

Colossians Series

[Sun. Aug. 9, 2015] Colossians Series, Col. 3.1-4 – Craig A. Thurman

Having completed the study of chapter 2 let me summarize it by taking the three imperatives in it:

Beware of those who would spoil or rob us through philosophy and vain deceit. Problem: These things take away from Christ, who He is and what He has done for us through His cross. Answer: Christ is the fulness of the Godhead bodily and He provided through His cross a complete redemptive work. No man can add to it or take anything away. (2.8-15)

Let none judge or condemn us for not fawning after their error by applying the Law of Moses to the New Covenant. (2.16, 17) Problem: There are some, particularly among the Jews, who would have us to add to the righteousness of Christ our own works by imposing ordinances that belonged only to O.T. Israel. Answer: Those things were only shadows of the real that was to come.

Let none beguile us of our reward by moving us to humble ourselves to rendering religious services to angels. (2.18-23) Problem: There are some who would supplement to our service to Christ a service to spiritual creatures, which service has no Biblical basis. Answer: Jesus Christ is our only Head from whom we receive all that we need for life and godliness. Therefore we are to serve only Him.

Most agreement for paragraph divisions (cf. p.2 above) are as follows:

3.1, 5, 12, 18 (3.1, 5, 9, 12, 15, 19, 23; The Grammatical Blueprint Bible)

Consider all of the imperatives in the book of Colossians:

As we just saw, in chapter two there are three imperatives. Three is the number for the Trinity. In chapter 1.1-8 the Trinity is comprehended.

In chapter three there are 14 imperatives. 14 is the number for *salvation*:

Set your affection on things above (2) – *Mortify* your members (5) – *Put off* these things (8) – *Lie* (not) (9) – *Put on* certain bowels (12) – *Let ... rule* the peace of God (15) – *Be thankful* (15) – *Let dwell* the word (16) – *Wives*,

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submit yourselves unto your husbands (18) – Husbands, *love* your wives (19) – Husbands *be not bitter* against your wives (19) – Children *obey* your parents (20) – Fathers *provoke* not your children (21) – Servants *obey* your lords (22)

Brings the imperative to a total of 17. 17 is the number for victory.

There is not an actual break in thought from chapter 3 to chapter 4. Continuing the series of imperatives we find through Col. 4.5 three more imperatives.

Masters (lords), *give* to your servants (5.1) – *Continue in* (watching by, ἐν) prayer (2) – *Walk* in wisdom (5).

20 total imperatives; 20 is the number for redemption. In verse 5 we find the word *redeeming*.

To complete the chapter we find six more imperatives: *receive* Marcus (10) – *salute* the Laodicean brethren (15) – *cause* the Laodicean brethren to read this epistle (16) – *say* to Archippus (17) – *take heed* to the ministry (17) – *remember* my imprisonment (18).

So, in chapter 4 there are a total of nine imperatives (the three in vss. 1-5; and the final 6 rounding out the chapter), the number for *fruit*. All of these imperatives considered (3 in chapter 2; 14 in chapter 3; and 9 in chapter 4) bring the total number of imperatives used in the book of Colossians, as best as I can tell, to 26, the number for *the gospel of Christ*.

Col. 1.21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled
22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:
23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard (1.5), and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister...

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Have we heard in the gospel the hope in it that is for us? Do we know that no matter what happens in this life we have eternal life? Have we understood that our sins are forgiven, that we have peace with God through the death, burial, and resurrection of the Father's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ? If we know this, and if we are walking with Christ in a New Testament church, then these imperatives are to us. If we don't know this, these imperatives really mean nothing to us. While we know that they are good things to do, we will not apply anything of them to our lives but what falls out naturally or accidentally. It's not that we really try to live for Christ, but there is just enough religion in our lives to make it look like we are living for Him. Why? We have not truly come to a living faith in Christ as Savior. We really don't have hope in Christ for eternal life? Our hope is only here. We live like it. All that we do is for the here and now. Christians can and ought to do differently, and that is what we find in our lesson today.

