

Colossians 3

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[0 : 0 0] Colossians chapter 3. So you say. Alright. Now, what I want to speak on tonight is really one of the implications of Easter.

! And if you want to give this sort of a title, it is after Easter, always Easter. After Easter, it's always Easter. What I mean by that is, if the truths that we celebrate and rejoice in today are true, then they will always be true.

Alright? It's not one day a year. That is, he died on the cross, that our sins might be forgiven. And his resurrection proves that God has accepted him.

So that's true. My sins are forgiven. Nothing will ever change on that. God will not never go back on it. He is alive. And therefore Jesus is with us by his Spirit wherever we go.

And that will always be true. And there's resurrection hope for us that is in Christ of a new world.

And that will always be true. After Easter, it's always Easter.

[1 : 0 6] If the truth of Easter is not true, then tonight we are wasting our time. But if it is true, it will always be true. And it will forever be true.

On the first Easter time, you remember we saw it this morning, Thomas got the message. Thomas wasn't there, was he? On the day that Christ rose. And when the ten met Jesus. And he didn't believe the witness of the other ten.

And he wouldn't believe it until he saw and he felt. Should he have done? Who knows? But eventually, on that Sunday after Easter, Jesus met him.

And he knew that. Thomas had said, unless I put my finger in the print of the nails, I will not believe. So he invited him. Did he? We're not told. I wonder if Thomas did put his finger in his side.

I doubt it. It never says he did. You can ask him when you get to heaven, can't you? But whether or not he made that great affirmation that we finished with this morning. My Lord and my God.

[2 : 0 4] That is the essence of great theology. Just think about that for a moment. It is the essence of great theology and great personal experience.

Because he got Jesus right. My Lord and my God. And he got his personal experience right. My Lord and my God.

You see, he got the conclusion that after all, if he was risen from the dead, then he was what they began to hope that he might be. The Lord God.

Of course he is. If he's risen, he must be that. That is unique. And then he became my Lord and my God. There are people out there, tragically, who believe the facts.

But it's never become personal. They believe the facts of the gospel, but it's never become personal. And then you meet people today, don't you, who think it can be personal without believing facts.

[3 : 1 0] Is it astonishing? You've really got to be able to say, my Lord and my God. He lives, he lives. Christ Jesus lives today.

You ask me how I know he lives. He lives within my heart. Well, it's 5 out of 10, isn't it, for that chorus at the very most? Because that doesn't prove anything, does it?

What proves it is that he died and he rose again on a certain day in history, and that's how I know he lives. And because that is true, well, he does live within my heart.

I hope you can sing both, he lives because he rose again and he lives within my heart. And if that's true, then come to Colossians 3. Because in Colossians 3, I think what you've got there is the perfect illustration of after Easter, it's always Easter.

After Easter, it's always Easter. There are three therefore. When you come to a therefore, you ask what it's? Yeah. Oh, isn't that great? Verse 1, can you see it?

[4 : 13] If then you have been raised with Christ. I don't know why ESV gets it wrong there. Since then, since therefore, you have been raised.

Look at verse 5. Put to death, therefore. And then just jump on to verse 12. Put on them. That should be therefore.

Therefore, as God's chosen ones. It's exactly the same word in the three. Therefore, verse 1.

Therefore, verse 5. Therefore, verse 12. So what he's saying is this.

If these things are true. If Christ rose from the dead. Therefore, certain things will follow. And not may follow. Certainly will follow.

And the key verse of our passage is there in verse 10. We have put on the new self. We have put on the new self. Which is being renewed in knowledge. After the omission of this creature.

[5 : 17] Two different words for new in the Greek. One means completely different. New. And the other means what we get day by day. As we are constantly renewed. Paul writes elsewhere.

He says, though outwardly we are wasting away. Inwardly we are being renewed. Day by day. Day. So after Easter. Always Easter. Every day is Easter. The resurrection makes every day different. Not just Sundays. Every day is different. Because we are being daily renewed. But we all like to think we look younger than we are. Don't we? I don't know if you.

