

Staying Focused

Colossians 3:1-7

Introduction

Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for Word of God this morning? Staying focused. This message most likely will be a part 1 to 2 sermon message. We live in a world where distractions are easy to come by. We all have our jobs to bring in income, our families, relationships, and responsibilities. All of these are necessary as we live our lives, but often we can lose sight of the main thing and where it is all to be centered on. The Bible teaches us this in 1 Corinthians 10:31:

(31) Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

If this is true, then there is no such thing as our Christian lives and worship of the Lord being separate from our daily living. He is to be the center and the main thing of it all. Everyone one of us here were created by God for given a universal purpose: To glorify Him. Our families and our marriages: Jesus is to be glorified in it and the center. Our jobs: Jesus is to be glorified in it and the center. I've been told before "That's easy for you because you work at a church." You'd be surprised how many preachers out there have lost focus and have not kept Jesus the main thing. When we go to our jobs, we are to be doing them with the mindset that we are doing this for the Lord. He is our true boss: we do it with integrity and we strive to do it well. Our focus needs to always be set on Jesus and how He gets the glory. If you look at something while driving, you tend to steer off the road. You must keep your eyes straight ahead. We must always keep our eyes on Jesus. This is to be in every aspect of our lives: This is what is to drive us and keep us going. This I believe this is the mindset Paul here on our text this morning was wanting to instill in the Colossian church. Let's make our way to Colossians 3 this morning.

Background

This letter was written by the Apostle Paul during his imprisonment in Rome, it is categorized as one of the prison Epistles along with Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon. The Colossian church was special to Paul in its own unique way. Paul himself did not start this church, neither has he ever visited or met these people, but was started by a man named Epaphras, whom he led to the Lord, disciplined, and sent out. The people primarily consisted of Pagan Gentiles and were caught up in what Paul calls “vain philosophies.” False teachings and inferior views about Jesus began to take place and Paul was set to correct it. Churches that operate with false teachings will not stand. Leading up to chapter 3, Paul addresses those false teachings and now transitions to practical living.

Scripture

Colossians 3:1-7

- (1) If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
- (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.
- (5) Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: (6) For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: (7) In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

Outline

I. Our focus begins with seeking and setting our affections on the things that are above, vv. 1-4.

A. Where our focus is set, vv. 1-2.

- (1) If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
- (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

1. If you then be risen with Christ . . .

a. Aka if you are saved. If there has been a moment in time where you dealt with your sin problem by putting your trust in Jesus to save you.

b. Most of us in here have gone through the Basic Bible Truth classes we teach here so this should be familiar. The moment a person gets saved there is a lot that takes place. It goes much deeper than simply going to heaven and not hell when you die.

(1) Some of this includes: passed from death unto life, your spirit was made alive, you were declared righteous, a new birth, and can no longer stand condemned.

(2) Here in this verse its about being raised with Christ. Just as Christ died, was buried and rose again. Our old live has died and now have risen to new life. Our baptism illustrates this. Paul introduced this in the previous chapter.

Colossians 2:12-13 (12) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (13) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

2. Seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.

a. If we are raised Christ, if we are saved, there is an expectation in our behavior that comes from it.

b. We are to “seek” this word is meaning “to pursue”. We are to pursue the things which are above, where Christ sits at the right of hand of God.

- (1) This here is symbolic of saying heaven or God's way. We are to seek after heavenly things, what God wants, not the things of earth
- (2) We know this is what he means by above because he says where Christ sits at the right hand of God.
- (3) Other texts touch on this concept as well regarding the right hand of God.

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Philippians 2:9-11 (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; (11) And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- (4) The right hand is an expression of the highest authority. God has set His Son Jesus as the highest authority. And if Jesus is the highest authority and given the name above every name – that is who we should be seeking after. We should seek after what He wants, not what I want for me or what others want for us.

3. Set your “affections” on things above not on things on earth.

- a. For emphasis, Paul says to set your “affections” on things above.
- b. This phrase “set your affections on” is one word in Greek, *Phroneo*.

