

Sermon: Dying to Live in Victory (Part 6, Colossians 3:1-11)

IN Opportunities to connect and pray as a group

1. Who is an example of a 'Christian' for you? Why? What have you learned from them?

UP Time that is devoted to the Word of God

1. If your group is just beginning the study of Colossians, check out <https://www.cschurch.ca/sermons/colossians/> for former Study Guides. (Sorry, no Sermon Study Guide for Part 5).
2. Take time to read (or ask someone to read) Colossians 1 and 2 to review Paul's words about who Jesus is and what He did for us through His sacrificial death and resurrection.
3. Read the following verses: Colossians 3:5, 8; 2 Corinthians 4:18; 5:21 and Hebrews 10:14. Draw a horizontal line. Write the following words on the appropriate sides of the line:
Seen, eternal, positional, temporal, I am, unseen, spiritually alive, I am becoming, natural, earthly.
How does this diagram clarify the apparent contradiction of the two realms in which a Christ-follower lives? What other words can you add to help you understand what Paul is saying about the two realms?
4. Why does Paul give the three commands: 'Set your hearts', 'set your minds,' and 'Put to death'? (Colossians 3:1, 2 5) What do they mean? How do these words speak to the sermon title, 'Dying to Live in Victory'?
5. What does Paul say about such sins as sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed? Why did Paul also include anger, slander, etc? (Colossians 3:8, 9) Pastor Henry said, "All sin is really idolatry." What is your reaction to his statement? Explain.
6. 'Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.' Colossians 3:6
What did Paul mean? How do we identify with God's wrath?
Why does this statement not have a greater effect on people's living?

OUT Seek to be the Community of God's people in your community

1. What has God said to you about the 'carnage' created by sin in our world?
2. Where do you see it in your own life?
3. How can we pray for you and the world? What steps do you need to take to 'die to live in victory'?

UP – IN – OUT reflect a balanced life including a focus on our personal relationship with the Father (UP), staying connected to the Body (IN), and reaching our world (OUT).

THE WORD (NIV)

Colossians 3:1-11

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

2 Corinthians 4:18

¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 5:21

²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Hebrews 10:14

¹⁴For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

Sermon Study Summary

When we see a generous person with a servant heart that reflects Jesus, we may ask "Is he/she a Christian?" That is whom Paul describes in Colossians 3 & 4. When we trust Christ as Lord, the old person we were dies and is buried with Him. Jesus invades our lives, becoming one with us and making us spiritually alive in Him. Our hearts are changed so that our values, attitudes, focus and behaviour are dramatically different from those in our self-centred, 'Me-absorbed' culture. Paul's words "Put to death therefore whatever belongs to your earthly nature..." (3:5) and "For you died..." (3:3) are confusing. "How can I put to death what has already died?" 2 Cor 4:18 explains it as two truths; one truth is about what is seen and temporary; the other is about what is unseen and eternal. (Dan Stone)

ETERNAL(unseen)

This is the spiritual, heavenly realm, changeless and timeless, complete, whole and perfect – the realm of our spirit, who we are in God's eyes.

TEMPORAL (seen)

This is the temporary, natural or earthly realm; it is creation with a beginning and end; it has both good and evil – the realm of our soul and body.

From God's perspective, the spiritual or eternal realm is greater than the other.

We may assume a Scripture refers to the earthly realm, but in fact it speaks of the eternal realm. "For by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." (Heb 10:14) speaks about both realms. At Christ's sacrifice on the cross, God put our sin on Jesus and put His righteousness on us so we are perfect before God. (2 Cor 5:21) In the spiritual realm we died with Christ and were raised with Him. Yet in the earthly realm we are still "being made holy" so Paul says "Put to death therefore whatever belongs to your earthly nature." (Col 3:5) We still have the earthly, selfish soul and body that fight against the new person we are in Christ. We struggle to re-educate ourselves, to put to death what is sinful and to allow the Holy Spirit to change us.

In Colossians 3:5-9 Paul instructs us "**PUT TO DEATH...**"

1. **SEXUAL IMMORALITY.** God tells us His original blueprint for sexual morality before sin entered the world. (Gen 2:24) "...become one flesh..." refers to sexual intimacy between a man and woman united in marriage; this is the **MORAL** context for sexual intimacy. Jesus reinforced this. (Mt 19:4) God has a positive view of sex; this drive is His gift with the limitation that it be properly controlled and expressed within the marriage of a man and a woman. This is God's **MORAL** standard for marriage. Anything outside that is abuse and detrimental to our health emotionally, spiritually and possibly physically; it is **IMMORAL**.

2. **IMPURITY**—taking something pure and perverting it. For example pornography dehumanizes and dishonours women and men who are used to produce it and also those who consume it. This corrodes their view of others; they are seen as sexual objects instead of people made in God's image. Those who view it become dissatisfied with or unable to be intimate with their spouses. Horrendous carnage is created in lives, marriages and relationships by pornography. This means get rid of books, magazines, videos that create impure thoughts. Impurity can also apply to misuse of food, consuming more than we need or junk food as a drug. Or to money for "love of money is the root of all evil" if we upgrade our standard of living but not our standard of giving.

3. **LUST**---doing whatever you want without considering God's approval or the damage your actions cause. Job said, "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman."

4. **EVIL DESIRES** that lead to anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language.

5. **GREED**, which is **IDOLATRY**—always wanting more things/pleasures in place of God and never being satisfied or content. Kent Hughes says if people, even Christians, were honest they would realize that materialism is their true religion because their trust, security and confidence are more in their money, possessions and position than in God. He warns that greed can be more dangerous than sexual sins because materialism seems respectable.

Because of these the wrath of God is coming. (v6) God's justice includes punishment for sin. If a man abuses a child or forces a young woman into prostitution, we also expect him to be punished. Sin breaks God's heart because He sees the relational upheaval and carnage sin causes in His children's lives. He weeps over the loss and hardship we face due to our sin. God pleads with us, "**PUT SIN TO DEATH.**"