

**Monday 3/14****Colossians 2:18-19**

**18** Let no one <sup>1</sup>defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize, in self-chosen <sup>2</sup>lowliness and the worship of the angels, <sup>3</sup>dwelling on the things which he has <sup>4</sup>seen, vainly puffed up by <sup>5</sup>his mind set on the flesh,  
**19** And <sup>1</sup>not holding the Head, <sup>2</sup>out from whom all the <sup>3</sup>Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the <sup>4</sup>joints and <sup>5</sup>sinews, <sup>6</sup>grows with the <sup>7</sup>growth of God.

**Related Verses****Colossians 2:8**

**8** Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ;

**Philippians 3:14**

**14** I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.

**2 John 1:8-9**

**8** Look to yourselves that you do not lose the things which we wrought, but that you may receive a full reward.

**9** Everyone who goes beyond and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

**John 15:5**

**5** I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

**Ephesians 4:15-16**

**15** But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

**16** Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

**Portions from the footnotes****Col. 2:18<sup>1</sup> defraud**

The heretical teachers judged the saints unworthy to worship God directly and maintained that they had to approach Him through the mediation of angels. This was to defraud the saints of their prize, depriving them of the enjoyment of Christ. In Christ, our sole Mediator, we can worship God directly.

**Col. 2:18<sup>2</sup> lowliness**

The heretical teachers of angel worship taught the saints to show lowliness in realizing that they were not worthy to worship God directly. They defrauded the saints of their prize in Christ in the element and sphere of such self-chosen lowliness and angel worship.

**Col. 2:18<sup>3</sup> dwelling**

Or, looking into, investigating (secret things).

**Col. 2:18<sup>4</sup> seen**

The heretical teachers lived in the realm of sight, in contrast to the faith mentioned in v. 12. They liked to have curious visions. Such insistence on visual experience resulted in fleshly pride, the vain puffing up by the mind set on the flesh.

**Col. 2:18<sup>5</sup> his**

Lit., the mind of his flesh.

**Col. 2:19<sup>1</sup> not**

The heresy of angel worship distracted the saints from holding Christ as the Head. God's economy is to head up all things in Christ (Eph. 1:10) through His Body, the church, making Christ the center of all things. The subtle one's device is to carry the saints away and thus cause the Body of Christ to collapse.

**Col. 2:19<sup>2</sup> out**

The phrase out from whom indicates that the Body of Christ grows out from the Head, for all the supply comes from the Head.

**Col. 2:19<sup>3</sup> Body**

The heresy caused the saints to be severed from the Head, and thus it damaged the Body. The apostle's revelation uplifted Christ and caused the Body to be safeguarded and built up.

**Col. 2:19<sup>4</sup> joints**

Joints are for the supply of the Body.

**Col. 2:19<sup>5</sup> sinews**

Sinews are for the knitting together of the members of the Body.

**Col. 2:19<sup>6</sup> grows**

Growing is a matter of life, which is God Himself. As the Body of Christ, the church should not be deprived of Christ, who is the embodiment of God as the source of life. By holding Christ, the church grows with the growth of God, with the increase of God as life.

**Col. 2:19<sup>7</sup> growth**

The growth of the Body of Christ has nothing to do with doctrinal knowledge of the Bible, the way of worship, or any such matter. Rather, the growth of the Body depends on the growth of God, the increase of God's element, in the Body.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

The heresy of angel worship distracted the saints from holding Christ as the Head. God's economy is to head up all things in Christ through His Body, the church, thereby to make Christ the center of all things. The device of the subtle one is to carry the saints away and to cause the Body to collapse. The heresy at Colossae caused the saints to be severed from the Head. This damaged the Body. Paul's revelation was to uplift Christ and to safeguard and build up the Body. We need to be preserved in Christ for the church life.

