

Commentary on Colossians Chapters 3&4 by Chuck Smith 5.19.24

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May memory verse Romans 6:8 (NKJV)

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

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Chapter 3

So then,

If then you are risen with Christ [If you are risen with Christ... going back to buried with Christ in baptism, now risen with Him], seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God ([Col 3:1](#)).

You're not really bound to these things of the world, the rudiments of the world. You're not under the laws: touch not, handle not, taste not. You've risen with Christ. You're living in a new dimension of life, the spiritual dimension of life. And you should be seeking those things which are above where Christ is sitting on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God ([Col 3:2-3](#)).

Now, again, my life is the reflection of what I am and what I believe. And it doesn't mean that Paul is giving these people a license to live after the flesh. It doesn't mean that he's saying it doesn't matter how you live. What he is saying, that these aren't the things that make you righteous. And you shouldn't be living in a negative relationship with God under the law; you should be living a positive relationship with God, seeking the things which are spiritual, seeking and pursuing those things that are above. Setting your affections on things above, not on these things on the earth. For really you are dead to them, and that's the principal he is teaching. I have been crucified with Christ, thus I am dead to the flesh and to the things of the flesh and to the life of the flesh; I should not be living after the flesh. For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. That's where I am now living in Christ, in God. And,

When Christ, who is our life, [Now, you see this is the key to it right here. Can you say that Christ is my life? As Paul said, "For me to live is Christ," and I love this powerful statement.] When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory ([Col 3:4](#)).

Jesus is going to come again as he said with "the clouds of heaven...and great glory" ([Matthew 24:30](#)). "Behold, He cometh...every eye shall see Him" ([Revelation 1:7](#)). "Ye

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men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing here into heaven, this same Jesus is going to come again" ([Acts 1:11](#)). And when Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory. Oh, but how important that we are able to say, "Christ who is my life." That my life be so completely bound up and centered in Christ that He is my life. Christ who is my life. I love it.

Mortify [or put to death] therefore your members which are upon the earth [that is the members of your body, those body desires put them to death]; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience ([Col 3:5-6](#)):

So don't be deceived; don't let men deceive you. You cannot live after your flesh and inherit the kingdom of God. The very fact that I have accepted Jesus Christ, the whole concept is that I have renounced the life of the flesh. I'm dead to the flesh that I might be alive unto God in Christ, living after the Spirit. And if I am still living after my flesh, the ritual of baptism is not only negated, but all that I might say is also negated. John said, "If a man says he loves God and yet hates his brother, he is a liar" ([John 4:20](#)). "The truth isn't in him" ([John 2:4](#)). If a man says he abides in Christ then he ought to be walking as Christ walked. In other words, it's not what you say which really counts; it's how you're walking that counts. And so, are you walking after the Spirit? Have you renounced these hidden things of the world? Have you mortified the deeds of the flesh? For don't be deceived, if you are living after the flesh, you are not an heir of the kingdom of God. It is a spiritual kingdom for those who are living and walking after the Spirit, regardless of what you may say or affirm to be so. They that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And so he lists these things and he says, "Look, the wrath of God is coming upon the earth because of these things. Don't presume upon the grace of God." The children of Israel made a tragic mistake thinking, "Well, we are God's chosen people, and we can live like the nations around us." You can't. You must live as God's people. Mortify, therefore, those fleshly things,

In the which you also walked sometime, when you lived in them. But now ye also put off all of these; [not just these more overt sins of the flesh, but put these off too, put off] anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him ([Col 3:7-10](#)):

So we should be as John says, walking as Jesus walked. He is our example; He is the image into which the Spirit of God is seeking to conform our lives. And so put off the old man, and put on the new.

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all ([Col 3:11](#)).

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We don't have distinctions in Jesus Christ, religious, ethnic or whatever; Christ is everything. He is all, and He is in all. There is not rich or poor, there is not favored and special class; we are just all one.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, [now, you put on Jesus Christ, you put off these things, put off anger, wrath, and malice and instead, put on] bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, and if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness [completeness] ([Col 3:12-14](#)).

So, not only am I to just put off the works of the flesh, the old life, I am to put on Jesus Christ, living after Him.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body; and be thankful ([Col 3:15](#)).

So, we're called to thanksgiving; we're called to the peace of God. And then, verse sixteen:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; [And that's why we're here tonight. That the word of Christ might dwell in our hearts richly. That we might teach and admonish one another.] teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord ([Col 3:16-18](#)).

