

Wanted Dead and Alive

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[0 : 00] Okay, I'm Steve Taberski. My wife just informed me that she didn't tell my daughter that I was speaking today. I was wondering why she showed up.

But anyway, for those of you who are visitors, we pass the baton, so to speak, from week to week for different speakers.

So if you come one week and you don't like the speaker, don't judge the whole church on that. Come the next week and listen to that one until you've gone through the whole gamut. Then make your decision.

But we love doing it this way because you just learn a lot more when you're doing the speaking. As you know, we've been in Colossians.

Colossians chapters 1 and 2, we've learned a lot about doctrine. In those two chapters, Paul has told us some of the stuff, what we believe and why we believe it.

[1 : 03] And he introduces us to Jesus. Over and over again, he tells us about Jesus being God in the flesh.

And he introduced us that without Jesus, we're dead. If we don't have Jesus in our lives, then we're going to, there's sure death.

Today we're going to talk about another kind of death, though. Not that kind of death, but another kind of death. Last week, Glenn gave us a great sermon on, about not being fooled by the philosophies of the world.

And not being led astray or letting people discriminate against you because of some of the things you do. Starting in chapter 3 now, we're going to look at practical applications to what we believe. You know, people act the way they act because they believe what they believe. And based on the doctrines that we've heard so far, we're going to look now at how we apply those in real life.

[2 : 17] We're looking at the first 11 verses of chapter 3 in Colossians, if you want to turn there. And by the way, John Howard told me last week that when he found out, Oh, you've got 3, 1 through 11.

He said, man, I wanted 3, 1 through 11. You know, John, Nana, Nana, Boo, Boo. I got it. We're going to be using the ESV today.

I usually like to use the King James Version. But for some reason, I was thinking that John's preferred version was the ESV. And I was thinking, you know, it's the least I could do. At least use his version.

Since he didn't get the verses he wanted to talk through. So something that I've seen in other churches, and we've never done it here, I'd like us to stand as we read the Word.

I'm going to read all 11 verses to us, and then we'll go into it. Let's see if this thing's going to work for me.

[3 : 19] Not too far. Is it? Okay. It says, It says, If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is 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, what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

On account of these, the wrath of God is coming. In these, you too once walked when you were living in them. But now, you must put them all away.

Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being

renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

[4 : 34] Here, there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ is all and in all.

You can sit back down. So some of the things that we know. Well, first let's pray before we go into His Word.

Father, I thank You for this opportunity to proclaim Your Word. And I pray, Father, that I don't stumble on my words and I don't get mixed up.

And, Lord, that anything that comes out of my mouth is correct and is glorifying to You. I pray, Father, that these people are listening, Lord, that they'll listen to Your Spirit speaking to them, Lord, and that they'll heed Your Word.

Now, again, help us understand as we look into it. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. So here's some of the things we know. All people are sinners. And the penalty for sin is death.

[5 : 44] And we know that Jesus died to pay this penalty and is willingly offering this payment for anyone who will receive it. And those who receive it will live.

Those who do not receive it will surely die. Now, this is the death that Paul was saying that we are going to experience without Christ. Like I say, today's passage, we're looking at a different kind of death.

And all of you have seen Western movies in the past where you've seen wanted posters, wanted dead or alive, you know, some bad guy.

Well, if I had to put a title, see, see, my words don't come to me very good. I'm getting Alzheimer's. If I wanted to put a title on this sermon, I would call it Wanted Dead and Alive.

That would be God's poster for us. He wants us dead and alive. In other words, he wants us dead to our old life, dead to the normal man life, but raised to live a life that's like Christ.

[7 : 00] That's what baptism is symbolizing. When we are pushed under the water, we're symbolizing that we are dying to our old life and when we come out of the water, we're being raised to a new life.

We're proclaiming it to the world that we've died to our old life and raised to a new life in Christ. As I was thinking about baptism and proclaiming it to the world and all, I was thinking, you know, it really should mean the most to the person being baptized.

You know, yeah, I'm proclaiming it, but as I'm doing this, it's a symbolization that I'm never going to be the same. I'm dying.

My life is forever changed. So, let's look at these passages how Paul is talking about that. So, let's go back into the first verse.

It says, if then you have been raised with Christ. A better translation for this would be since you have been raised with Christ. then seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

[8 : 21] You know, once we have become a Christian, our citizenship has changed now to heaven. That's our country. Heaven's our country.

And those are the things that we should think about. And really and truly, when you think about your life, and the Bible talks of our lives as being like a vapor. You know, it's so infinitesimally small compared to eternity.

