

Colossians Ch3v1-11 - Chnaged By Christ

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Preacher: Jonny Grant

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you all who are playing as well. Again, helping us to sing, which is always great. Let's turn in our Bibles to Colossians.

Colossians chapter 3. Next week, Sam, who is leading, is going to be taking up the next section from chapter 3, verses 12 to 17.

So please do be praying for him in his preparation through the week as well for that. We're going to read Colossians chapter 3, verses 1 to 11.

Just need to get a drink. Hang on. Thank you. Thank you. Let's read from verse 1.

[1 : 40] Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

And set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature.

Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these.

[2 : 48] Anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator.

Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free. But Christ is all, and is in all. Well, let's ask for God's help as we look at this together. Our Father God, we thank you for your word, and we thank you that it is true, and we thank you that it is living and active.

And so as your word goes out to us today, we pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit, it would lead to a change and a transformation, so that we become daily more like Christ.

this is what we long for. And so we pray that your word would help us in that today. In Jesus' name we pray.

[4 : 25] Amen. Well, we all have something in common. We all want to change.

There are things in our life we want to stop doing, and there are things in our life we want to start doing. Deep down we all want to be renewed.

We want to be transformed. We want to be different. Well, thankfully, our text this morning is going to show us how we can all change.

Three things are going to help us experience change in our life. Know who you are, know how you live, and know what you become.

Know who you are, know how you live, and know what you become. Three steps that we can take with us that will help us to lasting Christ-like change.

[5 : 28] So first, know who you are. So who are you? Do you know yourself? What is your identity?

How would you describe yourself? Well, in my case, I might say I'm Irish, I'm a husband, I'm a father, I'm a pastor, I'm a monster supporter.

You could just go on and on. All these different things define who we are. However, if we're a Christian, there is another way to define ourselves.

And we see it in verse 4. Look at verse 4. When Christ, who is your life. Do you see that?

Christ, who is your life. If you're a Christian, that's who you are. Christ is your life. His life is your life.

[6 : 30] His beauty, His glory, His purity, is yours. So if you're to ask me, who am I?

Well, strictly, I should be answering, Christ is my life. When I'm watching sport on television, if it's Cork, and they're playing football or Hurley, I might say, we played really well.

We were physical. We took our chances. We won the game. Now, at one level, that's a really strange way to talk, isn't it? Because I had nothing to do with the match.

I didn't play the game. I was nowhere near the ball. I'm just watching it on TV. Yet, because they are my team, I can say, we won, or I won.

The player's victory becomes my victory. I get to share in it. Well, through our union with Christ, that is, through our trust in Him, we can say, Christ is my life.

[7 : 44] All that Christ is, belongs to me. His life is my life. Three things show us how the life of Christ is my life.

Three things, from verses 1 to 4. First, I have been raised with Christ. Do you see it there, verse 1? Since you have been raised with Christ. Now, if we've been raised with Christ, it also implies we've died with Christ, which it says in verse 3, for you have died.

Well, how does that happen? How do I die with Christ, and how do I rise with Christ? Well, it's by faith. It's through our union, being united to Christ.

So, when Christ died 2,000 years ago, I can say, I died. When Christ was raised, I was raised. I died to my old self, and I was raised with a new self.

[8 : 51] You see, by faith, we get to participate in the death and resurrection of Christ. His death is my death. His resurrection becomes my resurrection.

So, I can say with absolute confidence, without any pride, but a humble confidence in God, the old Johnny is dead.

He's buried. He's gone. You'll never see him again. The new Johnny is alive. Because Christ is my life, I have been raised with Christ, to a new kind of life.

So, I've been raised with Christ, and I am now hidden with Christ. Look at verse 3. For you died, and your life is now present, hidden with Christ in God.

Our union is so strong, that we can say, my life is hidden with Christ. Where Christ is, we are.

[10 : 08] And where is Christ right now? Well, go back to verse 1. Where is Christ? Verse 1, since then, you've been raised with Christ.

Set your hearts on things above. where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Christ, now, is in the presence of the Father.

He is with the Father. Which means, if I am hidden with Christ, that means, I am also, right now, with the Father in heaven. Well, don't be silly, Johnny.

You're in Carragoline Community Centre. I can see you, with my own eyes. How can you say, you're in, the presence of the Father in heaven?