I got the prayer letter from Curt and Jill this week. So. And there is a photo of Timothy Mellor kneeling down. And I have my hand with my head bowed on his head. But for quite a while I didn't know it was my head.

And I notice I've got an island coming. Like my father had. It's a phenomenon. We all like to look younger than we are. Don't we? Interestingly if you go to the east. Those are in the east.

[6 : 16] And they like to think. They are older than they are. So it's a funny world. Imagine when you have that awful moment. When you've seen someone coming towards you. And your first thought is.

Good grief. Haven't they got old? Do you ever have that? I often have that when I go and preach somewhere. And I think. Good grief. How they've aged. You can't say that. And as soon as they get within striking distance.

You say. Oh you haven't changed a bit. Have you? Have you? And you with. They with awful hypocrisy. They bite their lip. And they say. Well no review. Now.

Why should we bother? Here's this message. That we are being renewed. The Christian life is. It's tragedy isn't it? When somebody says. Oh you haven't changed a bit. In the Christian life.

The Christian life is that. We are being changed. Moment by moment. We are being renewed. Day by day. So I've got six news. For you tonight. Six news. Three of them are what we have.

[7 : 15] Because we are in Christ. And three of them are things. That we have to do. Because we are in Christ. Alright. Three of them are. We already have.

Because we are in Christ. And three of them are what we have to do. Because we are in Christ. Now. And those of us who have been studying Ephesians. You'll see the immense similarity. Between Ephesians 3.

And Ephesians 5. That we've looked at. It's so similar. It's uncanny isn't it? And the message of Ephesians. Really is. Become what you are. That is.

You are a child of God. It's the same with Colossians. You are a child of God. So become it. You are an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. So live as if you were. Let me put it another way. Lucas wrote a commentary on 2 Peter.

And he gives one of these great Dick Lucas sayings. So when I see him. I'm going to mock him by the next step. The eschatological indicative. Is always followed by the moral imperative.

[8 : 11] What kind of world do you live in? Where you come out of the sentence of that. The eschatological indicative. Is always followed by the moral imperative. It may not be in Chinese. Now.

To which we should all say. If we understand it. Hallelujah. Because what that means. What he really means is this. Is. The indicative.

The truth. Is always followed by a command. It's not the other way around. It's not a command. And then the truth. It's always the truth. Is followed by a command. Now you see that in Ephesians.

Don't you? Those of you who have been studying it. You see these great doctrinal chapters. And then it moves. It's not as clear cut sometimes. We want to make it. But it moves. Doesn't it? To the practical nitty gritty of church life.

The indicative. Proceeds the imperative. So. That's what I'm going to do. A lesson in English grammar. The indicative mood. The statement of what is. That's what indicative means. And the imperative means.

[9 : 08] What we must do. So the Christian indicative. Three Christian indicatives. Three Christian statements. Of what we are. Number one. You have new life. Look at verse one. You have been raised with Christ.

Verse three. You died. You died. And your life is now hidden. With Christ in God. That is because. If we are believers. In the Lord Jesus Christ tonight.

If we put our trust in him. Alone for salvation. Alone in the one who died for us. And rose to us. Then we are with him. We share his cross. And we share his resurrection.

The bulb that went into the ground. That raised into a flower. It's exactly the same for us. One of the greed ambitions. The apostle Paul of Philippians three. Was this. I want to know Christ. And the power of his resurrection.

And the fellowship of sharing. His sufferings. You just think. Well. It's not the wrong way round. I want to know the power of his resurrection. And the fellowship of his suffering.

[10 : 05] Surely it should be the other way round. I want to know the fellowship of his sufferings. And then the power of the resurrection. But no. He got it right. On the Damascus road. The apostle Paul met.

The Lord Jesus. He met the risen Jesus. And his life was transformed. And he called him Lord. But then he learned. He had to suffer for his lame sake. First resurrection for the Christian.

Then cross. And for many of us. When we became Christians. Actually we weren't told. That it would be costly to be a Christian.

But we've learned that since. So there's new life. We are raised with Christ. First. We share his sufferings. That is what being a Christian is.

