

Set Your Minds on Things Above | Colossians 3:1-11

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. Well, good morning, everyone. Let's go ahead and head to our seats at this time. And I hope and I trust that you have been warmly greeted here at Ontario Community Church.

My name is Patrick Daly, and I'm the pastor here at Ontario Community Church. Whether this is your first time, or maybe your 17th time, or you've been faithfully attending every week, I want you to know that you are loved by Jesus Christ, and that God calls you to enter into a relationship with Him.

It doesn't matter what you have been through. It doesn't matter what you are going through, or what you will go through. God's grace is available for all who believe.

Amen? Knowing that we are safe and secure when we believe in Jesus Christ is remarkable. And I hope and I pray that you will come to know the Lord, that you will grow in Him, and you will do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

[1 : 23] And we have been doing a verse by verse, a line by line study of this amazing book of Colossians. We have found many truths that are directly applicable to our church today, just as it was back then in the New Testament.

The apostle Paul, he wrote to the Colossian church, a church that was faithful to God and had exhibited the love of Christ to others. That's the kind of church I wanna be a part of, right?

And I hope you do as well. The apostle Paul trusted that this church would continue to be faithful in doing the right thing, in responding to cultural changes and movement and false teachings and false teachers that were infiltrating the church.

The apostle Paul warned the Colossians to be careful of these false teachings, philosophy or anything that was contrary to the truth in Jesus Christ, much like how we are to stand firm in the word of God.

He encouraged the church to remain true and to not let anyone deceive or delude or disqualify you, to rob you of the opportunity to do good. The apostle Paul also wrote so much about the truth, the preeminence of Christ, that Christ reigns supreme, and he is all that we need, and Jesus Christ is in all.

[2 : 43] And this last week I spoke about the difference between religion, the rules and the regulations, as opposed to the relationship, the simplicity that exists in Jesus Christ.

There is freedom, there is salvation, there is security and safety when you believe in the Lord and are saved. And today, we are gonna talk about what it means to be raised in Christ.

It is this new life that is found in him. We are a new creation when we believe in him. As Christians, we are called, and we'll find in this sermon today, that we are called to seek things that are higher, not to focus on the things of this world, not the lower things.

So let us pray together, and let us ask God to bless this time together. Will you pray with me? Let's pray together. And gracious Father, we thank you for this opportunity to gather together as the body of Christ, as friends, visitors and faithful attenders, newcomers, whatever.

We pray that truth is spoken here, that lives are transformed, and that people will come to know who you are, that they will grow in you, and that they will know what it means to have this new life in you.

[4 : 01] We pray for continued transformation and sanctification. May we become more like you following in the footsteps of your son, Jesus Christ.

May we be like the Colossian church who is faithful to you and to your word. May we exhibit the love of Jesus Christ to others, to our brothers and sisters in Christ, and may we extend an invitation to our neighbors who may not know you yet.

And Father, we ask that you again bless this time together as we go into what it means to put away the former things of our old life and seek the things that are higher.

It is in Jesus' holy and awesome and powerful name that we pray, and we all say together, amen. Let us now go into verse one.

If raised in Christ, seek things that are higher, and you'll find this, I hope that all of you have your notes section, and as always, there's reference verses and connections in here, because we always need to look at the context of scripture and the connections with scripture.

[5 : 11] This helps us to have clarity and consistency found in God's word. So the verse says here, it says, therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

And what does it mean to be risen with Christ? This is a fundamental question. When we think of being raised with Christ, we can think about Christ's ministry, his life, his death, his burial, and his resurrection.

There is an open invitation for us to come to know him. This is what scripture means when we are to seek first the kingdom of God. To be raised up in him is to have salvation in him first, so I want to make it very clear.

There is a call for you to believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the son of the living God, right? That he had his ministry, his death, burial, and resurrection, believing in him and being saved.

Salvation comes first, then we seek the things that are higher. I want to put this up on the screen. It's Ephesians chapter two, verses five through six. Even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ by grace, you have been what?

[6 : 28] Saved and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Again, it is about salvation first.

