

Colossians 3:1-14
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1. What stood out to you from last week? What do you remember about the Colossian heresy?

2. Things Above and Things Below (3:1-4)
 - a. v. 1 - Paul just got done telling them they've died to the spirits of the world and human commandments. They have died to this kind of ascetic mysticism that is not of Christ.
 - b. They not only died with Christ but have been raised with Christ!
 - c. v. 2 - Question: What have you heard about this contrast between things above and things of earth?
 - d. v. 3 Paul is giving us **two** reasons *why*.
 - i. We died to our old ways of life
 - ii. Now, we have a new way with Christ. We are all *hidden* with him.
 - e. v. 4 "When Christ appears" –second coming
 - i. This is because we are united to Christ.
 1. Christ = your life. We have died with Christ and now that we're raised he is our life.
 2. "You also will appear" – anywhere Christ is, we are.

3. Vices/Things of Earth (5-10)
 - a. v. 5 Virtue and vice lists: used in Greek culture, but often with different characteristics.
 - i. These lists reminded them what it was to have the character of Christ, in contrast to the characteristics prized by the false teaching.
 - ii. McKnight: Desire sins and disunity sins.

- iii. In verse 3 – “you have died.” Now because you have died you must “put to death” (v. 5).
- iv. We come back to the question: What are the things of earth? Paul’s list defines what is earthly. He says “put to death what is *earthly* in you” but what follows isn’t material, but *immoral* things.
- v. Can’t be an earthly/heavenly separation as if the world is bad because Paul has twice referenced the incarnation:
 1. 1: 19-20: “For God was pleased to have *all his fullness dwell in him*, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether *things on earth* or things in heaven...”
 2. 2:9: “For in Christ all the fullness of Deity lives in bodily form.”
- vi. Things of earth and things above = old self enslaved to sin and the new self united to Christ.

b. v. 6 – The wrath of God

- i. N.T. Wright: “The wrath of God,’ is not a malicious or capricious anger, but the *necessary reaction* of true holiness, justice, and goodness *to* wickedness, exploitation and evil of every kind.”
- ii. These sins cause harm to ourselves and others.
- iii. The way to be delivered from the wrath to come is *not* by avoiding all these vices. No one is perfect. Instead, we are delivered from the wrath to come by Christ, who is our life, and because of his life in us we are then *able* to embody the virtues and kill these vices.

c. v. 7-9 – Moves from past to present tense.

d. v. 10 You *are* new and you *are being* renewed.

e. v. 11 - These terms are not a *comprehensive list* but a *representative list* of dividing walls that get torn down in the body of Christ.

- i. None of these categories make it more or less likely that God is at work in your life—Christ is at work *in all*.

- ii. These differences do not create hierarchies in the body of Christ or determine who is in or out.
- f. v. 12- since you are God’s holy and beloved, it only makes sense that you live from that identity and treat others the same.
- i. The litmus test here is: Does it point us to Christ? And does it produce these characteristics in us?
 - ii. Lent: So it is not wrong to deny ourselves or to want to experience God more. And over and above all of these is *character*.
- g. v. 13 - It’s not differences that cause issues, it’s about whether we are willing to embody these virtues Paul lists here.
- h. Spurgeon quote: “He who grows in grace remembers that he is but dust, and he therefore does not expect his fellow Christians to be anything more. He overlooks ten thousand of their faults, because he knows his God overlooks twenty thousand in his own case. He does not expect perfection in the creature, and therefore he is not disappointed when he does not find it.”

Things of Earth	Things Above
Sexual Immorality	Affection
Uncleanness	Compassion
Evil Desire	Kindness
Greed (aka idolatry)	Humility
Anger	Gentleness
Rage	Patience

Wickedness	Bearing with one another
Slander	Forgiving one another
Abusive Language Lying	Love

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¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.