

Col 3:1-4

Announcements:

- Hope you all had a **good Thanksgiving**. *We all have much to be thankful for...*
- I took a Selah last week. Pause. Rest. Family time. Refresh. **Annual BOD Mtg**, Seeking God. Clear the noise. Get Vision!
 - **A BIG update** to share with you all (after service / shorter message/communion)
- First a couple reminders: **We've been growing like crazy** = Three Services next weekend.
 - **Service times**: 8:00am, 9:45am, 11:30am (8:00am limited children's ministry (under 4))
 - **Sit 1 serve 1**: Ushers & Prayer Ministry (mature, loving believers in Christ)
 - If church is home, and able: **come to the 8:00am service** (make room for newcomers!)
- **Bring Matt and Jordan on stage** - pray over them both! (**Acknowledge families**)

Please open to **Colossians Chapter 3** (need a Bible? Raise hands or backs of seats...)

- Last time: **Calm Down, Bro!** (Legalism (diet/days), Mysticism (angels), Asceticism (do not...))
 - Commandments/doctrines of men. Appearance of wisdom. False humility. No value against indulging the flesh. Shadow vs substance. The head causes the body to grow!
- This time: We've seen what to avoid, now we see what to pursue! **Identity & perspective!** (**Just four verses today**)

Message Title: Not of This World

- **A New Standing** (verse 1(a))
- **A Focused Mind** (verses 1(b)-2)
- **A Hidden Reality** (verse 3)
- **A Glorious Hope** (verse 4)

Paul has spent two chapters defending the supremacy & sufficiency of Christ against false teaching. Now, he moves from **position to practice**. *It does Christians little good if they declare and defend the truth, but **do not, themselves, live it out!*** (if we share Christ's life, then we must live out that example).

Can I say - these verses are **powerful!** **Four life-altering truths in four short verses!** (pay attention)

Read **ALL FOUR VERSES** up front

A New Standing (verse 1(a))

V. 1 - If then

- Paul has used this Greek construct **a few times now** in Colossians.
- **First Class Conditional** in the indicative mood. Not questioning, doubting or being hypothetical.
- He's making a point based on a firm foundation. Better translation = **"since" or "because"**

V. 1 - You were [have been] raised with Christ

- **Christian - listen up!** This language is in the **aurist past tense** = a current truth/reality.
- **You, Christian man or woman** today **have been raised** to: New life! Abundant life! Eternal life!
- **ALREADY** - that is your current status. That is who you are now.
- **Passive voice** = It's a work of God done unto you - **anyone thankful?**

- *But, wait, there's more* - we're not just given new life, but new life **WITH Christ**
- In the Bible, you see the idea of **representatives**: (*David vs Goliath, the High Priest, etc*) - we experience victory & blessing **through the actions of another**.
- Likewise, **Christ is our representative**, and *His resurrection becomes ours*. *His victory is ours!*

What's the point in Paul making this statement? You *don't have to try to be spiritual or be religious*, just **live out the identity you have already been given** in Christ! *Know who you are = identity!*

- *Whom the son sets free, is free! Why would you want to go back to the **bondage of Egypt**?*

Your **STANDING** in life is based **on the vertical, not the horizontal**.

A Focused Mind (verses 1(b)-2)