That is the most critical and the most important thing that you can, that can happen in your life. Then you seek the things that are higher. This should be, it shouldn't be the other way around.

And I'm sure there are some people who seek the higher things when they don't have a relationship. Seek knowing the Lord first and foremost. We go to verse two, above not below.

And it says here, set your what? Your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. If you have been raised with Christ, if you are a believer, then you need to seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

There are things that are not of this world. We have to think, how many of you remember that bracelet or those shirts that said not of this world?

[7 : 39] I know, I don't see them anymore. I used to see them maybe like 20 years ago. But N-O-T-W and it was talking about how we are not of this world. And just as we are not of this world, we are to set our minds, to focus and to fixate on the things that are above.

We are to seek the things that are beyond this world, not on the things of this earth. Does this mean that we should neglect paying our bills and we should neglect the responsibilities that we have?

No, we're talking about the hope that exists in Christ. The future promises that the Lord has for us. It speaks of hope, our direction and our trajectory.

Ask yourself the question, what do you live for? Do you live for the world or do you live for Christ? God calls us again to have relationship with Him.

And from that salvation, we are to seek the things that are higher, to set our minds on the things that are above. This is where Christ is. He is seated at the right hand of God.

[8 : 41] And there are many verses that speak about Christ sitting at the right hand. And you'll find those in your notes. There are a ton of them on there. And feel free to search the scriptures.

This also means that Christ rules and reigns supreme. Christ being a part of the triune God, he rules, he reigns over us.

And look, this is the entire basis of Colossians. That it is Christ who reigns supreme, that he is preeminent, that he is all that we need and he is in everything.

Let's go to verse three. Our hidden life in Christ. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. In our former life, many of us, all of us, we focused on, we lived a life that was separated from God.

A sinful life, right? We focused on the worldly. We were in darkness and we were dead in our trespasses. And we find new life that exists in Christ.

[9 : 45] So then, wait a minute. If we were dead in our trespasses and we're finding new life, what does this mean here? You have died. What is that talking about? What does that mean?

The death that is mentioned here is the death of the former life. It is the former life that is passed away. And our new life in Christ is hidden.

It is concealed, right? When you see it being hidden, that is the word for concealed. It is covered. In other words, it's protected in Christ.

Many of you may have heard that we are covered by the blood of the Lamb, right? Or how grace covers our sins. It's the same idea here. In fact, in Colossians earlier, it's not like we've read this verse before, right?

If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulation? So there's a parallel that we can see here, right?

[10 : 44] That if you have believed in the Lord, if you are saved, you have died to the former things. That is the death that is being mentioned in Colossians 2.20 and also in Colossians 3 here.

It is the death of the former life and the birth of the new life. We are made a new creation. And our identity exists in Christ.

And being saved, there is that security. And look, there is a call for us to remain in Christ. I know there are some people who say, well, you know, if I'm saved, does that mean I can sin as much as I want?

Well, do you really wanna test God that way? It's a call for you to live a life of holiness. Don't go back to the former things, right? It's just like this question that's being asked.

Why are you still alive in the world? And in the context here, submitting to regulations, submitting to religion here. And just like how God is the God of renewal and restoration and we receive this new life and this new identity in Christ, we will receive a new body at the resurrection.

[11 : 53] And that's a wonderful thing to know. Verse four here, with Christ in glory. When Christ, who is your life appears, then you will also appear with him in what?

In glory. And that's a beautiful verse here. We must think about how Jesus, who Jesus is. And it reminds me a great deal of John chapter 11, verse 25 here.

I am the what? The resurrection in the life. I'm not speaking about me. I'm talking about what Jesus Christ said here, right? He said, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me though he what?

Die, yet shall he live, right? Do you see the connection here? We have to only die the physical death. Our former, our spiritual life is dead, but when we believe in the Lord and we save, we are a new creation, right?

That we are saved, we are secure. We have that eternal security and everlasting life. Much like how John 14.6, I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me.

[13 : 00] Who's the me? It's Jesus Christ, right? Jesus Christ being the way. And then another verse that speaks it up in this is first Corinthians chapter 15, verses 40 through 44.

