

Setting Our Mind Above

Part 6 of the Pre-eminence of Christ

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Read Colossians 3:1-11

Paul now goes from teaching us the wonderful facts of the pre-eminence of Christ and the gospel to how it affects *how we live*. Our faith *must* affect our lives indeed. As James reminds us, faith without works is dead. Now, Paul starts getting into the “nuts and bolts” of Christian living. So, here we see how we are urged to set our minds on things above, put to death our earthly nature, and put on the new man.

1. Set Your Minds on Things Above – vs. 1-4

As Christians, *you* have died with Christ and were raised with Him. Therefore, our minds are to be set above with Him!

Reasons we are to set our minds on things above:

- a. We’ve died (3a). This looks back to the cross where we died positionally in Christ. As a result, we have no obligation to live like we used to live. (see Gal. 2:20)
- b. Our life is hidden with Christ (3b)
- c. Christ will come again! (4) – We are not sure when this is, but we are looking up

We must make *conscious*, deliberate choices to keep our minds on things above!

2. Put to Death our Earthly Nature – vs. 5-9

- Fornication (*porneia*)
- Uncleaness. The life that is marked by all manner of sensuality.
- Passion. Basically, lust. Can never fulfil it. Not love.
- Evil desire. Desires are God-given, but when the “flesh” takes over, can become evil. (Sex, food, drink)
- Covetousness. Always wanting more. Likely in this context, trying to satisfy evil desires for sexual immorality. This leads to idolatry which is anything taking the place of God in our lives

In verses 8 and 9 we see more of these *clothes* to put off:

- Anger
- Wrath – uncontrollable anger spilling out
- Malice – Attitude of desiring bad things for others – hidden hatred
- Blasphemy – not just against God, but damage done by our speech

- Filthy language – Our speech should sound different than the world
- Lying to one another

These things have no place in the life of a believer!

3. Put on the New Man – vs. 9b-10

- Interesting to note “since you have...”
- This is not a command to keep but a truth to claim
- If anyone is in Christ, he is a *new creation*

This is where we take responsibility to renew our minds in Romans 12:2 “*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*”

“We were formed in God’s image, and deformed from God’s image by sin. But through Jesus Christ, we can be transformed into God’s image once again.”

Warren Wiersbe

Questions:

1. Can you put in your *own words* how we have died and rose to life with Christ? (As in Adam we all *sinned* in him, so after re-birth, we are placed into the family of God – in Christ. Therefore, we are now *in Him*. Since in Him, we died with Him and rose to eternal life in Him. We have His resurrection life.)
2. If we died with Christ (Col. 2:20), we are we now told to “put to death your members...”? (For the same reason we are told to renew our minds (Rom. 12:2) which is that while we are positionally righteous in Christ and free from the bondage of sin, as long as we are on this earth we must daily reckon ourselves *dead* to sin)
3. In what ways is taking off the “old man” and ridding our lives of these sins mentioned different from living in legalism like we discussed last week?

Prayer: “Father, thank You for the freedom we have in Jesus Christ! Thank you that we are accepted in Him and are now new creations. Lord, sometimes in our lives we may try to live with our ‘old clothes’ on which is not what You would have for us. Help us to obediently follow you and put away the things of the fleshly nature and put on the new daily. In Jesus’ name, amen!”