

Becoming in Your Lifestyle What You Are by God's Grace

Colossians 3:1-5 – July 4, 2010

- **By Having A Heavenly** _____
(Colossians 3:1)

“RAISED UP”

II Corinthians 5:17

*We master our flesh, not by fighting it but by rising
_____ it.*

Seeking the things above is first and foremost seeking
_____.

- Having a desire to _____ Christ.
- Having our interests _____ on Christ.

Psalm 73:25

- **By Having A Heavenly** _____
(Colossians 3:2-3)

Matthew 6:19-21

Romans 8:5-6

“YOUR LIFE IS HIDDEN WITH CHRIST”

I Corinthians 13:12

I Peter 1:8

- **By Having A Heavenly** _____
(Colossians 3:4)

Titus 2:13
II Timothy 4:8
I John 3:2

- **By Abandoning Sinful** _____
(Colossians 3:5)

We gained victory over the _____ of sin by
Christ at the time of salvation.
But we did not gain victory over the _____ of
sin.

HUMAN STRATEGY: *You can* _____
holy by developing holiness.

GOD'S STRATEGY: *You* _____ *holy, therefore act out who*
you actually are.

Wrap Up:

We need to become in our _____
what we _____ by God's grace.

My NEXT STEP for this week:

- Have an unbeliever listen to your verses from Colossians 3.
- Ask your family, “What does God think about movies?”
- Take a stand for purity on “Facebook.”
- Commend a child for doing something honorable.

Becoming in Your Lifestyle What You Are by God's Grace

Colossians 3:1-5 – July 4, 2010

Intro: In the first two chapters of Colossians ... Paul established who Jesus Christ is ... and what happens to those who have believed in Him.

Jesus is ...

- ✓ Not merely a wonderful Person ... He is the image of the invisible God
- ✓ Fully God ...
- ✓ The One who holds the worlds together by His power
- ✓ The One who needs to be known and pursued rather than philosophy ... and rituals ...

And when we understand WHO Christ is ... we discover what we have in light of that.

Let me remind you of a few of the things that every believer possesses because they are in Christ

- We have been *qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints* (Colossians 1:12)
- He reconciled us ... *in order to present us to God the Father ... holy and blameless and beyond reproach*—(Colossians 1:22)

These things are ours POSITIONALLY

- ✓ An inheritance
- ✓ Holiness ... considered blameless in His eyes ... and beyond the reproach of Satan!

Paul gives us doctrine in chapter one and two ... and follows that with application in chapters 3 and four.

- ✓ In the first two chapters Paul has taken us through the controversies concerning the Person of Christ.
- ✓ In the last two chapters ... Paul will be emphasizing practical living ... that which flows out of the right doctrine.

Life principle

Sound living flows out of sound doctrine

Understanding our POSITION in Christ is followed by how that is lived out PRACTICALLY.

Colossians 3:1-5

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

3:3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

3:4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Transition: In verse 1 again we see the word “therefore.” This word ties in all that was said prior to this. Paul in essence is saying ... based on *WHO* Christ is and who you are *IN CHRIST* ... responsibilities and duties follow.

All this to say ... we need to become in our lifestyle what we are by God's grace.

Testimony

Many years ago I memorized Colossians 3. This chapter has been one of God's tools to help me in my battle against the flesh. Verses 1-10 have been THE most effective verses for my soul in dealing with temptation to sin. I cannot emphasize enough the value of putting these verses to memory. They are invaluable to anyone who has battle with the world the flesh and the devil ... and that's all of us!

Before believers can reach the world, they must first leave it. We must leave our preoccupation with happiness here ... success here ... wealth here ... and focus on eternal things – none of which are found here on earth.

So let's observe the practical ways to live out our new life in Christ ...

Become in your lifestyle what you are by God's grace ...

➤ **By Having A Heavenly ASPIRATION**

Colossians 3:1

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

What is clear

Paul is speaking to believers, to Christians.

“IF” is not referring to a condition ... it really means ... “*IN VIEW OF THE FACT*”

It is helpful for us to understand this say ...
SINCE you have been raised up with Christ.

“IF” is not a condition it is an accomplished **FACT**

“*RAISED UP*” is a reference to our new life in Christ. It is the same as our spiritual baptism. We died with Christ and we were raised up to newness of life

II Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

A wonderful phrase to note ...

“*IN CHRIST*” – our position ... our standing ... our permanent place of standing

What is a heavenly aspiration?

It is pursuing a mind-set

- ✓ with eternity in mind
- ✓ with heaven in mind
- ✓ a longing for that which is our true home – heaven!