And check this out, this is very connected. I love how scripture is all connected here. There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of heaven is of one kind and the glory of the earthly is another.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable. What is raised is what? Imperishable. What is sown in dishonor is raised in glory.

It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. It is sown a natural body. It is raised, it gets a little confusing in here, but keep this in mind. You can see the connection here, right?

That there's this difference between our earthly and our heavenly bodies. So there's some really good things here that you will appear with Christ in glory at the resurrection.

[14 : 05] When Christ who is your life appears, then you will appear with him in glory. It's just a nice connection that we find in the first Corinthians passage.

Let's go to verse five here. Put to death your what? Your earthly ways, right? I think of that song, my parents used to play this song.

You've got to change your evil ways, right? Very similar in that. I know that's a worldly secular song. I apologize in advance, right? But it's the same idea, right? You got to change your evil ways.

You got to put to death your earthly ways, right? Put to death therefore what is earthly in you. Sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetness, which is idolatry.

Now, some of you may know, some of you may not know. We preach from the English standard version, but I like to challenge myself. I have a couple of really old KJV Bibles, and I study from that, looking at the really old English and seeing the difference in the modern vernacular versus the old English that happens.

[15 : 09] And it's very interesting that the KJV uses the word, it's the same idea, right? Put to death, to mortify. I'm like, oh, that, there's some heaviness in that word, right? Mortify the former things, right?

So some translations say put an end or put to death the things that are of the earth. It is talking about putting to death an end to sin.

And as a Christian, and I know this can be very convicting for some people, if you're a Christian, are you continuing in your sin? Well, only you can answer that, I don't wanna know all of your sins.

But if you really think about it, are you continuing to live a life of sin? If you're a Christian, there is a call for you to put an end, put to death, mortify the earthly things.

So, okay, pastor, what do you mean are the earthly things? Well, it gives you a list right here, right? It gives you a list of sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetness, and all of these things are idolatry.

[16 : 10] What is idolatry? It's worshiping something other than the living God. And how easy is it for us even nowadays? You know, as a kid, I'm sure many of us know the story of the golden calf, right?

They made an image and they worshiped it. And I remember as a kid, I used to think, oh, worship's a golden calf anymore. Come on, mom and dad, like really, like, that was back then, we live in the age of technology.

There is no way I would worship a phone. There is no way I would worship games. There's no way I'd worship content that comes from the screens.

Isn't it interesting? And I may sound a little extreme at this, but isn't it interesting how in pretty much every household you have a television and people gather around and they spend hours at a television?

Is there a similarity with worshiping an idol? Maybe, maybe not, but think about that. I tend to think that it can happen, though, when it becomes, when it consumes you, when it becomes your very identity, right?

[17 : 26] So when we're talking in the context here, I just gave some example of idols, but in the context here, we're talking about the sexual, the immorality that exists with impurity, passion, and evil desires.

And look, when we are born again, we're born again spiritually, just as I mentioned this last week, it's the question, what we found in Colossians 2.20, why would you continue to live in your former life?

Right? If you were getting out of the rain, and it's pouring rain and it's freezing cold, and you seek to find shelter, you wouldn't go back out into the rain, right?

You would want to seek shelter and you'd want to remain there in the shelter, so too is it with sinning. Get out of the rain, get out of the darkness into the light, remain in there.

And in the context of salvation, come to know the Lord, believe in him, and be transformed by the renewal of your mind, a renewed spirit.

[18 : 29] Think of it like that. Why would we continue to live in sin, which is a part of the former life? Why would you want to continue to do the things that separate you from God?

If you have a new life in Jesus Christ, live the new life in Christ. Let's go to verse six, the wrath of God. This is one of those fire and brimstone ones, right?

On account of these, the what? The wrath of God is coming. In some translations, such as the KJV, you'll find the mentioning of the sons of disobedience.

Some translations, some manuscripts say that. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming to the sons of disobedience, which is, well, it is before salvation.

You are disobedience. This term is found throughout scripture and it warns us to no longer be disobedient. Let's consider Romans chapter one, verse 18. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

[19 : 33] This is mentioning the wrath of God. So what about the sons of disobedience, right? Let's go to that next one here. Let no one deceive you with empty words.