Chapter 3

Εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ
1 ¶ *If ye then be risen with Christ,*

ye ... be risen, συνηγέρθητε, 2nd p pl, aor 1, ind, pass of συνεγείρω; σὺν with, by, together + ἐγείρω to rise, lift;

The predominate thought of 2.8-23 is that we can attest to the truth that Christ has worked grace upon our hearts (2.11 *circumcision made without hands*); that we are walking by faith (2.12); the fruits of which are the results of the forgiveness of sins that we received, as the elect of God, *in that day* when Christ died on the cross; and when he raised from the dead we, the whole lot of the elect, were quickened together with Him before God. But particularly, this clearly refers back to 1.12:

*Col 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye **are risen** συνηγέρθητε with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

This refers to the fact of a walk of faith. We are now walking with Christ by faith. Therefore, **if** we can attest to the reality of this truth in our lives, ... *then ye **are risen with Christ** And, *If ye then be risen with Christ ... seek and mind those things which are above.**

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There is at times a notable element lacking in some who profess that they have come to faith in Christ. How many have we seen it so, that professors of Christ were ready and willing to do all the commandments of Christ; such zeal and fervency? They were filled up with love for the Lord. But then there are others who come to Christ that have trouble with getting into the waters of baptism. This is strikingly revealing to me. It is an indication that what should have happened hasn't. Instead of faith it was probably more of a mere mental ascension of the historical Jesus, because had it been otherwise the new nature would have worked a will to do. When Christ brings one to life from the dead there is a change that takes place. The change is from darkness to light, not gray; from without God, without hope, to the only true and living God and hope of eternal life. There is a new will that says, *'Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth.'*

Kenneth S. Wuest, *Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*, vol. 1, p.217, 'Paul bases his exhortation to seek those things which are above, not on an unfulfilled hypothetical case, but upon a fulfilled condition.'

seek
desire, require, enquire about,
endeavor for, even, 'keep a fervent zeal for'

those things which are above,

seek, ζητεῖτε, 2nd p pl, pres, ind, act of ζητέω; KJV, *Lk. 24.5, seek; Mt.6.33, desire, Lk.12.48, require; Jn. 7.19, 29, go about; Jn.16.19, enquire; Acts 16.10, endeavor; Acts 21.31, went about; Acts 27.30, were about; Ro.10.3, going about;*

above, ἄνω, adverb; found nine times in the N.T., *Jn.2.7, brim; Jn. 8.23; Acts 2.19; Gal. 4.26; Col.3.1, 2, above; Jn. 11.41; He. 12.15, up.*

The place where our living Lord is, (not still hanging on a cross, not still laying in a tomb) to whom our real worship is directed, and where our real spiritual service is performed in the very presence of God by prayers and spiritual sacrifices.

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[things ...]

where Christ sitteth on the right [hand] of God.

sitteth, καθήμενος, nom, sing, masc, part, pres of κάθημαι; κατά down, against + ἡμῶν Thayer's, 'a verb of which only the pres. and impf. are in use in class. Grk. ... 1. to sit down, **seat one's self ...**' **Our Lord, having fully accomplished the will of the Father for all of those given to Him in eternity past, could then seat Himself beside the Father's right hand, where He is presently for us.**

Notice, not on His throne, but in the throne of His Father.

Heb 12:2 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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus Christ shall have His own throne in time to come:

*Mt 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration **when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory**, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

What are those things that we are to seek above **where** our Lord Jesus Christ sits by the Father? We need not to scan the universe for the discovery of these things. We need only consider that special place where Christ is seated at the Father's right hand. When we consider this place we shall begin to understand what those things are. Our Lord Jesus is there for us.

*Heb 9:24 **For Christ is not entered** into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but **into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us ...***

3.12-15 gives us a synopsis of some of those heavenly things: mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness, charity, not only is there peace with God there is the peace of God, and there is a constant state of thankfulness. All of these things are there for us

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in Christ before the Father, and more. And let me add this to the minds eyes while we focus on that which is there for us in glory.

There are the seven Spirits of the Lord by whose providence we receive everything we need for life and godliness.

Re 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne ...

*2Pe 1:3 According as **his divine power** hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue ...*

What lack we of the grace and power of God needed to walk with Christ through all of life's experiences? And there is more. All spiritual blessings are there in His presence and come to us through Christ Jesus our Lord:

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: ... he tells us of our eternal election, predestination, & acceptance in Christ; in whom we have redemption, forgiveness, wisdom and prudence ... that we should be to the praise of His glory.

What Jesus is to the Father, He is for us; we are in Christ.

