

New Identity, New Activity

4.26.09

3:1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2** Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. **3** For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. *Colossians 3:1-4 ESV*

Our new identity should lead to new activity.

“If then” Better translated as “Since then...” as in “Since this is true, then do this...”

“you have been raised with Christ” Lit. co-resurrected. Like what we saw in Ch. 2.

P: Our connection with Christ (union with Christ) is so close that what is true of Him is true of us.

Am I connected to Jesus? Am I living like this is true?

“seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.” Jesus is in heaven in a position of authority. Direct contrast to the heretics’ view of Him. To “seek the things that are above” is to seek for what is happening there to happen here—“Your Kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6)

P: “Seeking the things that are above” is about orienting all of our lives toward God.

This happens in both “general” and “specific” senses.

What does this look like?

1. Setting our life-compass “toward heaven.”

How do we do this?

1. We ask the “Kingdom” question: “God, what do You want done in this situation?”
2. We answer that question by:
 1. Going to the Scriptures. (Look for directives, esp. the “will of God”)
 2. For the things the Scriptures aren’t explicit on:
 - a. Pray. Acknowledge your dependence. Pray for guidance.
 - b. Seek wise counsel from God’s people.
 - c. Use Biblically-informed wisdom.
 - d. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you in specific situations.
 - e. Discern how God could be at work through specific circumstances.
3. We trust God and take action.
4. We evaluate our actions.
 1. We learn and grow. We repent when we are wrong.

General Sense: Does my life reflect that I am “seeking the things that are above?” Who/what am I living for? God or someone/something else? What needs to change in this area?

Specific Sense: In the decisions I make every day, am I “seeking the things that are above?” If not, what needs to change in the way I make decisions?

“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.” Lit. “Keep on thinking about”

P: “Setting your minds on things that are above” is about making sure God is always “on our minds.”

What does this look like?

1. Thinking more about the “Line” than the “Dot.”
 - a. Money / work / family / life matter but they are not *Ultimate*.
 - i. What is most important here? The Dot or the Line?

How do we do this?

1. Renew our minds through the Scriptures. (Rom. 12:2)
 - a. Memorize particular verses. Start with your immediate needs.
 - b. Go visual/concrete. (Post-it notes help.)
2. Monitor your inputs. (Phil. 4:8)
 - a. Media, relationships, etc.
 - b. Sometimes the “Dot” is so obvious, it points us to the “Line.”

Are we in the habit of “setting our minds on things above?” If not, what needs to change?

“For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” Fact based on new identity.

P: Our new identity is a ‘hidden one.’

What this means:

1. What is true of Him is true of us. See point one.
2. We are eternally secure. In fact, we are doubly secure. “with Christ, in God.”
3. People who don’t share our faith may not understand us.

Is this true of me? Is my life “hidden with Christ in God?” If not, repent and believe.

Am I resting in my security in Christ? Remember, our freedom is to do what God wants.

Am I ever in situations people who don’t understand me because of my faith? How do I respond?

“When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” (Now & Then)

P: Our new identity leads to a bright present and an even brighter future.

What this means:

1. Jesus *is* our life.
2. Jesus is to be our *lives*—not just first in our lives. (“First priority” vs. *the Sun*)
3. This identity and activity will be fully completed when we are in heaven.

The Gospel gets us in, keeps us in, and grows us in our new identity and activity.