

Seek the Things That Are Above; Colossians 3:1-4

I. Seeking

- a. We are all looking, seeking for something
 - i. We are looking to fill a void that is in us
 - ii. God created us and we belong to Him
 - iii. Sin separated us and since then our souls searching for a way back
 - iv. Unfortunately, we replace God with things that we think will fill that void
 - v. Substance abuse (alcohol and drugs), intimacy, professions, or hobbies
 - vi. Anything more important than God fits into this category
- b. Matthew 22:20–21 (ESV) ²⁰ And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” ²¹ They said, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”
- c. Our soul is telling us where it belongs, we should listen

II. Raised

- a. Colossians 3:1 (ESV) ¹ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- b. Paul reminds the Christians at Colossae of their salvation
 - i. Jesus died, was buried, and raised – so have we
 - ii. In that reenactment we made a commitment to God
 - iii. Paul admonishes the Christians in Rome, “are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?”
 - iv. We often think that is a rhetorical question (in this case, one whose answer is so obvious that it doesn’t need to be said)
 - v. Paul does not mean this to be rhetorical, he answers the question
 - vi. Romans 6:2 (ESV) ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?
 - vii. Romans 6:5–6 (ESV) ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.
 - viii. This is such an important moment for us
 - ix. Unfortunately, religious institutions have watered down this moment to nothing but a simple prayer asking Jesus into our hearts
 - x. This is a marriage!
- c. We must always remember that we have been raised with (married to) Christ

III. Set Your Mind

- a. Colossians 3:2–3 (ESV) ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- b. To set your mind on things above does not mean to ignore everything else
- c. Set – to give careful consideration, to concentrate
 - i. Too often we are concentrating on the mundane details of this life
 - ii. Our life here is short
 - iii. The Psalmist says, “For my days pass away like smoke”; Psalm 102:3
 - iv. James says our lives are a mist (vapor); James 4:14

- v. Compared to eternity, our physical lives here are very short
 - vi. Why do we spend so much time concentrating on our physical lives instead of our spiritual lives?
 - vii. Jesus rebuked Peter for that kind of thinking
 - viii. Matthew 16:23 (ESV) ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."
 - ix. Philippians 4:8 (ESV) ⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.
- d. You Have Died
- i. Paul gives us another reminder of our salvation
 - ii. First, we have been raised with Him
 - iii. Second, we have died with Him
 - iv. We have died to all the earthly things
 - v. Colossians 3:5–10 (ESV) ⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸ But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.
 - vi. There is nothing on this earth that can compare to our salvation
 - vii. Paul says everything he had is worthless garbage (sewage) compared to knowing Christ
 - viii. Philippians 3:7–8 (ESV) ⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ
 - ix. Don't allow the temptation of material wealth, passion, greed, and much more to interfere in our relationship with Jesus
- e. Since we have died and are hidden in Christ, we should set our minds on (concentrate on, give careful consideration to) the things of heaven
- i. Colossians 3:12–14 (ESV) ¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
 - ii. This is how we set our minds on the heavenly things
 - iii. These are the characteristics that God expects us to have – to live by

- iv. When we suffer loss, experience tragedy, we respond with kindness, humility, and patience
- v. We forgive when we are wronged
- vi. We use every experience God gives us as an opportunity to love others
- vii. We live in harmony with everyone (as much as it depends on us) Romans 12:16-19

f. Our efforts should be focused on eternity, not this life

IV. The Peace of Christ

- a. Colossians 3:16–17 (ESV) ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
- b. The only one way to fill the void sin has left in us; with Christ, who is our life (verse 4)