

# Preeminent. Christ's Place in The World

## WEEK 10

### Raised Up to New Life



***"You have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."***  
**Colossians 3:1-4**

**COLOSSIANS 3:1-4**  
**CORAM DEO**

Answer 45 of the Heidelberg Catechism lists three benefits that we receive from Christ's resurrection. The first of these benefits is that through rising again, Jesus enables us to partake of the righteousness He earned for His people. Jesus' resurrection proves that He obeyed the Father perfectly; thus, we can be declared righteous in God's sight via the imputation of our Savior's merit. This is our living hope: the work of Jesus gives us peace with God (Rom. 5:1; 1 Peter 1:3–5).

According to the catechism, the second benefit we have on account of Jesus' resurrection is that we are "by his power. . . raised to a new life." This truth is taught in several passages, including Colossians 3:1–4. Paul tells us in this text that we have been "raised with Christ," who is seated at the right hand of God the Father. Jesus' resurrection was the first step in His exaltation, which continued in His ascension, His session at the Father's right hand, and His eventual return to judge the living and the dead. In His resurrection, Jesus, as the first fruits of "those who have fallen asleep," gained new life according to

The Christian does not experience the new incorruptible and imperishable life completely before death, but this life does reveal itself in our sanctification (growth in holiness) even now. We begin hating that which causes corruption — sin and wickedness — as Christ's life-giving Spirit purifies us. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin in anticipation of the day when we will possess in its fullness the holy, clean, incorruptible life that Christ lives today (1 John 1:7).

His humanity — an incorruptible and imperishable body (1 Cor. 15:20, 35–58). He was raised, never to suffer death again.

Because we are united to our Savior in His resurrection, we are raised with Him to new life. We are “hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3) and enjoy incorruptible and imperishable life. Of course, we do not yet enjoy this life in all its fullness. We still await our physical resurrection, when we will fully experience everything that Christ has purchased for us. Still, this life is ours today even if aspects of it are not yet realized in our experience. We have been glorified (Rom. 8:30) — our final destiny in Christ is so certain that Paul talks about it as if we have already reached its fullness. Nothing can prevent Jesus from transforming us fully into His image.

John Calvin comments on today’s passage: “No one can rise again with Christ, if he has not first died with him.” If we would enjoy the new life that fuels our sanctification and grants us imperishable bodies, we must die to sin. To be raised with Jesus, we must repent and turn to Him. After conversion, we must walk in repentance to enjoy the Spirit’s power. If we do not die daily to sin, we cannot truly enjoy the new, resurrected life that Jesus shares with His people.<sup>1</sup>

## OPEN IT



1. Think back to when you were a child. What did you find yourself daydreaming about?
2. As you grew older, how did those dreams change?

## READ IT | Colossians 3:1-4

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/raised-up-to-new-life/>

## EXPLORE IT



3. Where did Paul tell the Colossians Jesus resides since His resurrection?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Where did Paul tell the believers to focus their concern?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What truth established the Colossians' security, in verse 4?

## GET IT

Paul has just explained the deception, frustration and futility of trying to live the "spiritual life," the "higher life," in reliance on the fallen flesh and legalistic, ascetic or mystic guidance. It cannot work. It won't work. It did not work before we were saved, and it will not work after we are saved. Paul once again reminds them of their resurrection with Christ, which conveys a new (resurrection) power by which one can live the true spiritual life, the genuine higher life. With this, therefore, Paul concludes that since the ways of legalism, asceticism and mysticism were unable to give us victory over "fleshy indulgence," the believer is to shift his or her focus from horizontal to vertical, if you will. Based on our high position, we need to work out a commensurate holy practice! In short, in Colossians 3:1-4:6, Paul is challenging every believer to. . . BE WHAT YOU ARE!

Paul is exhorting his readers to be in practice what they are in position in Christ, resurrected with Him, empowered with the grand potential to live a brand new quality of life we could never have even imagined prior to our regeneration and resurrection.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [http://preceptaustin.org/colossians\\_chap\\_3\\_word\\_study.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/colossians_chap_3_word_study.htm)

This passage follows the section in which Paul addressed the problem of legalistic rules. Those rules attacked only the symptoms, the outward behavior, rather than addressing the heart, the root that needs change. Why is it important to address the heart, rather than just the behavior?

