

Seek Things Above Imperatives of Crucified Living-4

Pray for EE if you know anyone going out explain a bit about them so the whole group can pray for them. Pray for boldness and fruit that remains.

Stand and read 1st Corinthians 11:17-34 and pray.

Christ's work on Calvary forever gave us the power and authority so we can stop anything that enslaves us and so that we can start anything He asks us to do!

First open your Bible to a Scripture that God is using to help you mortify your old life, something He is stripping away from your life or clothing you with!

Second, find someone that you can ask about one burden they bear, and in the spirit of Galatians 6:2, bear it with them.

May I again remind you of the two sides of the coin of salvation. We could use Paul's words from Romans—justification and sanctification. To best understand what Paul is asking us to do in Colossians let me contrast and explain justification and sanctification.

- At communion we remember our **justification**, what Christ did for me on the cross--**sanctification** is what Christ is doing in me because of the cross.
- At communion we remember our **justification** that was completely finished in me the instant I was saved—**sanctification** is an ongoing process never completed on earth until I meet Jesus face to face at death or His coming.
- At communion we remember our **justification** that was activated the moment I trusted in the Person of Christ Jesus and His finished sacrifice of the cross—**sanctification** grows with each obedient choice I make empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- At communion we remember our **justification** which is my position declared right in God's sight—**sanctification** is my practice made right by becoming more conformed to His image.

Just as there is nothing we can do before our salvation to make us accepted by God; and there is nothing we can do after our salvation that makes us acceptable to God.

As we were saved only by the accomplishment of Christ's sacrifice on the cross—so we live each day 'by faith' (the same faith by which we were saved). We are always

dependent upon Christ's gracious death upon the cross that saves and keeps us!

*"Our participation in the process of **sanctification** comes only after we've been totally accepted and made right before God through faith in Jesus. **So yes, we work hard at obeying God's word. We read our Bibles. We pray. We meditate on Scripture. We memorize Scripture. We share the gospel. We serve in our church. We fast. God commands us in His Word to do many things, and our obedience is both pleasing to Him and brings His blessing to our lives. But not one adds to our justification, our standing before God, our eternal life. Only grace sustains lasting change and sanctification . Through the cross we overcome not only the guilt of sin, but the power of sin as well**¹.*

Colossians 3 is built around 14 imperative commands. Remember that **God never commands me to do what He hasn't already given me the grace to accomplish by faith through His Spirit!**

Let's walk back through this chapter, see what Paul relates to us from the Lord, and then pause and ASK the Lord to unleash these powerful spiritual qualities in our lives today.

If then you were raised with Christ,

- **seek those things which are above**, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
- v. 2 **Set your mind** on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.
- v. 5 Therefore **put to death your members** which are on the earth: **fornication (NIV sexual immorality), uncleanness (NIV impurity), passion (NIV lust), evil desire, and covetousness (NIV greed)**, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.
- v. 8 But now you yourselves are to **put off all these: anger, wrath (NIV rage), malice, blasphemy (NIV slander), filthy language** out of your mouth:
- v. 9 **Do not lie to one another**, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, 11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all:
- v. 12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **put on (NIV clothe yourselves with) tender mercies (NIV compassion); kindness; humility;**

¹ C. J. Mahaney, The Cross Centered Life, Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2002, p. 31-34.

meekness (NIV gentleness); longsuffering (NIV patience); 13 bearing with one another: and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

- v. 15 And **let the peace of God rule in your hearts**, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.
- v. 16 **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly** in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
- 18 **Wives, submit to your own husbands**, as is fitting in the Lord.
- 19 **Husbands, love your wives** and do not be bitter (NIV harsh) toward them.
- 20 **Children, obey your parents in all things**, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.
- 21 **Fathers, do not provoke (NIV embitter) your children**, lest they become discouraged.
- 22 **Bondservants, obey in all things your masters** according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.
- 23 And whatever you do, **do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men**, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. NKJV

You and I are to live by the same simple faith that saved us. Paul tells us this truth in Colossians 2:6.

Colossians 2:6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, NKJV

Now join me in Romans 6, as we see how to live the life of killing our flesh, mortifying

our flesh—and living the crucified with Christ life!

*Romans 6: 11 Likewise you also, **reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.** NKJV*

*Romans 6: 11 **In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.** NIV*

*Romans 6: 11 **Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.** NASB*

Now, in simple faith that saved you repeat that to yourself. (Just like my old pastor John MacArthur always used to tell us 'preach the Gospel to yourself!') Say something like this:

Even if I do not feel it, understand it, or even at times want it I WILL by faith, believing YOU consider myself dead to sin. Or in times of need, "Lord I operate on what I know is true, you have made me dead to sin."

When I truly prayed, asking in simple faith for Christ to save me—whether I felt a strong emotional feeling or not, God began His work within me. I started changing from the inside out. The same is true with these imperatives.

God never commands me to do what He hasn't already given me the grace to accomplish by faith through His Spirit!

Now go through the same process the rest of the way through Romans 6—

- I will not let sin reign...
- I will not present my members...
- I now by faith present myself to You God...
- I present myself to You Lord as you slave...
- I ask You to enslave my members (my mind, my emotions, my desires, my body, what ones are out of control? If they are out of control they aren't under Christ's control...)