And we wonderfully share in his resurrection. New life. Secondly new security. So look at verse 3 again. For you have died. And your life is hidden. With Christ in God. I love that hidden.

[11 : 01] It's got double meaning. Isn't it? Do you hide things? So I'm leaving. I went to Malaysia for a couple of months.

The other week. The other month. And she hid all her jewellery. It was a good job. Burglars came and went into the house. But she hid her jewellery. The problem was. She hid it so successfully. She still can't find it. But she was so successful in hiding it. That the burglar couldn't find it. So here's the picture. Your life is hidden. With Christ.

You're safe. And you're secure. New security. Before the throne of God above. I have a strong and perfect plea. And the lady who wrote that hymn.

I think had this verse in mind. My life is hid with Christ in God. I think our hymn book says. My life is safe with Christ in God. I think she meant hid. And I think hid is pretty understandable.

[11 : 58] For most human beings. And so it should have been kept. My life is hid with Christ in God. My life is hid with Christ in God.

You see. It's not yet manifest. Is it? That we are sons of God. 1 John 3 verse 2. It's not yet manifest. It's not yet shown. That we are sons of God. One day it will be obvious.

At the moment it's hidden. Second even. But one day it will be obvious. Here in verse 4. The obvious time will come. When Christ who is your life. Appears. Then you will also appear with him in glory.

But at the moment you're hidden. When he does. It will be clear. That you are children of God. Meantime it's sort of hidden. But it does mean safe. And it does mean secure as well.

What is your security? What is your future? For the Christian. Because after Easter. It's always Easter. The real things.

[12 : 59] That matter. Are 100% secure. Peter writes. It doesn't mean one. Peter chapter 1. That we've been born again. By the resurrection. To an inheritance.

That will never perish. Or spoil. Or fade. And the message of the resurrection. Is security. It is kept safe.

It is hid. The third indicative. New life. Not the second one. It's a terrible one. You can't even remember your own points. New life. New security.

New status. Number three. What do you make of verses 10 and 11? Verses 10 and 11. It talks about it. It does say it's out there.

Putting on the new self. And the new self. That the apostle Paul. Is talking about. Is that we are now. One. In Christ Jesus. So the great divide.

[13:55] Of Paul's days. We saw in Ephesians 2. Where we study this. Is Greek and Jew. Jew and Gentile. But for Paul. That was unimportant. He was Jewish wasn't he?

And in Romans. He talks about. His great longing. That the Jews. Would be saved. He longs. For his countrymen. To come to the Lord Jesus Christ. He really does. His great confidence. Is that there would be a turning. But now. But he was now. More than that. Neither Jew. Nor Greek. I think Paul.

Would have a real go. At some people. That call themselves. Messianic Jews. I think we've. We've got to respect that. I've got a friend. Who is a Jew. Once he became. Converted to Christianity. He liked the word Christian. Yes he's Jewish. Still racially Jewish. He's proud of his Jewishness. But he's even more. Now proud. That he belongs. To a community. Which is neither Jew.

[14:51] Nor Greek. I'm a Christian. I'm not an Anglican. I'm a Presbyterian. I'm not a Presbyterian really.

I want to say. I'm a Christian. I'm not Welsh. To a certain degree. I'm a Christian. I'm a Welsh Christian. The definitive. Is the Christian. And I hope that you rejoice in that.

And in Christ. It's a new creation. And please remember. It breaks down all the barriers. The world fights. Because of barriers. You think of them all. In Christ. The barriers are down.

That doesn't mean. We become completely distinct. We all have to kind of become. You know. If you're outgoing. You have to become. If you're. You know. Whatever. The shy people. Need to become outgoing. We all need to become. This bland generic thing. We're different personalities. That's great. We're different nationalities. But in Christ. The barriers are brought down.

[15:49] We are together in Christ. So. I went through the pastoral list. And. And. I worked out how many nationalities. We have in the church. And I counted. Well in fact.

We'll count the. We'll count the four British nationalities. English. Irish. Scottish. Welsh. We'll count them. Separately. Alright. Anybody want to guess how many we are. On a Sunday. 15.

15. 17. 18. 19. 19. 19. 19. 19. 19. 19.

