

Colossians Chapter Three

Occupation with Christ (vv. 1-4)

VERSE 1 Therefore if you have been raised up with [in] Christ, keep seeking the

things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God (Εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε

τῷ Χριστῷ, τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε, οὗ ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ καθήμενος [*part ei if + conj*

oun therefore + aor.pass.ind.2p. sunegeiro raise up together; also at 2:12 & Eph. 2:6 +

d.a.w/noun loc.m.s. Christos + d.a.acc.nt.p. ta “the things” + adv ano above +

pres.act.imper.2p. zeteo seek + adv ou where + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. Christos + pres.act.ind.3.

eimi + prep en “at” + adj.loc.f.s. dezios right hand + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos +

pres.dep.part.nom.m.s. kathemai sit]).

VERSE 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth

(τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε, μὴ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆ [*d.a.acc.m.p. ta “the things” + adv ano above +*

pres.act.imper.2p. phorneo have in mind, keep in mind + neg me not + d.a.acc.nt.p. ta “the

things” + prep epi upon + d.a.w.noun gen.f.s. ge earth]).

VERSE 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in [by] God

(ἀπεθάνετε γὰρ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν κέκρυπται σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ ἐν τῷ θεῷ [*aor.act.ind.2p.*

apothenesko die + part gar for + conj kai + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. zoe life + pro.gen.m.p. su +

perf.pass.ind.3s. krutao hide + prep sun with + d.a.w/noun instr.m.s. Christos + prep en +

d.a.w/noun instr..m.s. theos]).

VERSE 4 When Christ, who is our [your] life, is revealed [has been made manifest], then you also will be revealed [manifest] with Him in glory (ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς φανερωθῆ, ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν, τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ [*conj hotan when + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. Christos + aor.pass.subj.3s. phaneroo manifest, reveal + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. zoe life + pro.gen.m.p. su your; mistranslated “our” + adv pote then + conj/ascensive “also” + pro.nom.p. su + prep sun with + pro.instr.m.s. autos + fut.pass.ind.2p. phaneroo manifest + prep en + noun loc.f.s. doxa glory*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 1-4

1. Paul continues his emphasis on the new life believers have in union with Christ.
2. “Therefore” marks a transition into another level of Paul’s teaching relative to the doctrine of positional sanctification.
3. In 2:12 Paul addresses this union by means of the baptism that identifies believers with the resurrection of Christ.
4. Here as in 2:20 (“if you have died with Christ”) we have a 1st class conditional clause (“if you have been raised up with Christ”).
5. In 2:20 he makes the argument that in Christ believers have positionally died to the old order of things (cosmos with its human viewpoint way of approaching things).
6. Here we have a forward-look where believers are identified with Christ’s resurrection assuring them of future resurrection.
7. This participation in Christ’s resurrection is not in doubt (if, and it is true; 1st class condition in the Greek).
8. To be “raised up together in Christ” means that CA believers are assured of sharing in Jesus’ resurrection at some future date.
9. The aorist passive indicative of *sunegeiro* literally means ‘raise up together with’ and occurs in Eph. 2:6 and Col. 2:12.
10. The implications of this union with Christ are participation in an entirely new life and destiny.
11. Here in the second part of v. 1 the temporal and primary focus for believers is “the things above.”
12. It is introduced by a royal imperative “keep seeking” (pres.imper. *zeteo* ‘to seek’ something).
13. Obviously “the things above” cannot be seen with the natural eye, but are perceived via learning the truth (cf. 2Cor. 4:18 “while we look not at **the things** (pl.def.art.) which are seen, but at **the things** which are not seen, for **the things** which are seen are temporal (nom.nt.p.adj. *proskairos* temporary; cf. Heb. 11:25 “passing pleasures of sin”), but **the things** which are not seen are eternal.”).
14. The adverb “above” (*ano*) is used here as a substantive for the realm where God’s throne is.

15. Some argue that this word is one of the catchwords of the teachers of the philosophy that was introduced at Colossae.
16. If so, the focus of the false teachers with their focus on angels and the heavenly realm (2:18) is here countered by the focus on the glorified Son of God “seated at the right hand of God” (i.e., God the Father).
17. In other words, the center of attention should be “where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.”
18. Jesus Christ the glorified God-Man enjoys a position equal with the Father and functions as His agent in the subjection of all authorities and powers.
19. Jesus as of His ascension sits at the Father’s right hand and this fact alone should be the believer’s focus.
20. “Seated at the right hand of God” alludes to the Ps. 110:1 (“Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”).
21. Being where He is indicates that all hostile spiritual entities/powers have been strategically defeated with the death, burial, resurrection and ascension (cf. 2:10, 15).
22. Tactical victory over Christ’s enemies awaits the day of the Lord beginning with the Tribulation, 2nd Advent, Millennium, Gog and Magog revolution and the Great White Throne Judgment.
23. In Jewish theology God alone sits in the heavens, but Christian theology has the Messiah sharing fully in God’s glory and sovereign rule with angels placed around the throne.
24. Jewish tradition had no place for Ps. 110:1.
25. This text was used by early Christians as a polemic arguing for Jesus as the designated Messiah of Israel.
26. “The things above” as noted in point 13 refer to SG3, that is, eternal rewards.
27. The production of good works is the basis for our Ph 3 rewards endowment.
28. To seek the unseen which is “above” is to apply BD in Ph 2.
29. All divine good production will result in a units of SG3.
30. Cf. Matt. 5:12 “Rejoice and be glad (when under persecution) for your reward in heaven is great...”; 6:1 “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them (approbation); otherwise you have no reward with your Father in heaven.”; 6:4 “so that your giving will be secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”; 1Cor. 3:14 “If any man’s work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward.”; Heb. 10:35 “Therefore, do not throw away your confidence (e.g., in BD), which has a great reward (the prize).”; “considering the reproach of Christ greater than the riches of Egypt; for he (Moses) was looking to the reward.”; Rev. 22:12 “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”).
31. See also Matt. 9:19-20 and 10:42.
32. In v. 2a Paul reinforces the thought of “seek the things above” with another imperative to “set your minds on the things above.”
33. This refers to the transformation of one’s thinking so as to be occupied with SG3 based on the production of good works.
34. This transformation comes gradually as a result of exposure to Scripture (cf. Eph. 1:18 “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,”).
35. In v. 2b we see a polarity between “above” and “earth.”

