

RESURRECTION LIVING

Colossians 3:1-17

Easter - April 17, 2022

1. The Big Question: "If then you have been raised with Christ..."

v. 1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21

2. The Life-Changing Fact: Christ rose from the dead and is "seated at the right hand of God." (v. 1)

"No witnesses watched Timothy McVeigh load two tons of fertilizer-based explosives into a Ryder rental truck. Nobody saw him drive the vehicle to the front of the federal building in Oklahoma City and detonate the bomb, killing 168 people. No video camera captured an image of him fleeing the scene. Yet a jury was able to conclude beyond a reasonable doubt that McVeigh was guilty of, perhaps, the worst act of domestic terrorism in U.S. history. Why? Because fact by fact, exhibit by exhibit, witness by witness, prosecutors used evidence to build an airtight case against him."

- > **Eyewitness accounts** (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)
- > **The apostles...**
- > **The Jewish leaders of that day...** (They COULD not because they WOULD not...)
- > **The Romans...**
- > **The Conversion of Skeptics** - Saul of Tarsus, James the brother of Jesus, many others since then...
- > **The Lord, Liar, Lunatic trilemma...**

3. The Natural Response: "Set your minds on things that are above ..." (vv. 1-2)

You say that you were dead with Christ, & that you have risen with Christ. Live, then, the risen life, & not the life of those who have never undergone this matchless process. Live above. Charles Spurgeon

Question: What do YOU "come alive to?"

Warren Wiersbe tells a story 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 attend because we recently died." (Warren Wiersbe)

But how do we "seek those things which are above"?

The secret is found in verse 2, "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." Literally: "Habitually set your mind—your at-

tention—on things above, not on things on the earth". Our feet must be on earth, but our minds must be in heaven. This is not to suggest that (as D.L. Moody used to say) we become "so heavenly minded that we are no earthly good." It means that the practical everyday affairs of life get their direction from Christ in heaven. It means further that we look at earth from heaven's point of view. (Warren Wiersbe)

Question: Is your heart set on "things above" or on the things of this earth?

4. The Logical Conclusion: If... you died... with Christ, THEN your life is now hidden with Christ in God & will not be fully seen until "Christ... appears." (vv. 1ff)

Christ was not seen by the world while He walked among us. So it is with us. We are NOT what we WILL be. When Christ is finally seen by all, so shall WE be as He intends us to be.

Sadly, for many of us our profession of faith in Jesus Christ is contradicted by our lives.

They are lives "shaped by things and feelings instead of by God." (v. 5 - The Message)

James 2:14 - Dear brothers & sisters, what's the use of saying you have faith if you don't prove it by your actions? That kind of faith can't save anyone.

5. The Evidence: (What difference does this make?) (vv. 5-18)

vv. 3 & 5 - For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.... Put to death therefore....

v. 7 - "In these you too once walked." - PAST tense. "You are dead to them. If it should ever come to pass that you fall into any of these things, you will loathe yourself with bitterest repentance that you could find comfort, satisfaction, life in them. You are dead to them." (Charles Spurgeon)

vv. 5-18

☞ vv. 5-6 - Put to death, therefore...,

- > **Sexual immorality**
- > **Doing whatever you feel like whenever you feel like it...** That's a life shaped by things & feelings instead of by God. (v. 5 - The Message)
- > **The pursuit of STUFF** (covetousness)

☞ **Put... away hurtful words, said in anger** (v. 8)

☞ **Stretching the truth** (vv. 9-10)

☞ **Put on...** (v. 12)

"The sacred vestments of your daily priesthood"

- **Compassionate hearts** (NLT: tenderhearted mercy, Greek: oiktirmos - pity, compassionate feelings)
- **Kindness** - the opposite of meanness or apathy
- **Humility...**
- **Meekness** (Gentleness) - the opposite of assertive?
- **Patience** / Forbearance (v. 13)
 - **Forgiveness** (Forgive "as the lord has forgiven you...") - "Just as readily, just as freely, just as heartily, just as completely." (Spurgeon)
- **Love** (v. 14)
- **Peace** (v. 15)
- **Thankfulness** (v. 15)
- **Scripture** (v. 16)
- **Worship** (v. 17)

"We are in such a hurry, in such dreadful haste, so selfish, so discontented, so impetuous, and the major part of our sins spring from that condition of mind." (Charles Spurgeon)

The picture here is that of a person changing clothes: "Put off... put on" (Col. 3:9-10).

As our Lord Jesus Christ, when He rose from the dead, left the grave clothes behind (John 20:1-10). He had entered into a glorious resurrection life and had no need for the grave clothes. The Christian life has always been a walk of discipline. But it is not discipline for discipline's sake; we deny ourselves certain things because Christ has called us to something so much better. (Larry Richards)

(The Message) So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective.

Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ. And that means killing off everything connected with that way of death: sexual promiscuity, impurity, lust, doing whatever you feel like whenever you feel like it, and grabbing whatever attracts your fancy. That's a life shaped by things and feelings instead of by God.

It's because of this kind of thing that God is about to explode in anger. It wasn't long ago that you were doing all that stuff and not knowing any better. But you know better now, so make sure it's all gone for good: bad temper, irritability, meanness, profanity, dirty talk. Don't lie to one another. You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it.

So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.

Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.

A Truth to Remember: If we have put our trust in the resurrected Lord, then we have been raised with Him & are seated with Him in Heaven.

A Challenge to Consider: Are you living in the light of the resurrection & of your position with Christ in God's Presence?

One thing I heard this morning was...