

“Our Future Glory”
Colossians 3:4
(Preached at Trinity, August 5, 2018)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Verse 1** speaks of our spiritual resurrection as a present reality. We have been raised up with Christ. It speaks of our union with Christ. His life is our life, His death is our death, His resurrection is our resurrection. Paul is saying, “Since it is true that you have been raised up with Christ who is seated at the right hand of God, let this be reflected in your life.”
Instead of being earthly minded with your mind bound by earthly things, set your mind upon heavenly things that reflect the Lordship of Christ.
2. **Verse 3** attaches the reason for this way of thinking.
“For” you have died. The word γὰρ can also be translated “because” expressing the cause or reason for something.
Paul is saying, look to things above because you have died.
3. **Verse 3** is tightly connected to **Verse 1**
“you have been raised up with Christ for you have died.”
In other words, before there can be a resurrection there must be a death.
4. Paul is saying the Christian has died to this earth and has been raised to things above. John Eadie writes – “Neither ‘seek nor savour’ the things of earth; for having died, and having been even buried with Christ, your sphere of being, action, and enjoyment, is totally different from your former state.”¹
5. The spiritual realities of the resurrection are enjoyed now.
“your life is hidden with Christ.” – Paul is speaking of spiritual life enjoyed now, yet the fullness is yet to come. The hidden source of this life is Christ.
6. **Verse 4** adds another dimension to the “because” of **Verse 3**.
We are to set our minds on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God because of the expectation of His return and our participation in His return.
The word for “revealed” is from a word that means “to make visible.” It refers to the visible return of Christ when every eye shall behold Him.
Revelation 1:7 NAS - "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen."
7. This glorious thought should captivate our thinking in this life. It should affect how we live.

¹ John Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Colossians*, ed. W. Young, Second Edition., (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1884), 211.

8. In **Verse 4** Paul speaks of two appearances
- A. One is Christ – “When Christ, who is our life, is revealed”
 - B. The other involves those who are united with Him – “then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”
The verb is a future passive. We will “be revealed,” meaning we will be made to appear. It is the work of Christ, who is our life.
- I. The appearance of Christ
- A. It will be a spectacular event
 1. There will be blinding glory – the word for glory (δόξα) can refer to brightness or splendor.
 2. The transfiguration was described in terms of brightness
Matthew 17:2 NAU - "And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light."
 3. The appearance of Christ at Saul’s conversion is described in terms of brightness.
 4. It will also be a triumphal event with a majestic proclamation and the blowing of trumpets.
1 Thessalonians 4:16 NAU - "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God"
 - B. For most of humanity, it will be a fearful display of fiery judgment
 1. While the saints are rejoicing, the rest of fallen humanity will weep with the sound of loud lamentation.
Revelation 1:7 NAS - "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him."
 2. The One they denied, the One they ignored, the One they refused to receive and follow they will see in the brightness of His coming.
 3. They will find no escape from His condemnation
Revelation 6:15-17 NAS - "And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶ and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?"
 - C. Paul describes the coming of Christ as an unveiling where the invisible becomes visible. He uses the word φανερώω
 1. On one hand, it will be an exposing of the hearts of men
1 Corinthians 4:5 NAU - "Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, *but wait* until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose (φανερώω) the motives of *men's* hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God."

2. On the other hand, it will be an unveiling of Christ Himself.
 - a. Again, for the lost it will be terrifying.
 - The last time they saw Him He was the suffering Servant walking humbly through the streets of Galilee.
 - The last time they saw Him He was hanging upon the shameful cross. They mocked Him and cursed Him.

But now . . .

Revelation 1:14-17 NAU - "His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. ¹⁵ His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷ When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man."
 - b. For the Christian it will be the great unveiling of the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form.

Colossians 2:9 NAU - "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,"
3. We will behold Him with our physical eyes and comprehend Him with our understanding.

