You are one with Jesus Christ!

(How should you therefore live?)

Colossians 3:1-5

8-21-2016

INTRODUCTION:

***If you are saved, remember this: You are one with Jesus Christ!**
(inseparably united to Him)

I. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>PRIORITIES</u> IN THE PRESENT (v. 1-3a)

II. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>OUTLOOK</u> FOR THE FUTURE (v. 3b-4)

III. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>MORALITY</u> IN THIS WORLD (v. 5)

You are one with Jesus Christ!

(How should you therefore live?)

Colossians 3:1-5

8-21-2016

INTRODUCTION:

"If ye then be risen with Christ" -

Paul, writing to Christians at Colosse, speaks of them as being already resurrected with Christ.

"Risen with Christ" = co-raised; jointly resurrected.

How is it possible that believers are already risen?

Answer: Our future resurrection is so guaranteed; so sure to happen, that God speaks of it in the past tense.

How is the believer's resurrection so certain?

Answer: Because of our oneness with Jesus Christ. Because of our union with Him.

Christ and the believer have been married (Rom. 7:1ff) or merged.

ILLUS: Marriage united a man and woman together in such a way that what one has now belongs to the other.

Her bills are my bills; my checkbook is her checkbook (and vice-versa). The same is true for the house, car, food, property, talents, etc. We wear the same last name, share the same burdens, joys, and victories, etc.

**So it is with Christ and His bride. This mysterious union described in Ephesians 5:30-32 reveals the incomprehensible truth that the believer and Christ hold all things common.

God views Christ and the believer as being together; one; "joint heirs" (Rom. 8:16-17).

This union is called a mystery (Eph. 5:32) that is spiritual
(I Cor. 12:13), and living (John 15:4).

Note the emphasis on oneness with Christ in verses 1-4 -
"Risen with Christ" (v. 1)
"Dead (with Christ)" (v. 3; 2:20)
"Hid with Christ" (v. 3)
"Appear with Him" (v. 4)

We benefit in Christ's death and resurrection.

SEE previous context:

--Col. 2:6 (we received Him by faith, so we are to walk daily with Him by faith)

--Col. 2:9 - Christ lacks nothing (all power and blessing are His)

--Col. 2:10 - Therefore, those who belong to Christ lack nothing

We are complete in Him because of our union with Him (v. 12) (SEE: Ephes. 2:4-7)

2:12 - "Co-burial" (baptism = Spirit baptism [Rom. 6:4-5; I Cor. 12:13])

2:12 - "Co-resurrection"

2:13 - "Co-quickened"

***If you are saved, remember this: You are one with Jesus Christ!**
(inseparably united to Him)

I. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>PRIORITIES</u> IN THE PRESENT (v. 1-3a)

V. 1

Your oneness with the risen Christ is the greatest incentive to live a different lifestyle (cp. Rom. 7:6; I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:6).

"Seek" - to live <u>zealously</u> for something. (present tense - <u>to keep seeking</u>, every day).

"Above" = the Heavenly, the spiritual, the eternal

"To seek those things which are above" means to <u>center</u> your life on your ascended (Eph. 4:10), glorified (Jn. 17:5; Phil. 2:9) Christ! (SEE: Walvoord, <u>Bible Knowledge Commentary</u>, Vol. II, p. 680)

"Things <u>above</u>" - our # 1 priority affection is to be toward God! (SEE: mark 12:29-30)

"Where Christ sitteth" - the fact that Christ is sitting (at the right hand of the Father) proves two things:

1)He is alive
2)His work is complete (cp. Heb. 1:3, 10:10-12)

The "right hand" is a position of power and authority (what the Father does, He does by the power of His "right hand" - Ex. 15:6, 23; Ps. 89:13, 118:16; Is. 48:13); and this is where Jesus is seated (Ps. 110:1; Mk. 16:19; Lk. 22:69; Acts 7:55; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2; I Pet. 3:22).

The point is: If you are one with Jesus and if you share His life (v. 4), then you should live for Him and seek to please Him.

We need to look at our values in light of our oneness with Christ.

What is important to us and what should be important are not always the same.

"We seek those things which are above when in heart and spirit we are truly sojourners in this world and are not bound to it" (Calvin, cited by Vaughan, p. 90).

V. 2

The first word ("seek") suggested striving; the second word ("set affections") suggests concentrating (Walvoord, p. 680).

"Set your affection" - lit. Focus your thoughts; put your mind.

What you spend your time thinking about reveals where your priorities are.

"The sure safeguard against seeking things below, is not to set the mind upon them" (Eadie, Colossians, p. 91).

To set our thoughts on things above does not mean that we are to withdraw ourselves from all of the activities of this world and do nothing but contemplate eternity and heaven . . . But as Barclay explains, "There will be this difference-- from now on the Christian will see everything in the light and against the background of eternity. He will no longer live as if this world was all that mattered; he will see this world against the background of the larger world of eternity" (Vaughan, citing Barclay, p. 91).

