

JESUS MADE VISIBLE

A five-day walk through Colossians 3 | The Orchard

Colossians 3 is not a list of religious improvements. It is a picture of what begins to grow when the life of Jesus takes root in ordinary people. This week, we will slow down and let the chapter move closer: into the thoughts we rehearse, the desires we hide, the relationships that test us, and the small choices no one applauds.

Each day should take about seven minutes. Open your Bible or Bible app and read the passages before the reflection. If Scripture is new to you, you are not behind. Read slowly. Notice one phrase that catches your attention, even if you do not yet know why.

One word before you begin: Nothing here is a way to earn God's love. Colossians begins with what Jesus has already done. The practices that follow are not a ladder up to God; they are how we learn to live from the life he has already given us.

MONDAY

YOUR LIFE HAS ANOTHER ADDRESS

Read Colossians 3:1–4

Also read Ephesians 2:4–6

“For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.” —Colossians 3:3 (NLT)

There is the life everyone can see: the appointment on your calendar, the number in your bank account, the tension in your family, the mistake you wish you could undo. Those things are real. But Paul says they are not the deepest truth about you. Your real life is hidden with Christ in God.

Hidden does not mean pretend. It means secured somewhere the visible world cannot reach. Your circumstances may change quickly, but the center of your life has been placed with Jesus. You are not trying to climb toward him. Ephesians says God has already raised us from spiritual death and seated us with Christ. Before your feet touch the floor, before you succeed or fail today, you belong where he is.

That is why Paul tells us to set our sights on the realities of heaven. He is not asking us to ignore earth. He is teaching us which reality gets to interpret the other. If rejection tells you, “You are unwanted,” heaven answers, “Your life is with Christ.” If shame says, “You are only what you did,” heaven says, “Jesus is your life.” If anxiety says, “Everything depends on you,” heaven says, “Christ is already seated in the place of honor.”

Setting your mind is not a one-time surge of faith. It is a repeated return. Thoughts wander. Fear gets loud. Old labels feel familiar. So we turn again—not to manufacture a better mood, but to remember where our life is held.

Before you begin the demands of this day, name the loudest visible fact in your life. Do not minimize it. Then place beside it the deeper fact: My real life is hidden with Christ in God. Ask Jesus to let that truth shape how you carry what is in front of you.

What is most visible about your life is not necessarily what is most true about your life.

Sit with this: What circumstance or label has been telling you who you are? What changes when you let your life with Christ answer it?

Pray: Jesus, you are my life. Teach me to see what is in front of me from where I am held—with you. Quiet every name that is smaller than the one you have given me. Let the reality of heaven steady me on earth today. Amen.

TUESDAY

YOU ARE NOT POWERLESS AGAINST WHAT IS KILLING YOU

Read Colossians 3:5–11

Also read Romans 8:12–13

“But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.” —Romans 8:13 (NLT)

Paul's words are severe: put to death what belongs to the old life. He does not say manage it, rename it, or keep it nearby in case you want it later. Some patterns do not need better manners. They need an ending.

But notice how Romans says that ending happens: through the power of the Spirit. This is not self-hatred, and it is not self-salvation. Grace does not merely forgive us after sin has done its

damage. Grace gives us power to stop cooperating with what is destroying us. Because Jesus has made us alive, we can finally become honest about what keeps pulling us toward death.

Sin usually arrives carrying a promise. Greed promises safety. Lust promises intimacy without vulnerability. Anger promises control. A lie promises escape. Malice promises that making someone smaller will make our wound hurt less. The promise is always larger than the pleasure and much larger than the truth. Sin asks us to trust it with a hunger only God can heal.

So do not begin today by asking only, “What bad thing should I stop?” Ask, “What is this offering me, and why have I believed it?” That question brings the battle into the light. The Spirit can meet you beneath the behavior—in the fear, wound, loneliness, resentment, or craving that has been driving it.

