



The Sermon

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Colossians 3:1-4

"Looking Through New Eyes"

July 2, 2023

TRANSCRIPT

Well, good morning. If you could open your Bibles, please, the Colossians chapter 3. We come this morning, a holy grind. It was very kind of Dr. Steven J. Lawson the plan everything so that he give me the best passage in Colossians. So, very thankful to him this morning. Let me read the text, then we'll pray and ask God for help.

Colossians chapter 3 and reading from verse 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. 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 appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." Let's pray.

[Prayer] Our heavenly Father, we are so thankful to be found in this place. We're so thankful to be able to read the words that we have just read. We recognize, Lord, our need to have illumination. We pray, Lord, that Your Holy Spirit would work amongst us to help us to see wonderful things of Christ in this passage. We pray, Lord, that You would help us to remember that it is true for many this morning that we do indeed love You, but because You have first loved us. And we ask, Lord, that You would work in us to allow this truth to inform our mind, but also motivate our heart to action that would be appropriate and pleasing to You. We pray, Lord, that You would foster that spirit of worship and true thankfulness for the glory

that is ours in Jesus Christ as this passage unfolds. And we ask, Lord, as a result of our time together and time in Your word, that You would help us to taste and see and know that You are good. So be with us during this special time, we ask. For we come humbly in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. [End]

I love this church. I mentioned to the ones this morning that, in particular, this last year for the Currys has been a tricky one. We've had a lot of different family needs to navigate. Sarah's had to spend a lot of time going back and forth between America and Ireland in order to minister and to try and help her family at this particular time. But this church has been so good, letting us know that you've been praying for us. Or, many of you sending messages, little bits and pieces of encouragement. And over the years, getting to come back and forth to Trinity, I've grown to really love and appreciate especially the saints here. It's just natural, isn't it, when we spend time together; we love each other more. And this particular year where my family has had it particularly tough, the extra love and care that many within this congregation have shown has made it all the more exciting, and made it much more of a longing experience coming to Dallas this particular trip.

I'm so glad to be here, and the reason is not just because you're nice. Of course, you are. But it's because we're united in Jesus Christ. We have the same Father who loved us in eternally past, the same Savior who died for us, the same Holy Spirit who indwells us, and He has bound us together. We had a group from this church that came over to serve us in our church, and it was amazing for the congregation there and Emmanuel to get to rub shoulders with many of the members here in Trinity, because there's just good in being together, because we have a wonderful union with each other.

But there's one union that's better, and it's the one that we're going to focus on this morning. It's the one that this paragraph is soaked and saturated with. It is the union that we declare in baptism. Last year when I was here, there were a number of people who got baptized. And Tim was carrying out the baptisms, and when he would lower them down and bring them up, he would say something along the lines of, "Buried with Christ in baptism, and

risen to walk a new way." And what was being declared in baptism is that Jesus, He died, was buried and rose again. But actually, He was glued to us; and in that great act, we died, were buried, and rose again also. There's a union, a joint participation that the believer has experienced when Jesus died and rose on our behalf; and forever our identity has been joined to Him.

I was told in the first service that you Texans are familiar with the story of the ugly duckling. I wasn't sure with all the woke agenda and everything else, you know, that story is kind of frowned on at the moment. But you have this struggling, ascetically deficient bird that kind of wallows and goes through life. But a dramatic transformation takes place in the kids' story, and the bird becomes something splendid, something impressive, something physically attractive; but it doesn't realize it. And though it has become a swan, he moves and acts with the same nervousness, the same low self-esteem, the same self-deprecating mindset. He, on the surface, looks spectacular, and yet still behaves like an ugly duckling.

In a much more profound way, Paul tells a similar story here, that you, Christian, have become something all together attractive, all together different from your former life to our chalk and cheese – that's a an expression we use – this white stuff that is so unlike, so different from each other. You're not what you once were. And yet the tendency is though we have been transformed through our union with Christ, yet we still wallow, we still drag ourselves into the mud and hide and go back to old, broken systems of behavior, even though that is not who you are in Christ.

And so Paul writes in part to address the brokenness that seems to continue to plague us. And its solution is not a ten-step plan to a better life. His solution is: "Look at who you are. Realize what you have. Realize the work that has been done in you; and through that understanding, live and lay off it." And so if we're going to live and enjoy our union with Christ, Paul, in verse 1, says first of all this morning, "You have been raise, so you can look up. You have been raised, so you can look up."