The main reason Paul wrote the book of Colossians was to rescue the saints from fraud and to preserve them in Christ for the proper church life. To be preserved in Christ for the church life is to hold Him as the Head, out from whom the Body grows with the growth of God. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 209, 210)

*Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 17 – Sections: Practicing Dropping Our Concepts To Pick Up The Central Thought Of The Bible; Our Concepts Hindering Us From Obtaining The True Meaning Of The Bible; Our Concepts Hindering Us From Receiving The Central Thought Of The Bible (paragraphs 1-3)*

**Tuesday 3/15**

**Colossians 2:20-23**

**20** <sup>1</sup>If you <sup>2</sup>died with Christ from the <sup>3</sup>elements of the world, why, as living in the world, do you subject yourselves to ordinances:

**21** <sup>1</sup>Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch,

**22** (Regarding things which are all to <sup>1</sup>perish when <sup>2</sup>used) according to the commandments and teachings of men?

**23** <sup>1</sup>Such things indeed have a <sup>2</sup>reputation of wisdom in self-imposed worship and lowliness and <sup>3</sup>severe treatment of the body, but are <sup>4</sup>not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Related Verses

**Romans 6:4-5**

**4** We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

**5** For if we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

**Galatians 5:16**

**16** But I say, Walk by the Spirit and you shall by no means fulfill the lust of the flesh.

**Romans 7:4-6**

**4** So then, my brothers, you also have been made dead to the law through the body of Christ so that you might be joined to another, to Him who has been raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit to God.

**5** For when we were in the flesh, the passions for sins, which acted through the law, operated in our members to bear fruit to death.

**6** But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that in which we were held, so that we serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter.

Portions from the footnotes

**Col. 2:20<sup>1</sup> If**

Or, since.

**Col. 2:20<sup>2</sup> died**

In baptism (Rom. 6:3).

**Col. 2:20<sup>3</sup> elements**

The elements of the world are the elementary principles of outward, material things, the childish teachings of externalism, such as asceticism. This is altogether different from God's way, the way of the cross. See note 83.

**Col. 2:21<sup>1</sup> Do**

These are ordinances, rules, and regulations concerning material things and deal with, respectively, things that move, things that are edible, and things that are tangible. Handling, tasting, and touching include virtually every kind of action, and the ordinances concerning them are related to the practice of asceticism.

**Col. 2:22<sup>1</sup> perish**

Or, become corrupted. All material things are destined to decompose and perish through corruption when used (1 Cor. 6:13; Matt. 15:17).

**Col. 2:22<sup>2</sup> used**

Or, consumed.

**Col. 2:23<sup>1</sup> Such**

Such things refers to the commandments and teachings of men (v. 22) and ordinances (v. 20).

**Col. 2:23<sup>2</sup> reputation**

The Greek word denotes a word or a saying; hence, expression, show of reason, and, therefore, a reputation.

**Col. 2:23<sup>3</sup> severe**

This is asceticism.

**Col. 2:23<sup>4</sup> not**

The ordinances, rules, and regulations of the elementary teachings of externalism and asceticism are of no value in restraining the indulgence of the flesh.

Portions from the Life-study messages

In the Christian life there is no place for asceticism, no place for treating the body severely in the attempt to restrict the indulgence of the flesh [v. 23]. Asceticism is not God's way. On the contrary, it is a human invention, a product of man's fallen mind. Hindus and Buddhists may practice asceticism, but Christians

should not. Asceticism is part of the "elements of the world" spoken of in 2:20. These elements are the elementary principles of outward, material things, the childish teachings of externalism....It is an elementary principle of asceticism to mistreat the body or to treat ourselves severely in an effort to suppress the flesh. God's way, the way of the cross, is altogether different.

According to the economy of God's salvation, the cross is God's central way in the universe. However, most Christians see little of the cross in relation to the spiritual world. For the most part, Christians appreciate the physical aspect of the cross, the aspect that can be observed with human eyes. But in verses 14 and 15 there is a window through which we can see into the spiritual side of the cross of Christ. When Christ was on the cross, He was not only suffering; He was working to accomplish redemption by bearing our sins and by doing the Father's will. God was also working, wiping out the handwriting in ordinances by nailing it to the cross. As we have pointed out, the evil angelic rulers and authorities were busy also, having come to interfere with what God and Christ were doing. But God stripped them off, triumphed over them in the cross, and put them to an open shame. Of course, on the physical side, the Roman soldiers and the Jewish religionists were also very active. Because all this activity was brought to a focus on the cross, the cross became God's eternal, central, and unique way.

