

Colossians – Seek Those Things Which Are Above
Col. 3:1-4

Thesis: To help us understand the importance of seeking after the things of Christ.

Introduction:

- A. The whole passage is based on the fact that we have been “raised with Christ.”
 - 1. This means that we have been “buried with Him in baptism,” and we have been “raised with Him” (Col. 2:12).
 - 2. But what does it mean to “seek those things which are above?”

- B. To “seek those things which are above” means that we will put our minds on Christ and the things of heaven.
 - 1. Col. 3:2 - Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.
 - 2. Mt. 6:19-21 - Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; {20} but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. {21} For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
 - 3. We must put our entire focus on making it to heaven.

I. We seek those things which are above because that is where Christ is (3:1).

A. Christ is now at the right hand of the Father (3:1).

- 1. We see Christ at the right hand of the Father just after His ascension into heaven.
 - a. Acts 1:9-11 - Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. {10} And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, {11} who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”
 - b. Mk. 16:19 - So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.
- 2. From this time forward, Christ is (and will be until His return) at the right hand of God.
 - a. Acts 2:33 (Peter on the Day of Pentecost) - Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.
 - b. Acts 5:31 – (Peter while on trial) - Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

- c. **Rom. 8:34** - Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.
3. The only time in the New Testament (after His ascension) that we do not see Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father was in Acts 7.
- a. In this instance, He is standing at the right hand of the Father.
 - b. **Acts 7:55-56** - But he (Stephen), being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, {56} and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

B. The idea of Christ being at the right hand of the Father shows the authority and preeminence that He has.

- 1. The one to the right hand of a king was the one that was second in command.
 - a. It was the seat of greatest honor in the kingdom.
 - 1) This is why James and John asked Jesus to put them, one on the right hand and the other on the left, in His kingdom (**Mk. 10:37**).
 - 2) This is also why the other apostles became displeased with James and John (**Mk. 10:41**).
 - b. To say that Christ is at the right hand of God shows His great authority and preeminence.
- 2. The writer of Hebrews talks a great deal about the greatness of Christ in relation to His being seated at the right hand of the Father.
 - a. **Heb. 1:1-4** - God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, {2} has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; {3} who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, {4} having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.
 - b. **Heb. 12:1-2** - Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, {2} looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- 3. Jesus has the authority and power, and is at the right hand of God.

C. We should "seek those things which are above" because that is where Christ is.

II. We seek those things which are above because we have died (3:3).

A. Remember, the whole context of this passage is about having been “raised with Christ” (3:1).

B. When we were raised with Christ in baptism, we died to sin (3:3a).

1. Sin no longer has dominion (or control) over us.
2. Rom. 6:1-14
3. We are dead to sin.

C. If we have died to sin, then our life is hidden with Christ (3:3b).

1. Remember, when we were buried with Him in baptism, we were raised with Christ (2:12).
2. The life that we now live is not ours, but Christ’s.
 - a. Gal. 2:20 - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
 - b. II Cor. 5:14-15 - For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; {15} and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.
3. Christians should bear the image of Christ.
 - a. Col. 3:10 - and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
 - b. This simply means that our life is the life of Christ.
4. One who is in the world should not be able to distinguish between the life of Christ and the life of a Christian – they should be the same.

III. We seek those things which are above because Christ will appear again (3:4).

A. When Christ appears, then we “also will appear with Him in glory.”

1. I Jn. 3:2 - Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.
2. I Thes. 4:15-17 - For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. {16} For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. {17} Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

B. It is only when Christ appears that we will receive our reward.

Conclusion:

- A. We seek those things which are above because:
 - 1. That is “where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.”
 - 2. We have “died, and [our] live is hidden with Christ.”
 - 3. Because Christ will appear again.
- B. We must continually seek after the things of God.