

Colossians 3:1

The Doctrine of Sanctification

3:1- “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.”

“Ei oun sunegerthete to christo”
“If therefore you-have-been-raised with Christ”

“Since” is an “if” in the first-class condition in the Greek which means “Assuming you have been raised with Christ, then...”

“Since” or “assuming” you have been resurrected to a new domain and are no longer part of this world, think/learn these things and gain understanding of this new life.

“...you have been raised” is passive verb

In 2:12 “raised with Christ” refers to new life with Christ. Here “raised with Christ” refers to our potential/obligation.

This is written in the imperative which urges/commands the Colossians to:

1. Think, learn, understand Christian theology
2. Live, do, act Christian theology that you understand.

“Set your hearts on things above”

1. “Set your hearts” refers to “seeking” and “desiring”
 - a. Seek the things above (Mat. 6:33, “Seek first the kingdom.” And, Mark 7:15)
 - i. “above” is contrasted with “below” in John 3:12-13 with Jesus and Nicodemus.
 - ii. Philippians 3:14 “upward call”
 - iii. Gal. 4:26 “upward city”
 - b. “Desire” or “be mindful of” things above as in Romans 12:3 and Philippians 2:5
2. “above” - may be one of the false teachers philosophical phrases that Paul is going to redefine. The mystics want to focus on the hidden heavenly realm above, but Paul is going to define that as:
 - a. Christ → “where Christ is”
 - b. Christ’s domain → “seated at the right hand of God.” Jewish tradition had all other spiritual beings (including priests) standing, but the son sits to share in sovereign rule (Psalm 110:1)
 - c. Where the power and glory are “2 Chr. 18:18; Ps. 11:4; Isa. 6:1; Dan. 7:9 and God’s creative power
 - d. Defeated all the spiritual powers (2:10, 2:15; 1:16)
 - e.
 - f. Our domain
 - g. Location of the treasures

In 2:20 “if you have died with Christ” is now contrasted with “if you have been raised with Christ.”

3:2 – “Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”

This is parallel to 3:1:

- “Set your hearts on things above.” (3:1) – means to seek, desire things above
- “Set your minds on things above.” (3:2) – means to transform the mind into obedient submission (Rm.12:1-2)

Earthly things

1. Contrast with flesh and Spirit

2. Above is where Christ is seated to rule contrasts with earthly things that reject Christ and his authority including Paul's reference to:
 - a. "human tradition" and Christ" in 2:8
 - b. "shadow" and "substance" in 2:17
3. Rejects the dualistic structure of the false teachers and their ascetic practices that create the false contrast the body and the soul
 - a. "all things were created by Christ in heaven and earth" 1:16
 - b. "all things were reconciled to Christ by his death." 1:20
 - c. Thus, there is no dichotomy since Christ is the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of ALL THINGS

Paul was critical of the same thing to the Philippians, urging them to avoid earthly things (Phil. 3:19) and thinking and have Christ's mind.

- Phil. 2:2 – one mind, like minded
- Phil. 3:20 – citizenship in heaven

3:3 – “For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”

Close association

security

2:3 Hidden along with treasure in Christ

historical truth rather than mystical

true identity is only found in Christ

3:4 – “When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”

3:5 – “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.”

3:6 – “Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.”

3:7 - “You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.”

3:8 – “But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.”

3:9-10 – “Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”

3:11 – “Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.”

3:12 – “Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

3:13 – “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **15** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. **16** Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. **17** And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.