There is fulness of joy and eternal pleasures:

Ps 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: [David now lifts his eyes into glory] in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

*Joh 17:13 And **now come I to thee**; and these things I speak in the world, **that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.***

We have an audience with God at all times:

*Heb 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing **he ever liveth to make intercession for them.***

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Jn.11.41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

*42 And I knew that **thou hearest me always**: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.*

There is satisfaction for justice (no condemnation) and justification (the declaration of righteousness):

*Is.53.11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be **satisfied**: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant **justify** many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

We behold the oneness of God; the union between the Father and the Son; there is harmony, quiet, rest:

Joh 10:30 I and my Father are one.

Heb 2:13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. (Never separated from the love of God; no fear of being cast off.)

We see there in Christ our life; eternal life:

*Joh 14:19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: **because I live, ye shall live also**. (As long as our Lord lives, we live!)*

This is a sampling of what we are spoiled from (robbed of) for not *watching, being aware* (2.8.); this is a sampling of why we do not need to add an iota to the terms of the New Covenant, to be intimidated to follow legalistic rules of others to walk by faith; this is a sampling why we should not allow others to move us into worshipping/rendering service to angels. **The result of stooping to these base elements of the world is the loss of the greatest spiritual comforts that we have in this life with Christ.** Reading, being taught, believing all that the Word of truth reveals keeps our zeal and our mind focused on Him. These are the things that are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God.

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Brethren, we might think that such a fall away from Christ would be impossible for those who have been raised so high with Him by the operations of the faith of God. But the truth is, we are always prone to being misled for innumerable reasons. One of the most prevalent propensities working against us is our dissatisfaction with One Bread for life. (Nu.21.5) Discontentment with the manner of life with Christ is at the root of feeling like we need something new to believe or practice. It is the same ole KJV Bible. It is the same ole local church. The ordinances are always the same. The same services, songs, preacher, deacons, treasurer's reports, same faces year after years. That attitude shows a discontentment with the true Bread of Life. It is a sinful and dangerous dissatisfaction to have that we must cast off.

Εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε οὗ ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ καθήμενος

2 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*
– Mind ye – not things upon the earth.

mind, φρονεῖτε, 2nd p pl, pres, ind. and **imper** of φρονέω; ;

Only other passage where φρονεῖτε is in the imperative mood:

*2Co 13:11 ¶ Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, **be** of one **mind** φρονεῖτε, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*

A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. IV, 500, 'Paul does not mean that we should never think [of] the things upon the earth, but that these should not be our aim, our goal, our master. The Christian has to keep his feet upon the earth, but his head in the heavens.'

Mt 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Comp. (Jn. Trapp)

Pv.23.4 ¶ Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

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5 *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.*

1Pe 1:3 ... *He has begotten us again unto a lively hope ...*

4 *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

5 *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ...*

Ro 8:5 *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.*

Kenneth S. Wuest, *Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*, vol. 1, p.217, 'Lightfoot says: "The same expression [in verse 1, *is*, edited] repeated for emphasis; **'You must not only seek heaven; you must also think heaven ...'**" (bolding added)

We understand the sentiment concerning heaven, but so much about heaven is misunderstood, as if that is where the saints are to dwell forever. It is not. The Spirit of the Lord would have us to seek and mind those things which are above where our Lord Jesus Christ is seated, because He will come back to this earth, and we will be coming with Him; that we shall be on this earth for a certain time, and then, ultimately, we shall go to the new earth forever. That's a fuller explanation of the sense that we are given here. (vss.1-4)

τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε μὴ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

3 *For ye are dead,*

ye are dead, ἀπεθάνετε, 2nd p pl, aor 1 ind of ἀποθνήσκω; ἀπό forth, since, of + θνήσκω dead; ἀποθνήσκω is to perish or die, to be dead; this verb form is only used in Colossians (Col.2.20 ye be dead; 3.3 For ye are dead).

This describes our standing to the world. We are dead to it.

Ga 6:14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

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1Jo 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ ἐν τῷ θεῷ
and your life is hid with Christ in God.

is hid, κέκρυπται, perf, ind, pass of κρύπτω to hide; KJV, Mt. 5.14, hid; Mt. 13.35, secret.

In the covenant of redemption we were given to Christ in eternity. We were kept, secured, hid in Him since. Nothing can remove us from Him.

Jn.10.27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Our life is hid in Christ. That life didn't just begin to be hid when we believed. Now, having faith in Christ we know that life and can live it through Him living in us. We are in Christ and Christ is in God. **Christ cannot be without God, and we cannot be without Christ. This is an unbreakable union.**

Our life is hid with Christ in God.