I wish to emphasize the fact that God's way is not asceticism. No Christian should practice asceticism. As believers in Christ, we are not a joyless people. On the contrary, we are a joyful people, those who constantly rejoice in the Lord. Why then should we inflict pain on our bodies or mistreat ourselves? How foolish! Our way, the unique way, is the cross. Therefore, the experience of the cross is versus asceticism. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 212-213)

*Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 17 – Sections: Our Concepts Hindering Us From Receiving The Central Thought Of The Bible (paragraphs 4-7)*

**Wednesday 3/16****Colossians 3:1-3**

**1** <sup>1</sup>If therefore you were <sup>2</sup>raised together with Christ, seek the things which are <sup>3</sup>above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

**2** Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the <sup>1</sup>things which are on the earth.

**3** For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

**Related Verses****Ephesians 2:6**

**6** And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

**Romans 8:4-6**

**4** That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

**5** For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.

**6** For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

**1 John 2:15**

**15** Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him;

**2 Corinthians 4:18**

**18** Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

**Matthew 6:33**

**33** But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

**Hebrews 12:2**

**2** Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

**Portions from the footnotes****Col. 3:1<sup>1</sup> If**

Verses 1-4 imply that with Christ we have one position, one life, one living, one destiny, and one glory.

**Col. 3:1<sup>2</sup> raised**

This is the raising aspect of baptism, which is altogether contrary to asceticism. We were raised together with Christ. We are now where Christ is, sitting in the heavens. Hence, in contrast to the ascetics, we should not practice the things on the earth. We should seek the things that are in the heavens, such as knowing Christ as everything to us, so that we take Him as life and thereby walk in Him.

**Col. 3:1<sup>3</sup> above**

I.e., in the heavens; in contrast to on the earth in v. 2. The heavens are linked to Christ and joined to the church. The things above include the ascended Christ and all things pertaining to Him. Therefore, to seek the things above is to seek to live Christ in and with the church.

**Col. 3:2<sup>1</sup> things**

The things on the earth include culture, religion, philosophy, and improvement in behavior, as spoken of in the preceding two chapters.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

Paul wrote the book of Colossians in a very concise way. In only four chapters he presents many riches. In 1:12 he indicates that Christ is the portion of the saints. The One who is our portion is the image of the invisible God, Firstborn of all creation and also the Firstborn from the dead (1:15, 18). Paul also tells us that Christ is the mystery of God (2:2) and that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily (2:9). As the mystery of God and the embodiment of the Godhead, He is the reality, the body, the substance, of all positive things (2:16-17). The more we enjoy Him as this reality, the more we hold Him as the Head of the Body and thereby become Body-conscious. Then we shall experience Him as our life (3:4) and as the constituent of the new man (3:10-11). In the new man,

Christ is all the members and in all the members.... Those of us who enjoy Christ and partake of Him, those who are being constituted into members of the new man, have our life hidden with Him in God. Now we should seek the things which are above and set our mind on them [3:1-3].

In 3:1 and 2 Paul tells us not only to seek the things which are above, but also to set our mind on them. This means that we need to forget earthly things—culture, religion, philosophy, and the natural human virtues. Instead, let us lift up our eyes to the heavens and set our mind on the wonderful, excellent things, the things that are above. These are the things which can cause us to be transformed, for they transmit a heavenly element into us. Let us learn to open our spirit and our whole being to the heavens and keep the "switch" turned on so that the transmission from the divine power plant may flow into us unceasingly. Do not be distracted by religion, philosophy, or anything else. Focus your attention on the things above and stay open to the heavenly power plant. Then the riches of Christ's heavenly ministry will be transmitted into you, and you will be transformed and constituted of Christ.