Now, as we had mentioned when we were going though Ephesians, God gave very simple rules for marriage. Two rules: one for the wife, one for the husband. And if we'll follow these rules we can have a very happy marriage and a happy relationship. But if we violate these rules, we're going to bring misery into our marriage. The rule for the wife: submit yourself unto your own husband. To the husband: love your wife, be not bitter against them. So the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. The wife is to submit to the husband. These two are tied together. God knows that the greatest need that the woman has is to know that she is loved, that she is loved supremely. When she knows she is loved supremely, she is secure, and she feels that security, and thus anything my man does is all right. Then she finds it easy to submit to him, because she knows that he loves her supremely. And as she says, "Well, honey, whatever you want." God knows that the greatest need a man has is to be macho, to feel he's in control. And to challenge that is to court problems. But to play up to that is to open the door for all kinds of demonstrations of love. "Oh, my little sweet heart. Man, what can I do for her today; she's such a doll. She trusts my judgment; she trusts my wisdom. How can I show her how much I appreciate her and love her?" So, as the wife submits, the husband finds it easy to show his love. As she rebels, then he's got to

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show that he's macho. "I don't need you; I don't need anybody. I'm able to handle. I'm macho. I can do what I want." And so he becomes cold. And as he becomes cold, then she feels all the more insecure and she has to challenge all the more. "This creep! I don't know if he loves me or not. Think what he wants to do is stupid. We have to lose everything, and then he is going to take off. I know he is, because I don't know if he loves me or not." So you feel like you've got to challenge everything. "Are you sure? Do you really know what you're doing?" Macho, "I know what I'm doing. Leave me alone." He gets cold.

Two rules: wives submit, husbands love. Then you have a happy relationship. Because the wife feels the love and the security and she knows, "Hey, he's my man." And the husband, he feels so macho, "Hey, she's my little gal; she's trusting me to do the right thing." And it's beautiful. It's heaven on earth. Simple, isn't it? "Well," you say, "and it would be simple if my husband really knew what he was doing." But she says, "It would be simple if he really loved me, liked Jesus loved the church." Now,

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord ([Col 3:20](#)).

When we were going through Ephesians, he said, "Obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." And we do recognize that the highest authority in our life is God. And we, the presumption here, is that the parents are Christians and are seeking the spiritual welfare of the child. If the parents are not Christians and are demanding the child do something that would be a violation, of the child's conscience before God, then we must obey God rather than man. But assuming that the parents love the Lord and you have a Christian home, children, obey your parents in all things; this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged ([Col 3:21](#)).

And, *to anger*, is not in the original text. You notice it's in italics. It's just, "Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged." It's easy to discourage the child through unreasonable demands. Isn't it interesting how we want to make sure that our children don't make the same mistakes that we made. How we want them to be better than we were. We don't want them to goof off and get mediocre grades in school. We want them to get all A's. And sometimes, we are guilty of pushing our children with unreasonable demands, and what it does cause is discouragement on their part. Make sure that we're not making unreasonable demands upon them, taking away their humanness, causing discouragement. And so, don't provoke your children so that they get discouraged

Servants [or employees], obey in all things your masters [bosses] according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men ([Col 3:22-23](#));

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Oh, that you could have employees like that, that are doing things as unto the Lord. They do it heartily; they do it with joyfulness. They do it with a great spirit. Not to be a man pleaser, "Oh, the boss is coming. Look busy." But doing it as unto the Lord,

Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve [are a servant of] the Lord Christ ([Col 3:24](#)).

Now, you may be making your living by working there at that office, or factory, or wherever. That may be putting bread on the table, but your life really is bound up in Jesus Christ. You're His servant. You're called to serve Him. Now you make your living over here. But, even in making your living, if you will do things heartily as unto the Lord, it will open up many opportunities for you to witness. People will say, "How is it that on Monday you can be so happy; you're whistling. Man, my head aches so bad I can hardly see. You seem to have such a good attitude. Boy, if he'd told me that, I would've just really said, 'Hey you take this job, man and stuff it.' You had such a good attitude. And you just went ahead and did it. How is it?" Hey, it opens up so many opportunities to witness for you. Do it as unto the Lord, you're the Lord's servant. He's watching.

But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done: and there is no respect of persons ([Col 3:25](#)).

Chapter 4

Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal [pay them a decent salary]; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving ([Col 4:1-2](#));

As we said, prayer has many parts and an important part of prayer is praise and worship, thanksgiving. A minor part of prayer is request, petitions. But then Paul says, "Pray for us." And, of course, in each of the churches he requested prayer, and I think that every minister feels his need of prayer. Pray for us. And Paul desired that they would pray.

Withal praying for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds ([Col 4:3](#)):

Here I'm in prison because of my preaching, but pray that God will give me an open door here, even to declare the glorious truth of Christ.

That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom [The exhortations: continue in prayer, watch the same with thanksgiving, pray for us] toward them that are without [That is towards those in the world, walk in wisdom toward them], redeeming the time ([Col 4:4-5](#)).