Look at verse 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." Paul says, first of all, he wants these Christians to "remember a work done on behalf of you. There has been a work done on behalf of you." And he picks up that language that is so central to the cross work of Jesus Christ, the reference to resurrection. There is good news that believers hold on to, but it is good news because there was a resurrection.

And so here in verse 1, Paul takes that great event that's foundational, it's central to your good news message, and he brings that into play in order to push us towards a great commission. Christ's resurrection has a call on your life, a call on your life, and it's because that work done on behalf of you produced a work in you. That work that was done on behalf of you has produced a work in you.

The text insists on going further than simply saying, "Do you know Jesus rose from the dead?" and it goes further by stating boldly that we were raised with Christ, that you, Christian, were affected, that a real event took place in your life when Christ rose from the dead. Something has actually happened. Something has actually been achieved. This isn't just a work that was done for you, he's saying this is a work that has been done in you, in you. You have been affected by this resurrection.

Now we've got to be very careful this morning, because at one level, we're talking about familiar things – resurrection, death, the second coming. And there's a danger with these things that we kind of hear them and we kind of apply them to the church at large generally. But Paul is concerned with you specifically as a Christian, and he doesn't want you to simply dismiss this and to think of it in generic, general terms; he wants you to think personally. And he's saying in verse 1, "You have been raised." And he's going to say in verse 3, "You have died," and he's not talking in metaphors; that's not what he's doing. This isn't a picture of something that could or would or may take place, he's talking about a real event. He's not saying in metaphorical language, "We have been raised to something," he's saying, "You actually have been raised. You actually have died." And what he's

talking about is a spiritual work that has actually taken place in your life. There is a real work that took place.

The verb is passive: "You have been raised, been raised." There's an outside age, and you didn't do it. You didn't will yourself up. You didn't transform yourself. Rather, God, He brought about a glorious resurrection, not just by raising His Son from the dead, but He brought a glorious resurrection in the act of also raising you. An actual transformation has taken place through your union with Christ. You have been changed.

Look back in chapter 2 to verse 11. We see the same idea there: "In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses." Paul is crystal clear. Not only was a work done on behalf of you, "He was raised from the dead," but that has produced a work in you.

And then Paul goes further and he says, "So now there's a work for you. A work has been done on behalf of you. It's produced a work in you, and so now there is a work for you." In this glorious work that he's been talking of, of Jesus, it's produced a new reality in your life. You've been rewired, you've been dramatically transformed, you're not the same entity anymore. And part of that dramatic transformation is you have been rewired to do brand new things to live and behave and act in a brand new way.

In particular, it says there in verse 1, "Seek the things that are above, where Christ is. Seek the things that are above." That verb "seek" is an imperative. In other words, this is a command. This isn't an optional thing, it's a command from God; you've got to do something. There's an action. This isn't a good suggestion from above, this is a command from God. And it's in the present tense. It's a command not to do something down the line, "Put this on your to-do list," this is something He wants and expects of you,

Christian, today. God commands you here and now to seek something. And what does He want you to seek? Oh, the text states it so clearly: "the things that are above," a phrase that's so often used in Scripture to talk about the things of heaven, the heavenly courts, the edicts that come forth from the throne of God. We're living in this world, but our mind is recognizing that there is a higher throne that we submit to. There's a higher order that we are to follow. We have been raised to seek out the heavenly courts, to seek out the rules and laws and edicts of King Jesus.

You see that phrase again in verse 1, "seated at the right hand of God." That's a special phrase. It's a reference to Psalm 110:1. It's the most quoted verse from the Old Testament that appears in the New. It appears multiple times, because it's important. It's a verse, it's a passage that really sums up the nature of this Messiah King who would come, that He would have divine authority. He wasn't just an ordinary man, He's one with divine authority; and it's speaking of the authority that Jesus has. And Paul was saying, "Look, He is on that throne. He has it." He's not saying that one day down the line Jesus is going to win, but that today, today He is on His throne already.

And so today, if that is true, today we should be seeking His rule, His way. He's King over this world today. He's King today over this nation. He's King over your workplace. He's King over our home. He's King over our church. He's King over every area of your life, every aspect of your existence. And as such, Paul says, because He is the King, we should listen to Him. We should seek out His ways and do them.

