

As you focus, so you will live

Seek the things above 1

Set your mind on things above 2

Paul...is not pleading for an other-worldliness in which the Christian withdraws himself...and does nothing but contemplate eternity. Immediately after this Paul goes on to lay down a series of ethical principles which make it quite clear that he expects the Christian to go on with the work of this world and to maintain all its normal relationships. But there will be this difference - from now on the Christian will view everything against the background of eternity and no longer live as if this world was all that mattered. - William Barclay, *Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*

Think and live this way because you are secure 3

Think and live this way because Jesus is coming 4

You must not only *seek* heaven; you must also *think* heaven. [Because]...the veil which now shrouds your higher life from others, and even partly from yourselves, will be withdrawn. The world which persecutes, despises, ignores now, will then be blinded with the dazzling glory of the revelation of Christ. - J.B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*

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letter to the Colossians

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONE

**7 For as he thinketh in his
heart, so *is* he.**

Proverbs 23 KJV

**As you focus,
so you will live.**

Ellen, be careful! Don't mess up this one tricky section.



AAAAGGGHHH!



**⁸ Finally brothers and sisters,
whatever is true,
whatever is honorable,
whatever is just,
whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely,
whatever is commendable—
if there is any moral excellence
and if there is anything praiseworthy—
dwell on these things.**

Philippians 4 CSB

As you focus, so you will live.

Colossians

“Theological”

Chapters 1-2

Paul points out the serious flaws in bad theology.

“Practical”

Chapters 3-4

Paul turns to the right way to live a valuable Christian life.

¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB

¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3

Greek: 3rd class condition; indicates something that is totally true or something very likely.

**So, there are two choices.
But how can we tell the
difference?**



¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3 CSB

Greek: 3rd class condition; indicates something that is totally true or something very likely.

- If the 3rd class conditional clause uses the word “if” and is followed by a present tense verb – then the author clearly means something that is sure and certain.**
- When there’s no “if” + a present tense verb – the author is describing a hypothetical situation or a future possibility.**

1 So if you have been raised with Christ, **seek** the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3 CSB

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Colossians 3 CSB

Greek: zeteo ζητέω = seeking information about something truly desired; especially getting word about or items from home



courtesy thebullephant



courtesy Cadbury; Britfood; Nestle

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Colossians 3 CSB



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Colossians 3 CSB

Greek: ἄνω ano

ἄνω in Colossians 3:1 can be precisely defined: Where Christ is at the right hand of God; the opposite of this world...it [represents] an antithesis between God as the holy and eternal and the world as the sinful and therefore transitory.

–Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

Which is living in light of eternal home?



Which is living in light of eternal home?



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Colossians 3 CSB

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¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3 CSB

**⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own understanding.**

Proverbs 3 CSB

As you focus, so you will live.

What you feed yourself determines appetite.



¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3 CSB



Greek: zeteo ζητέω = seeking information about something truly desired; especially getting word about or items from home

Colossians

Chapters 1-2

The bad
theologies
all
diminish
Jesus.



Chapters 3-4

Jesus is fully
God, seated
at the
right hand of
the Father.



¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB

Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt when Using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing Task[△]