We're going to spend a whole lot more time in heaven in that kingdom than we are on this world. So, it'd be nice to start thinking more about the kingdom of God.

And seeking after the things of the kingdom of God. God. The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 5, 17, there, for any man being Christ, he's a new creature.

Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are come new. We are a new person and this new person as a citizen of God living in this earth, we still have to deal with this earth, but guess what we're called now that we're on this earth?

[9 : 23] We're called Christians, yeah. But we're also ambassadors for this new kingdom. this kingdom that we are a citizen of in heaven. So, we need to, because we're a new creature, we need to change our complete way of thinking.

So, we need to think on things that are above. See, the second verse says, set your minds on things that are above, not on things on the earth. Set your minds and refocus your thoughts.

We're not, we get so tied up with the world and all the stuff that we have to do and stuff that we want and things that are going on that we end up really losing thought.

How many of you ever really think about heaven? You know, Jesus spoke more of heaven than anything. And when you count the verses, and I was reading one commentary and he was talking about the number of verses and I didn't write them down, but he speaks of heaven more than the other things that he talks us about.

But yet, we hardly ever talk about heaven. Do you ever, do you ever think that how it's going to be when we get to heaven? I know Glenn, yeah, Glenn talks about it. Oh, I just can't wait when I get there.

[10:40] But he's saying, you know, there's going to be no more death, no more crying. He's going to wipe away all our tears. There's going to be no more pain. Yeah.

There's no, there's no worrying about being misunderstood or misunderstanding other people because we're going to have perfect bodies.

And we're going to see in a little bit that where he talks about that we're going to put on a different body when Christ comes. We're going to be glorified to this new body where we won't have to worry about gaining weight.

You know, you won't worry about being stiff. If I sit more than five minutes, I'm stiff when I get back up. I don't know what, when did that start? But it's the truth.

I'm like, you know, you can tell a lot of us when you can hear us when we get up. As we move. So, as we sojourn in here, in this life, as we are Christians, as we are ambassadors for Christ, Paul's going to tell us some things that since we are this, then, in the next verses, he's going to talk about what we should do about that.

[12:04] First, I want to cover a couple of these things in verses 3. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Your life is hidden with Christ in God.

You know, when, after you become a Christian, when Jesus looks at your life, he sees Jesus' blood covering you. Your life, that life of yours is hidden with Christ.

And he no longer has any beef with you, so to speak, because Jesus has paid your debt. And verse 4, it says, when Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

This appearing that he's talking about here is the second coming of Christ. When Christ comes, when the rapture occurs, what's going to happen to us? What's going to happen to our body?

We're going to be changed. Yeah, we're going to be changed in the twinkle of an eye. We're going to put this corruptible body, this one that has pain, this one that has all the problems is going to be changed to this new body.

[13:15] And then forever we'll be with Christ in heaven. Okay, he says, put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you. And then he gives a list of all of these sins.

We're really talking about sexual discipline here. These are the things that he wants us to put to death.

These things, and really, it's really any sin, isn't it? A sin is a sin. It's all an abomination to God. And so, whether it's these sins or the other ones where he says, but now, you must put away anger, wrath, malice, slander, obscene talk from your mouth.

you can put pride in there. You can put unforgiveness in there. You can put jealousy in there.

Things that are sins against God, any of these. And so, the question is, a lot of us struggle with these things.

[14:28] Just because you are saved doesn't mean that you become sinless, right? I was thinking about it the other day.

You know, I've got woods around my house and, of course, the yard isn't enough. You always got to make the woods your yard as well, too, right? You go in there and get the briars out.

And, and, one of the things that I really don't like that much, even though they're a little bit pretty in the fall, are sweet gum trees. I got sweet gum trees all around my, you know, and they drop those sticker balls in your yard.

I really would rather not have the sweet gum trees than have other trees, right? So, if you take the sweet gums out, the other trees will grow a digger and all that.

So, I go, I've gone through and I've cut down the sweet gum trees, most of them around my yard.

And, of course, it doesn't take long when I go out into the woods that what's coming up, where the roots were, all these sweet gum trees.

[15:34] I'm continually having to cut them down. And, that's the way it is in our lives, too. Our, sure, we died to, when we accepted Christ, we died to that old life, but it's going to keep springing

up on us.

And, these words in here, he's telling you to put these away or mortify them or kill them, it has the connotation as to not, it's not a one-time thing.