- (1) This means to exercise the mind, that is, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion; by implication to be (mentally) disposed (more or less earnestly in a certain direction); intensively to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience): - set the affection on.

(2) Other passages commonly translate this as “mind.”

c. Jesus rebuked Peter using this same strong word. Peter tried to rebuke

Jesus first and this was the response.

Matthew 16:21-23 (21) From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. (22) Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. (23) But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

d. That word savourest is the same word “phroneo” used here in Colossians. Peter was guilty of having his mind or affection set on things that be of men. The same lines Paul is commanding the Colossians over. Because when your mind and focus is set on the things of the world or the things of men, you are not set on the things of God. You cannot have it both ways.

e. Not on the things of earth.

(1) This doesn't mean anything material or ordinary things in life. Most of the things we think about are materialistic. It is not wrong to think about material things as long as material things do not become of utmost importance in our hearts.

(2) We must make a living; we must shop for groceries. God expects us to become productive members of society. We must educate our children and make provisions for the future. Our problem is we think about material things exclusively.

(3) Paul is not pushing spiritual escapism, such as becoming a monk or hiding from everyday life. If we take ourselves out of the world, how then would we reach the world for Jesus? This phrase ought to be embedded in every one of us, we are to be in the world, but not of it.

B. Our reason to keep our focus set on the things above, vv. 3-4.

(3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

1. It is because our old selves are dead! Now, of course he is talking spiritually.

We were once dead in sin, and now alive in Christ. Our past selves are now dead. Spiritually, we died with Jesus and then were raised to new life.

Galatians 2:19-20 (19) For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. (20) I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Romans 6:6-10 (6) Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (7) For he that is dead is freed from sin. (8) Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: (9) Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. (10) For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

2. Praise the Lord that sin no longer has dominion over us! This text speaks for itself. If you died with Christ, you shall also live with him. Your life is no longer your own. Considering all what Jesus did for you, you ought to stay focused on the main thing.

3. Your life is also hid with Christ in God.

a. This means without a doubt we are a safe and secured in Jesus.

b. This word here for “hid” is “kryptoo” it’s the same word where we get our English word crypt from. To be concealed for the sake of protection.” Our new man is untouchable when it comes to salvation. It is a real eternal life. Peter writes that our spot in heaven is reserved for us.

1 Peter 1:3-5 (3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, (5) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Philippians 3:20-21 (20) For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: (21) Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

c. Our salvation contract is dependent on God. He would have to be the one to break the contract, thus, breaking His promise. And I guarantee you, that is not going to happen.

4. It says also “when Christ who is our life . . .”

a. Wow, what a statement. How much have we heard descriptions such as “Sports was their life, music was their life, art was their life, his work was his life.” At my funeral someday, I obviously won’t be there to hear it, but I want my life to have been recognized as “Jesus was his life. His life was passionate about the Gospel and the things of God.

b. Our lives indeed belong to God, and He is our life. But do others see that in you?

c. And when He shall appear, ye shall appear with Him in glory.

(1) This refers to Jesus' second coming and our glorification – We will receive new glorified bodies.

(2) Jesus will come back someday for His saints – Are you looking forward to that? Does that excite you? We ought to live our lives so committed for Jesus that others say about you “There I is all about Jesus.”

II. Our focus is kept when we put to death our past lives and refuse to live in them, vv. 5-7.

A. We are to put to death our old man to not lose focus, v. 5.

(5) Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

1. Mortify therefore your members.

a. This word mortify comes from the word “Nekro’-oh.” It literally means to subdue, to put it to death. This shows it is not merely to control or suppress it but kill it. Based on this positional truth that you are to seek that which is above and not the things of earth and because your life is hidden with Christ. Put these things to death because this is not who you are anymore.

b. The members which are about earth he then explains: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry

(1) Fornication: This is from the word “porneia.” I don’t even have to say what English word we derive this from. This is Sex outside of marriage in all forms.