Vv. 1, 2 - **Seek/Set your mind** on those things which are above

- **Seeking & Setting**. **Two different verbs** = *both saying the same thing*.
 - **Seeking** has to do with **your heart** and **setting** has to do with **your mind**.
- **And, we all do this, no matter what**. *Every one of you*. Your **heart seeks after** things, and you **set your mind upon** things. *Let's take a closer look...*
- **Seeking (zeteo)** = *to crave, to strive for earnestly, to devote serious effort. To desire or demand.*
- **Setting your mind (phroneo)** = *mental framework: thinking, judging, siding with.*
- **Put it all together** - this has to do with your **direction, cravings, passions, affections, and goals**. The **things your mind/heart go after**. *We're all seekers (not just the unbeliever...)*
- **Both of these verbs** are in the **present, active, imperative**:
 - **Present** = *a continual lifestyle (not sporadic or occasional, but a disposition in life)*
 - **Active** = *a choice of our own will (not forced, each must choose)* **Perspective = Hand!**
 - **Imperative** = *we are commanded to this (not to be dismissed, neglected or overlooked)*
- **Did you hear all that, Christian?** You are **commanded** by God to make an **ongoing lifestyle decision** to **set your mind and heart** upon the things of Christ. *It's a complete life orientation!*

So now the big question - *what does your **heart and mind go after MOST** in this life? Think...*

- If the answer is *anything other than Christ* - you're likely **dealing with an idol**. **Repent, correct.**
- I am **not talking about the occasional focuses**: *rest, work, bills, recreation, etc...* (*dwelling*)
- Remember the **Rich, Young, Ruler in Luke 18?**
- **Matthew 6:19-21** - *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**"*

The **Scriptures here give us a contrast** between **above & below**. Things of **heaven** vs things of **earth**.

- As a believer, we live in a **tension between the two realms**. *Both are vying for our affections.*
- **This is the battle**. *Flesh, the world, and the devil*. - it's **not easy**... *shiny stuff everywhere...*

Further...

Setting your mind on things above doesn't mean you walk around **physically looking up** to the sky... you might seem **lost or confused**... and you're going to **trip and stub your toes** a lot. **Fall into holes!**

- Maybe you've heard the quote: *"they're so **heavenly minded**, they're no **earthly good**"*

- Yeah, **that can be a real problem**, if you walk around with *your head always in the clouds*.
- *Paul is not preaching "Escapism"* - This is **NOT** a call to **ignore your earthly responsibilities**.
 - *Work, family, food, etc* - **Be good stewards**, not negligent (*can't use these verses...*)
- Remember, *We're called to be **IN** the world but not **OF** the world. Bring Christ into all scenarios.*
- *It's **not about** what makes me happy or gives me pleasure, but about **what glorifies God**...*

So, *as citizens of heaven*, while we're *sojourning as pilgrims* through *this world that is not our ultimate home*, but along the way, we *love and serve the people* in it *to the glory of God*; however, we **must not let our heart affections become set on the world**.

Instead, we *continually set our hearts and minds above...*

V. 1 - **Where Christ is**, sitting at the right hand of God

- **This is theologically true**. *Eternality, Incarnation, Crucifixion, Burial, Resurrection, Ascension.*
- **Sitting at the right hand** = the place of all **authority, power, and rule**. **Supreme & Sufficient!**
- Both verbs "*is*" and "*sitting*" are **present tense**, indicating that this is *Christ's continual position - 2,000 years ago it was true, and today it is still true!* *Head of the church, author over creation, holding all things together. This **changes perspective** on problems: sickness, finances, relationships, etc.* - *none of these sit at God's right hand. Christ does. **And you're in Him!***
 - **John G Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides Islands**, surrounded by **hostile tribes**. When asked why he wasn't afraid, he said, *"I belong to another King who is seated far above every spear on this island."* (John G Paton)

So this passage is **calling you higher**. Get your *head and hearts* out of the *mud & muck*. The **noise**.

- **Things above** = *Not babies/harps in the clouds*. The **character, presence, and joys of Christ**. *Patience, wisdom, virtue, forgiveness, joy, peace, love, strength, meekness, holiness, purity, etc.*
- **Things below** = *the greed, lust, envy, jealousy, gossip, slander, drunkenness, gluttony, etc.*
 - **Even earthly honors** = *position, status, material, achievements, fame... can be a trap.*
 - *Also, **man made religious approaches**. (legalism, mysticism, asceticism, etc)*

It's so easy to get caught up on things below these days. *News, AI, influencers, conspiracies, etc.*