Nataliya Kosmyna^{*}
MIT Media Lab
Cambridge, MA

Eugene Hauptmann
MIT
Cambridge, MA

Ye Tong Yuan
Wellesley College
Wellesley, MA

Jessica Situ
MIT
Cambridge, MA

Xian-Hao Liao
Mass. College of Art
and Design (MassArt)
Boston, MA

Ashly Vivian Beresnitzky
MIT
Cambridge, MA

Iris Braunstein
MIT
Cambridge, MA

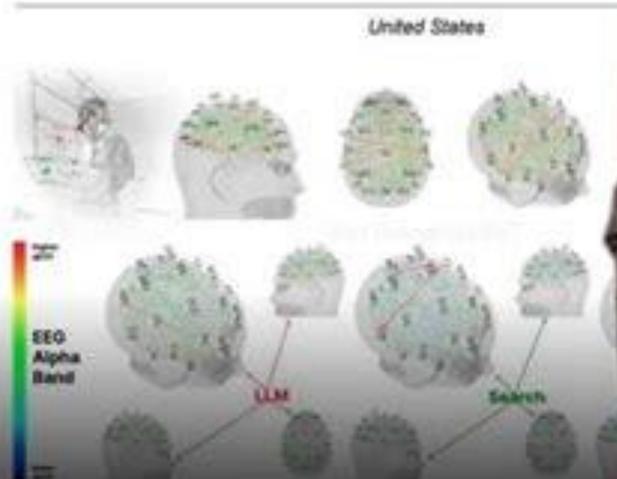
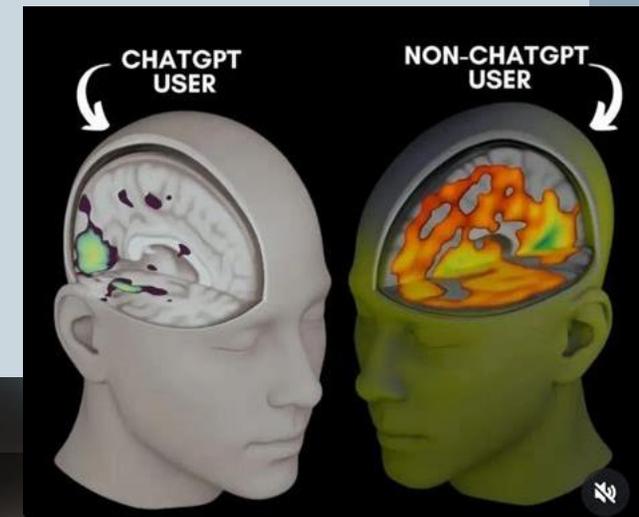


Figure 1. The dynamic Direct Transfer Function (dDTF) EEG analysis of A LLM, Search Engine, Brain-only, including p-values to show significance (significance $p < 0.05$ to apply significance $***$)

Your Brain on ChatGPT 2025 Experiments at MIT

- **Brain-only. No search engine or other electronic assistance. All quotes or references had to come from reading printed material.**
- **Search Engine. Students were allowed to search and quote from items found online.**
- **LLM. Users create a prompt and have ChatGPT write their essay, which they could then modify at will.**

We used EEG [electroencephalography] to assess cognitive load during essay writing. Across groups, NERs, n-gram patterns, and topic ontology showed within group homogeneity. [Translation: each person was very similar to others in their group.] [We] observed significance difference in brain connectivity: Brain-only participants exhibited the strongest, most distributed networks; Search Engine users showed moderate engagement [of their brain]; and LLM users displayed the weakest connectivity, in fact, LLM users struggled to accurately quote their own work. – Nataliya Kosmyna, Eugene Hauptmann, Ye Tong Yuan, Jessica Situ, Xian-Hao Liao, Ashley Vivian Bereenitsky, Iris Braunslein, and Pattie Maes, “Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt when Using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing”



- Brain-only-switched to-LLM participants showed a drop in activation of occipito-parietal and prefrontal areas, similar to Search Engine users. [Translation: They were less able to focus than when doing their own thinking.]
- LLM-switched to-Brain participants showed reduced alpha and beta connectivity, indicating under-engagement of neurons. [Translation: they were less able to focus than when they started the semester.]

“Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt when Using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing”



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Colossians 3 CSB



The forbidden cusswords of a culture tell you a great deal about how people think.
– John McWhorter



**He used the
Lord's name
in vain!**

**Our shift has been so wholesale that using God's name in vain is now a sure sign that one [is] holding to the accepted and common way of thinking. Today, our cusswords are all about sex – revealing *that* is what we worship.
– John McWhorter**



¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Colossians 3 CSB



Greek: φρονέω phroneo = a worldview; a mind trained to a certain way of thinking

^{1:17} And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ^{ESV}

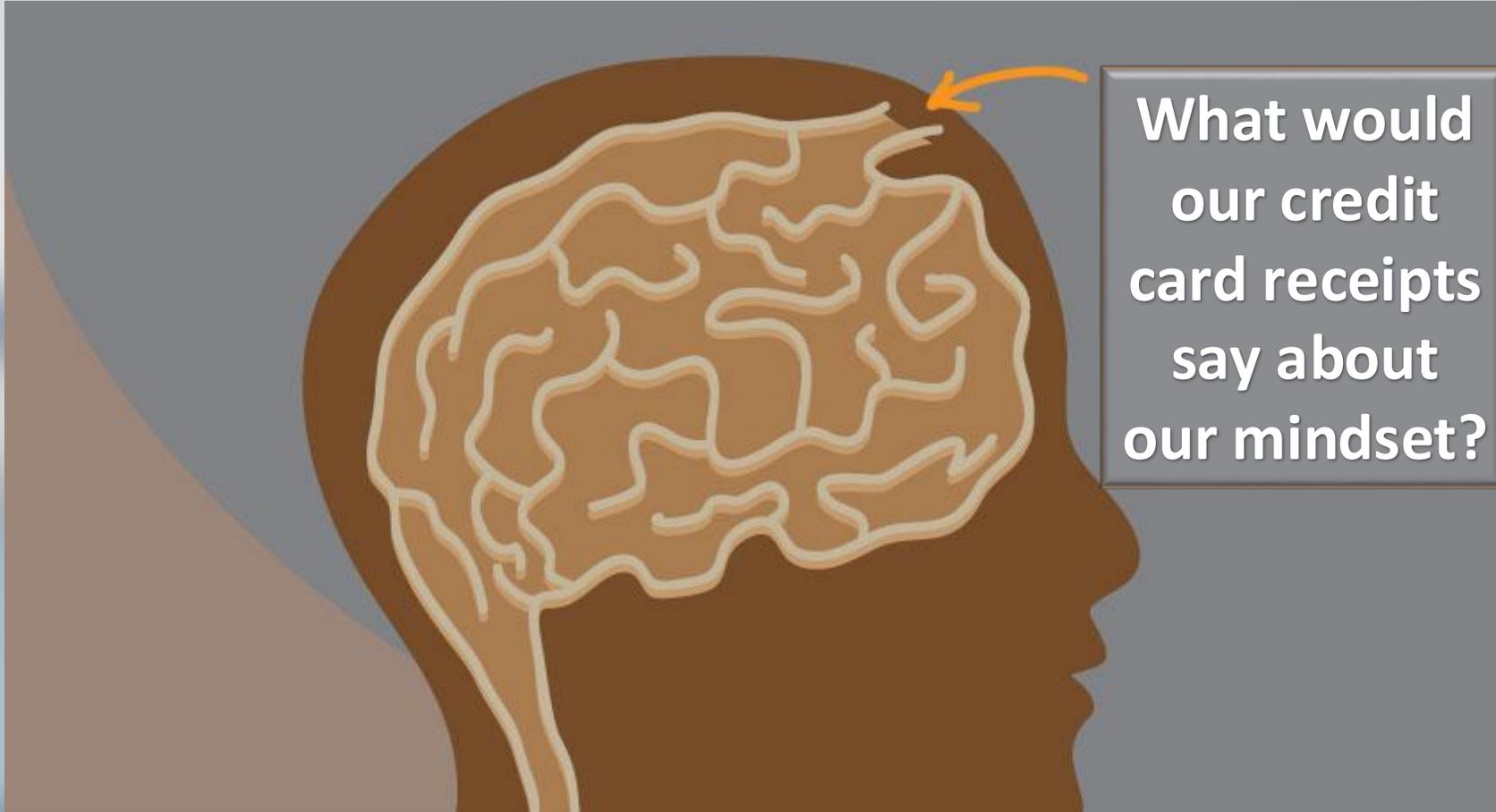


**Jesus, stop talking
about Your sacrifice!**

TPKRÜGER

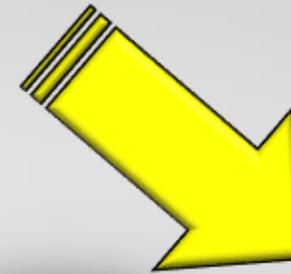
23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind [phroneo] not on divine things but on human things.”