There was a time when I became a citizen of the United States. I know; they let me in, even with this accent. And I went to this grand ceremony after a long process. Do you know what they did not do at that ceremony? They didn't give me a clipboard where I could tick boxes to say what aspects of American society I wanted to be part of: "Well, I'll take the freedom, but I'll say no to the taxes." That wasn't an option, believe me.

You don't get to choose. When you become a citizen of a country, you embrace all of the rules and organizations and structures within that country. And it's the same as we become Christian citizens of heaven, citizens of the kingdom. We must embrace all of the rules and structures that are to be found at His heavenly court. You don't get to choose what areas of your life His rules affect, because today, today He is that King, with all authority.

So today, seek the things that are above. Seek what the King would want today in every aspect of your life. In fact, that stress really continues all the way through this paragraph. We're to see that our union and connection to this all-glorious King, it affects everything. We are raised with Him. We died with Him. Verse 4, "We will appear with Him in glory." And so this call to seek His rule in our life, it's motivated because, well, He's the one we're united to, He's the one we're glued to. God saves us; and when He does, it is no longer I, but we. We can say it like the hymn writer: "I am His, and He is mine."

There's a fundamental change that has taken place when you repented of your sin and put your trust in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit in that moment wove and knitted you together to Jesus in an inseparable union that will never diminish your fate, so that when He died, we died; when He rose, we rose; and when He returns, we will return. And that affects the here and now; and so even His values here and now are our values here and now. In other words, Colossians 3:1 isn't simply a call to do something; rather, it's a call to look inside and recognize that you're somebody brand new. You have become a new person, new wiring. And so live that out. Live in light of that. Seek the things that are above, because you have been raised with Christ. Christian, you have been raised, so you can look up.

But then the text continues and it says, "You have also died, so don't look down. You have died, so don't look down." Look at verse 2: "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died." You can see how the call here is very, very similar to the first one.

I had a Greek professor at seminary, and every single class he would say, "Repetition is the key to learning. The key to learning is repetition." And then the next day he would do exactly the same thing: "Repetition is the key to learning. The key to learning is"? "Repetition." There we go. That's good work, everybody.

And that's true; and you see it so often in Paul's writings, and you see it right here. What he says in verse 2 is really an echo of what he has already said in verse 1, and he's repeating himself with slightly different words, but the same idea, because he knows that we have thick heads, and it takes a long time for truth to sink in.

And so in verse 1, we are called to seek the things that are above. And now we're told in verse 2, again in the present tense, to set your minds on things that are above. It's the same thing - slightly different words, but saying the same thing, but maybe a little bit more the idea of dwelling, that you can't just hear and suddenly say, "Oh, there we go; saw that, and we'll leave it." You have to on an ongoing basis dwell on these things, keep them in your mind, live them out in your life.

But it's the same idea, that the things that God would want to see in our life, the things that would please King Jesus, those are the things we're to lift our mind to and to focus on. And why are we to do that? Well, verse 3, it declares, "You have died." But you look, and your fingers still move; and you put your hand on your chest, you take a deep breath, and it goes out again. Make sure you do both, in and out. You're still alive.

But verse 3 says, "You have died." Again, it's not metaphor, it's a real reality you have experienced, but a spiritual reality. You were once dead in your sins and transgressions; but when Christ died for you, that life died also. It died also. Jesus, when He died on the cross, He did pay the debt for your sins; but He didn't just pay the debt for your sin, He died so that your old life would die, too. That took place at the cross. Your sin condition died at the cross.



I don't know if you've ever noticed this, but dead people don't do very much. Wherever you leave them, you could go away, have your lunch, you come back – you shouldn't do this, this isn't advisable – but they will still be there, because they can't do anything to help themselves. That's how the Bible describes our natural condition in sin. We can't do anything but sin. We're stuck, we're dead, we're trapped in that state. But when Christ died, we died. The stranglehold of sin in your life, it was broken by His death. We are no longer sinners who can only sin; that has died through our union with Christ. And so, just like before, a work has been done on behalf of you. He died for you; and again, it has produced the work in you. He died for you, and it caused you to die to your old sin life.