1 John 3:2 NAU - "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."

 - a. John says that our Christian life, our union with Christ is a present reality – "now we are the children of God."
 - b. But Christ is veiled to our eyes – "it has not appeared" "We know that when He appears" - φανερώω
 - c. John says on that glorious day we shall see Him just as He is. We will see Him in the brightness of His glory.

II. Paul describes a second revealing on that Great Day

Colossians 3:4 NAU - "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

- A. First of all, Paul is saying we will be with Christ when He returns
 1. Paul describes the second coming:

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 NAU - "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord."
 - a. When Christ returns in the clouds the dead in Christ, believers who are in the grave, will be raised to meet Him in the air.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 NAU - "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus."

- b. They will be followed by all of the believers who are alive at the return of Christ.
1 Thessalonians 4:17 NAU - "Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"
 - c. This will happen in a flash of time. Paul describes it as happening at the blinking of an eye.
1 Corinthians 15:51-52 NAU - "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."
 - d. Having gathered all of the saints together with Him, He will descend as the great conquering King. Then there will be the general resurrection of the dead. All will stand before Him. All will bow.
- B. What else happens when Christ returns?
John says when we appear with Christ we will be like Him
1 John 3:2 NAU - "We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."
- 1. **Verse 1** reminds us of our spiritual resurrection that directs our hearts upward
 - 2. **Verse 4** speaks of our future physical resurrection.
 - a. We shall be like Christ – to be with Christ in heaven demands a change in our bodies
Philippians 3:20-21 NAU - "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory"
 - b. This describes our glorified bodies.
1 Cor. 15:42 - "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption"
1 Cor. 15:50 - "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doeth corruption inherit incorruption." -
1 Cor. 15:53 - "For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."
 - 3. **1 John** describes the mystery of what is to come. Our future glory.
 - a. It is the mystery of the "not yet."
John says, "Now we are the children of God." This is the present reality.
Then he says, "and it has not appeared as yet what we will be."
 - b. We don't know what we will be, but we know that when Christ is revealed we will be revealed with Him. And John says we will be like Him. Not that we will be like Him in deity but like Him in His resurrection. We will see Him as He is in His resurrection and we shall be like Him.

C. What else happens when we are revealed with Christ in glory?

We shall receive our reward

1. Paul stated that all share in his crown of righteousness. This is the crown shared by all who are the righteous.
2 Timothy 4:7-8 NAU - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."
- a. The Christian is the one who rejoices in the coming of Christ – first of all in His birth as our Savior
2 Timothy 1:9-10 NAU - "has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, ¹⁰ but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,"
- b. Second of all in His second coming, which is our hope of glory. Our hearts are enflamed with the thought of seeing Christ. We love the very thought of seeing Him face to face.
- c. This is the crown of righteousness shared by all who are in Christ.
2. And what is our ultimate crown? It is Christ!

Conclusion:

1. Do you understand what Paul is saying? Can you comprehend the richness? He is saying this:
 - If it is true that you have been raised with Christ, then seek the One with whom you are united.
 - If you share in His resurrection, then you also share in His death – live as one who has died to your former life of sin.
 - If you share the life of Christ, then you shall share in His return. You will enjoy eternal sonship.
2. But what does this mean? It means this. John says, “Now you are the children of God.” Now, today, at the present you share with Christ the blessedness of sonship. When He returns you will comprehend fully the blessedness of sonship. You will be like Him! What did it mean for Christ to be the Son of God? Among other things, it meant He behaved like a Son.
John 4:34 NAU - "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."
 Robert Candlish – “We must look, as always, to Christ. He had a hope in God, or upon God; a hope having God for its object, and God for its ground and warrant. It was hope for himself as the Son; and it was hope in and upon the Father. And it was substantially the same hope that we have as children that he had as the Son.”²
3. We are children of God now, but we cannot fully comprehend it. But we have the blessed hope that we will. How then shall we live now?
1 John 3:2-3 NAU - "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

² Candlish, Robert L., *The First Epistle of John*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1979), Page 243.