Matthew 16 NRSV

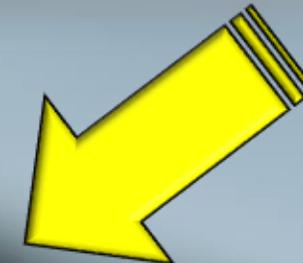


**What would
our credit
card receipts
say about
our mindset?**

**Brain tuned to
world all day**



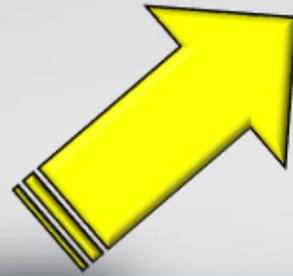
**More pain and
exhaustion**



**Vegetate and
tune to world**



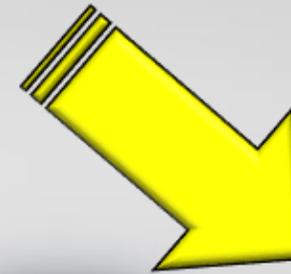
**Deeper appetite
for world**



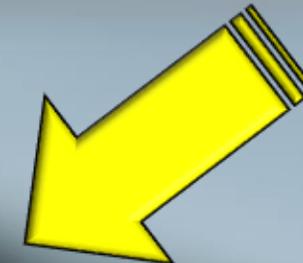


courtesy imindmental

Brain tuned to world all day



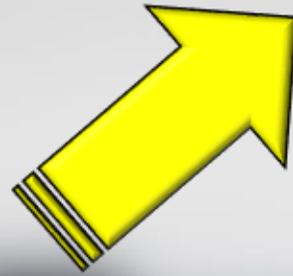
More pain and exhaustion



Vegetate and tune to world



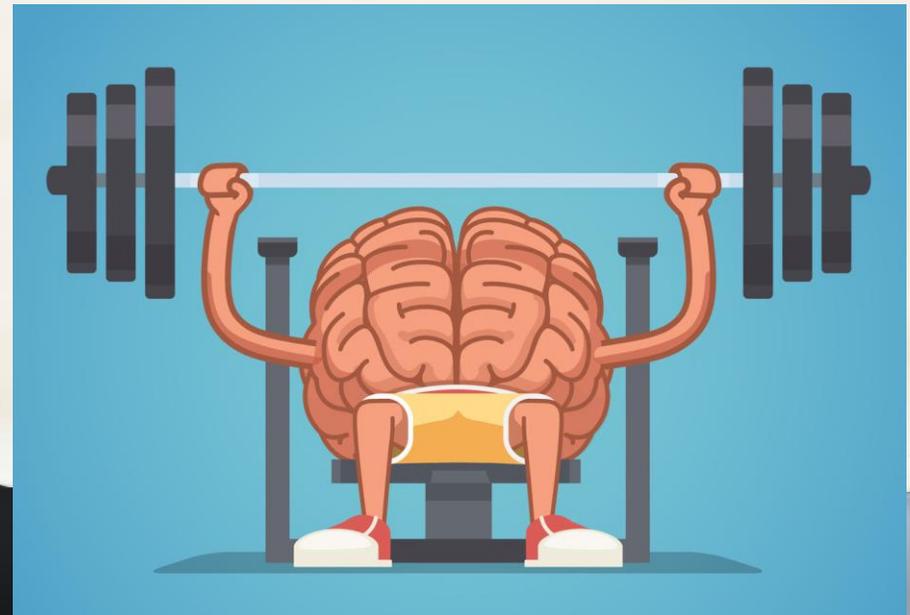
Deeper appetite for world



¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Colossians 3 CSB

Greek: φρονέω phroneo = a worldview; a mind trained to a certain way of thinking