Again, so neither is a work for you; neither is a work for you. Again as before, Paul declared to us that God wants us to do: He wants us to set our minds on things above, to live out Christ's rule here and now. You see the pattern? The same type of process, the same type of points; except now in verse 2, one more thing is added. So you see, a work has been done on behalf of you, it's produced the work in you. So again, now there is a work for you. And then he adds the extra: "so don't be a piece of work, so don't be a piece of work."

The one difference you find here in this second example in verse 2 is not only does he talk about what we should do, but he alerts us to the fact that there is an ugly duckling tendency to resort back to an old, broken way of living that doesn't fit anymore. You see it, verse 2: "Set your minds on things above, not on things that are on earth." And he's going to expand that in the rest of this chapter, and so you'll see much more illustration and commentary on how that is to be worked out. But Paul primarily is reminding us here that though we have been saved, we still live in a perverse and wicked generation, we still live in a world that is broken; and that's part of the intention of God. He's left you here to be salt, to be light, to share the good news. But unless you are purposefully setting your mind on things that are above, there's a danger that you would descend into patterns of brokenness. You would start to think only about the here and now again, and then you would forget to purposefully set your mind on things above, than to remember that even in this broken world, Jesus is King and ruling over it.

Now again, he's going to expand much more on this in the rest of the chapter. But do you see the big point? Through your union with Christ, when He died for you, you died to that old life of enslavement to sin. So you don't need to be dead anymore. You don't need to live like a dead sinner anymore.

My granny has passed away and gone to glory. She was a wonderful and quirky woman. Me and her would go out. We don't go out for coffee in Ireland, you take your granny out for a pot of tea. And when we would go out with her, she would make us share the tea bag, share the tea bag. See, she had grown up in World War II, she was a child of the war, and she had been conditioned to be frugal and careful. She lived on rations. She didn't see a banana her whole childhood life until she was in her 20s, that's when she saw her first banana. It was a different world.

But you know what? The war ended when she was a teenager. But still a woman in her 80s, she was living like she was still on rations. If you went to her house, if you didn't clear everything on your plate, you were in trouble. If she was cooking, and there happened to be the most minuscule bit of butter left, it was rewrapped and put in the fridge. Nothing was to be wasted. Now, she didn't have a lot of money, but she could have gone and bought more groceries, she had enough to do that. But she wouldn't, she didn't. She'd live still like she used to in the war. It still marked everything that she did, and everything that she did in particular in regards to food. She lived on rations a long time after that ceased to be a thing.

Well, Paul is writing to tell us, "Friend, the war is over. You don't need to live that way anymore. Why would you live make-believe? Why would you live still in that old, miserable, frugal, denied place? We have died to that old life. We've been raised to new life in Christ." And yet, he's talking about that ugly duckling syndrome, that tendency to forget what we are in Him, and still stalk and wonder and go back to that old pattern that once marked us. But God calls us to, "Set your minds on things above, not on things that are on the earth. For you have died with Christ, with Christ."

Friend, you've died with Christ. You don't need to look down. You don't need to go back. You don't need to lose your focus and get trapped just on earthly things in the here and now. We live for Him and heaven's pleasing, heaven's court. Christian, you have been raised, so you can look up. You have died, so don't look down. And then, lastly, he says, "Christian, you have been hidden with Him, so you can look ahead. You've been hidden with Him, so you can look ahead."

Look again at verses 3 and 4: "For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." The paragraph takes on a new dynamic at the end. Up to that point, verses 1, 2 and 3, he talks about the here and now, the present things you enjoy through your union with Christ. And then in verse 4, he looks ahead to one more aspect of that union that is yet to come, that's in the future.

And so he starts in verse 3 by unfolding that last part of the here and now, that if you are united with Christ, he says, your life is hidden with Christ in God. This is a wonderful statement, isn't it? This is a statement you would want Dr. Stephen J. Lawson to unfold for three weeks so we could just soak in it. And it deserves that. This is one of those verses you need to meditate on, you need to chew on. And on one level, it's hard to get our arms around it in the context of this one Sunday morning. But what can we say? Well, at the risk of being boring – oh, this is always a risk whenever I step in the room – at the risk of being boring, let me talk to you about the grammar here, because it's weird. There's weird grammar that's being purposefully used here.