For these things, the wrath of God, there it is again, comes upon the sons of disobedience, right? You find that there again, and you'll find it again in Ephesians 2,2, right?

You were dead in your trespasses and your sins in the world where you once walked, following the course, right? The way of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, who's that? The spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

So you see a little parallel that exists here. The idea here is the sons of disobedience. These are people who reject the Lord. These are people who habitually sin.

These are people who do not know the Lord yet. And you find that in some translations, and I just find it to be very interesting that specifically that wording is there. So I want you to think for a moment, church.

[20 : 32] You're either a son or a child of disobedience, as it were, what's the opposite then? Child of God. Being a child of God, amen, right? Being a child of the light. So it's just nice when you see the difference between going from darkness into light, going from being unsaved to save.

And in this context is being a son, or you could even say a daughter of disobedience, being a child of disobedience to being a child of God, right? A child of light.

So it's nice when you see these little connections here that help us. Look, the idea here is God does not like sin. He wants us into enter a relationship with him to grow in him and do good his name.

Let's not, let's not be a son or a child or a daughter of disobedience, but rather let us be children of the Lord, right? Let us trust in God, growing and living for him.

Let's go to verse seven. You were once one of them. In these, so the apostle Paul is saying, in these you too once walked when you were living in them. So the Colossian church was perfect.

[21 : 36] They didn't need to confess. They didn't need to repent. None of that happened at the church at Colossia, right? No, it's saying here, look, you were once one of them here.

It's mentioning the former life as opposed to the newer life, right? We've been talking about the importance. Look, it is so important that when you believe in the Lord, you leave the thing that the things of the world.

You focus on the things of God. Okay, well, what does that look like? Maybe opening your Bible. What's your, just a job, a little fun here.

What's your Bible to person, how many people you have in the household ratio? Some of them you may have like 10 Bibles in one person, right? But do you open and read those Bibles, right?

Reading the Bible, studying the Bible, praying, being together with brothers and sisters in Christ in Christian community. So it's so important to know that you're not alone, to be with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

[22 : 38] And I'm sure for some of us, I mean, I'm sure we're all perfect here and we've never had to, we weren't one of them. No, we were one of them, okay?

And Romans 6:19, it helps us. I'm speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. You were once presented your members as slaves to impurity, to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness.

So now present yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification, right? Once being one of them. Now be on a trajectory of the things of God, the truth of His words, stand firm in it, do not waver, do not have your mind changed in that.

First Corinthians chapter 6:11, that's another one that shows up. It says, oh, is it not there? That's okay.

It says, and such were some of you, you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of God, right?

[23 : 43] So these are giving ideas of, again, the former life to the new life in Christ. And I want you to think for a moment, I seem to be focusing so much on the former life.

Well, that's the idea with what Paul is doing in Colossians. These verses are speaking about the importance of leaving the former life. Next week, we're gonna go on what it looks like to take on the new life, being the new creation.

So there's a transition from a former life to the new life in Romans 7:5. While we were living in the flesh, and the flesh are sinful passions aroused by the law, we're at work in our members to bear fruit for death.

So again, that's talking about the former life. And it's always been very convicting. I don't know if it's convicting to you, but it's very convicting to me that we are going to bear fruit. It's going to be good fruit or bad fruit.

And for some of us here, we've planted trees before. How many of you have planted a tree and the crops just not good, right? You can be honest here. And how many of us have planted a, let's, I don't know, we planted another plant and let's do an apricot tree.

[24 : 56] And man, that thing produced really good apricots. And you love that tree. And not idolize it, but you love the fruit that it's producing, much like how we are when we produce fruit.

Are we going to be a bad tree that's going to produce bad fruit? Are we going to be a good tree that produces good fruit? So that's a thing that's very interesting. So again, going back to the verse here, the apostle Paul is saying, hey, look, you were once this way, but no longer, right?

And we should praise God when we are no longer a part of the darkness, when we're no longer a child of disobedience, when we enter this new life in Christ. Let's go to verse eight.