“KEEP SEEKING” is a continuous action. You are involved in seeking heaven when you view the things, people and events of this world through the eyes of God. That is, when you have an eternal perspective.

- ✓ When sin seems rampant you will cry out, LORD JESUS COME QUICKLY
- ✓ When you see fulfillment of end time prophesy you will rejoice – THE LORD’S RETURN IS SOON

Things above are heavenly VALUES ...

- Things that characterize Christ ... kindness, tenderness, meekness, wisdom, forgiveness etc

Story

When Chad was a preschooler ... I used to ask him a question and taught him a response.

The question was, *where is Jesus?*

I taught him to respond,

He’s in heaven and in your heart, daddy ... not mine. But someday, Daddy, someday.

While it is accurate to say that Christ lives in the believer’s heart ... for Colossians 1:27 says that very thing ... **Christ in you is the hope of glory.**

THE most glorious place of Christ’s residency is at the right hand of God the Father Almighty!

Christ seated next to the Father ...

Is the position of honor based upon **a finished work.**

He’s seated because the work of **salvation is complete!**

When Stephen was killed ... just before he died he saw Jesus STANDING at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55). Jesus stood up to welcome Stephen into heaven! What a glorious scene.

Seated at the right hand of God is a place of HONOR ... showing that Jesus is now fully EXALTED

So on the one hand ... Jesus Christ lives in every believer. But He is more gloriously living in heaven

What is the value of seeking things above?

In some ways it is quite simple ... when we are seeking things above ... we will not be seeking the things of the world, the flesh and the devil ... and by seeking things above we’ll have victory over our flesh.

Well said

*We master our flesh, not by fighting it but by rising **ABOVE** it*

Compare: Elder’s prayer time

Just about every Thursday morning of the year the elders meet. We begin our time on our knees praying especially for the needs of this congregation. When we get off our knees you won’t find us sitting around the table arguing about things. When we have been thinking about things above...we are Spirit filled.

Watch this

Seeking the things above is first and foremost seeking **JESUS CHRIST**

It is not seeking a place ... it is seeking a Person in the place where He abides!

Seeking things above is ...

- Having a desire to **PLEASE** Christ
- Having our interests **CENTERED** on Christ

One of the Psalmists understood this well!

Psalm 73:25

Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.

Transition: So the first practical thing to do after knowing our position in Christ is to have a heavenly aspiration. Very close to this concept we see another truth.

Become in your lifestyle what you are by God's grace ...

➤ **By Having A Heavenly CONCENTRATION** (Colossians 3:2-3)

Colossians 3:2

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Dr. Lightfoot

*"You must not only seek heaven; you must also **THINK** heaven"*

Jesus said ...

Matthew 6:19-21

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

6:20 "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

6:21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Illustration

When men join the U.S. Navy and go out to sea ... they are not forced to desire their family and their wife. They do so naturally. And their desire for their family increases when they know they are headed home.

This pastor's perspective

So often there are distractions here on earth that keep me from having a heavenly concentration. But the study of God's Word awakened this interest in heaven ... in Christ.

Romans 8:5-6

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

Transition: *Why do we set our mind on things above?*

Answer: It is because of a change that has happened in our soul ... that which we see in verse 3.

Colossians 3:3

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

“YOU HAVE DIED”

What we must always remember ...

Salvation results in being dead to sin and alive to Christ. We are to take what we have become by God’s grace ... and have it affect our lifestyle!

Story (Warren Wiersbe)

Two sisters once lived a wild lifestyle ... but were converted to Christ and discovered a new life in Jesus. They received an invitation to a party and sent their RSVP in these words:

“We regret that we cannot attend because we recently died.”

A very practical way to live out what they were by the grace of God.

“YOUR LIFE IS HIDDEN WITH CHRIST”

There is a mystery element to our position in Christ.

Our life is hidden with Christ

- ✓ Our spiritual privileges and status is completely hidden to unbelievers
- ✓ But even with us ... our unique privileges are obscured.

I Corinthians 13:12

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

It becomes obvious

There is a mystery element to our existence ... much that is hidden from us at this time.

But we should be thinking about this ... and longing to know what this ultimately will be ... while understanding it won’t be understood until Christ takes us home.

A.T. Robertson

Our sphere of life is not this earth, but heaven; and the things that attract us and excite us belong to heaven, not to earth.

Interesting observation

Jesus is most glorious in heaven in order to draw our desires toward Him

Though Christ at this time is a hidden Christ ...

Though we cannot see Him ...

THIS IS OUR COMFORT and provides us with security!

I Peter 1:8

“... though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory

Become in your lifestyle what you are by God's grace ...