Did you notice there Paul said and used the phrase, "your life, your life"? And what he is doing there is, in the Greek he actually uses the plural, "your," – so, your – but he uses the singular, "life." So if only there was a Texan translation of the Scriptures, it would read, "y'all's life." Do you hear how that's weird? You'd either expect, "your" singular "life" singular, or, "y'all's lives."

But Paul doesn't do that. He says, "y'all's life." Why? What he's saying here, what he's purposefully under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit saying here is this is a truth that is universal. Every believer who has put their trust in Jesus Christ – past, present, future; all across this globe; every tribe, kindred, and tongue – this is true of them. But I want you to think about it individually. I want you to think about it in terms of your singular life.

There's something here we need to soak in, something personal about the nature of our connection to Jesus: not our, "your" singular connection to Jesus. And what is that? Well, he tells us here that, "your life is hidden with Christ in God." There's something about your union with Christ, and it sounds almost blasphemous, because he couldn't better the statement. Something about your union with Christ that he relates to the union that exists within the Trinity, between God the Father and Jesus Christ Himself. They are one.

Jesus declares that Himself, John 17, that, "We would be one as He and the Father are one." And for all of eternity there has been a perfect unity between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; indivisible, inseparable. They can never be thwarted or pulled one from another. And Paul brings it down to you personally and he says, "In a similar way, so strong is the bond that exists between you, believer, and Jesus Christ." It cannot be broken. It cannot be separated. It will stand for all eternity. The superest of super glues cannot compare to the divine knitting that has taken place to join you to Jesus Christ; it is unbreakable.

It's Romans 8: "Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Our union with Christ is an indivisible one, it's an eternal one, and that changes everything. And yet, do you see the language in verse 3, that all-important union? At some level it's hidden; that's what it says. It reminds us, doesn't it, of the Christmas carol, "Veiled and flesh the Godhead see." It reminds me of the story of the transfiguration, you remember, where Peter, James and John are up there on the mountaintop; and there for a moment, something happens where Jesus' glory, that to that point had been veiled, is put on full display; and it forever changes and affects those three men.

But it reminds us, that special occasion, that the normal life of Jesus was altogether different. He always was glorious. He always was perfect. He always was the full Son of God, walking in the flesh; and yet, it was hidden. So many were in the same room as Jesus and didn't get who He was. So many walked past Him on the street like He was just another ordinary man. And what Paul is saying here is, "Christian, you are hidden with Christ."

And like you go into work; they might not notice. You go and eat in a restaurant later, the waiter may not see a difference in you compared to somebody else. They might not be able to perceive the full glory of your union with Christ, but that doesn't mean it's not there. You think of precious stones buried in the ground. The stones themselves always possess exactly the same value, but so many people walk over the top of them for not realizing what exactly is there.

And hidden, your union with Christ. But that doesn't change its value. That doesn't change its reality. That doesn't change or make it any less significant or wonderful. These qualities that we value that Paul has been talking about, they are so special, and the world cannot perceive it. Just because they walk past you on the street doesn't mean that that reality isn't true. The average person may not see it, but you have an unbreakable bond with Jesus Christ. How amazing is Jesus, and how glorious is our union with Him.

And yet, rather than stop there, he continues. In verse 4, he talks about how this hidden reality now will be put on display later. It says in verse 4, "When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." Again, our union with Christ is the central theme here, and it's dressed in that phrase "Christ who is your life." It's not saying simply that we share our lives with Him. You know, it's so nice in the church, isn't it? We share our lives together. We enjoy company with each other. We eat with each other. We spend time with each other.

That's not what's being said here. Rather, it's saying something much stronger. So strong is our union with Christ, that not only do we share our life with Him, He is actually our life. He is who we are. Our identity cannot be understood apart from Him. There's not certain parts of your life that you have, and then there's your Jesus bit. He is everything; that's the idea. He is all-encompassing. There's no identity outside of Christ. As Galatians 2:20 says, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

But now that union that drives every daily reality in our life, we read it also guarantees a future. Look again at verse 4: "When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." Paul talks about this great event that so much of scripture points towards. And the Christian tradition over history has longed for the coming of Jesus. He's going to come back and He's going to come back in glory. But what Colossians 3:4 adds, what it adds to our understanding here is that because of union with Christ, we are so united to Him, that not only have we died with Him, and not only have we been risen with Him, not only have we been hidden with Him, but verse 4 says, "We will appear with Him in glory."

