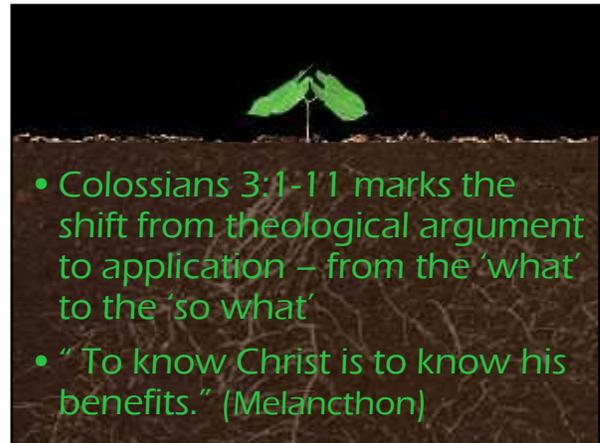


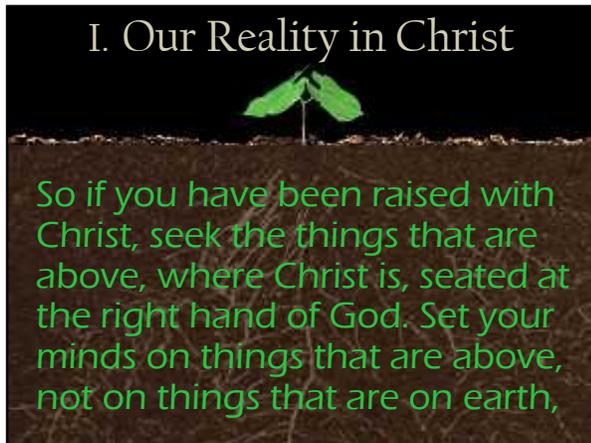


Deeper into Christ

Changing Our Identity
Colossians 3:1-11

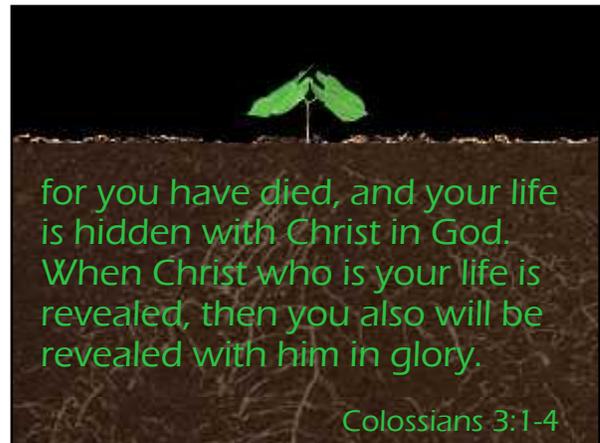


- Colossians 3:1-11 marks the shift from theological argument to application – from the 'what' to the 'so what'
- "To know Christ is to know his benefits." (Melancthon)



I. Our Reality in Christ

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth,



for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Colossians 3:1-4



1. Raised with Christ (v1)

- We are raised with Christ to life
- Colossians 2:12 – the image of baptism reflects our new life in Christ
- Christ has led the way into new life – his work for us!



- Seek the things of Christ
- Be intentional in your thoughts & actions to focus on Christ as your centre
- Don't waste your time on the Greco-Roman gods/diversions

2. Set Your Mind on Christ (v2)

- A focus on our thinking patterns
- The battle for the mind
- Our actions flow from our mind

The 'False Trinity'

- Possessions
- Power
- Human relationships

(Gerald May)

The Importance of Scripture

- Read and study the scriptures
- Let them shape your life
- With prayer and praise to create the contours of your life instead of the world's mores

3. Be Energized by Your Hope in Christ (v3-4)

- Our life is hidden with Christ in God (v3) – the mystery of faith
- The now but the not yet

- Christ is our life (v4)
- He is life – life eternal; we share in this life (zoe) now

'Within ten paces, as I walked, life was transformed to me,' he said; so wonderful was the discovery that the Lord Christ is not merely Rescuer, Friend, King, but Life itself, Life central, inexhaustible, 'springing up within my heart, rising to eternity.'

F.F. Bruce



- The new dimension of life will be revealed – a glorious new dimension transcending the old

II. Claim Your Reality in Christ (v5-11)



Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.



These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life.

Colossians 3:5-7

A. Put to Death Your Old Self



- 'Put to death' (v5); 'strip off the old self' (v9)
- Again imagery of baptism
- The false self we let go to embrace the true self – intentional actions

1. A Focus on Immorality



- Fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire
- A focus on how you handle your own body
- Treat your body with respect

A Focus on Purity



- Purity was not practiced in the Greco-Roman world
- It was a Judeo-Christian focus which elevated the importance of purity
- It was seen how quickly impurity could become a form of idolatry

Greed



- Parallel with immorality was greed – another form of idolatry (v5b)
- The desire for more things
- The desire to consume

A desire to have more, the accursed love of getting is an insatiable desire to possess. Quickly goods become our gods.

Ralph P. Martin

2. Sins of Speech (v8-9)



But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices

- Get rid of anger, wrath, malice, slander, abusive language, lying
- All destructive, hurtful speech

Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:29

B. Put on the New/True Self



- The new self according to the image of the Creator (v11)
- Alludes to putting on Christ (Galatians 3:27)



- The Second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45)
- Harkens back to the creation story – Genesis 1:27; we are created in the image of God

Put on Christ (v12-13)



The Characteristics of Christ

- Compassion, kindness, humility, patience, love, forgiveness

A New Life



- A new life which celebrated unity & diversity in Christ (v11)
- We are different (gifts, etc.) but united in Jesus
- Speaks loudly to our alienated world today



- The new self/the new world is already shaping up in Christ
- It will one day be revealed (v4)



- Our job today is to do our part for its present manifestation
- By doing so we model the Kingdom of God among us now
- Model peace & love in all of our spheres of influence