The time of the initiatory act of election is our life.

The time of the initiatory act of election is hid with Christ in God.

ἀπεθάνετε γάρ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν κέκρυπται σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ ἐν τῷ θεῷ

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear,

Or, shall be manifested

Grammatically:

Ye shall be manifest with Christ in glory, when He, who is our life, shall be manifested.

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shall appear, φανερωθῆ, 3rd ps, aor 1, **subj, pass** of φανερώω; φανερωθῆ is used ten times in the N.T. (translated *shall be manifested; should be manifest; may be manifest; should be made manifest; might be made manifest; shall appear; do appear*).

We know that there is coming from glory, at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, our new bodies. (1Co.15.49; 2Co.5.1, 2) But here we are reading about our *life*. Isn't applying the principals of the Word of God to the lives that we live now living forward of that which shall be a completed reality when Christ comes? We are living as our Lord lived when He was here. We are taking of His life and living it for ourselves. Yes, now we love the brethren weakly, but when He comes it shall be perfected. Joy is presently mixed with sorrow, but not then. When we have hoped the best for others, then it is a reality without any sense of suspicion or ill. We won't be double-thinking or rethinking what we had intended for the good of our brothers and sisters in Christ. While we have desired peace, union and harmony in the body, even though there is an element in us of unrest, and misunderstanding, when Christ comes the old nature will then be completely dissipated and the new nature is all that remains. When? When Christ comes! For now, the life that we so long for and apply, and walk by faith, is what we shall receive in its fullness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We should be transforming to His image now,

*Ro 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye **transformed** by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

because then we shall be like Him.

1Jo 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but **we know that, when he shall appear φανερωθῆ, we shall be like him**; for we shall see him as he is.

then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

shall ... appear, φανερωθήσεσθε, 2nd p pl, fut, ind, pass of φανερώω.

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*1Co.15.49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.***

Christ's coming shall be in glory. It shall be wonderful. It is going to be a brilliant, magnificent display before the whole earth. And we are going to be with Him in that time of His glory.

Ten times the Greek phrase, ἐν δόξῃ, *in glory*, appears in the N.T. Some make this synonymous with *heaven*, but it should not be thought to be referring to heaven. To whatever this phrase is connected it refers to its wonder or brilliance. The first use of this Greek phrase is at:

ἐν δόξῃ speaks of the manner of their appearance, not the place:

Lk.9.30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

*31 Who appeared **in glory**, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.*

The next Scripture is 1Co.15.41, which speaks of one star differing from another star in glory.

*1Co 15:41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star **in glory.***

To continue with this phrase we continue reading in 1Co.15.

*1Co.15.42 **So** (in this manner) also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:*

*43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised **in glory**: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Again, the Greek phrase refers to the appearance, not the place.

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2Co 3:7 *But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was **glorious** (ἐν δόξῃ, **in glory**; This not referring to the place, which was not heaven, but the Mount Sinai. It must refer to appearance, or brilliance of the Law in the face Moses ...) so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses **for the glory of his countenance**; which glory was to be done away:*

And reading on ...

2Co.3.8 *How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather **glorious**? (or, ἐν δόξῃ, **in glory**)*

9 *For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. (ἐν δόξῃ, **in glory**)*

10 *For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.*

11 *For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.(or, ἐν δόξῃ, **in glory**)*

So do these last three verses refer to a place? Or do they rather describe the manner of His riches; His coming; and of His ascension?

Php 4:19 *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory (or, ἐν δόξῃ, **in glory**) by Christ Jesus.*

Col 3:4 *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (or, ἐν δόξῃ, **in glory**).*

1Ti 3:16 *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory (or, ἐν δόξῃ, **in glory**). (Probably meaning the wonder, splendor, brilliance of His ascension before a limited audience that day.)*

We shall appear in the brilliance of Christ's eternal and glorified glory before the world that now is. Every eye shall see Him.

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Re 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

And we shall be with Him. Are we prepared for His coming? It doesn't matter if we live or die before that day we shall all be with Him. Yes, there is coming a judgment seat where we shall stand before the Lord Jesus and receive from Him reward for service. Don't live with regret. Live for Christ. Use His talents in His service. Be watchful and waiting until our Lord returns.

Mt.24.44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς φανερωθῇ ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