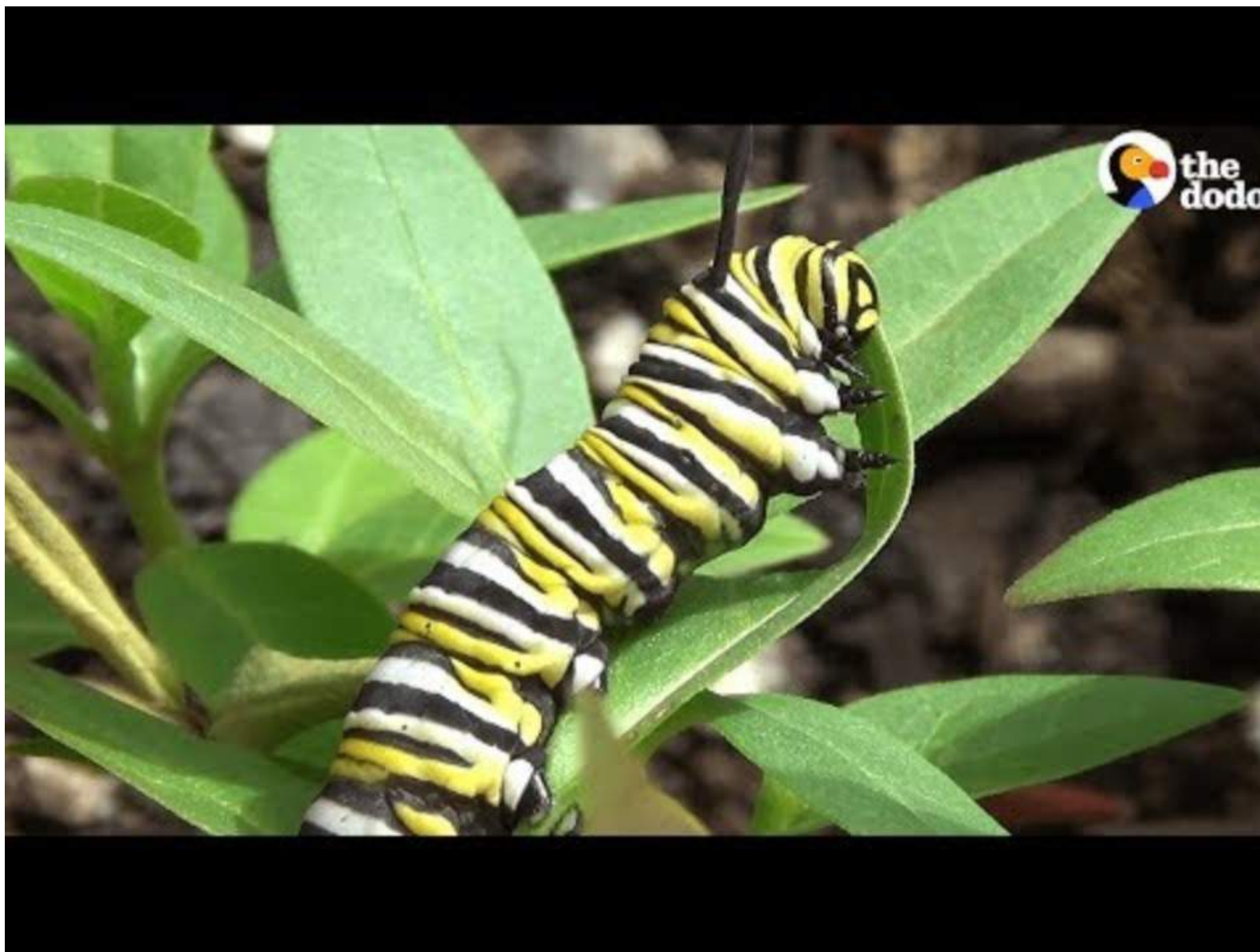


**21-23 You yourselves are a case study of what he does. At one time you all had your backs turned to God, thinking rebellious thoughts of him, giving him trouble every chance you got. But now, by giving himself completely at the Cross, actually *dying* for you, Christ brought you over to God's side and put your lives together, whole and holy in his presence. You don't walk away from a gift like that! You stay grounded and steady in that bond of trust, constantly tuned in to the Message, careful not to be distracted or diverted. There is no other Message—just this one. Every creature under heaven gets this same Message. I, Paul, am a messenger of this Message.**



## **Place Your Life Before God (The Message Translation)**

**Romans 12** <sup>1-2</sup> So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.



**How a Caterpillar Becomes a Butterfly**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3VMI-EY2DM>

- ▶ ***If you accept a Belief***
- ▶ ***You reap a Thought.***
- ▶ ***If you sow a Thought***
- ▶ ***You reap an Attitude.***
- ▶ ***If you sow an Attitude***
- ▶ ***You reap an Action.***
- ▶ ***If you sow an Action***
- ▶ ***You reap a Habit.***
- ▶ ***If you sow a Habit***
- ▶ ***You reap a Character.***
- ▶ ***If you sow a Character***
- ▶ ***You reap a Destiny***