But now you must put them all away, not just sex, it's not just sexual immorality that we have to put away. There are other things too. And this is very difficult.

Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth, right? Is there obscene talk that's coming from your mouth? That was such an interesting way of wording it, right?

[25 : 58] Is the Lord really telling us to clean up our act? I thought if I believe in the Lord, I'm saved and secure and that's the end of it. No, this is why I say salvation is not the end of your story.

It is the beginning of your life in Christ. It is the foundation and you then build your house, right? You build your treasures in heaven. You go after the prize, right?

When the apostle Paul is saying, he's seeking out, he's going after the prize. So saved by grace through faith, so that we can do good in the name of Christ, so that we allow for God to change who we are.

It's just like we think of repentance, Metanoia, to change your mind about who God is so that you can believe in him, but there's continued repentance, continued Metanoia where your mind is continually changed.

But here's the thing, cleaning up these things, this is important upon salvation, after salvation, not the other way around.

[26 : 58] Because when we do it the other way around, we've created a workspace religion, right? It sounds like how many other religions are. You must do X, Y, and Z and then you attain salvation. When you're saved by grace through faith, believe in the Lord first, right?

Be saved by grace through faith. You need to be on a path after the fact to be more like Jesus Christ. It's the order in which we do things. We're given this free gift of grace, right?

Again, we have got to continue to live for him. We've got to change and continually change. Hebrews chapter one, verses one through two.

It's a lot of verses here. We're surrounded so great by a cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight and sin which cleans so closely and let us what? Let us sit.

No, let us run with endurance the race that is set before us looking to Jesus, the founder and the protector of our faith who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame.

[27 : 59] So you get the idea here, right? You go towards the Lord. You become more like him, right? So when you hear people say, oh, I'm saved by grace. I don't need to do anything after the fact.

Well, you should read your Bible and see that. Yes, you're saved by grace through faith, but you got to do after the fact, right? That's why you'll hear me say so much. Come to know the Lord, grow in him, and do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

Do you see what there's this connection here? The apostle Paul last week was saying, don't be defrauded, don't be disqualified, don't be distracted, don't be derailed.

Don't be distracted from doing good in the name of Christ and following God's will for your life. Don't you think for a moment, there's a reason why God wants you to do good as opposed to doing evil?

What a horrible way to kind of throw it back in God's face, so to speak, is to continue to sin. We're called to do good after salvation.

[29 : 04] Let us lay aside every weight like that verse saying so that we can do good. Let's go to verse nine. Tell the what? Tell the truth. It's the verse say, do not what?

Not lie to one another, seeing that you've put off the old self with its practices. Are you telling me pastor, I need to stop lying? Yeah, some scriptures say that, right?

It's a wonderful connection that we can apply to our life. I'm also reminded in Ephesians chapter four verses 20, right? And these verses here are applicable to what we're reading here in the context of Colossians chapter three, eight, nine, and 10.

You'll see here, it's not the way you learned Christ, assuming that you've heard about him and were taught in him, the truth of Jesus, to put off your what self, old self, which belongs to your what manner of life?

Former manner of life, right? It's corrupt through deceitful desires and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the what? Right, created after the likeness of God and true righteousness and holiness.

[30 : 12] Therefore, same thing, right? Putting away all falsehood. Each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. So there's a real nice parallel that exists there.

It's pretty self-explanatory here. Don't lie to one another, right? This is exhibiting the fact, it's showing that you're living this new life in Christ by telling the truth.

I mean, that's a pretty easy one. Let's go to verse 10 here. It says to put on the new self and to be renewed. The verse says, I have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator, amen to that.

It reminds me a great deal of Romans chapter 12 verse two. Don't be conformed to this world, right? You see how things start connecting together, right? Set your mind on things that are above, right?

Well, how interesting. Are you going to be conforming your life to the ways of the world? Or are you gonna be conforming to the things of God? Don't be conformed to this world, but be what?

[31 : 18] Transformed by the renewal of your mind that by testing, you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable in prayer. That's one of my favorite verses, right? It's a call for us to be renewed, right?

