

Colossians
“A Worthy Walk”
III. Main Teaching: 1:15-4:6

3:1-4:6 **Walking in the Wisdom of Christ**

3:1-4 Position in Christ

3:1-4
“Looking Up”

I. Intro.

II. Vs. 1-2 Seek and set

III. Vs. 3-4 Put on and Put off

I. Intro.

Near the end of Jesus’ public ministry as He was in the temple He said that not a stone shall be left upon another. Everything that the Jews held dear Jesus said was going to be destroyed. The disciples were shocked and wanted to know when this was going to happen, so Jesus told them the signs. I can only imagine the long faces of despair on those that heard Jesus’ true predictions of the future of the world. Ah dear ones listen to what Jesus said after those dire predictions in Luke 21:28 *“Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”* Is your world coming apart, the walls of your temple falling down? Are all of your hopes and dreams coming to an end? **“Look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”** Far too many of us have set our affections on the things of the earth and all its bringing us is *heart aches* and *heart burns*! Heaven is where it’s at, so now you can simply enjoy life! It does little good for Christians to declare and defend the truth if we fail to demonstrate the truth in our own lives.

II. Vs. 1-2 Seek and set

I've noticed as I've traveled that despite the different cultures there is always a distinguishing characteristic of believers everywhere. Spend any time with a believer and no matter where you are they always have a positive, optimistic joy about them despite their circumstances. It's like they have a secret switch, an invisible reality that enables them to go to another gear to pass by the obstacles that stop the ordinary person. They don't use this extra dimension to best their fellow man they use it to help their fellow man and are ready to share their secret success so that they too can have that inner energy.

It seems that what lay at the base of the Colossian's quest was growth in Christ but though their aim was right their approach was wrong. Twice in the first four verses Paul tells them that if growth in Christ is what they sought they didn't need to look elsewhere they only needed to look up.

Vs. 1-2 Paul uses two words that give us the keys to this extra gear in life: **SEEK** and **SET!** These two words are **action** words but more than that they are **attitude** words!

There use suggests to us that the Colossians lack was **not because of a lack of resources**

but rather because they lack two things:

- Effort
- Direction

1. **Seek**: The truth was they already had everything they needed to be victorious Christians but had simply failed to tap into what they already had in Christ, as they were coerced to look other places than Jesus. Paul offers this secret to only those who have been "*raised with Christ*"; in other words **this secret is in a person not a**

formula! If it was a formula then any one could have exercised the ritual and pop-O-presto, instant life. Paul like a father to his young child even tells them where to look, “*Seek those things which are above*”. The word “*above*” would better be translated “*within*” but this word “*within*” is yet another relational word that is telling us that what we need isn’t outside our relationship with Christ it’s **WITHIN** the relationship we already have with our Lord! The word also comes with an action attached: “***Make the choice and decide to look at what you already have available to you in Christ...don’t separate your life from Him,...you belong to Him so yield your life over more to Him and you will experience more life through Him.***” *Oh saints there is no greater poverty than the person who lives starving for sustenance while seated at the banqueting table full of provisions. Their hunger is because they won’t take a bite and taste and see that He alone is good?* Here was a fellowship that had a never ending supply of Christ but had been conned to look elsewhere for scraps.

2. **Set:** The second step is also an action and attitude word as seeking was not enough they needed to **SET** their mind on those things above and not on things on the earth. The word “*mind*” can also be rendered “*heart*” and is a word that is used to describe a person’s “***emotions, intellect and will***”! Paul is saying while you are thinking on the things that naturally consume us you like: family, work, home etc. don’t forget to SET your mind also on the things of Christ. When we only set our minds on the things that trouble our emotions intellect and well we will soon get depleted and begin to dwell on our poverty and total inability to deal with what life is tossing at us. Ah but when we set our minds on the things above we will still see our total inability but we will also see His total ability! Friend there is nothing wrong with “*getting to*

the end of yourself” as long as you don’t start believing that your poverty is God’s poverty. You have in the “THINGS ABOVE” all His resources of wisdom and knowledge. You have His power that has conquered death and you don’t have to wait in line or be concerned that He may run out.

This two-step process is also known as a walk because it involves two equally important steps: SEEK and SET that all we have to do is moment by moment repeat the same two steps.

III. Vs. 3-4 Put on and Put off

Vs. 3-4 Just in case we didn’t get the two steps he repeats it using another analogy that I like to call as he does elsewhere “**PUT OFF**” and “**PUT ON**” or death and life!

1. **Put off**: Paul starts with the negative by reminding these believers of what has already happened when they received Jesus, “*For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*” Paul phrases this by saying in the past tense; “*for you died*” and because of this in the present tense “*your life IS hidden with Christ in God.*” Christ is our life and this life isn’t something that we have to wait to enjoy we ought to start living eternally NOW! John wrote in 1 John 5:12 “*He that has the Son has life...*” He didn’t say WILL have life, but HAS life! Paul wrote in Phil. 1:21 “*For me to live IS Christ...*” Years ago I heard a story about two sisters who loved to attend wild parties. Then they gave their life in Christ and discovered what life was really all about and didn’t want to party any more. A short time later they received an invitation to a party with a RSVP in which they sent back in these words: “*We will be unable to attend your party because we recently died.*”

2. **Put on**: The next part of this is the positive “Putting On” as Paul says, “*When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*” Our shedding of those old rags enables us to put on Christ who Paul says “*is our life*”. The context of this passage is the certainty of the return of Jesus and how that truth transforms us in the present as well as permanently in the future. The putting off only makes sense if it enables us to putt on someone better. There is a saying made famous by the then US Senator Hubert Humphrey with regards to voting when he said, “*You must remember that in politics, how you stand depends on where you sit.*” I would add that this is true as believers in Christ “*Where we stand and walk on this earth depends totally upon the fact that we are seated in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*”

Paul’s simple message for the Colossian believers was, “*Live for heaven and you will enjoy life!*” How do you do that, you ask? I suggest **three T’s**:

1. **TREASURE**: Matthew 6:21 “*Where your treasure is, there your heart will also be.*” First step is you’re going to have to **redirect where you keep your assets!** To do this you will need to start making deposits in eternal things and when you do this a strange thing always happens...your heart always follows what you treasure!
2. **TRIALS**: 2 Corinthians 4:17 “*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory..*” Second trials cause us to start living for heaven as we lose our affection for the things of this world. If we didn’t lose the things of this world we would have never known what we were missing! In 1 Corinthians 2:9 Paul wrote that, “*Eye has not seen, nor ear*

heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”

3. **TRANSFER**: 1 John 3:2 “*Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*” The third and final way you can live for heaven and enjoy life is by realizing that those departed believing loved ones will be reunited with us for eternity. They may have preceded us but we will be together for eternity.

Consider old Joshua and Caleb who had to wait 40 years to enter into the promise land as the only two who were ready to enjoy the blessing and provisions by faith. How did those two make it 40 years? Well they had their heart **SEEKING** the things above and their mind **SET** of the land of promise! That is the key for us as well saints!