There is a transmission taking place from Christ in heaven to us on earth by means of the all-inclusive Spirit.... We all need a vision of the heavenly transmission from the glorified Christ into us. Furthermore, we need to stay open to this transmission so that it will not be cut off. Even a small amount of insulation will cause this transmission to cease. Between Christ as the fullness of God and the one new man, there is our experience of the heavenly transmission. May there be no insulation to hinder this divine transmission. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 507, 516, 509-510)

*Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 17 – Sections: Needing To Give Up Our Concepts When We Read The Word; The Center Of The Bible Being God Becoming Man’s Life In The Son*



**Thursday 3/17**

**Colossians 3:3-4**

**3** For you <sup>1</sup>died, and your <sup>2</sup>life is <sup>3</sup>hidden with <sup>4</sup>Christ in God.

**4** When <sup>1</sup>Christ our <sup>2</sup>life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

**Related Verses**

**Galatians 2:10-11**

**10** Only they requested that we remember the poor, which very thing I was also eager to do.

**11** But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.

**Galatians 3:27**

**27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

**Romans 6:3-5**

**3** Or are you ignorant that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

**4** We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

**5** For if we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

**Philippians 3:9-10**

**9** And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,

**10** To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

**Portions from the footnotes**

**Col. 3:3<sup>1</sup> died**

We died with Christ and so were set free from the things on the earth, especially things related to asceticism. We were baptized into His death (Rom. 6:3).

**Col. 3:3<sup>2</sup> life**

Because our life (not our natural life, but our spiritual life, which is Christ) is hidden with Christ in God, who is in the heavens, we should no longer be concerned for things on the earth. God in the heavens should be the sphere of our living. With Christ we should live in God.

**Col. 3:3<sup>3</sup> hidden**

That our life is hidden with Christ in God means that it is hidden with Christ in the heavens.

**Col. 3:4<sup>1</sup> Christ**

That Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to take Him as life and live by Him, that we are to live Him in our daily life in order to experience the universally extensive Christ revealed in this book, so that all He is and has attained and obtained will not remain objective but will become our subjective experience.

**Col. 3:4<sup>2</sup> life**

In God, Christ is our life. This life is now hidden but will be manifested. Then we will be manifested with this life in glory.

In 2:20 — 3:4 the unique way and the unique person are revealed to us. The unique way is the cross, the center of God’s government, and the unique person is Christ, the preeminent, all-inclusive One, the center of the universe. By the cross, not by asceticism, we were saved from the negative things. By Christ, not by philosophy, we live the life hidden in God.

Christ, who is our life, is the allotted portion of the saints (1:12), the image of the invisible God (1:15), the Firstborn of all creation (1:15), the Firstborn from the dead (1:18), the One in whom God’s fullness dwells (1:19; 2:9), the mystery of God’s economy (1:26), the mystery of God (2:2), the reality of all positive things (2:16-17), and the constituent of the new man (vv. 10-11). By taking such an all-inclusive Christ as life and thus living Him, we experience and enjoy all His riches.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

In God's economy there is one Person, Christ, and one way, the cross....Today both Christ and the cross are in the all-inclusive Spirit. Therefore, to be recovered to Christ and the cross is to be recovered to the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit. In our daily Christian experience we need to know the difference between practicing asceticism and taking the way of the cross. To take the cross is certainly not to cause ourselves to suffer in some way ...If we would apply the cross to our situation, we need to contact the all-inclusive Spirit.... This [Spirit] includes the effectiveness of Christ's death and the power of His resurrection. Furthermore, Christ's resurrected and uplifted humanity is also in the all-inclusive Spirit....If we would apply the cross of Christ, we need to open ourselves to the Spirit, contact the Spirit, and allow the Spirit to have a free way within us. Then the Spirit will spontaneously apply the effectiveness of the death of Christ to us....Furthermore, when we open to the Spirit and allow Him to apply the death of Christ to our situation, this experience of Christ's death will bring Christ to us in resurrection. Hence, through the experience of Christ's death, we also experience His resurrection. The more we experience this, the more we can say with Paul, "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21).