Well, if I'm hidden in Christ, then I am where Christ is. Not physically, but spiritually. So, that means, I also have access to the Father, anytime, anywhere, because I am hidden, in Christ.

[11 : 14] And if I'm hidden in Christ, that means, I am safe, and secure, in Christ. Nothing, and no one, is able to take me, from the grasp, of Christ.

Not my sin, not my suffering, not Satan, nothing, can take me, out of Christ. Christ. Because Christ, is my life, I am hidden, in Christ.

But there's a third reason, why we can say, Christ is my life, is I will appear, with Christ. Look at these words, they're tremendous. Verse 4, when Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also, will appear, with him in glory.

One day, Christ is going, to return, and he's going, to bring all things, to its conclusion. He'll establish, the new creation, the new heavens, and the new earth. A world, where there'll be, no evil, no Satan, or death.

And Christ, will live, with his people, on earth, if we're not going, up to heaven, Christ is coming, to this earth, and he's going, to renew it all, and everything, will be, as it should be.

[12 : 37] And when that happens, we will be sure, to share in it. Do you see it, in verse 4? You, will, appear with him, in glory.

No ifs, no maybes, no buts, not I'm sure, I'm unsure, absolutely guaranteed. We will, appear with him, in glory.

So who are you? Do you, do you know yourself? Do you know your identity? Well, if you're a Christian, you can say, Christ is my life.

I have been raised, with Christ. I am now, hidden, in Christ. And I will appear, with Christ. His life, is now, my life.

This is, who I am. And if we're, going to change, we need to understand, our identity. The first step, in being changed, is knowing, who you are.

[13 : 45] My life, is Christ's life. So, know who you are. Second, know how you live.

Know how you live. So, how do we live? Well, if Christ, is my life, I now, begin to live, with Christ, priorities.

Look, what it says, in verses 1 and 2. Since then, you've been raised, with Christ. Set your hearts, on things, above where Christ, is seated, at the right hand of God.

Verse 2, set your minds, on things above, not on earthly things. Set your hearts, set your minds, focus, seek the things, that are above.

Desire what, Christ desires. In other words, let the rule of heaven, now shape, how you live your life, on this earth.

[14 : 55] In other words, you have a new life. Your life is Christ. Christ, now become, who you are. Start living, the way, which God, has called you, and rescued you to be.

Live, your new life. You see, if you begin, to see yourself, as God sees you, then you will start living, as God wants you to live.

We will begin, to change. Now, two surprising commands, are given to us, to show us, how we should live. If you were to think, of all the things, that we need to change, in our life, I wonder, if we would come up, with these two things.

Here's the first one. Kill, harmful, sexual behavior, and desires. Verse 5, put to death, kill, therefore, because you have a new life, in Christ, therefore, put it to death, whatever belongs, to your earthly nature.

Well, what's our earthly nature? Well, sexual immorality. That is, any sex, outside the bounds, of marriage. Impurity.

[16 : 15] Any kind, of sexual activity, outside of God's design. Lust. Self-gratification, regardless, of the impact, on others.

Evil desires. acting out, and living out, what I want, and what pleases me. And greed.

An appetite, for sex, that is, never satisfied. What a list. Now, this doesn't mean, to say, that all sex, is harmful.

No, it's a wonderful gift, from God. Sex, is part of God's, design, for humanity. However, once we take it, outside of God's design, once we go, beyond God's, boundaries, then it becomes, destructive, and harmful.

Verse 6. Because of these, because of these, harmful, behaviors, and desires, the wrath of God, is coming. God, will judge, harmful, sexual, behavior, and desires.

[17 : 29] Now, that's a good thing. Think with me, for a moment, about this. If you were the object, of the behaviors, in verse 5, all that list there, if you're the object, of that behavior, if you're receiving, the end, of your spouse's, partner's, attitudes, if people are, treating you, in this way, well then, wouldn't you want, justice to be done?

Wouldn't you want, things to be put right? Well you see, God has made us, and he's designed us, to live a certain way, and he won't let us, go on destroying, each other's lives, with harmful, behaviors, and desires.

He's going to hold us, to account. So it's a good thing, that God is going, to come, and judge. Now of all these, behaviors, that we see, in verse 5, of all the behaviors, that could possibly, be addressed, why do you think, he's chosen sex, as the one, to deal with?

Why, why that issue? Why nothing else? Well here's, what I think. Distorted sex, is the one thing, that has such a, profound, impact upon us.