➤ **By Having A Heavenly ANTICIPATION** (Colossians 3:4)

Colossians 3:4

When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

The revelation of Christ is His return!

And we're told in Scripture to be ...

- *Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus*
(Titus 2:13)
- *In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord ... will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing*
(II Timothy 4:8)

My friends ... a heavenly mind-set ... setting our mind on things above ... should cause us to remind ourselves ...

NO MATTER WHAT I GO THROUGH IN THIS LIFE ... THE BEST IS YET TO COME ... THE BEST IS YET TO COME ... THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

- When He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is
(I John 3:2)

“Christ ... who is our life”

Well said

Life is what you are alive to

My friends, what enlivens you? What do you like to talk about? What thoughts bring you delight?

- ✓ The Lord Jesus wants to be He who enlivens us!
- ✓ The Lord Jesus would like for us to talk about Him
- ✓ The Lord Jesus would like us to delight in what He did for people ... and what He said ... and how He responded to people

With my grandchildren ...

I use a little phrase to bring them to life. The phrase is,

HOW WOULD YOU ... LIKE TO HAVE ... (and they come alive because they know something good is going to follow) ... SOME ICE CREAM AT RITE AID?

And let me assure you ... my grandchildren come alive at the offer of ice cream.

The thought came to me ... something Pastor Mike might do to start each service ... say to us ... *HOW WOULD YOU ... IN THE NEXT HOUR AND 15 MINUTES ... LIKE TO HAVE ... A TIME TO THINK ABOUT AND FOCUS ON JESUS CHRIST?* And report to us what he sees on our faces.

Teenage boys ...

They may come alive when you start to talk about cars ... or sports

Story:

Linda and I were with my 3 sisters and their husbands and brother and his wife as well as the widow of my brother for 4 days. All of us know the Lord so we talked about the Bible on several occasions. But I noticed something ... our enthusiasm ... that which enlivened our discussions the most ... took place when we talked about the Lord Jesus and when we talked about heaven.

“REVEALED WITH HIM IN GLORY”

Don't forget!

The things of heaven are the only things that will truly **gratify** our deepest longings
The things of heaven are the only true treasures

Transition: To seek heavenly things ... is to love them and have our desires directed towards them. *WHY?*

- ✓ Because **Jesus** is there ...
- ✓ Because **our home** is there ...
- ✓ Because our **treasure** is there ...
- ✓ Because we will be free from sin there!

We need to have an *aspiration* for heavenly things ... we need to *concentrate* on heavenly things ... and we need to *anticipate* heavenly things. ...

This will lead to something else ...

Become in your lifestyle what you are by God's grace ...

➤ **By Abandoning Sinful HABITS**

Colossians 3:5

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

The word *THEREFORE* appears again. It is a tie to all that has preceded.
We are told to consider ourselves dead to sin ... by having our mind set on things above.

Don't forget what our salvation came with ...

We gained victory over the **POWER** of sin by Christ at the time of salvation
But we did not gain victory over the **INFLUENCE** of sin.

Regarding personal holiness ... understand a biblical perspective in contrast to human logic

“*CONSIDER YOUR EARTHLY BODY AS DEAD TO IMMORALITY*” is a radical departure from human reasoning.

Compare:

Some prisons are called *CORRECTION FACILITIES*.

The big question ... *can correctional facilities really correct evil behavior?*

Let's contrast human strategy vs God's strategy

HUMAN STRATEGY: *Little by little free yourself from sinful habits*

GOD'S STRATEGY: *Immediately break from sin because you are now dead to its power*

HUMAN STRATEGY: *You can **BECOME** holy by developing holiness*

GOD'S STRATEGY: *You **ARE** holy, therefore act out who you actually are*

Watch this ...

Because we have been raised up with Christ ... we have IMMEDIATE power over sin!

We are IMMEDIATELY dead to sin.

Because Christ has defeated the POWER of sin ... He's given us the resources to defeat the INFLUENCE OF SIN.

Our resources are found in our new POSITION IN CHRIST.

Wrap Up:

Evil does not die naturally ... it must be slain!

Evil does not die easily ... it must be continually resisted

We have to make continual decisions to flee sin ... and practice our position.

J Vernon McGee tells the story ...

Of a little boy whose mama called to him one night when she heard him in the kitchen,

“Where are you?”

He said, “I'm in the pantry.”

He had the cookie jar open.

She called, “What are you doing?”

He answered, “I'm fighting temptation!”

McGee went on to say ...

That is the wrong place to fight temptation. Don't fight it there at the cookie jar, if you're not to have the cookies.

We need to become in our **LIFESTYLE** what we **ARE** by God's grace