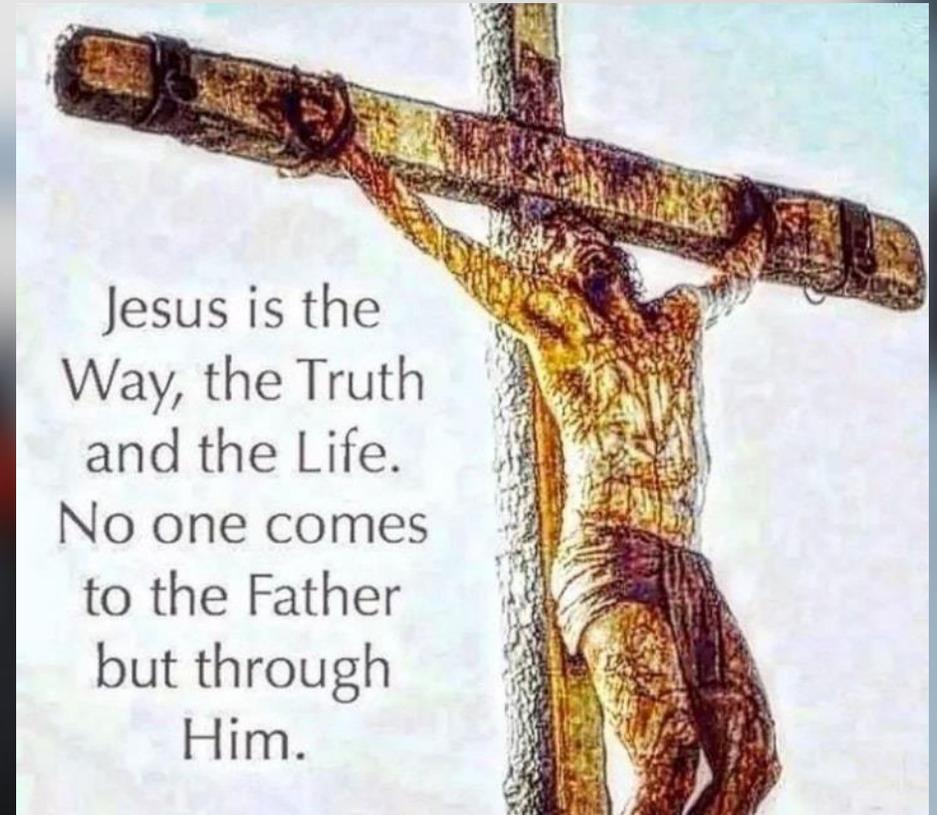
Paul...is not pleading for an other-worldliness in which the Christian withdraws himself...and does nothing but contemplate eternity. Immediately after this Paul goes on to lay down a series of ethical principles which make it quite clear that he expects the Christian to go on with the work of this world and to maintain all its normal relationships. But there will be this difference – from now on the Christian will view everything against the background of eternity and no longer live as if this world was all that mattered. – William Barclay, *Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*



Romans had no trouble with a religion as long as it didn't try to comment on truth.



Christian phroneo: Jesus is the truth (John 14:6).



