

THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST

The Fullness of Deity Dwelling in Christ

Putting the Old Nature to Death

Colossians 3: 4-11

Introduction: Having dealt with the empty philosophy of the false teachers, Paul, in Chapter 3, turns his attention to the positive privilege and experience of walking in Christ in spiritual maturity. The essence of this teaching parallels other letters such as Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, and focuses on the believer's potential to be filled by the Holy Spirit and to bear, naturally, the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

I. In many of Paul's letters there is a common theme followed by a list:

Colossians 3:5-11
Romans 6:18-13
Galatians 5:16-26
Ephesians 4:25-5:10

II. The theme may be expressed as "put off," "consider as dead," and similarly based on the reality that we have truly died with Jesus Christ to the old nature.

A. This consists of a general, one time, "global" determination (Rom. 6:12-13)

B. It is followed in the maturing disciple by daily acts of specific obedience arising from that crisis moment of total devotion to Jesus Christ.

III. Allow the Holy Spirit free reign to purify you and yield continuously to His guidance and conviction. (Hebrews 5:11-6:1; Ephesians 4:13ff—no longer children)

- A. Listen to the Holy Spirit
 - 1. Invite His control
 - 2. Affirm your desire to be mature
- B. Expose yourself to the Word of God—not to educate but to obey
- C. Listen to your critics
- D. Listen to your friends

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. ⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. ⁶ For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷ and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸ But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, ¹⁰ and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him-- ¹¹ a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

Colossians 3: 1-11
(NASB)