We are 39. But let me tell you this. If you count people who come every so often. Those kind of fringy people. We are 45. Now I think that is a great witness.

Isn't it? I think that is a wonderful witness. We are one in Christ. New life. You were dead. You are alive. New security. Hid with Christ. You have a new status.

[16:46] You have a new self. We are one in Christ Jesus. And it's what we are. It's indicative. It's not telling you we are one.

We must be one. We are. We are united in Christ. Okay? The Christian imperative. Let's move on. The Christian imperative. Because of the resurrection.

We must have a new ambition. So it's there in verse 1. Isn't it? If then you have been raised with Christ. Seek the things that are above. Seek the things which are above.

Put everything you've got. Into the things that are above. This is where your heart is. Not just your emotions. Heart is not emotion in the Bible.

It includes it. But it's the whole of your being. The passion of your life. On things above. Tell me. What is Christ doing? At the right hand of God. Well. Number one.

[17:41] He's in the place of power. Isn't it? He's God's right hand man. He's in the place of holiness. That he's with God. And he's praying for us.

Shall I tell you what it means. To set your heart on things above. It means that you want more holiness. That you want greater power. As a Christian.

And you want to pray more. You know that sounds dull isn't it? That sounds dull. Well Psalm 16 says. At God's right hand.

There are pleasures forevermore. Who is at God's right hand? It's the Lord Jesus isn't it? Psalm 16. Psalm 16 is the psalm.

Actually we read a funeral. It's the time of the committal. At the crematorium. And when we read Psalm 16.

[18:40] We can read it with great assurance. That the person that we are speaking of. Is now with Christ. In all the pleasures. And that's what our ambition should be.

For things that are above. That we should be. Wanting. To know more of Christ. And know more of his holiness. And know more of his prayers.

Now secondly new attitudes. New attitudes. Verse 2. Set your mind. Set your mind.

Seek the things that are above. Or set your hearts. Verse 1. Verse 2. Set your mind. And the word means just think. Think.

Set your mind on things above. And the world bombards us. Set your mind on things. And the world bombards us. And the world bombards us. And the world bombards us. And the world bombards us. We should get lifted above that.

[19 : 40] Do you remember? The moment in the story of Jesus. Where Peter confessed. Jesus you are the Christ. The son of the living God. And at that point. Jesus begins to speak about the cross. That he had to go and suffer and die.

And Peter said. Not so Lord. That's not what I'd envisaged. And Jesus said to Peter. Get behind me. You don't think. The things of God.

But the things of man. And I want to say. It takes real effort. Of concern. To lift my thoughts. Above myself.

And my concerns. And the world around me. Around my natural level of thinking. The things that dominate my mind. And Jesus is saying.

Paul is saying to us here. Isn't he? Make a conscious effort. To think on things. Above. It's good to be lifted up. Isn't he? When you fly over London. You fly into London. It's a completely different view.

[20 : 36] Isn't he? You get out of London. You get a completely different perspective. And so set your heart. Set your mind. Your ambitions. And your attitudes.

On things above. And new activity finally. New activity. So if you know the prayer about Adol. Do you know what the reading is.

For Easter day. From the epistles. Do you know what the reading is? It's Glossians 3. It's Glossians 3. 1 to 7. So it's a lovely exciting morning.

On the triumphs of Jesus. And it seems very odd. Doesn't it? To read about sexual immorality. And impurity. And lust. And desires.

Verse 6 and 7. Somehow. It doesn't seem to fit with. Easter day. Does it? But actually. It really does.

[21 : 32] Verses 5 to 8. Really do. Fit with Easter day. Because if I am a new person. In Christ. Here's the moment.

When I have to be prepared. To say. Certain things need to be put to death. If I am a new person. In Christ. I will put to death. Therefore what is earthly in use.

Sexual immorality. Impurity. Passion. Evil desires. Covetousness. Such as idolatry. On account of these. The wrath of God is coming. Do you think Paul is a bit extreme? Do you remember what Jesus says?