Then take one concrete step. Delete the access. Tell the truth. Leave the room. Make the call. Confess to a mature believer who will love you and refuse to help you hide. Ruthlessness toward sin is not cruelty toward yourself. It is refusing to let an enemy keep living in a life that belongs to Jesus.

You may not feel instantly free. Do not confuse a continuing battle with a losing battle. Every time you bring darkness into Christ's light and choose the Spirit's way, you are practicing the freedom Jesus has already opened for you.

Jesus does not shame you into the light. He meets you there and teaches you to live.

Sit with this: What old pattern keeps making you a promise it cannot keep? What honest, concrete act of surrender is the Spirit inviting you to take today?

Pray: Holy Spirit, show me what I have excused, managed, or hidden. Expose the false promise beneath it. Give me courage to put it to death—not to earn life, but because Jesus has made me alive. Lead me into the freedom that tells the truth. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

WEAR WHAT LOVE ALREADY GAVE YOU

Read Colossians 3:12–14

Also read 1 John 4:19

“We love each other because he loved us first.” —1 John 4:19 (NLT)

Before Paul names a single thing to put on, he names who you are: chosen, holy, and loved. Read those words again. They are not a reward waiting at the end of a good Christian day. They are the starting place.

We often reverse the order. We try to be patient so God will be pleased with us. We try to forgive so we can prove we are spiritual. We try to love difficult people while quietly wondering whether God still loves us. That turns the new wardrobe into another costume. Eventually it becomes exhausting, because we are trying to display a love we have not stopped long enough to receive.

The order of grace is different: loved first, then learning to love. Mercy is what received mercy looks like when it walks into a room. Patience is what the patience of Jesus looks like when someone interrupts you. Forgiveness is not pretending the wound did not matter; it is refusing to make another person keep paying a debt Jesus has begun to heal in you.

Paul's list becomes most real in our closest relationships. It is easy to appear kind at a distance. The people who share our table, our workload, our group text, or our weekly routines meet us when we are tired and unedited. They reveal which garment we reached for without thinking.

Choose one person you are likely to encounter today. Do not ask how to fix them. Ask which quality of Jesus they most need to meet through you: tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, or love. Picture the actual moment—the comment, delay, mess, disagreement, or need. Then ask Jesus to clothe you before you enter it.

This does not mean accepting abuse, hiding harm, or abandoning wise boundaries. Jesus can be both gentle and truthful. Love seeks the other person's good, and sometimes love speaks clearly. The question is not whether every interaction feels pleasant. The question is whether the character of Jesus is governing the way we show up.

You do not wear these qualities to become loved. You wear them because you already are.

Sit with this: Who is most likely to meet the unedited version of you today? Which quality of Jesus would make the greatest difference in that relationship?

Pray: Father, thank you that I am chosen, being made holy, and deeply loved. Let your love reach the people nearest to me. Clothe my reactions, my tone, and my words with the character of Jesus. Give me courage to be truthful and grace to be tender. Amen.

THURSDAY

WHO GETS THE FINAL WORD INSIDE YOU?

Read Colossians 3:15–16

Also read Philippians 4:8–9

“Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives.” —Colossians 3:16 (NLT)

Every heart has voices competing for the final word. Fear says, “Something bad is coming.” Shame says, “You will never change.” Resentment builds its case again. The news tells us what deserves our outrage. An old wound tells us what to expect from every new person. If we listen long enough, those voices stop sounding like voices. They start sounding like reality.

Paul gives us two invitations: let Christ's peace rule, and let Christ's message fill. The word translated rule carries the picture of an umpire—someone who makes the deciding call. Paul is not saying peaceful people never feel conflict or distress. He is asking: when the voices disagree, who gets authority to call what is true and direct what happens next?

The peace of Christ is not avoidance. It does not tell us to keep everyone comfortable or pretend nothing hurts. Jesus made peace through the cross, not by walking around it. His peace can lead us into a hard conversation without letting contempt rule us. It can steady us inside uncertainty without promising that every circumstance will become easy.