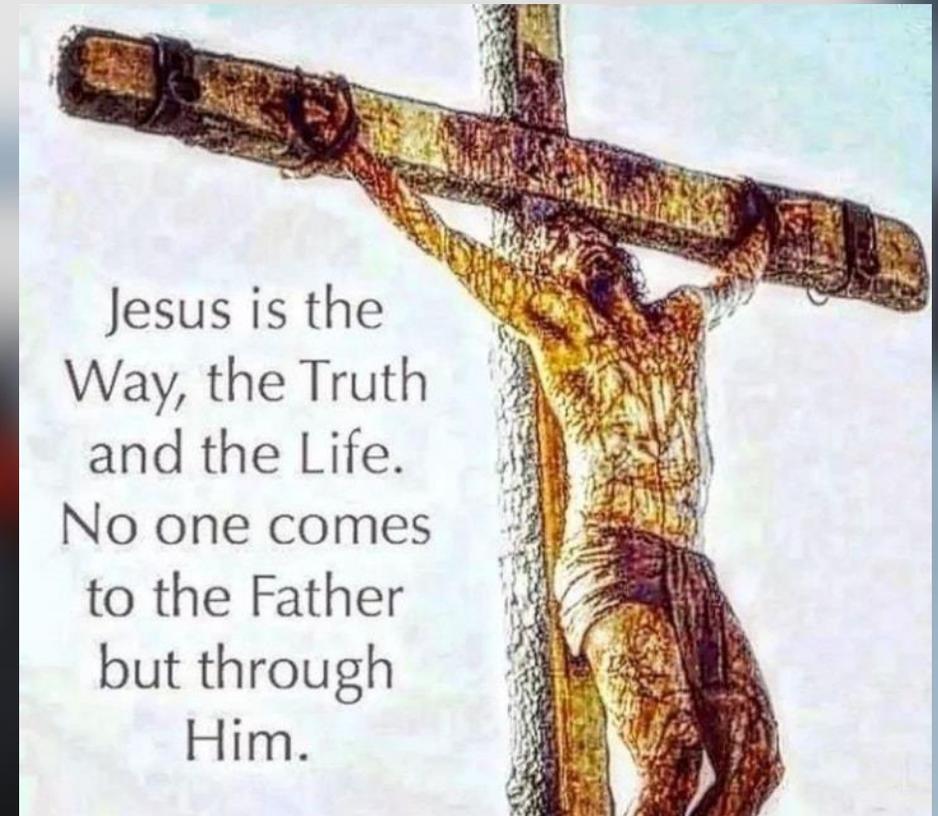
**One sacrificed to please the gods
so one could live well now.**

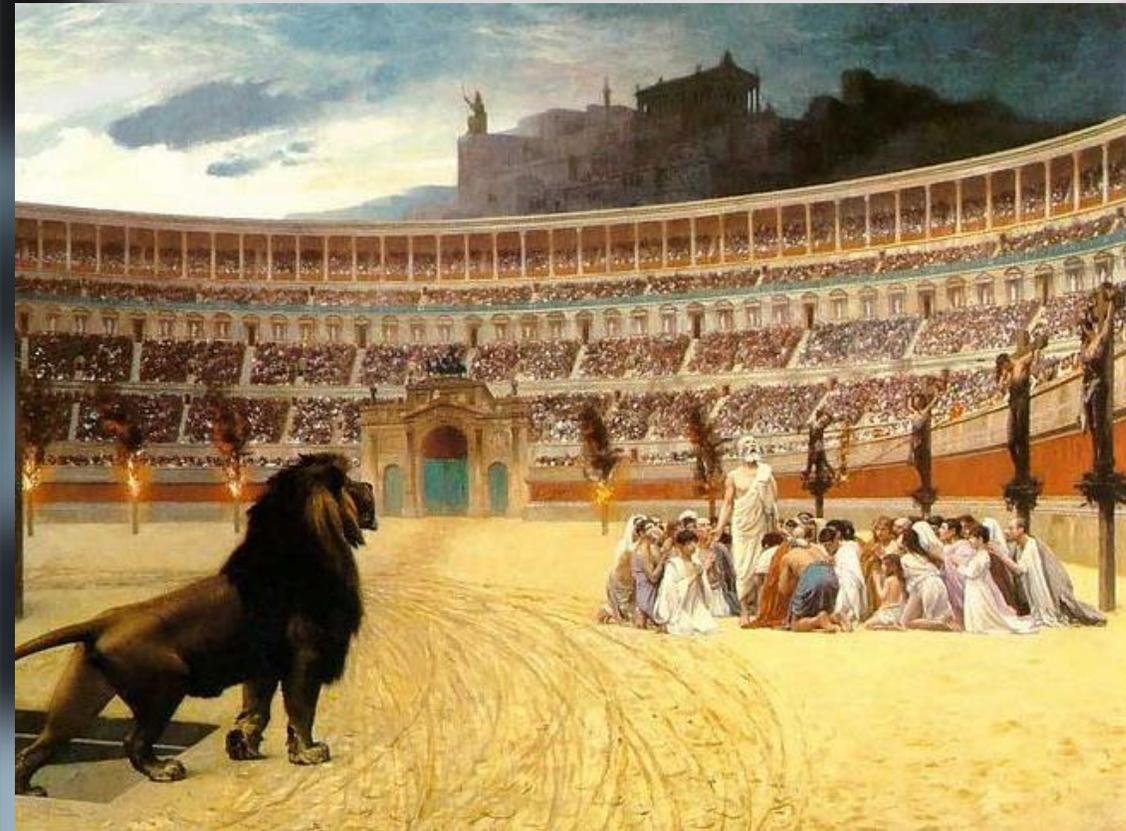


No religion was fully right.
Thus, no one was wrong and
everyone was righteous by
default.