He says. If your hand offends. You pluck it off. Cast it away. It's better to go into heaven. With one hand. Than to go into hell with two. If your eye offends. You pluck it out.

It's better to go into heaven. With one eye. Than to go into hell with two. If what I'm doing is wrong. If what I'm watching is wrong. If what I'm looking at on the internet is wrong.

[22 : 26] Put it to death. And it's very interesting. Before I can put on the new self. In verse 10. And before I can put on all the things.

In verses 12 to 16. I've got to be decisive. Let me try and speak here. Look at verse 5. We have to say that it's all to do with sexual matters.

And some of us maybe have to listen to that tonight. We may need to ask God's forgiveness. And we may need a new direction in our lives. And so I want to say to you.

Look at verse 5. It's very, very clear. Pull the trigger. Put the knife in. Put the death. And I think it's very interesting.

On just certain areas of sexual sin. That actually we try and analyse it. We try and get behind it. What is causing it. When actually there are times. When you've just got to pluck out the eye.

[23 : 28] And cut off the arm. And it's very blunt. Blunt language. Now we want to thank God. This is a service isn't it for sinners.

Sinners. And if it were for perfect saints. You wouldn't be here. And I wouldn't be here. But it is for sinners. Who are penitent. Repentant sinners. And when I recognise.

The things in my life. That have been wrong. That they need to be put to death. And there's no shame. In saying to a brother or sister tonight. Help me to put this to death. There's no shame in that other one. And thank God. God receives sinners. But of course. It's not all about that. Yes. Wrath is coming. Verse 6. And once we did walk in that way. But no longer. And then in verse 8. It's to do with rage. Anger. Wrath. Malice. Slander. And obscene talk from your mouth.

[24 : 26] Do not lie to one another. Seeing that you've put off the old self. With its practices. Well. We don't often put those in the same category.

Do we? As verse 6. But I think we have to say. The apostle Paul does. And I think that's very very helpful. That Paul puts verse 6.

In the same category as verse 8. And God does. Now I have known churches. That have been decimated. By sex scandals. I've known that. But I have known far more churches. Decimated by disunity. By slander. By backbiting. And the rest. And so have you. And they all need to be put away. So there are 15 vices.

In the list of the lust of the flesh. I think in Galatians 5. You can read them if you want. Three of them are sexual things. Two of them are to do with the occult. Two of them are to do with drunkenness. That makes seven.

[25 : 28] And you don't have to even be an expert. And so don't go to know. That leaves 8 out of 15. More. More than half. What are the 8? The 8 are dissensions. Factions.

Rivalry. Gossip. Malice. Do you realise how that can kill a church. A church like ours. And so I think it's a great way to end the weekend isn't it.

To likely with you tonight. As Easter people. Which is what we are. And after Easter. It is always Easter. But I demonstrate to my Lord. That I really do take the resurrection of Jesus seriously. And I want this new activity. I want to put to death those things that are wrong. And I want to deal with them decisively. And what it may be in my life.

And then. Verses 12 to 17 are full. Aren't they? Of wonderful. Wonderful truths. Put on then. Put on then. Let me read them to you.

[26 : 22] Put on then. As God's chosen ones. Holy and beloved. Compassionate hearts. Kindness. Humility. Meekness. And patience. Bearing with one another. And if one has a complaint against another. Forgiving each other.

As the Lord has forgiven you. So you also must forgive. And above all these. Put on love. Which binds everything together. In perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ. Rule in your hearts. To which indeed you were called in one body.

And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Teaching and admonishing one another. In all wisdom. Singing psalms. Hymns. And spiritual songs. With thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do.

In word or deed. Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. Giving thanks to God the Father. Through him. It is actively doing these things. This has happened to me.

I am raised with Christ. This is what I am. And that consciously changes my behaviour. And so tonight we need to resolve. I have been raised with Christ.

[27 : 19] And I need to keep that in my consciousness. Don't we? So we need to say to each other. Every morning. I am risen. And I need to have the concept.

And the concerns. And the mindset. Of a spiritually raised person. Because after Easter. It can never be business as usual. And you are a raised person.

So think like a raised person. After Easter. It's always Easter. Let's pray.