Then Paul says to let the message about Christ fill us richly. A room becomes filled when something has permission to occupy it. What occupies your inner room? Which sentence have you rehearsed so often that it now speaks automatically? Philippians tells us to fix our thoughts on what is true and worthy, then to put what we have learned into practice. Christian meditation is not emptying the mind. It is giving the truth of Jesus enough room to reshape our reflexes.

Try this today. Notice one sentence your mind repeats when pressure rises. Write it down. Then place beside it a sentence from this week's passage. Perhaps: My real life is hidden with Christ. I am chosen and loved. Christ lives in me. The peace of Christ gets the deciding vote. Return to that truth whenever the old sentence begins again.

And give thanks. Gratitude is not denial; it is a way of noticing that fear is not the only thing in the room. Thanksgiving opens a window and reminds the heart that God is already present.

Whatever fills your inner life will eventually spill into your visible one.

Sit with this: What voice has been making the deciding call inside you? What truth about Jesus needs to be given the final word today?

Pray: Jesus, let your peace rule in me and let your message fill me. Show me the thoughts I have treated as truth simply because they are familiar. Train my mind to return to what you have said, and make gratitude louder than fear. Amen.

FRIDAY

THE ORDINARY IS WHERE JESUS BECOMES VISIBLE

Read Colossians 3:17

Also read 2 Corinthians 5:20 and Matthew 5:14–16

“And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus.” —Colossians 3:17 (NLT)

Whatever is an enormous word. It includes the moments we call spiritual, but it refuses to stay there. It reaches the kitchen, the car, the office, the classroom, the store, the field, the phone call, and the conversation you wish you could avoid. Paul says every ordinary place can become a place where Jesus is represented.

An ambassador does not enter a room merely carrying personal opinions. An ambassador represents someone else's heart and kingdom. Paul tells the Corinthians that we are Christ's ambassadors and that God makes his appeal through us. That does not make us impressive. It makes us entrusted. People are forming conclusions about Jesus through the way his people speak, listen, apologize, serve, disagree, and repair what they have broken.

You may be the only Bible some of your friends or family ever read. That sentence can feel inspiring for about three seconds and then become terrifying. None of us represents Jesus without distortion. We become impatient. We choose ourselves. We say the wrong thing. If visibility required perfection, Jesus would remain invisible in all of us.

But repentance also makes Jesus visible. A sincere “I was wrong” reveals a kingdom where pride does not have to win. Asking forgiveness reveals that grace is more valuable than image. Returning to love after failure tells the truth that Jesus is not finished with us. The light Jesus describes in Matthew is not the glow of flawless people. It is a life whose goodness points beyond itself to the Father.

Think through the ordinary places ahead of you today. Before you enter a room, answer a call, send a message, or sit down with someone you love, pause for one breath and pray: Jesus, represent yourself through me. Then pay attention. The opportunity may not feel dramatic. It may look like patience when you could rush, curiosity when you could assume, generosity when no one would notice, or humility when you would rather defend yourself.

And if you are still exploring faith, notice what Paul is actually offering. Christianity is not an invitation to improve yourself until you resemble Jesus. It is an invitation to receive his life. He forgives, raises, renews, and then begins making his character visible through people who stay close to him. You do not have to pretend you are already changed. You can bring him the life you actually have.

The world does not need a better advertisement for Christians. It needs a clearer view of Christ. Today, your ordinary life can become a window.

The goal is not to make people impressed with us. It is to make Jesus easier to see.

Sit with this: Where will your life be read today? What would it look like for Jesus to become visible there—not through perfection, but through love, truth, and quick repentance?

Pray: Lord Jesus, thank you for trusting ordinary people with your name. Make me attentive to the places where my life will be read today. Let my words and actions carry your love. When I fail, make me quick to repent. May people see through me to you. Amen.

Jesus above all. Jesus, period. Jesus made visible.