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Don't waste time; we don't have that much time. Take advantage of every opportunity that God gives you. Redeem the time.

Let your speech be always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man ([Col 4:6](#)).

Peter said, "Be ready to give unto every man a reason for the hope that you have within you. That you might be able to answer men" ([1 Peter 3:15](#)). And so your speech always with grace. God help us, to bring this tongue under control. Now,

All of my state [or how I am doing] shall Tychicus declare unto you [will tell you], who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord ([Col 4:7](#)):

Tychicus delivered this epistle to the church. Paul was in Rome in prison. He wrote the epistle to the Ephesians and this epistle to the Colossians at the same time, and Tychicus carried this epistle. He also wrote at the same time an epistle to the Laodiceans. And they were to trade them back and forth. They were to read the epistle, this epistle, in the church and then read the one that he also sent to the Laodiceans. And so Tychicus was the one that brought these epistles from Paul to the churches there in Asia Minor. Interesting things that he says of him: he's a beloved brother, he's a faithful minister, and he is a fellow servant in the Lord. What neat things. He's a beloved brother; he's a faithful minister. He's a fellow servant in the things of the Lord.

Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate [he might tell you how I'm doing, and that he might find out how you're doing], and comfort your hearts; With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother ([Col 4:8-9](#)),

Now, this is Onesimus for which the book of Philemon was written: the runaway slave who ran away from Philemon, who met Paul in Rome and received Jesus Christ, who Paul was sending back to Philemon with a personal letter, from Paul to Philemon, begging Philemon's forgiveness and begging Philemon to set Onesimus free from his slavery.

With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here [the Lord is doing here]. Aristarchus my fellow prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas ([Col 4:9-10](#)),

Barnabas, of course, was the first companion with Paul on the first missionary journey. He was the one who went to Tarsus and found Paul after Paul's conversion. And going back to Tarsus for several years, Barnabas came and found him when there was a need in the church of Antioch for someone who really understood the Greek culture to come and minister to the Gentiles, and got Paul involved in the ministry, went with Paul in the first missionary journey. And Mark went with them on the first journey but got frightened and came home, and so when Barnabas wanted to take his nephew (it was his sister's son), wanted to take him on the second journey, Paul said, "No way." And

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the contention between Paul and Barnabas came so great that Barnabas took Mark and went. And Paul took Silas and went another direction. So now, this same Mark that Paul didn't want to go on the second missionary journey is with Paul there in Rome and he is greeting with Paul the church. And Paul, is saying, "If he comes to you, receive him."

And Jesus, which is called Justus ([Col 4:11](#)),

Jesus was a common name in those days. That's why He was usually called, Jesus of Nazareth to distinguish Him from all the other little boys that were named Jesus. It is the Hebrew name for Joshua or Yeshua, and so, the Hebrew is Yeshua; the Greek is Jesus. And so, here's another one in the Bible called Jesus, which is called Justus.

who are of the circumcision [or they are Jews]. These only are my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. Epaphras, who is one of you ([Col 4:11-12](#)),

He had been the one who was ministering there at the church of Colosse who had came and told Paul of the church and its condition.

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth [is greeting you], always laboring fervently for you in prayers ([Col 4:12](#)),

I love this. Epaphras was there in Rome with Paul, but he was always praying for those in Colosse. Laboring for you in prayer, or laboring fervently, the Bible says, "The effectual, fervent prayers of a righteous man avails much" ([James 5:16](#)). And here's Epaphras, their minister, though he's away from them fervently praying for them. What is he praying:

that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God ([Col 4:12](#)).

John said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in truth" ([3 John 1:4](#)). It's a very discouraging thing if you go away from a church and you hear the whole thing's gone to pieces. Fractured. But to go away and years later to hear, "Oh, they're walking in truth; they're going on with the Lord." No greater joy. And here's Epaphras praying that they might really walk perfect and complete in the will of God.

For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and [for] them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis. [These three cities that were close in proximity to each other.] Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you ([Col 4:13-14](#)).

Luke, who, of course, was Paul's companion in much of Paul's journeys, the beloved physician, the one who wrote the gospel and the book of Acts. Demas... Now later, Paul is to speak of Demas in his epistle to Timothy, "Tragically Demas has forsaken me, having loved the present world more than the things of God." But here, he joins in the greeting to the church.

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Salute [greet] the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans [in other words, after you've read it, send it over to Laodicea]; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hath received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it ([Col 4:15-17](#)).

So, you're Archippus tonight. I want to say to you, take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, and fulfill it. That's something that all of us should be concerned with. What is it that God has called me to do, I must be fulfilling it. As Jesus said, "I must do that will of Him who sent me." So take heed to the ministry that God's called you to fulfill. See that you fulfill it.

The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen ([Col 4:18](#)).

And so, we come to the end of the Colossian epistle.