I appreciate the word "hidden" in 3:3.... Our Christian life should be a hidden life, a life hidden with Christ in God. Our church life should also be hidden in God and in the heavens....As long as we are hidden, we are with Christ in God, in the heavens, and in the church. But when we advertise and promote ourselves, we are outside of Christ and are not with Him. When Christ appears, we shall appear with Him. That will be the time of our manifestation with Christ. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 221-222, 223, 226-227)

*Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 17 – Sections: Examples Of Man’s Concepts Veiling God’s Word (paragraphs 1-4)*

**Friday 3/18****Colossians 3:5-10**

**5** <sup>1</sup>Put to death therefore your <sup>2</sup>members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and greediness, which is idolatry;

**6** Because of which things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience;

**7** In which you also once walked, when you lived in these things.

**8** But now, you also, put away all these things: wrath, anger, malice, blasphemy, foul abusive language out of your mouth.

**9** Do not lie to one another, since you have <sup>1</sup>put off the <sup>2</sup>old man with his practices

**10** And have <sup>1</sup>put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

**Related Verses****Galatians 2:20**

**20** I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

**Galatians 5:24**

**24** But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.

**Romans 8:13**

**13** For if you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

**Ephesians 4:22-23**

**22** That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,

**23** And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

**Ephesians 4:25**

**25** Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

**Portions from the footnotes****Col. 3:5<sup>1</sup> Put**

This is based on the fact that we have been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20a) and baptized into His death (Rom. 6:3). We execute Christ's death upon our sinful members by crucifying them, by faith, through the power of the Spirit (Rom. 8:13). This corresponds with Gal. 5:24. Christ accomplished the all-inclusive crucifixion. Now we apply it to our lustful flesh. This is absolutely different from asceticism.

**Col. 3:5<sup>2</sup> members**

In our sinful members is the law of sin, making us captives of sin and causing our corrupted body to become the body of death (Rom. 7:23-24). Hence, our members, which are sinful, are identified with sinful things, such as fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and greediness.

**Col. 3:9<sup>1</sup> put**

Putting off the old man is like putting off an old garment. First, we put to death the physical lusts, then we put away the psychological evils, and last, we put off the entire old man with his practices. This is not by our own energy but by the power of the all-inclusive Spirit.

**Col. 3:9<sup>2</sup> old**

See note 224 in Eph. 4.

**Col. 3:10<sup>1</sup> put**

Putting on the new man is like putting on a new garment.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

Christ's all-inclusive death on the cross is applied to us at the time of baptism. All those who believe in the Lord Jesus should be baptized. In baptism we not only recognize Christ's death, but we also apply it to ourselves. Therefore, in baptism we are placed into the death of Christ and buried.

According to Romans 8:11 and 13, the putting to death of the practices of the body is an action carried out in the power of the Spirit. It is not accomplished by self-effort. Our attempts to put to death the practices of

the body are nothing more than asceticism. Although we are not to practice asceticism, we are to put to death the negative things in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. In order to do this, we need to open to the Spirit and allow the Spirit to flow within us. Through the Spirit's flowing, we shall experience the effectiveness of Christ's death. This is not asceticism; it is the operation of the Spirit within us.

We need to be warned concerning asceticism. We should not impose anything on ourselves in an attempt to deal with the lust of the flesh. On the contrary, our practice should be to open ourselves in fellowship with the Lord and allow the Spirit to have a free way to flow within us, and to apply the effectiveness of Christ's all-inclusive death to the negative things in our being. Asceticism is spiritual suicide; in contrast, what we are speaking of is the application of Christ's death through the flowing of the Spirit.