36. “The things on the earth” are not all bad as we need “things” to survive and thrive (cf. 1Cor. 7:31 “and those (bels) who use (pres.part. *chraomai* make use of) the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.”; 1Tim. 6:7 “For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.”).
37. Paul isn’t here advocating asceticism like that of the false teachers, rather he is advocating establishing priorities.
38. “Not the things on the earth” has the weak negative *me*.
39. In other words, do not put the acquisition of the material things and physical delights above living the CWL.
40. The idea here is to transform the believer’s perspective *visa vi* “the things above” versus “the things on the earth.”
41. In Phil. 3:19 Paul speaks of those believers who have left the faith as those “whose end is destruction (SUD), whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is their shame, who set their minds (pres.part. *phroneo*) on earthly things (adj. *peigeios*; cf. Phil 3:18, 20).
42. Believers are to live for God, that is, to serve Him in whatever niche He assigns for individuals, and with that there is a promise that God will take care of all our needs (Matt. 6:33 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”).
43. “For you have died” (v. 3) refers to one of the implications of positional sanctification and that is the believer’s relationship to the pre-salvation status quo.
44. This is true whether or not the believer serves God or the lusts of the flesh.
45. The death Paul speaks of here is a positive thing as it separates us from spiritual death that had us helplessly in its grip.
46. “Your life is hidden with Christ in [by] God” refers to the life that comes with the salvation adjustment.
47. “Hidden” (pf.pass.ind. *krupto* ‘to hide/conceal’) suggest that which is inaccessible to that which seeks to undermine it.
48. “Hidden with Christ” implies the security that believers have in Christ.
49. The forces of evil cannot touch or harm Christ and we are “with Christ” and kept safe from our enemies.
50. Although translated “in God” it is possible to take this in an instrumental sense (cf. Eph. 3:9).
51. So there is an unbreakable bond between believers, Christ, and God the Father.
52. This bond provides the security for believers as they await the consummation of God’s prophetic plan in history.
53. The reference to something hidden leads to a discussion about its revelation (v. 4).
54. In v. 4 Paul presents a temporal framework (adv. *hotan* when) to describe the event when the hidden will be made manifest.
55. Note the significance of the temporal adverbs in this verse—“when” and “then” (*tote*).
56. “Christ” stands in apposition to “your [literally] life” and this tells us that the life Christ has is fully shared by those who are His.
57. The basis for our future resurrection is that fact that we have eternal life within us based on the salvation adjustment.
58. Not only is our life hidden with Christ by God, but Christ Himself is hidden in heaven.
59. “Is revealed” in reference to the Person of Christ is an aorist passive subjunctive of *paneroo* meaning ‘to make [something] manifest/reveal.’

60. The temporal adverb (“When”) with the aorist subjunctive indicates an event yet to be determined.
61. The verb “revealed” is used in 2Cor. 5:10 and 1Pet. 5:4 in connection with the Bema Seat.
62. Christ will be revealed to the entire Church at his appearing.
63. The noun “appearing” (*epiphaneia*) likewise is used in connection with the Rapture and Bema Seat (1Tim. 6:14; 2Tim. 4:8; Titus 2:13; 1Jn. 2:28; 3:2; cp. 2 Tim. 1:10).
64. “Then” advances the scene to include believers “with Him in glory.”
65. “You also” indicates that CA believers will share in this revealing of Christ at His coming for the Church.
66. “Will be revealed” (fut.pass.ind.2p. *phaneroo*; 2nd time) has as its subject the Colossian saints.
67. “In glory” refers to heaven where the throne of God is located (cp. 1Tim. 3:16 “And by common confession, great is the mystery of godliness. He who was revealed in the flesh. Was vindicated by the Spirit. Seen by angels. Proclaimed among the nations. Believed on in the world. Taken up in glory.”).
68. Right after the Rapture and the Bema Seat the Church will travel with Christ to the throne room of the 3rd heaven (1Thess. 4:17 “Then [afterwards] we who are alive will be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.”).
69. Phil. 3:21 “who will transform the body of our humble estate into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.”; 1Jn. 3:2 “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”