The "when" and "then" in verse 4 are connected, you can't separate them. When Christ appears, then you also will appear. It can't happen any other way, because you are united to Christ. Where He goes, you go; when He appears, you appear; that's the idea. And the gracious reality here is we don't simply appear as spectators. We're not on the sidelines cheering this great event. But rather, so full is our union with Christ, so gracious and

complete was His work in us, that when He returns in glory, verse 4 says we will share in that glory.

Friends, those of you who have ever played sports, you'll know that there is a world of difference from being the spectator cheering your team on. And that can be wonderful. But how much better to be wearing the jersey on the field in the game when the final whistle blows and victory is declared. And what we're being told here is that we will not simply be a spectator, we will be a full participant in team Jesus when the final whistle is blown. As Romans 8:18 says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

Think of all of little Colossae. What is Colossae? But Paul writes to these ex-Pagans in a third-rate country town that nobody in the Roman world cared about at the time, and he writes to those individual Christians to say, "You will appear with Him in glory."

Monday mornings are hard work, aren't they? Man, you come to church on Sunday, and we sang together to the King, and we talk with each other, and iron sharpens iron, and we spur one another on to love and good deeds, and we come and we sit around the word of God and we feast from His table, and we're reminded that He is with us; and it's so good. And then the alarm goes on Monday, and what went wrong? We're yelling at our kids to brush their teeth. We go into work, and the boss says, "Look, the most important call is coming at 11:00, you've got to focus on that." Our head's spinning because we realize it's Monday, we don't actually have any groceries at home; what are we going to do? And then far from our mind is our union Christ. We're stuck in all these other things. But what does the word say? "Christian, you have been raised, so you can look up. You have died, so you don't have to look down. And you are hidden with Him, so you can look ahead."

That's who you are on Sunday, but also Monday, and every day after that, and every day throughout all of eternity, because you are eternally united to Christ. And yet as we close this morning, having just scratched this glorious

doctrine that's true for every believer, I want to draw your attention to just one word, one word we missed, and it's actually the first one. Do you see it? That conditional word in verse 1: "if, if." It makes so clear that all of these glorious realities – and they are immeasurably glorious – they are not true of every person in this world.

So what is the essential qualification to experience the glories of union with Christ? Well, it's in the text as well, isn't it? Repetition is the key to learning. The key to learning is repetition. Verse 1, "with Christ." Verse 1, "where Christ." Verse 3, "with Christ." Verse 4, "when Christ," and, "with Him."

It's not about what you do to make this thing work. I mean, I don't have a ten-step, five-step, hundred-step plan to help you to strive and move forward in holy living. It's never about you, it's about who you're trusting in. "There is no other name in heaven or earth given among men by which you may be saved." The Philippian jailer cried out to Paul and Silas, "What must I do to be saved?" Do you remember the answer? It wasn't really a to-do, it was a where do you look: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will, you will be saved, and united to Him for all eternity." Let's pray.

[Prayer] Our heavenly Father, we have so much to be thankful for. We are an undeserving people; and yet, we have been given so much because of Jesus Christ. We thank You that He does not leave us. We thank You instead, Lord, that our identity is bound up with His; and there is no one we would rather be with. We thank You that nothing can separate us from the love of God and Christ Jesus our Lord. We thank You, Lord, for the sureness that is found in Him, and we ask, Lord, that You would give us the grace to live as we have been made, that we would see that we have been raised, that we would see that we have died, that we would see that we are hidden with Christ. And we pray, Lord, that tomorrow would be affected by that, that You would help us to propel forward in Christian living, not for our glory, but for the glory of Jesus, that we would display Him before this lost world.



We thank You, Lord, that the best is yet to be. And we pray, Lord, for each brother and sister in the room and ask, Lord, that You would help them to fix their eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of the faith, and You would help them, Lord, to run well, with all endurance, the race that is marked out for them.

Lord, we do pray, we pray for any who have not yet put their trust in Jesus, and we would ask, Lord, that You would protect them from that great lie of Satan that makes them think that they can do; and instead, they would throw themselves upon the mercy of God that is found only in Jesus Christ.

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."