To be on a path to grow as a Christian. Going from that milk to the solid food. Growing in the understanding of the word of God and living out your faith. There's this inner transformation that will occur in your own life that outwardly manifests in love, right?

It'll manifest in understanding, knowing that you know the difference between truth from lies. The new self, you'll learn the ability and I think one of the most wonderful abilities about knowing the word of God and what it has to say has to do with the ability to discern.

Knowing right from wrong, knowing truth from lies, knowing light from darkness. It's just like how sometimes you might hear, I'm not gonna bash anybody when I say this, but sometimes you hear someone speak something and just doesn't settle right with you.

Is it a conviction? Well, sometimes it can be. Other times you're like, I don't know if that's right. I need to check my Bible, right? Testing the spirits. That's the ability to discern. That's so important.

[32 : 31] We grow in Christ and as we grow spiritually, we're being continually renewed even though the physical is fading. We have the restoration of the physical body at the resurrection in 2 Corinthians chapter four, verse 16, right?

It's a discouragement that we're getting older, let's be honest here, right? It's a discouragement that you can't do the things that you were when you were 20 years old. I don't wanna go any further, but it says here, we do not lose heart.

The outer self is what? It is wasting away, right? Our inner self is being renewed day by day, right? And we will have that new body. That's a wonderful thing to think about.

And in all of this, I wanna share with you this verse. How many of you know Ephesians chapter two, verses eight through nine?

Some of you can verbatim quote it, right? All right, for by grace you have been saved through faith. This is not of your own doing. It is the gift of God, not a result of work so that no one may boast.

[33 : 39] Consider that following verse. We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for what? For good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Doesn't that verse talk about how important it is that we come to know the Lord first and then we do good in the name of Christ, right? So again, in verse 10, put on the new self, which is being renewed, right?

In knowledge after the image of its creator, you are continuing to grow in who God is and what his word has to say. And that's a call for you to do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

And I just find it so interesting how a lot of, I've met younger people who only, they'll quote eight and nine, but they don't go to that verse 10, right?

There's an importance of doing good in Christ. Let's go to verse 11 here. It says here, here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ is what?

[34 : 47] And he is in awe. In being saved, we must realize that we are equal in the eyes of God. What matters is that you have a relationship with Jesus Christ that is the first and foremost.

Again, it doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter what you have been through or what you are going through. What matters is knowing Christ first, then grow in Him, be transformed, come to read scripture and come to know more of the intricacies of God.

You'll see in our transformation, how many of us have changed? You don't have to raise your hand. I can tell you in my own personal walk with the Lord, the man that I was before I knew the Lord was a very different kind of person.

God worked in me and I was stubborn as all can be, but a lot of us were, let's be honest here, right? But God works in and through us so that we become more like Him.

So don't waste that opportunity to continue to grow in the things of God, continue to grow in the truth of His word. And look, we're gonna continue to sin.

[36 : 08] We're not sinless. But we are, or at least we should, sin less, right? Becoming more and more sanctified.

And so grow and bear fruit. What matters is that you are becoming like Him. Continue to grow. Let this be a call for you. If you do not know the Lord, let this be a call for you to believe in Him.

John chapter six, verse 47, Jesus Christ says, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. Let this be a call to grow in Him. Maybe it's been a while since you've opened Scripture.

Maybe it's been a while since you've prayed. Maybe it's just you've been in a dry season. You've been in a valley. You've gone through trials and tribulations.

Maybe it's a call for you to be connected with the body of Christ. When we think of being one body, when we're thinking of being connected with our brothers and sisters, one of the great things is we encourage each other.

[37 : 11] Sometimes we rebuke one another or correct one another. Just like last week, I apologize. I said that in the connection of the fruit being taken from the tree, I said it was the tree of life, but it correctly was the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

I was using this apple as a representation that we are being separated from Christ, but when Christ died on the cross, there came the restoration, the ability to become connected with the Lord.

So even I make mistakes. It was a slip of tongue, but that's okay though. That wasn't my intention. But for many of us, we may, we will still have our mistakes.