(2) Uncleaness – This is the state of moral impurity, especially in relationship to sexual sin — impurity, immorality, filthiness.

Used 10 times in our NT.

(3) Inordinate affection – This is from the word “Pathos” where we get our word “passion” from. It’s an uncontrolled desire.

(4) Evil concupiscence – This from the word “Epi-thumia.”

Compound word “over desire” also meaning a desire which is forbidden.

(5) Covetousness, which is idolatry. Greed, this is a desire for more and never satisfied. This is also defined to be idolatry – tune into last week’s message for more detail over this one.

2. The first 4 mentioned here deal with sexual sin. It is an absolute shame and frustrating that something God designed exclusively for a husband and wife to enjoy. It must be understood that sex itself is a good thing, but done in the wrong context is when it destroys. It has been tainted and treated as no big deal. Our TV and movies just throw it in there like it’s a must have. I hate this. If you think it is bad now, back in this context, engaging with prostitutes was common. Even as we heard in last week’s message, Corinth engaged in this.
3. I’ve been told the words even by people who claim to be saved “it is to see if we are compatible. That’s old-fashioned thinking, it is better to test before you get married.” I don’t care how the world wants to view it and redefine it. The Word of God teaches clearly that sex outside of marriage will absolutely destroy a person.

4. Want to know how to keep your focus off Jesus – Live like you're lost. Live like the life you had before trusting Jesus. I get this is not the most popular or desired messages to hear in church, but I love you enough to tell you the truth from God's Word.
5. No doubt a saved person can do the same wickedness as a lost person can, but there is something saved people cannot do anymore. You don't get to live after the flesh without that new man inside you grieving. An inner battle that'll exhaust you and leave you miserable. This keeps you out of fellowship with God – A place no child of God should have any part of.

B. We are no longer to live after the things that brought God's wrath, vv. 6-7.

(6) For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: (7) In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

1. Children of disobedience is who we used to be, before we came to know Jesus, we were hell bound children of disobedience deserving God's righteous wrath, but His mercy was rich.

Ephesians 2:1-5 (1) And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; (2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (4) But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

2. This kind of living is no longer who you are, so put them to death! guard your eyes protect yourselves from it because this will never be just a one-time battle. Some think marriage is the solution to solving sexual sin and temptation. This is false because countless marriages are destroyed by this: and not just

physically. Jesus taught to look upon a woman with lust you have committed adultery with her in your heart. The warnings are clear, God's wrath is upon these things, and He will not be mocked. A good amount of people I knew whose marriages failed. They all had something in common: They were all addicted to pornography. They thought marriage would free them from it.

Lighthouse, if there is something to take from today's message, understand this: the only one who can free you from any sin is Jesus. Even these sins. As you depend on Him and set your hedges of protection. If temptation arises, don't fight it off. The Bible says to FLEE!

3. There are people in my life that I love dearly no longer attend church faithfully because of these kinds of sins took place in church leadership. Pastors having an affair with staff member, cover ups happened, they were found out, and their church crumbled. It leaves the members frustrated, confused and not wanting a part of it anymore.
4. Don't lose focus, keep Jesus at the center in everything you do. It starts with seeking and setting your affection on the things above and not on earth.

Conclusion

If you are indeed risen with Christ. If there was a time where you understood what Jesus did on the cross for you. How He died for your sin and He was buried and He rose again three days later and when you trust in Him personally to save you from the wrath to come – You will have eternal life the Bible says. The things preached this morning on keeping Jesus the center and seeking the things that were above, it's only possible if you've been risen with Jesus first. If you reverse this and try seek the things above in order to be raised with Him, you will be filled

with never-ending frustrations. You will not put the old man to death if there is no new man to put on. God's glory is what it's all about. Will it shine through you? Can someone honestly describe you as someone who's life is all about Jesus? What we do here at Lighthouse must always be about Jesus and making Him known. Let's us never lose focus in that.

Prayer