Christian phroneo: Jesus is
the truth (John 14:6).





The Christian Martyr's Last Prayer
Jean-Léon Gérôme
1883

How did the early church respond? It resolutely refused to reduce Christianity to Rome's relativistic definition of religion. As [Catholic theologian Lorenzo] Albacete writes, Christianity "would not accept a place with the religions of the empire" as merely another set of rituals and practices. It "saw itself as a philosophy, as a path to knowledge about reality, and not primarily as a source of spiritual or ethical inspiration." (Albacete, "For the Love of God," New York Times, 3 February 2006.)

The message of Christ's resurrection – in a physical body, in historical time – did not allow for any dualism that shoved religion off into a separate sphere of life concerned only with spiritual rules and rituals. The early church[es] insisted that biblical truth is a comprehensive unity, encompassing the realms of *both* priest and philosopher. Truth is a unified whole. – Nancy Pearcey, *Saving Leonardo*

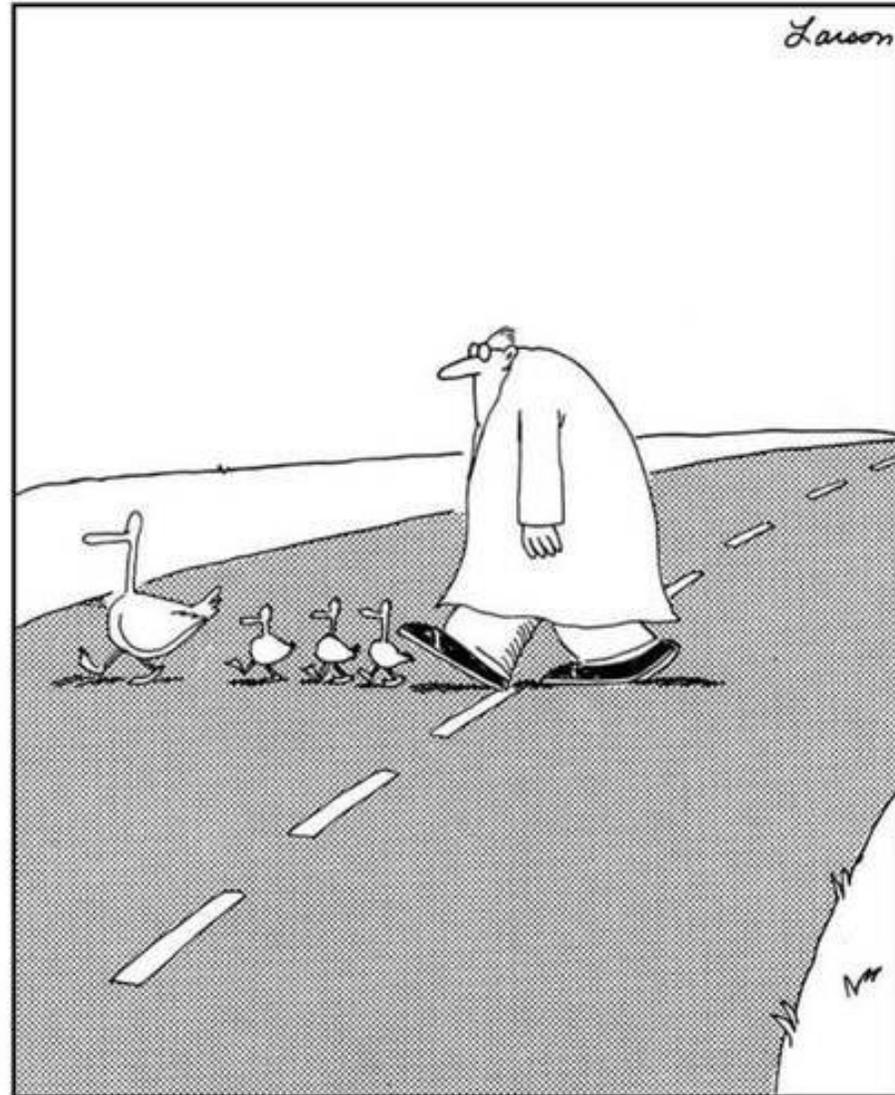
Today Christians have largely lost that conviction. When they read verses like “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Ps. 111:10), they interpret it to mean only spiritual wisdom. When they read that Christ is the one “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3), they limit the term to spiritual knowledge. Yet these verses do not restrict their range. True wisdom comes in seeing every field of knowledge through the lens of God’s truth – government, economics, science, business, and the arts. This [is what is meant when] Christians speak of *worldview* [phroneo].

