

**Subject: *Marks of a Normal Christian Life – Part 4***

**Scripture: *Colossians 3:1-7***

The Bible describes what a normal Christian life looks like. These are unmistakable marks of a Christian. So far, we have examined three marks of a normal Christian:

- *The 1st mark is a serious commitment to Scripture*
- *The 2nd mark is a serious commitment to Christ*
- *The 3rd mark is a serious commitment to the church*

***The 4th mark of a normal Christian life is a serious commitment to eternal things***

Vs. 1 – seek those things which are above

Vs. 2 – set your affection on things above

Things which are above would include things that are eternal and heavenly. These would be eternal truths, eternal realities, eternal blessings, eternal privileges, and eternal riches.

## **1. OUR CONNECTION TO ETERNAL BLESSINGS**

Eternal things or things which are above are things that are part of salvation and the gospel. Our connection to eternal blessings is “in Christ.”

***Colossians 1:3-6*** <sup>3</sup> *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,* <sup>4</sup> *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,* <sup>5</sup> *For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;* <sup>6</sup> *Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.*

Col. 3:1 – We are risen with Christ

Col. 3:3 – Our life is hidden with Christ in God

Col. 3:4 – Christ is our life

Every spiritual blessing we have comes in and through Christ (in Christ).

***Ephesians 1:3*** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*

***2 Corinthians 5:17*** *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

***1 Corinthians 15:22*** *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

Our connection to eternal blessings is in Christ. You can be in church and not be in Christ. You can be in a Christian family and not be in Christ. You can be in your Bible

and in prayer every day and not be in Christ. To be in Christ is to be in grace. To be in Christ is to trust in Christ and repent of your sins.

## **2. OUR AFFECTION FOR ETERNAL BLESSINGS**

Verse 1 – seek those things which are above

Verse 2 – set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth

Just think of all the things that attract us to heaven: Our Father is there; our Savior is there; our loved ones are there; our treasure is there; our name is written there; our future is there; our home is there.

**1 Timothy 6:17** *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*

God gives us many earthly blessings to enjoy, but they must never capture our hearts.

**1 John 2:15** *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

**Luke 12:15-21** <sup>15</sup> *And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.* <sup>16</sup> *And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:* <sup>17</sup> *And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?* <sup>18</sup> *And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.* <sup>19</sup> *And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* <sup>20</sup> *But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* <sup>21</sup> *So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

A Christian enjoys earthly blessings, but his heart is fixed on eternal, heavenly treasures. Paul was motivated by eternal things, not earthly things. He enjoyed earthly blessings, but his heart was captivated by eternal things.

**Philippians 1:21** *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

**Philippians 1:23** *For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.*

**2 Corinthians 4:17-18** <sup>17</sup> *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;* <sup>18</sup> *While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Think about some of our favorite gospel songs...

“I woke up with heaven on my mind...”

“I’m kind of homesick for a country to which I’ve never been before...”

Do those songs really describe how you feel in your heart?

### **3. OUR PARTICIPATION IN ETERNAL BLESSINGS**

**Colossians 3:4** *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

If Christ is your life, then you will be with Him in glory (heaven) for eternity.

**Psalms 73:24** *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

This is our motivation for Christian living.

**1 John 3:2-3**<sup>2</sup> *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*<sup>3</sup> And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

**2 Peter 3:10-14**<sup>10</sup> *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*<sup>11</sup> *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,*<sup>12</sup> *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*<sup>13</sup> *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*<sup>14</sup> Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Do thoughts of eternity fill your heart and motivate you or does heaven and eternity seem distant and irrelevant to your daily life?

In 125 A.D., a man named Aristides wrote to a friend about those early Christians. Here’s what he said, “If any righteous man among the Christians passes from this world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God, and they escort his body with songs and thanksgiving as if he were setting out from one place to another nearby.”

Notice that word “nearby.” For normal Christians heaven seems to be a place nearby, not far away. That’s because their heart is already there.