

How to Win at Life

How do you win at life?

The world is more than happy to offer answers.

The **materialistic voice** tells us that winning means chasing your dreams and getting what you want—usually measured in money and influence.

The **hedonistic voice** says winning at life is about choosing yourself. Break the mold. Define your own truth. Do what makes you happy. Live for your desires and pleasures. Put yourself first.

The **religious voice** tells us that winning at life happens through self-discipline, effort, and rule-keeping.

But there is one voice who made the boldest claim imaginable. His name is Jesus. And He said the way to win at life is found in what sounds like loss.

Jesus said, “*Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*”

TO WIN AT LIFE, YOU MUST SURRENDER TO JESUS.

That is exactly what the apostle Paul echoes in Colossians chapter 3. In Paul’s day, the Christians in Colossae were under pressure from outside voices—

voices telling them that Jesus was not enough. That if they really wanted to win at life, they needed something more than Christ.

But in Colossians 3, Paul reminds them: Don't listen to those voices of the world. Keep your focus on Jesus. Surrender to Him. And watch what He does.

What does it look like to surrender to Jesus? That's the question Paul answers. He shows us:

Three areas of life that must be surrendered to Christ if we are going to win.

Area #1 – Surrender Your Identity: You Belong to Jesus (Colossians 3:1–4)

If a Christian is going to win at life, it starts with identity. You must identify yourself properly. And you must think in a way that matches who you truly are.

In verse 1 through 4, Paul is speaking directly to believers—those who have already placed faith in Jesus for salvation. He's not talking to unsaved unbelievers here. That matters.

It matters to know that Paul is speaking to Christians because #1 - he reassures us that we are secure and

heaven-bound. If you have believed in Jesus, your future is settled. Glory is coming.

It matters to know that Paul is speaking to Christians because #2 - it shows us that believers can still struggle. Christians can get distracted. Christians can live defeated lives. Christians can buy into the world's definitions of success and end up feeling like we're losing.

But we don't have to.

Paul is teaching us that our identity is completely wrapped up in Christ. We used to belong to this world, but when we believed in Jesus, our old life died with Him. When Jesus was raised from the dead, we were raised with Him into a brand-new life.

That means your past does not define you. Your failures do not define you. Your successes do not define you. Christ and His victory defines you.

So Paul says, *think accordingly*. Set your mind on where you're headed. It will change your life.

Area #2 – Surrender Your Conduct: You Represent Jesus (Colossians 3:5–17)

Now that you're a Christian, how do you conduct yourself?

Paul paints a picture that's easy to understand. He talks about taking off old clothes and putting on new ones.

Put off the old self—with its selfishness, pride, and sin. Put on the new self—made possible because Jesus now lives in you.

I once heard someone say, *the reason a flower grows is to get out of the dirt*. Dirt ruins its beauty—so it grows upward. That's a great picture of the Christian life.

A winner, in God's eyes, is not the one who dies with the most money, toys, or applause. A winner is the one who dies with a Christlike character.

Now someone might ask, *But what if I get burned?* Paul closes this section by giving us three anchors that help us keep pressing on. To keep representing Christ—even when life feels unfair.

First, **the peace of Christ**. Second, **the word of Christ**. And third, **the name of Christ**.

Area #3 – Surrender Your Role: You Serve Jesus (Colossians 3:18–4:1)

Every one of us has a role to play in life. How do we win in the roles where we spend the majority of our time? Paul's answer is simple: **surrender your role to Jesus.**

Verse 24: **“You are serving the Lord Christ.”**

So what is marriage really about? What is parenting really about? What is work really about?

At the deepest level, it's all about **serving Jesus** through the role He has assigned you.

If you want to win at life, surrender your role to Jesus. Serve Him right where He has placed you. And when you do, even the most ordinary places of life become places of worship and service to Jesus. That's what winning looks like.

To win at life, you must surrender to Jesus.

Surrender your **identity**—you belong to Jesus.

Surrender your **conduct**—you represent Jesus.

And surrender your **role**—you serve Jesus.