- It will make you **dizzy/disoriented**. Looking down into the *swirling water* vs the *clear horizon!*

And the **world systems often do not call you above**, but instead to seek those things **within**. This is *new age enlightenment* and *secular humanistic self-help* that only **feeds the flesh**... (*about you!*)

- **Wrong**. *For the heart (without God) is **deceitful and desperately wicked**. (Jer 17:9)*

Be encouraged by **Joshua and Caleb in Numbers 13** - *This is what we're talking about!*

- *Peter likewise when walking on water vs falling in the water... (where you focused?)*

So *how* does one *obey this command* and *continually orient your life* towards **heaven**? **Application:**

- **Recognize your standing**. *Raised with Christ. Feet on the rock!* *"Tuned to a new frequency"*
- **Remember, there's more to life than the physical, seen realm**. (*submarine - periscope!*)
 - *Heads down in our phones is such a great visual of our spiritual awareness in life.*

*Matthew 6:33 - "But **Seek first** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness..."*

- *Don't put the **cart before the horse** (*me: fast moving; conquer the world, takes remembrance*)*

- **Do you, ever, look to heaven? Be real for a moment...**

Fertilize and cultivate!

- **Meditate upon God's Word (Psalm 1, Joshua 1)** - do this MORE than news and entertainment of the world (**limit intake**)
 - **Memorize verses** - flash cards... (This is how Jesus fought temptation - "**it is written**")
- **Pray without ceasing... (1 Thess 5)** - throughout the day... mini prayers... (heavenly minded)
- **Sing His Praises (Acts 16)** - worship and thanksgiving is a weapon! A perspective changer!
- **Fellowship of the Saints (Hebrews 10)** - wisdom in a multitude of counsel...

In this regard - **Be a Mary, not a Martha!** (Mary chose the **good/better part...**(in that moment))

- If you're too busy to do a daily Bible study, you're **too busy**. And your mind is set upon earth.

Paul gives the Colossians further perspective on the matter...

A Hidden Reality (verse 3)

V. 3 - You died

- **Say what?** Well, maybe physically not yet; but **theologically, that is true**. (party invitation)
- **Romans 6** teaches on this in depth. Christ died for sin, so reckon ourselves dead to sin.
- And the text here is in the **aorist past tense**. This is a **settled reality**. **Died and raised!**
- If not physically, then what died? Old Nature in Adam. Penalty/Power of sin. The Law's condemnation; and your subjection to the world's systems (with all its passions and desires)
- **You have a new master now! You live in a new sphere now! Old man is dead (Jason!)**
- **OT Connection**: Read Sea; Passed through; Water closed on Pharaoh's army, No going back!

V. 3 - Your life is hidden with Christ in God.

- Not just life in general, but your real life. The real you. **Your soul**. The essence of life itself!
- **Hidden (krupto)** - "Does not mean lost or misplaced. It means concealed. Safe & secure!"
- **Perfect tense** = completed once and for all. You are no longer lost and floating. Now found/anchored. **Sealed and zipped up in the airtight ziplock baggy of salvation!**
 - **Three ways to look at hidden**:
 - (1) **Safety** - the devil can't snatch it away and death can't reach it! No sting!
 - (2) **Identity** - great treasure in the jars of clay/earthen vessels (my son/hockey)
 - This is where our approval and value is found... (not in man's view)
 - Christ was despised and rejected - but to the Father the Beloved Son!
 - (3) **Secrecy** - the world may judge/oppose us, but God knows (don't fit?)
 - (bonus) Add satisfaction - completed in joy. Fulfillment. (rest in this truth)
- **Double Fortified**: Our loves are now perfectly with Christ (union), In God (protection)
 - If the devil wants to mess with you, He has to go through the Father and the Son
- John 10:28-29 - "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

Truth is - on the surface, it might not seem that way sometimes. **Why do the righteous suffer and the wicked prevail? Why does faithfulness appear to go unrewarded at times?**

- God's people have been asking these questions for ages... (these verses explain why)
- Our true treasure and value, in some mystical way, is currently hidden (not yet revealed)
- The world laughs and mocks... and in their ignorance does not perceive... (iceberg effect)

But one day, all the hidden truths will be revealed...