We'll still sin. It still happens. What matters is that we love the Lord and we continue to seek Him and in His way and we continue to be transformed by Him. Grow and bear fruit.

Grow in Him and in knowing Christ, do you realize that God hides the truth and the intricacies of His word to those who are not saved? When you believe in the Lord and you study, you'll find truth that is being spoken to you from the word of God being living and active.

[38 : 33] How many of you have read the same verse so many times and you're like, I didn't see that before. I should have known this verse enough times and yet here God is speaking to me in another capacity.

I think I might have mentioned this once before. I don't know if I mentioned it in a sermon, but at the end of Daniel, there is mentioning of the scroll that will be put in and tell the end days.

So there's still all that to say, there's still truth that's hidden. I find that remarkable, right? There's still things in the word of God that is still not, I think it's Daniel 12, nine by the way.

Correct me if I'm wrong. But in that, there's still things that are being hidden and tell the appropriate time much like how the mystery and the majesty of Jesus Christ was hidden and tell the appropriate time.

We can know the deeper things of God. We are called to do good things in the name of Christ. If we are saved by grace through faith and we are made a new creation, we have a new life and the former life has passed away.

[39 : 46] Why in the world would we go back to darkness? Why would we go to the former things? In being Christian, we are saved and secure and we're seen as equal in the eyes of God.

Galatians chapter three, verse 28 is a parallel to what we just read in verse 11 here, right? There is neither Jew nor Greek, there's neither slave nor free.

There is no male and female for you are all what? One in Christ Jesus, right? In the Colossians passage saying the same thing, but it's saying the difference between the Colossians verse and this verse has to do with Christ being all that we need and is in everything here.

It's talking about we are all one, we are all united as parts of the body of Christ. Ephesians chapter two, verse 14, he himself is our peace and he has made us both one and is broken down in his flesh, the dividing wall of hostility, right?

Talking about that separation no longer. I want to be united with Christ. I want to no longer be like that apple like I said last week that is separated from the Lord.

[40 : 58] Instead I want to know Jesus Christ. And I hope and I pray and I, that you will come to know the Lord just as we've been talking about.

If you have been raised in Christ that first verse, can you go back to that first verse one? By chance, I don't, if you can. The verse one, notice the if, if, if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, speaking about how Christ reigns supreme, that He is preeminent, the first born of all creation.

If you have been raised in Christ, seek the things that are above. First, believe in the Lord. Believe that Jesus Christ is the savior and that you are a sinner who is in need of a savior.

You need to be reconnected. Jesus Christ came down. He was born in a manger. There was His ministry, His works, His miracles, and His teachings, healing the sick, raising people from the dead, turning water into wine.

I mean, that's the best party trick out there, right? Seriously, some of you got it. These miracles that He did, His works, right?

[42 : 28] His teachings, just like when Christ says, I am the bread of life, right? Or when it was talking about water, who drinks of water will never thirst, the water that I give, right?

It's wonderful. We know that Jesus Christ, or we should know that Jesus was born, He had His ministry, was crucified, died and was buried, and on the third day, He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

Do you realize that means the fulfillment of prophecy in all of the Old Testament prophecies? Jesus Christ is the way, He is the truth in the life, and He loves us, He is light.

Darkness does not exist in Him, right? He is the resurrection, He is the life. Let this be a call for you to change, to change your mind, to believe in Him, grow in Him, and do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

And as that first verse said, if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, first believe in the Lord, then seek the things that are higher.

[43 : 41] Let's pray together. Gracious Father, we thank You for bringing us here today, our time together. We pray that truth has been spoken here, and that lives will be transformed by the renewal of our mind, that we come to know who You are, have that knowledge of You, and that we're moved to trust in You, and to do good, to obey You.

May we be saved first and foremost by believing in You through faith. May we be encouraged to grow in You by studying the scriptures, by being a part of the body of Christ, by being in Christian community in prayer.

May we be transformed. May we act upon this faith to serve the church, and to serve the community doing good in Your name. It is in the name of Jesus Christ, His precious name, the preeminent one, the firstborn of all creation, that we say all of these things, we pray, and we all say together, amen, amen.

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May God's blessings be with you.