Does Paul suggest that the Christian is to become heavenly minded, losing sight of anything on earth? Does he mean that the Christian is to stretch his mind in contemplation of what might be present in heaven? The language is quite clear. Your pursuit is above, that is, it is to be spiritual in nature. You are to be living with an eye toward eternity. But the focal point of all of your life is to be Him who is seated at the Father's right hand, Jesus Christ. The Christian's active pursuit in sanctification is for his life to be shaped by the life of Christ, his tongue to reflect the gracious speech of Christ, and his service to be selfless like that of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

6. Paul begins this chapter with the word "if." What proofs in Colossians 3:1-4 does a believer have to confirm that they have been raised with Christ?

7. What reasons does Paul give for us to "keep seeking the things above?"

8. If you consistently set your sights on Christ and heaven, how would your life be different?

If Christ is currently seated at God's right hand, that means He has authority over all creation. That is, he is not idly hanging out, waiting for God to open up the hatch and send Him back down to earth. Rather, He is presently ruling over all creation and though things seem pretty bad here on earth sometimes, He is ultimately moving all of creation towards His good, redemptive purposes. Thus, our lives ought to align with His rule and seek to make His kingdom a reality in our community around us by growing as His disciples and sharing the love of God with all people.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [http://archive.southwoodsbc.org/sermons/colossians\\_03.01-04.php](http://archive.southwoodsbc.org/sermons/colossians_03.01-04.php)

<sup>4</sup> <http://franklinchristianchurch.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Nowns-Hide.pdf>

9. The end of verse 1 says, "Christ is seated at the right hand of God." How might the fact that Christ is currently seated at God's right hand change the way we live?

10. In what particular areas can this truth allow you to forget the things of this world and focus on Him alone?

This setting of one's mind, affection and heart calls for a definite act of our wills (not self-effort but Spirit-enabled to daily, continually, moment by moment be thinking about and directing our minds toward the things of heaven and eternity. In fact believers should "filter" everything they see and experience on earth through the lens of eternity. Believers are to be heavenly-minded, and not weighed down, worried and bothered by the fleeting fancies of this material, mundane present passing age.<sup>5</sup>

11. This past week, on what earthly things did you place too high a priority?

12. How did that affect your relationships with others and with God?

13. How did it affect your use of time and money?

14. What primarily controls your mindset — the things on earth or things in heaven?

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<sup>5</sup> [http://preceptaustin.org/colossians\\_32.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/colossians_32.htm)

15. What is one area in your life that tends to move your focus away from things above to earthly things? What could help you to keep your mind on things above in that area?

Your life is hidden with Christ in God — in a word, you are eternally secure. No caveats. No disclaimers. No asterisks. God says it. That settles it, whether we believe it or not. If we are truly in Christ, we are forever and ever in Christ, independent of our frequent failings in this present earthly existence. When Christ said, "It is finished," He put His irrevocable stamp on our eternal security. No works we do can ever add to His finished work. No sins we commit have not already been atoned for by His precious blood of the New Covenant. Our hidden life is eternally secure in Christ. May God grant us grace by His Spirit to fully rest in this incredible truth.<sup>6</sup>

16. Paul reminds us that we have nothing to hide in our lives because our lives are hidden in Christ. What are things we tend to hide in our lives (sin, past mistakes, physical blemishes, etc.)?

17. Why does life in Christ mean we no longer have to hide things we're not proud of?

Paul then reminds us that Jesus is our all in all, the One we live for each and every day who is coming back. Paul's point is clear: that one day we will be seen externally as we really are, and the lost world will see who we are in Christ, for when we see Christ we shall be like Him. In verse 4 Paul tells us the end of the story. Though we presently face trials, disease, debt, failure, and disappointment, we will one day be glorified in Christ when He returns to establish His kingdom in full and make all things whole.

18. How does knowing the end of the story change the way we live?

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<sup>6</sup> [http://preceptaustin.org/colossians\\_33-5.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/colossians_33-5.htm)