It's continually, continually killing them. Die to these things. there's a, you know, some of the guys get up here and make me look bad by doing some videos or showing music videos, and there's a couple of them in here.

So I thought, you know, I'm going to do a video today, and it's entertainment, and you guys might recognize it. So go ahead, Mark. I'm going to do it. I'm going to do it.

I'm going to do it. Don't rush me, sonny. You rush a miracle and you get round miracles. You got money? 65. Phew. I never worked for so little, except once, and that was a very noble cause.

[16:46] This is noble, sir. His wife is crippled. Children are on the brink of starvation. Are you a wrong liar?

I didn't have to avenge my father. Murdered this 20 years. Your first time was better. Where's that ghost, man? He probably owes you money, huh? If he's dead, he can't talk.

Thank you. Look who knows so much, huh? Well, it just so happens that your friend here is only mostly dead. There's a big difference between mostly dead and all dead.

Please open his mouth. Now, mostly dead. He's slightly alive. Now, all dead, with all dead, there's usually only one thing that you can do.

What's that? Go through his clothes and look for loose change. You want to know why you live a defeated Christian life?

[17:46] It's because so many of us are just mostly dead to that old life. Instead of completely dying, we hold on to something that's there.

Or we allow something to keep making its way back into our life and instead of killing it again or, you know, running away from it, we entertain it a little bit.

So, I urge you, be dead Christians. Be dead to the world. Be dead into your old life. And you have to do that deliberately.

It's not something that comes naturally for us. We have to do it deliberately. And you know, something that I noticed as I keep cutting down those sweet gums, the more I do it, longer and longer I do it, as they come up, I keep cutting them off, cutting them off.

If I don't let them get too big especially, eventually they stop coming back. So, these things that you're struggling with in your life that you just got to keep killing them, get them back, eventually it will become easier to you.

[19:05] Eventually it will die. Eventually you won't have that issue anymore. that was just some insight that came to me one day as I was out there looking at those things.

I used to have a, I still do, I have a lot that I mow. There's a house on it that I use for storage. But I had to get one of those forestry mulchers to come in the first time to cut the yard because there was trees.

It was completely overgrown for years and years in the forestry mulcher. And every time I went over there to cut, there were trees growing up. Now I don't see any trees anymore.

They've all given up I guess over time. So, put away those things. Now let's look at the next verses. And he says, do not lie to one another seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

[20:07] here. In verse 11 he says, here there is not Greek or Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave free, but Christ is all and in all.

What he's giving us here, Christ is the answer, or a Christian life is the answer to racism and bigotry.

this is breaking down these social barriers. The circumcised and uncircumcised, those are like religious barriers being broken down, barbarian, Scythian, slaves, those are sects of people that are, you know, we all come, it doesn't matter, you're black or you're white, you're Asian, whatever, Christ is all and in all, Christ is the answer.

And if, can you imagine what a world this would be if all Christians actually completely died to their own self and lived a life that was completely led by the Spirit?

What a different world this would be. What a difference our churches would be. It says Christ is all and in all and one day, one day Christ is coming back and he's going to make all of this stuff, all these problems that we have in the world go away.

[21 : 32] He's going to make all things new. And it's on that day that he will get the recognition and the honor that he deserves because the Bible says that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that he's Christ.

That's the God that we serve. That's the God that I hope that you'll serve today. Let's pray. Father, I thank you for the word, Lord.

There's a whole bunch of things that I didn't say that I thought I would. Lord, I just trust that you speak to the people. And I pray, Lord, that each person right now would search their hearts. And Lord, find those things that they haven't died to. And Father, kill them. I pray, Father, that we'll just continue to do that.

Lord, that we'll think about heaven. We'll think about the hereafter. You tell us, seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. And all these other things that we worry about will be added to us.

[22 : 38] Lord, thank you for those promises. Thank you for your love for us. Thank you for these words. Paul gives us these practical instructions, Lord.

I pray, Father, that we will heed them. Lord, if we find ourselves in a situation where we know we're going to be tempted, Lord, we'll just run away, just like Joseph did, Lord, when he was confronted with Potiphar's wife.

Lord, I just pray, Father, that we will have the mindset, Lord, that we're going to serve you and nothing's going to stop us.

Thank you again. Lord, I pray again if anyone here doesn't know you or, Lord, realizes that they haven't been following you like they should.

Lord, we know that you're there to help us. You don't expect us to be perfect. You don't expect us to be sinless, but Lord, the longer we're with you, then we do at least sin less. In Jesus' name, Amen.

[23 : 42] Amen.