It runs, riot, in our society, and in our culture. And it harms us. When it's wrong, it riddles us, with guilt and shame.

[19 : 08] It makes us feel, dirty and unclean. It changes us, for the bad. So think about it. If you were to have, an affair, it isn't just, some kind of, thing that you do.

No, it has a knock-on effect. It breaks relationships, and destroys families. Watching porn, isn't a private matter. It affects, and shapes, how we treat each other, and how we treat ourselves.

Uncontrolled desires, lead to uncontrolled, damaging behaviors. others. You see, if we don't, kill it, it's going to kill you.

So first, kill harmful, sexual behavior, and desires. Second, he says, banish harmful speech, from our life.

Verse 8. But now, he says, you must also rid yourselves, of all such things, as these. Anger, uncontrolled outbursts, rage, angry, violent words, malice, hateful speech, towards others, slander, speaking damaging words, behind people's backs.

[20 : 40] Filthy language, from your lips. The use of gross, swear words, which we aim, at other people. You've heard the saying, haven't you?

Sticks and stones, may break my bones, but words, will never, hurt me. Is it true? No, it's not true. It's a lie, isn't it? I'm sure quite one of, all of us here, could share stories, of how the words, of other people, have hurt us.

But here's the point. My words, can be harmful. My speech, can also break, and destroy relationships.

Let's face the reality, this is what it's saying, to us here. The words, that can come out, of our mouths, can be hurtful. And if we don't keep, our speech in check, it's going to change us, for the bad.

[21 : 43] You see, our words are important. We speak all the time. It's how we communicate, to one another. And with our words, we build up, or we're tearing down.

With our speech, we're expressing love, or we're expressing hate. You see, if we don't, banish it from our life, it's going to grow, and fester, and destroy us, and destroy others.

Now let's be honest, about these concerns, that are being addressed here. Harmful sexual behaviour, and hurtful speech. They're not things, that are out there, outside of these four walls. They're in here, in my heart. Remember, this is a letter, written to a church, to Christians, people, who are singing the songs, we've just sung, people who will say, Christ, is my life.

So we don't need to go, pointing fingers elsewhere, we need to examine, our own hearts. So how do we, put to death, and get rid of, our earthly nature?

[23 : 06] Well, you might come up, with a better, set of examples. Let me, let me take you through, five steps, that we can take.

Ruthless action, that we need to take, to kill, and to banish, that which isn't right, in our life. Here's the first one, I've got them listed there. Name it.

Identify, the particular, harmful behaviour, or speech. Name what it is. If it's anger, it's anger. If it's sexual immorality, or impurity, name it, that's what it is.

If that's what your sin is, name it. Second, own it. Let's not blame it on others, or excuse it, or say, I wasn't feeling particularly well, that day, or somebody annoyed me, or, well, they did it to me, I'm doing it to them.

No, there's no blame. Take personal responsibility, for our actions, and our words. Third, confess it.

[24 : 15] Bring it to God. Ask his forgiveness, and acknowledge it, before the person, you've harmed or hurt, and ask for their forgiveness. Fourth, replace it.

And I think this is the main thing, here in this context. You see, we cannot change our actions, or our words, by sheer determination. If we go out of here, thinking, I must do better, I must stop this, I must stop doing that, I must do this, I must do that.

But, sheer willpower, is never going to change our life. We need to replace, the desires that we have, for Christ's desires.

And how do we do that? Well, it's back to verses 1 and 2, isn't it? To set your hearts, on things above. Set our minds, on things above.

Meditate, and reflect, and think about, deeply, about the word, of Christ, who he is, his character, his goodness, and ask God, to change you, and transform you, in your life.

[25 : 24] And the Holy Spirit, will work a change, that will be lasting. And then fifth, share it. That is, share your struggle, with another Christian.

Share it. It's okay, to tell people, what you struggle with. They can pray for you, and get alongside you, hold you accountable. We're not here, to crush each other.

We're here, to help each other. And as we do this, so we will begin, to change, for the good. So first, we need to know, who we are.

And second, we need to know, how to live out, our new identity. Third then, know what you become.

Thirsty this morning. Know what you become. The ugly duckling, turned into a, swan. And the hairy caterpillar, is turned into a butterfly.

[26 : 38] What about the Christian? What are we going to turn into? What are we going to become? Well, look at verses 9 and 10.

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off, your old self, with its practices, and have put on, the new self, which is being, renewed in knowledge, in the image, in the image, of its creator. Our creator, is Christ. So we are being, renewed, into the image, of our creator, into the image, of Christ.

We are being made, to be like him. Isn't that amazing? Each one of us, are being made, like him. And it is important, for us to understand, how this happens.

First, look at our unchanging status. Look at what, has already, happened to us, in the past. Verse 9.

[27 : 44] Do not lie to each other, since you have, taken off, your old self. Verse 10. And have, put on the new self.

It is something, past, that has happened. You have, taken off, the old self. You have, put on the new self. This is the same, as what we have, talked about before.

We have, died with Christ. The old is gone. We have been, raised with Christ. The new has come. I have been, given a new life. A new beginning. A fresh start.

It is the same, as saying, verse 4, Christ, is my, life. And this life, is a permanent life. We can't, ever lose, this, new life.

It's an unchanging status. No matter how often I fail, no matter how many times I fall, Christ, is still my life.

[28 : 45] That will not change. It's an unchanging status. But it is, second, a gradual process.

Do you see it there in verse 10? We are being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator. We're being renewed.

Gradually. Being changed to become the person God created and rescued us to be. We're being renewed in knowledge. That is, we're knowing more of who Christ is.

But more than that, we are being made into the likeness of Christ. You see, on the one side, Christ is my life. So whenever God looks at me, he sees Christ.

He treats me as Christ. However, in practice, my behaviour and my words are still not yet like him. So God is still gradually changing me to be more like him.

[29 : 48] Maybe some of you have seen the TV programme, The Repair Shop. It's all about people bringing old gadgets and things that have sentimental value to them to this workshop and the thing about it is everything they bring in is broken.

It's not working. It's not how it should be. One of them was all about a clock, one of these wind-up clocks that tick away and tick away and, well, they brought it in and it was not working.

The cogs and everything were all in disrepair. It was a desperate colour. It was still a clock but it wasn't all that the clock should be.

And, of course, they left it there and over the weeks they did the repair and eventually the person comes in to get their clock. It was the same clock but now it's a different kind of clock.

It's everything that it should be. Well, in the same way when we turn to Christ we're entering into God's repair shop.

[30 : 59] Or better still, God enters into our life to renew us and to restore us to what we were created and rescued to be.

Daily, we are becoming more like Christ. we are becoming the person he has declared us to be. So, on the one hand I can now say Christ is my life.

That is unchanging. But I can also say I am becoming like Christ. That is a gradual process. Now, becoming like Christ is not just a personal project.

It's a communal project. Look at verse 11. Here, he's talking about in the church amongst God's people there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

So, it doesn't matter your nationality. Circumcised or uncircumcised. It doesn't matter your religious tradition. barbarian, whatever your social background, Scythian, whatever your culture is, whether you're slave or free, whatever your economic status, none of these things matter in the church.

[32 : 17] What matters is, end of verse 11, Christ is all and is in all. Christ is supreme over this church and Christ is at work in each one of us right now.

You see, in the church we are all equal. Christ is our life and we are being made into the likeness of Christ. It's not that some people are better than others.

It's not that we have some kind of level that the front row have made it and those at the very back, well, they're just a little further off. They're not as like Christ as the ones at the front.

No, it's not like that. No one can claim a superiority and no one can feel an inferiority. Christ is not working in some.

He's working in us all. The church is a communal project. Together we are being renewed into the image of our creator.

[33 : 20] Are we there yet? No. But together we are becoming the people he has called us to be. So the third step in being changed is knowing what you become.

You see, we all have things we want to change. We want to stop doing certain things and we want to start doing things. We want to behave right and speak right.

Well, here are three things that we take with us that we don't just look at once but they become foundation rocks, if you like, foundations for us in our life.

Know who you are. Know how you live and know what you are becoming. And through that, God changes us.

Let's pray. our Father God, we thank you so much for the truth of your word that helps us to see who we truly are, that we are in Christ, Christ is my life, and you are making us to be more like Christ, changing our behaviors, changing our speech, changing us to be the people you have created us and rescued us to be.

[35 : 02] Thank you with you there is real hope and lasting change. please help us as we go into a new week to live the life that you have made for us.

In Jesus name, Amen. We're going to sing together. When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast.

Because we are in Christ, if we can say Christ is my life, well he will hold us through everything we go through. He is my life.

Let's stand together as we sing.