--What people talk about reveals what they think about (where their affection is).

--Where people go reveals what they think about.

--What people do reveals what they think about.

What are some things that are upon the earth? (SEE: v. 5)

We are so united to Christ, that where we go, He goes; what we do, we in a spiritual sense bring Christ into the practice (I Cor. 6:15-17); when it is a sinful practice, we grieve the Spirit of God (Eph. 4:30).

"Not on things on the earth" -

SEE: Matthew 6:19-21, 33

Our # 1 goal in life is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and the temporal necessities will be added to us (Mt. 6:33).

SEE: I Tim. 6:6-12, 17-18.

Eternal vs. Temporal -

II Cor. 4:18 - "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

When we keep in mind our oneness with Christ, we will have this attitude: "What is important to Jesus is important to me. What is on His heart is on mine. Where His focus is, there do I want mine to be."

When your affection is on things above, you will have time for God.

You will have time to read His Word; you will have time to do His work; You will have time to seek His face in prayer; you will have time to assemble with His people, etc.

(The reason why "Easter" is the only time many go to church is because during the other 51 Sundays of the year - they are busy seeking the things that are on the earth.")

V. 3

"For ye are dead" - cp. 2:20 - "dead with Christ."

How is the believer "dead"?

He is dead to that which Christ is dead to. He is dead in relationship to the O.T. Law, dead in relationship to sin; dead in relationship to the world system (2:20).

The believer has already died and been raised to live a new life

II Cor. 5:14 - "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."

Gal. 2:20 - "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I , but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Cp. Rom. 6:3-11.

A story is told about two sisters who enjoyed attending dances and wild parties. Then they were converted and found new life in Christ. They received an invitation to a party and sent their RSVP in these words: "We regret that we cannot attending because we recently died." (Wiersbe, p. 133)

II. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE (v. 3b-4)

V. 3

"Hidden" implies both concealment and safety, both invisibility and security.

The believer is not yet visibly glorified, but he is secure and safe in Christ" (Walvoord, p. 680).

V. 4

The word "hid" (v. 3) is used in contrast to the word "appear" (v. 4).

Our profound oneness with Christ is hidden from our eyes; but one day this reality will be clearly revealed, openly displayed (manifested - Greek phaneroo).

In the mean time, we must accept this reality by faith!

"According to the Apostle Paul, we have already been glorified! (Rom. 8:30). This glory simply has not yet been revealed." (Wiersbe, p. 134).

"Christ . . . is our life" -

Our Savior does not merely give us life, He is our life. He is our eternal life. To have Him is to have life (I Jn. 5:12). To be united with Him is to be fused to the source and essence to life. He is "the life" (Jn. 14:6).

It is said of Jesus: "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4); Jesus Himself said, "I am the resurrection and the life . . ." (Jn. 11:25). "I am the way , the truth, and the life." (Jn. 14:6)

I Jn. 5:20 - "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

This appearance is describing the Rapture (at which time the resurrection of God's saints also occurs - I Cor. 15:51-54; I Thes. 4:16-18, Rev. 20:4-6.

What is our outlook?

Via our union with Christ, we look forward to a certain Resurrection. Cp. Job's testimony (Job 14:14-15; 19:23-27; (cp. Jn. 5:25).

III. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: MORALITY IN THIS WORLD (v. 5)

V. 5

"Therefore" leads us back to verses 1 - 4.

In other words, the reason given for mortifying selfish lust is because of our union or oneness with Christ.

Note the believer's union:

V. 1 - "risen with Christ"

V. 3 - "Hid with Christ"

V. 4 - "Christ ... is our life"

V. 4 - "Then shall ye also appear with Him..."

The negative prohibitions of verses five and following grow out of the positive doctrines of verses one through four.

"Mortify" = put to death; the Aorist imperative points to a decisive act. A decision to once and for all execute or do away with certain sins that at one time were very much "alive" in our lives.

"Your members" = your parts; the members of the body which are used to carry out the desires of the mind.

According to the Jewish Rabbis, the number of commandments and restraints of man's "evil impulse" found in the Law equalled the number of body parts that man had - 248 (cp. Reinecker, p. 578).

NOTE: God is not calling for physical dismemberment (or the cutting off of body parts that might otherwise lead to sin - cp. Mt. 5:29-30), but He is calling for the believer not to surrender his body parts to fulfill the sins mentioned in verse 5.

The accusatives of this verse are accusatives of general reference. Meaning that we are to mortify our earthly members in reference to fornication, uncleanness, etc.

The believer is to "mortify" (put to death) the following sins in his life:

1) **Fornication** - sexual perversion

"Fornication" = a broad term which includes every type of sexual perversion or illicit sexual behavior. The word fornication specifically applies to:

1) Pre-marital Sex - The word can include "adultery," but is often distinguished from it (Mt. 15:19; Mk. 7:21).