A Glorious Hope (verse 4)

V. 4 - Christ who is our life

- Actually, the text just says, "**Christ, our life**" - For the believer, **He is everything to us.**
- What is someone asked, what is the main thing your life is about? **Sports, work, family, money, possessions, cars, fame?** What would **you** say? What would **others** say about you?
 - What **subject, person, or item** caused you to "come alive"?
- One of the things I admired from a clip I saw of Charlie Kirk, "If I'm to be known for anything, I want to be known for being courageous for my faith." (Charlie Kirk)
- **Many of you would say the same thing today.** You used to make your life about _____, but now **Christ is your life!** **To Him be the glory! Christ is not part of our lives, He IS our life!**

V. 4 - When [Christ who is our life] appears

- Paul would say to the Philippians, **"to live is Christ, to die is gain!"** "He is **our life now**, and when we die, **we get all of the very person we've been living for!**"
- This text is dealing with the **return of Christ at the end of the age.**
- **But Christ will appear (Phaneroo) = become manifest/be revealed. **Hidden becomes visible!****
- Not if, but **WHEN** - **We're living in the last days! Ripe for the plucking.** Days of Lot and Noah
- Today, we walk by faith and not by sight. We set our mind on things above where Christ is seated. But there's coming a day when **He will be revealed** to the whole world. **Walk by sight!**

V. 4 - Then you also will appear with Him in glory.

- **Then (tote)** is an expression of time. It means next or at that time.
 - **At the time of Christ's appearing,** the text says:
- **We will also appear / be revealed. (phaneroo - same as above)** When Christ appears someday to reveal who he really is, at that time, it will **also reveal who we really are.**
- **In glory** - Because our life is in His, His glory will reveal **our glory. Hallelujah!**
- Right now, our lives are hidden in Christ, but there is a glorious revealing resurrection awaiting!
- 1 John 3:1-2 - "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God... the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has **not yet been revealed what we shall be**, but we know that **when He is revealed, we shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is."
- Romans 8:18-19 - "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of creation **eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.**" (all creation groans with birth pangs)
- **It will be the Great Unveiling! Wheat and Tares** (right now, growing together til end of age)
- Matthew 13:43, ESV - "Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father!"
- This glorious day is coming, friends... **You will stand with Christ, clothed in glory!**
 - All the **wrongs** will be made right...
 - All the **mockers** will be silenced...

- Every sacrifice will be rewarded...
- The hidden glory will be visible glory...
- Resurrected bodies in an eternal kingdom...
- No more disease, decay, disability or death...
- No more sin, struggle, or shame... (*light affliction is but for a moment...*)
- **The most glorious part** = **With Him. Face to face. Paradise restored!**

Closing

With Christ:

- **Raised with Christ...** = **identity**
- **Hidden with Christ...** = **security**
- **Will appear with Christ...** = **victory/glory**

His victory is our victory! *"Lift your eyes to heaven for your redemption draws near" (Luke 21)*

You are not of this world. You belong to another kingdom. That **changes how you live**, today!

Altar Call - before communion...

- Maybe someone is here today and realize, you **ARE of this world**...? Never trusted?
- Your mind is **only on the earthly things**. Headed not for glory but for eternal judgment...
- The kindness of God is reaching out to you today... you can be **raised with Christ!**
 - **G.O.S.P.E.L.** - **plead with the souls of men!**

Communion

1 Cor. 11:23-24 - "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, '**Take, eat; this is My body** which is [given] for you; do this in remembrance of Me.'

1 Cor. 11:25 - "In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, '**This cup is the new covenant in My blood**. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.'"

1 Cor. 11:26 - "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you **proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.**"

PRAY