– Nancy Pearcey, *Saving Leonardo*



¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ **For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.** ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB



When imprinting studies go awry

³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3 CSB

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2 CSB

³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3 CSB

**²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live,
but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by
faith in the Son of God,
who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

Galatians 2 CSB

**But the long face that you see
Comes from living close to your fears
And when one little bump leads to shock,
Miss a beat
You run for cover in this heat
One thing leads to another
– from “One Thing Leads to Another” by Cy Curnin, Adam Woods,
Jamie West-Oram & Rupert Greenall (The Fixx)**



As you focus, so you will live.

**But the long face that you see
Comes from living close to
your fears
– from “One Thing Leads to
Another” (The Fixx)**

**³ For you died, and your life
is hidden with Christ in
God.**

Colossians 3 CSB

¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB

This paragraph has been called the height of human thought.

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Colossians 3 CSB

It is wise to scan the horizon, know where the boundaries are, and live freely, focused on where we are heading. It is foolish to solely gaze upon life's dangers and live in fear. – Jeremy Mikeska

³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB

Greek: κρύπτω krypto = placement of protection and concealment



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Colossians 3 CSB

Greek: κρύπτω krypto = placement of protection and concealment

Special meaning in mystery religions [like Gnosticism, Demeter, Dionysius, or Mithras] – secrets hidden in special books that offer a “fuller” spiritual life.

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Special meaning in mystery religions [like Gnosticism, Demeter, Dionysius, or Mithras] – secrets hidden in special books that offer a “fuller” spiritual life.

It is as if Paul said, “For you the treasures of wisdom are hidden in your secret books; for us Christ is the treasury of wisdom and we are hidden in him.”
– William Barclay

³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB

“Hidden with Christ in God” suggests not only that the believer’s life is secure, but also that it belongs in a very real and profound sense to the [currently] invisible spiritual realm. At the present time his connection with God and Christ is a matter of inner experience; one day it will come into full and open manifestation.

– Curtis Vaughan, *Colossians*





What seasons or situations make it difficult for you to stay mindful about who you really are in Christ?

**⁴ When Christ, who is your
life, appears, then you
also will appear with him
in glory.**

Colossians 3 CSB

4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB

Greek: φανερώω phaneroo = to be made manifested; a stage term for something that was present, but the audience just couldn't see yet

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You must not only *seek* heaven; you must also *think* heaven. [Because]...the veil which now shrouds your higher life from others, and even partly from yourselves, will be withdrawn. The world which persecutes, despises, ignores now, will then be blinded with the dazzling glory of the revelation of Christ. – J.B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*



**This is not our home.
We don't belong here!**



² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3 CSB

If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.

– C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*





**Wayne,
I still haven't gotten over the
fact that on my 16th birthday
my grandmother didn't come
over to tell me I was actually
princess of Genovia.**



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Colossians 3 CSB

Faithful Truthful Powerful Wonderful Masterful Graceful Mindful Purposeful Delightful Joyful

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letter to the Colossians