Pre-marital sex is the primary meaning and usage of the word (Jn. 8:41; * Cor. 7:2; Heb. 13:4, etc.).

2) Pornography - the Greek word translated "fornication" is "porneia."

3) Prostitution - the feminine noun form "porna" refers to a harlot (I Cor. 6:15-16, etc.). The masculine form "pornos" = "whoremonger."

2) **Uncleanness** - moral impurity

"Uncleanness" = impurity, filthiness, the opposite of being morally clean and pure (the word is used to describe "demons" - "unclean spirits"; and works of the flesh - Gal. 5:19).

Paul frequently combines "uncleanness" with "fornication" (EX: Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3), and thereby indicates that the uncleanness in view is sexual uncleanness or impurity.

Sexual sin is one sin that makes you feel "dirty," stained," unclean." Jesus said it defiles a person (Mt. 15:19-20).

NOTE: Purity is to be in mind and body. To have a pure body but an impure mind is to be unclean.

The reason we are to be pure is because our Father is pure. "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:15-16).

3) **Inordinate affection** - painful passion

"Inordinate affection" - not speaking about a good affection, but an affection outside of God's order and design; a restless and driving passion.

Greek - "pathos" from the verb "pascho" which means to suffer (Vines, p. 36).

Hence, the word refers to an extreme impure passion. An out-of-control immoral passion. A wrong passion that is so strong that it causes anguish and lethal obsession.

EX: How people get so obsessed with something or someone that it leads to bizarre or dangerous behavior. A "fatal attraction."

4) **Evil concupiscence** - bad lust

"Evil concupiscence" = an evil (or "bad" - "kakos") strong desire or lust ("epithumia").

To have strong desires is not wrong -- There are good desires (Lk. 22:15; Phil. 1:23; I Th. 2:17).

But what about "evil desires"? -

--Selfish desires - II Tim. 4:3; Jd. 16
--Worldly desires - Tit. 2:12
--Fleshly desires - I Pet. 2:11; I Jn. 2:16
--Ungodly desires - Jude 18

5) **Covetousness** - an unsatisfied desire to have more

"Covetousness" - a violation of the 10th commandment (Ex. 20:17 - "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.").

"Covetousness" ("pleonexia") = lit. a desire to have more and more ("pleon" = "more"; "echo" = "to have").

It refers to an insatiable selfishness. It refers to greed or an unsatisfied desire.

--An unsatisfied desire for material possessions = Lk. 12:15; II Pet. 2:3

--An unsatisfied desire for sensuality - Eph. 4:19

God calls covetousness "idolatry"! Idolatry = idol worship or idol service.

The Hebrew word for "idol" means that which is empty, hollow, void, nothing.

How is covetousness idolatry? ANSWER: Covetousness is obsession, and obsession refers to a giving of one's heart and mind to one object.

Wherever your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Where is our heart to be fixed? On God.

That which obsessively motivates us is to us a god. Whatever you live for is your god.

The sins mentioned can all be summarized as selfish lust.

Not one of the sins mentioned is for the benefit of anyone else - They are self-centered pursuits for illicit pleasure.

Selfishness is the root cause of all sins. Whenever one puts his own will ahead of God's will, he has selfishly sinned.

Every time a believer sins, he does not merely sin against himself; he sins against his Lord who lives in his heart (1:27).

This is why a Christian feels so miserable when he/she is in sin. Because there is an inner awareness that your Lord is offended, and the Spirit is grieved (Eph. 4:30).

No Christian does anything in life alone; Jesus is always there with you -

Mt. 28:20 - "...Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Heb. 13:5 - "Let your conversation be without covetousness;

and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

No believer sins in a vacuum; you are not an island unto yourself. When you sin, you indirectly drag your Savior into the sin.

This does not mean that Christ sins with you; but that He is intimately present during the act of defilement (SEE: I Cor. 6:15-20).

When you commit "fornication," you are taking the body that belongs to Christ and placing Christ's property in a domain that is abhorrent to Christ.

When you are guilty of "uncleanness" you are subjecting your mind, soul, and body to stains and defilement that is contrary to the nature of Christ.

When you are driven with "inordinate affection," you are taking your heart which should be devoted to Christ and becoming obsessed with someone or something other than Christ.

When you are overcome by "evil concupiscence" (bad lust), you are taking a mind that belongs to Christ and plunging it into the sese-pool of debauchery.

And when you allow yourself to become obsessed with "covetousness," you have taken eyes which should be kept fixed on your God and focused them on the empty, meaningless, futile, vain, vanishing dainties of the world. And in so doing, Christ's worship suffers loss, because your worship becomes limited to what you are covetous of.

The most powerful reason for being pure and free from indulging in selfish lust is because "I am one with Jesus." I dare not drag Him into the muck and mire of the Devil's playground.

CONCLUSION: