

# Don't Live Belonging to the World

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Preacher: Paul Barker

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, let's pray as we come to God's word tonight.

Let's pray.

We may more and more be renewed in the image of Jesus. And may your powerful word work that good purpose out in our lives tonight.

For Jesus' sake. Amen. My grandfather lived in Australia for, I think, well over 60 years.

He died less than three years ago at the age of 98 and a half. But to the day he died, he was English.

[ 1 : 18 ] He was born in London. But for well over 60 years, may have even been 70, he lived in Australia. But he kept saying we, meaning England, not Australia.

And you, being Australians. We, grandchildren, found this all a little bit puzzling. And we kept wanting to say to him, you're an Australian now.

Act like an Aussie. But he never did. Imagine a new husband. Recently married. Comes home late at night, having not rung his wife to explain that he'd be late.

Comes home from the pub, drinking with his mates. What's she going to say? The angry wife. You're not single anymore. You're married. Act like a husband.

Or imagine Ben Cousins. On the rare times that he plays. Imagine if he'd gone out on whatever ground it was yesterday for the latest debacle.

[ 2 : 20 ] That he wore his West Coast Eagles shirt. You're a tiger now. Act like one. Well, he probably played badly, so he probably did. A daughter turns 18.

And her mother notices her. Sucking her thumb. Cuddling her teddy. Playing with dolls. You're an adult now.

Not a child. Act like an adult. Now, in a sense, they're trivial examples. But that's, in essence, what this passage tonight is about.

Where are you with God? A believer in Jesus? Act like one. And that's, in essence, what Paul is saying to the Colossians here.

The answer is, for a Christian, you are in Christ. We often think that when we become Christians, Christ takes up residence in us.

[ 3 : 25 ] And indeed, he does, of course, by his spirit. But there's an equally important truth. That when we become a Christian, we become in Christ.

Typically, in the New Testament letters, Paul speaks of Christians in all sorts of ways as in Christ. And we've seen that the last couple of weeks. It becomes slightly odd in our thinking, perhaps.

But Paul has said these words in the passage we looked at, for example, last week. You were buried with him in baptism. And when we think of Joseph of Arimathea taking the body of Jesus down from the cross and placing him in that new tomb in the garden very close to the cross, there's a sense in which we were buried in him and with him.

When he died, we died in him. When he rose from the dead, we rose in him and with him. My guess is we don't often think in those terms.

We think, perhaps, of Jesus in us, less so of us in him. But Paul has emphasised that in this letter. That we are in Christ.

[ 4 : 42 ] The question, then, is where is Christ? Christ has died, he was buried, and he's risen and ascended to the right hand of God the Father.

Where are we if we're believers? We have died, we've been buried, and we are raised with Christ, in effect, to heaven. There's a sense in which that's where we now are.

Yes, it doesn't quite look like heaven around here, but that's actually spiritually where we are, where our home is, where our citizenship. It's where we belong. We are in and with Christ, raised and ascended to the right hand of God in heaven.

Now Paul draws out the implication or the application of that theological statement. He's now making an ethical point, a moral point, behavioural.

How should Christians live? And he's undergirding that ethical injunction and imperative with this theological truth.

[ 5 : 50 ] We are in Christ. We are in Christ, who died and was buried and is raised and ascended to God's right hand.

That's where we are. That's the reality. That's the truth. So, act like it. Don't act as though you're not in Christ.

Don't act as though you didn't die and weren't buried and weren't raised. Act according to your reality in Christ risen.

And that's why I gave those slightly trivial examples at the beginning. You see, Christian ethics is not about changing our behaviour so that we become something else in order to attain a different status.

But rather, changing our behaviour to reflect the status that we're already in by the grace of God. We are in Christ.

[ 6 : 49 ] By his grace. We've been transferred into Jesus' kingdom as we saw in the middle of chapter 1. We've died in Christ. Died to our sins. The old self dead.

If we're believers. And we've been raised to a new life. Therefore, because that is true for a believer, act like it. Act according to the status, location, place, if you like, spiritual reality that is already ours in Christ.

In essence, Paul puts it this way. Negatively and then positively. If you've died in Christ, then don't live as if you belong to the world.

Because you're dead to the world. If you've been raised with Christ, then seek the things that are above. Act according to the things above. The negative and the positive.

He uses both of those as conditional statements. If you died, if you are risen, but he's implying, if as is in fact the case, then don't act that way, the old way, the earthly way, but rather act the heavenly way.

[ 8 : 07 ] You've changed kingdoms, you've changed lives, you've changed natures and selves, from the old to the new, from the dead to the alive, from the earthly to the heavenly. So act appropriately.

Act right. So chapter 2, verse 20. If with Christ you died, to the elemental spirits of the universe, something Paul mentioned back in verse 8, when he said, see to it that no one takes you captive, through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe.

It's a broad term, meaning the evil, even worldly powers and forces of our universe, that are opposed to God. Don't be taken captive to them, because you belong to the Lord of everything, Jesus Christ.

So if you've died to them, through your faith in Jesus, reflected in your baptism, then don't be taken back into that life, don't be taken captive to them, and he says here in verse 20, if you died to them, as indeed you have if you're a believer, why do you live as if you still belong to the world?

You don't belong to the world, you belong to Jesus. Now we often don't think in those terms. We think in terms of, well, we belong in this world.

[ 9 : 31 ] We've got a right to be here. But the bigger reality, the eternal reality is, we don't belong here, we belong in Jesus' kingdom, because we're in Christ.

It's very helpful, I think, to try and orientate our minds, to think, I'm in this world, travelling through, travelling light. I'm here for a short time.

I don't actually belong here. My citizenship is in heaven. That's my home. That's where I belong. That's where, in fact, I am already in Christ. So don't act as though we belong in the world, he says in verse 20.

If, as indeed is the case, you've died to these elemental spirits. Back in verse 12, Paul said, you were buried with him in baptism, you were raised with him through faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead.

And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive. Basically, Paul has said, you have died to the elemental spirits in this universe.

[ 10 : 39 ] So in verse 20, when he says, if you have, he means, yes, you have, therefore behave the right way. Act not belonging to the world, but belonging to Jesus' heavenly eternal kingdom.

He goes on then in verse 20 to say, another question, why do you submit to regulations? Now, wouldn't it be great to live in a regulation-free world?

Our world, in fact, is becoming more and more regulation complex. Everything we do is full of rules and regulations often beyond our knowing.

Now, Paul is not against all rules. He's not speaking about anarchy here. But rather, he's speaking about rules that, or regulations, as he goes on to say, he gives a few simple examples in verse 21, don't handle, or don't taste, or don't touch.

And then he explains why those regulations are, in a sense, not to be submitted to. All these regulations refer to things that perish with use.

[ 11 : 46 ] They're simply human commands and teachings. They've indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-imposed piety, humility, and severe treatment of the body, but they are of no value in checking self-indulgence.

Paul here is addressing what seems to be the false teaching that is coming into the town of Colossae and is perhaps tempting some Christians to divert from the gospel.

They seem to be people who are advocating a highly ascetic lifestyle, that is, of self-denial. probably things like don't eat, don't drink wine, subjugate yourself, humble yourself, don't indulge yourself, be restricted in what you eat and what you do, don't even touch some sorts of foods perhaps, or maybe the don't touch is about sexual relations.

It's very much a sort of extreme asceticism, self-denial, monastic sort of idea that is being advocated. The reason it seems that they're teaching that is to try and subdue our earthly desires and self-indulgence.

Paul's not against rules or regulations per se, but he's saying these rules and regulations, they're human imposed. They refer to things that perish, like food or wine, like our physical body perhaps in a sense.

[ 13 : 18 ] Christianity is not essentially about self-denial or asceticism, although it is about self-control. They are human regulations, maybe made up or imposed by these false teachers.

They may not necessarily be evil ideas in themselves, but they are not the essence of the Christian faith. and they appear to be wise.

They appear to say, yes, that might be the way, a sort of five-step program to get my life in order, to get free from indulgence and addiction or extravagance or something. But it's not, in fact, of any value, he says in verse 23, in checking self-indulgence.

The things that are listed in verse 21, do not handle taste and touch, probably, possibly are referring to some of the Jewish laws and food laws that maybe these teachers are trying to drive them back to Old Testament laws.

The things that are listed though about the goal, self-imposed piety in verse 23, humility and severe treatment of the body.

[ 14 : 38 ] Those things he's already mentioned in verse 16. Don't let anyone condemn you in matters of food, drink, observing festivals, new moon, sabbaths. There are only a shadow of what's to come.

Don't let anyone disqualify you, verse 18, insisting on self-abasement, worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking. They are the rules, I think, behind this now statement in verse 23.

The self-imposed piety is about a sort of religious asceticism that is from a human rule. It's self-imposed. It's not from God. Secondly, he talks about this humility but here it's like a false humility, a false modesty in a way that I'm humbling myself.

What I said last week was like a Uriah heap, humility. An ascetic living, trying to somehow pummel the body into submission to these rules and regulations.

It's all about self-denial but the trouble is it's of no value. No value, he says at the end of verse 23. It looks like wisdom but it's not.

[ 15 : 52 ] It looks like common sense. It's plausible but it's of no value because all wisdom is in Christ. Chapter 2 verse 3 said and we've seen that earlier in chapter 1 in a sense as well.

You see, these rules are not the essence of Christianity. Christ is. Christ is the source and fount of all wisdom. Not rules and regulations. And external rules do not change the heart or mind.

And that's the point. They're of no value. They're external, weak, human, perishable, no value. What Paul's saying in this paragraph is very much like what Jesus said back in Mark's Gospel.

Jesus had a number of confrontations with Jewish leaders and Pharisees and so on. And in Mark chapter 7 for example, he said about these leaders quoting from Isaiah, In vain do they worship me teaching human precepts as doctrines.

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition. And then later on he says there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile but the things that come out are what defile.

[ 17 : 13 ] In effect, Paul is picking up the same argument. He's reflecting the fact of what Jesus taught that rules or regulations are, many of them in the end just human tradition and are of no value in changing our hearts and minds.

Hearts and minds being changed, that's what's needed in fact for checking self-indulgence. Something that's internal to us that flows out not something that would be taken externally in like a rule or a regulation.

The background of this is that our flesh has been dealt with by Christ. If our fleshly, earthly, old nature is self-indulgent for example, what will deal with that, what will correct it and change it are not the rules and regulations but rather what Christ has done.

Paul said back in chapter 2 verse 11, in Christ also you are circumcised with a spiritual circumcision that's internal not external by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ.

That is, when you're identified through faith with Christ then your old nature is dealt with. You've died to the old nature, you've been buried or the old nature has been buried when you're buried in Christ.

[ 18 : 35 ] That's where the power for self-indulgence and dealing with it comes from, not from rules or regulations. So the Colossians are being tempted to make a backward step to a sort of rule, regulation, legalism for an ascetic life and they've failed to see the true power for a changed life.

Jesus Christ himself and his death and his resurrection. That's why this letter is so full of theological truth because it's the theological truth of the gospel of the glorious supremacy and lordship of Jesus, the creator of all and the lord of the church.

That's why Paul goes at length to tell us and remind us about those truths because that's where we need to go back to to tap into in a sense the power of his death and resurrection to lead to changed lives for us.

Theological truth is powerful to change us. Compare that with our world. There's lots of stuff in our world that's about self-help.

Steps to change your life. Steps to get your life under control. Steps to change from being indulgent to ascetic and so on. How to be a better person. How to live properly. And much of it is rules and regulations.

[ 19 : 54 ] Human tradition and of no value at all because the power to change us comes alone from Jesus Christ.

Well if Jesus' death has power to change us as Paul is saying here so too and in a complimentary way his resurrection.

Paul now expresses his argument positively. He said firstly if you died with Christ as in fact you did don't live the old way now positively he says well if you raised with Christ live according to where you've been raised to.

That's the positive flip side if you like of the argument. So he says at the beginning of chapter 3 if you've been raised with Christ as is the case if you are believers seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God that's where Christ is they're the things that we are to seek and in effect it's seeking Christ himself it's not sort of seeking heavenly comfort it's not particularly seeking you know a crystal sea and all that sort of picture stuff that you find in Revelation that's where Christ is admittedly but actually it's Christ centered seek Christ who is above set your minds on things that are above and not on things that are on earth that's the point of all of this stop seeking the things of earth stop seeking the worldly things as if you belonged here for we don't seek the things of Jesus it's worth reminding yourself regularly where do I belong in Christ in heaven that is

I belong where Christ is and therefore I'm to seek the things and set my mind on the things of Christ where he is above my citizenship is in heaven I am anchored in heaven I am raised in Christ that's the key imperative set your minds there not just an occasional thought but a focused fixing of our minds on Christ above and not on earth the reason verse 3 for or because you have died that is in Christ our old life is dead when we embrace Jesus with faith you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God it's a succinct summary of what Paul's arguing you might normally say you have died therefore you've got no life but you have died and your life is not over but is hidden with Christ not hidden in the sense of being a secret but hidden in the sense of being secure and safe that's where we are we can actually have a confidence about where we are because Christ has gone there is our forerunner the writer to the Hebrews says our life is hidden it is safe it is secure permanent in heaven where Christ is and therefore a consequence of that is that when

[ 23 : 27 ] Christ who is your life is revealed then you also will be revealed with him in glory that is when Christ returns we will be revealed on that day in him glorious in him like him renewed in his image transformed into his likeness on that day what a glorious thing to look forward to the day of revelation of Jesus return when we will be seen publicly in him and like him our life is inextricably bound up with that of Jesus in fact it says in that verse when Christ who is your life he is our life if he were not alive we would have no life worth living he is our life and he's in heaven we died in him we were buried in him and we've risen in him and we're now with him in heaven where we belong but what does it mean now it's not just about pie in the sky when we die the purpose of it as we saw in fact in the first week is that our hope of a glorious future which is certain and sure our life is safe and secure in Christ means that our life will change now we saw that in the opening paragraph of this letter where Paul praises and gives thanks for the

Colossians because of their love why are they loving because of the hope they have which is laid up for them in heaven you see these themes were already there in the opening words of this letter Paul said in verse 4 of chapter 1 he gives thanks to God for the love that you have for all the saints because of the hope that is when our hope is fixed on the things above when our minds are fixed there when it's fixed on the light being laid up in heaven for us it affects our lives now we become loving hope sure hope produces love as we saw in that opening paragraph of this letter and that's what Paul is urging them to fix your eyes your minds your hearts your focus on Christ above so that now you live a life worthy of the Lord so that now you live a life of love so that now you live a life of endurance of patience of thanksgiving and joy of growth in knowledge and bearing fruit the things that he described in the second paragraph of chapter 1 in his prayer for them we are to be heavenly minded so that we are of earthly good we are to live belonging to heaven but living that life now we are to live now as heaven citizens we are to live now lives like

Christ the very crucial basis for Christian ethics as I said so often we think about we keep reverting to a works mentality that somehow I've got to get better so that I'm fit for heaven but actually I'm already there in Christ so I've got to live my life now reflecting the reality of where I already am that is the future breaking into the present ethics of grace and not merit well as a result of this as a result of fixing our minds where we are in Christ above our lives will change there'll be things we reject and things we adopt today mostly now the negative next week the positive verses 5 to 11 are largely about things we reject things we no longer practice things we take off or shun or put to death next week we'll see their replacements there are two imperatives two commands that is in verse 5 put to death therefore whatever in you is earthly verse 8 get rid of all such things they're the two commands and they each followed with some examples of things you put to death things that you get rid of both are a list of or a series of sins put to death fornication impurity passion evil desire and greed which is idolatry five things perhaps moving from the external to the internal that is of practice into motivation or attitude or thought most of them are probably focused around sexual sin but not exclusively so greed is much bigger than simply that and Paul is making it clear in the little bracket at the end of verse 5 that these things are serious these are not mere peccadillos things that we can sort of snigger at or sneer at like our society does or turn a blind eye to or pretend is okay these are serious because they're idolatry that's the worship of something other than God and if God has transferred us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his son as he said in chapter 1 verses 12 to 14 if we've died to that life and are raised for this life then don't live the old life because that's a life of idolatry of the worship of a non-God if Jesus is the supreme

Lord as that great hymn of chapter 1 said as we saw two or three weeks ago then don't worship another Lord don't commit idolatry worshipping something that is already conquered a ruler a principality a power or an elemental spirit of the universe that leads you into greed and sexual sin don't do it it's a serious matter it's exchanging the lordship of the supreme Jesus for a false god for an idol for something that he's conquered by his own death and resurrection we belong in heaven with Jesus as our Lord that's what he was saying back in chapter 2 verse 1 not chapter 2 verse 1 sorry 2 verse 6 as you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord continue to live your lives in him we're under the lordship of

Jesus not the lordship of an idol or a false god not the lordship of an elemental spirit of the universe so shun these sins turn away from them if you're a person who is tempted to or committing fornication impurity which is a more general term of evil thoughts and actions if you're subject to passion and evil desire lust perhaps evil desire broader than simply sexual sin and greed whether that's for other people for sexual gratification for money for possessions for prestige or fame and many of those things happen behind closed doors many of them are within our hearts and we might cultivate them thinking that no one sees them my brothers and sisters these are serious matters no one else may see it but it's idolatry and God sees it see how significant the resurrection of

[ 31 : 15 ] Jesus is setting our minds on him as Lord because he's risen will change our sexual practices will change our hearts from being greedy to being generous will change us from impurity to purity will change us from evil desire to godly desire so set your minds on him yes there are many rules and regulations about how to overcome these sorts of sins and some of those may or may not be helpful in curbing or guarding or giving some accountability but in essence the power to change comes from the resurrection of Jesus Christ so set your mind on him there's an added warning here as is typical in Paul in verse 6 he says on account of these that is these sins the wrath of God is coming is imminent it's close is the warning on those who are disobedient though these are the ways you once followed when you were living that life but that life's over we've died to that in Christ so set your mind on

Christ on his kingdom on his values and his power to change us to be more like him that's what Paul is saying the second imperative or command is verse 8 it balances the one in verse 5 and it leads to a slightly different list of sins but now you must get rid of all such things the ones before and the ones that are about to follow again five things anger wrath malice slander and abusive language from your mouth now perhaps not so much the sexual focus but certainly an interpersonal focus still anger will break down relationships between people wrath and malice here are probably synonyms more or less evil desires and breaking down of relationships slander and abusive language from your mouth things that are gossipy or untrue so many of us don't guard our tongues like we ought so many of us use coarse language obscene language swear words and blasphemy even so many of us don't say edifying true things about other people so often we're quick to undermine or defame or slander somebody else we don't check always the truth of what we say these again are serious matters we must get rid of them not just indulge them occasionally get rid of them they have no part in the life of a risen believer in Christ and all of those things fracture human relationships anger wrath malice poor speech of different sorts lies at the beginning of verse 9 they all break down relationships they all break down the community of God's people the church the body of Christ

Paul says get rid of them sadly they're often found in church life talking behind someone's back not being prepared to speak the truth in love bearing grudges being malicious against somebody jealous or coveting somebody else's role or ministry or life all destructive and there is no place for them in the body of Christ and no lies we often try and excuse lies our world tries to excuse it as though we have white lies and different colors of the rainbow of lies as though some of them are okay not so don't lie verse 9 says to one another in particular within the Christian community this is but it's not limited to that of course why are we not to lie because you stripped off the old self with its practices the language of change of clothes is coming in and we'll see that again next week but it's like Ben

Cousins playing for Richmond wearing a West Coast Eagles shirt it's ludicrous to think of that he's had to change his clothes because he's changed allegiance and so too for us we are to strip off or get rid of or put to death all these sinful behaviours they have no place in the clothing of a believer in Christ they have no place in the clothing of heaven take it off is what Paul is saying get rid of it all don't sort of put something over the top and pretend it's not seen and therefore okay not at all get rid of it we'll see next week what we're to be clothed with in exchange but the clothing image continues now Paul says you have stripped off the old self with its practices and you've clothed yourself with the new self which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator

Paul is not anticipating an instantaneous sinlessness he's not anticipating that because we're Christians suddenly bingo the sins are discarded and thrown into the clothing box outside or something and now we're wearing new clothes and we're all roved in white it's not instantaneous perfection that Paul's expecting here but he is urging us to strive for that perfection not to settle for thinking well I'm still in the world I'm still going to sin a few lies here and there a little bit of sexual fornication or lust or whatever you know everyone's like that that's how we excuse it not what Paul's arguing for strive now for the things that are above of holiness and purity and perfection oh you won't attain it instantaneously but we should be setting our minds on those things it's actually a gradual change he suggests at the end of verse 10 the new self is being renewed in knowledge that is it's changing it's being transformed the new self is blossoming out through now our life as Christians on earth and it will be fully in flower on the day of the Lord's return it's being renewed in knowledge he says already we've seen that theme in this letter



[ 38 : 20 ] Paul's basic prayer for the Colossians remember in chapter 1 verse 9 was this we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will with all spiritual wisdom and understanding why so that you may lead a life worthy of the Lord he said in chapter 1 verse 10 and that's what's going on here our new self is being renewed in knowledge Paul is praying for them to know knowledge so that they lead a life worthy of the Lord knowledge renews our godly character that's why the cycle that we're part of as I said when we dealt with chapter 1 is that we are filling ourselves with the knowledge of the gospel knowledge of grace and knowledge of truth knowledge of the Bible so that our lives become renewed and more and more and more like Jesus and the more and more like Jesus the more knowledge we get and it's like a spiral going up in a sense that's what our lives are to be like that's why Paul prayed this in chapter 1 verse 10 the worthy life is set on the things that are above and it's renewed in

Christ and Paul is praying and laboring and writing this letter so that the new life is worn fully by the Colossians renewed in knowledge and that's why this letter is so impregnated with statements of theological glorious truth about the lordship and the supremacy of Jesus and what God's done for us in Christ so that as we meditate on and feast on the knowledge that he reminds us of in this letter our lives in fact are being renewed and our minds are being set on the things above because the gospel is powerful to transform and change us not rules and regulations set by humans we were dead we're now alive that was the old now we're in the new we were earthly but now we're part of the kingdom of heaven we've been transferred all of that language is found in this letter so take off the old clothes and wear the new ones because that's where our lordship is that's where our allegiance is that's what kingdom we belong to and don't wear the old clothes of the old life no wonder you see thanksgiving is such an essence of christian faith because god has actually made us already citizens of heaven we are there we're not having to get there by changing our life we're changing our life in reflection of we're already there ben cousins didn't have to sort of practice wearing a richmond jumper before they took him in and in a much more profound and serious way we belong in the kingdom of heaven now we're to wear the clothes of it grace and thanksgiving all the way through but what paul's talking about here as well of the exchange of the old self or old nature for the new it's actually the old self and new self in a way is not just about renewed individuals we tend to think that because we live in an individualistic age we tend to think perhaps reading this that it's all about me becoming more like jesus and there's truth in that but it's more than that the new self is not me looking like jesus so much as jesus himself because i'm in him and so what paul is saying here in verse 10 clothe yourselves with the new self is clothe yourselves with jesus we'll see that more next week things like love and humility and kindness and compassion and forgiveness which are in essence jesus and christ is being renewed and this is to be renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator that is jesus as paul said about jesus being the image of the first one and so on in chapter 1 verse 15 onwards in that renewal there is no longer greek and jew circumcised and uncircumcised barbarian scythian slave and free but christ is all and in all that is the new self is not just me looking like jesus it's about us the people of god the body of christ the community of god's people together in unity and harmony in christ perfectly it's a corporate model more than it is an individual model here the new self is jesus and that's why verse 11 makes it clear that it's so corporate because i'm not jew and gentile and so on i'm not sort of divided in that way it's talking about the community of god's people there's a sequence of opposites no longer does it matter whether you're a jew or a greek or that is a non-jew no longer does it matter whether you're circumcised or uncircumcised physically that is no longer does it matter whether you're a barbarian or a scythian they're actually not opposites they're they're sort of the same thing they're uncouth people the word barbarian comes from the civilized greeks who thought these these poor people they spoke a language like bah bah bah sort of they didn't understand it slave or free

none of it matters we're in christ if we're believers it's a corporate model we're to be clothed in him united in him and that's why these sins are sins of fractured relationships they've got to go because the things that are coming that will clothe ourselves with as we'll see next week are things that promote human relationships within the body of christ this is not simply a cameo of heaven this is to be a characteristic of the church on earth where racial and socioeconomic barriers are non-existent it's a radical inclusivity of a harmony of relationships in a perfection in christ you imagine our church without rancor or gossip without lies or in the end of without lust without evil desire without anger or malice now you might think our church isn't typified by those things but imagine if they're completely gotten rid of if sin springs from the heart and mind rules and regulations will not quash it only the gospel of jesus and our union in him dead buried risen and ascended will change our heart therefore don't live as if you belong to the world therefore seek the things that are above therefore set your mind on the things above therefore put to death whatever in you is earthly therefore rid yourself of all evil how do we do it by being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the creator jesus our glorious lord you have died and your life is hidden with christ in god amen who thinkab yes in who