In verse 8 Paul speaks of putting away evil psychological things....If you compare this verse with the foregoing verses, you will see that Paul classified the things of the flesh in one category and the things of the fallen soul in another category. All negative things, whether of the flesh or of the fallen soul, must be put aside....[Verse 9] indicates that the totality of the old man, the entire being of the old man, is to be put off as if we were putting off an old garment. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 230, 231)

*Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 17 – Sections: Examples Of Man’s Concepts Veiling God’s Word (paragraphs 5-6); Asking God For New Things*

**Saturday 3/19****Colossians 3:10-11**

**10** And have put on the <sup>2</sup>new man, which is being <sup>3</sup>renewed unto full knowledge according to the <sup>4</sup>image of Him <sup>5</sup>who created him,

**11** <sup>1</sup>Where there <sup>2</sup>cannot be <sup>3</sup>Greek and Jew, <sup>4</sup>circumcision and uncircumcision, <sup>5</sup>barbarian, <sup>6</sup>Scythian, <sup>7</sup>slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

**Related Verses****Ephesians 2:15-16**

**15** Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,

**16** And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

**Ephesians 4:24**

**24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

**Romans 12:2**

**2** And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

**Philippians 1:21**

**21** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

**1 Corinthians 12:13**

**13** For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

**Portions from the footnotes****Col. 3:10<sup>2</sup> new**

The Greek word here means new in relation to time, whereas the word in Eph. 4:24 means new in nature, quality, or form. Concerning the new man, see note 242, par. 1, in Eph. 4. Since Christ is the constituent of the new man, we, who are the new man, are one with

Christ. This is the most basic and crucial point in this book.

**Col. 3:10<sup>3</sup> renewed**

Because the new man was created with us, who belong to the old creation (Eph. 2:15), as his constituents, he needs to be renewed. This renewing takes place mainly in our mind, as indicated by the phrase unto full knowledge. The new man was created in our spirit and is being renewed in our mind unto full knowledge according to the image of Christ.

**Col. 3:10<sup>4</sup> image**

Referring to the image of Christ as the very expression of God (1:15; Heb. 1:3a).

**Col. 3:10<sup>5</sup> who**

Referring to Christ the Creator, who created the new man in Himself (Eph. 2:15).

**Col. 3:11<sup>1</sup> Where**

Where, referring to the new man in v. 10, means in the new man.

**Col. 3:11<sup>2</sup> cannot**

Not only is there no natural person in the new man, but there is no possibility and no room for any natural person to exist.

**Col. 3:11<sup>3</sup> Greek**

The Greeks favored philosophical wisdom; the Jews, miraculous signs (1 Cor. 1:22).

**Col. 3:11<sup>4</sup> circumcision**

Circumcision here refers to those who observed the Jewish religious rituals; uncircumcision, to those who did not care for the Jewish religion.

**Col. 3:11<sup>5</sup> barbarian**

A barbarian is an uncultured person.

**Col. 3:11<sup>6</sup> Scythian**

Scythians were considered the most barbarous.

**Col. 3:11<sup>7</sup> slave**

One who has been sold into slavery.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

The new man is of Christ. It is His Body, created in Him on the cross (Eph. 2:15-16). It is not individual,

but corporate. According to the clear vision in Ephesians 2:15, the new man is a corporate entity. This is proved by the fact that it is created out of two peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles. Furthermore, Ephesians 2:16 indicates that the new man created out of these collective peoples is the Body of Christ. Hence, the new man and the Body are synonymous terms and may be used interchangeably.

The problem with the believers in Colossae was not with the spirit, nor with the new creation. Because they had accepted various philosophies, their problem was in the mind....They were in need of the renewing unto full knowledge....The renewing of the new man results in full knowledge, and this full knowledge is according to the image of God. In some of the foregoing messages we pointed out that the image in 1:15 refers to the expression of God and to the fullness of God. The image of God is His fullness and expression. This, of course, is Christ Himself.

The word "where," referring to the new man in verse 10, means in the new man. There is no natural person in the new man. Furthermore, there is no possibility, no room, for any natural person. There cannot be Greeks, who are for philosophical wisdom, and Jews, who are for miraculous signs (1 Cor. 1:22). There cannot be circumcision and uncircumcision. Circumcision refers to the observers of the Jewish religious rituals; uncircumcision refers to those who do not care for the Jewish religion. Furthermore, in the new man there cannot be barbarian, Scythian, slave, or freeman. A barbarian is an uncultured person, the Scythians were considered the most barbarous people, the slaves were those sold into slavery, and the freemen were those who had been freed from slavery. No matter what kind of person we may be, as far as the new man is concerned, we must regard ourselves as nobodies. In the new man there is room only for Christ, not for any kind of natural person. Therefore, in the church we all are nobodies. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 232, 233-234, 237)

### Outline

- II. The preeminent and all-inclusive One, the centrality and universality of God (1:9-3:11)
  - E. The body of all the shadows (2:8-23)
  - F. The life of the saints (3:1-4)
  - G. The constituents of the new man (3:5-11)

### Crucial points

Colossians 1:9-3:11 unveils Christ as the preeminent and all-inclusive One, the centrality and universality of God. As such, He is the body of all the shadows (2:8-23), the life of the saints (3:1-4), and the constituents of the new man (3:5-11).

In 2:18 we see that the heretical teachers judged the saints unworthy to worship God directly and maintained that they had to approach Him through the mediation of angels. This was to defraud the saints of their prize, depriving them of the enjoyment of Christ and distracting them from holding Christ as the Head (v. 19). God's economy is to head up all things in Christ (Eph. 1:10) through His Body, the church, making Christ the center of all things. The heresy at Colossae caused the saints to be severed from the Head. This damaged the Body. Paul's revelation was to uplift Christ and to safeguard and build up the Body. We need to be preserved in Christ for the church life.

In 2:20-3:4 the unique way and the unique person are revealed to us. The unique way is the cross, the center of God's government, and the unique person is Christ, the preeminent, all-inclusive One, the center of the universe. By the cross, not by asceticism, we were saved from the negative things. By Christ, not by philosophy, we live the life hidden in God. In God, Christ is our life. This life is now hidden but will be manifested. Then we will be manifested with this life in glory.

That Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to take Him as life and live by Him, that we are to live Him in our daily life in order to experience the universally extensive Christ revealed in this book, so

that all He is and has attained and obtained would not remain objective but would become our subjective experience.

The old man (v. 9) is of Adam, who was created by God but became fallen through sin. Putting off the old man is like putting off an old garment. First, we put to death the physical lusts (v. 5), then we put away the psychological evils (v. 8), and last, we put off the entire old man with his practices (v. 9). Although we are not to practice asceticism, we are to put to death the negative things in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. In order to do this, we need to open ourselves in fellowship with the Lord and allow the Spirit to have a free way to flow within us, and to apply the effectiveness of Christ's all-inclusive death to the negative things in our being.

The problem with the believers in Colossae was not with the spirit, nor with the new creation. Because they had accepted various philosophies, their problem was in the mind. They were in need of the renewing unto full knowledge (v. 10). The renewing of the new man results in full knowledge, and this full knowledge is according to the image of God. The image of God is His fullness and expression. This, of course, is Christ Himself.

The new man (v. 11) is of Christ. It is His Body, created in Him on the cross (Eph. 2:15-16). It is not individual, but corporate. There is no natural person in the new man. Furthermore, there is no possibility, no room, for any natural person. In the new man there is room only for Christ.

### Lord's Day 3/20

#### Related Verses

#### **Galatians 3:26-29**

**26** For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

**27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

**28** There cannot be Jew nor Greek, there cannot be slave nor free man, there cannot be male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

**29** And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

#### **Ephesians 4:20-25**

**20** But you did not so learn Christ,

**21** If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

**22** That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,

**23** And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

**24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

**25** Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

### Further Reading:

*Life-study of Colossians*  
Msgs 25, 26, 43, 27, 28

Hymns

510, 1087, 1187

474, 593, 1230