

Life of Faith and Participating in Kingdom Life

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 26 July 2026

Preacher: Rev Callum Macleod

[0:00] Let's turn together now to Paul's letter to Colossians and chapter 3 and reading at the beginning of that chapter. Colossians 3 and verse number 1.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. And so on down to the end of verse 4.

The last couple of times we've been together for the morning service, we have been looking at something of what this letter tells us.

And we noticed that the overall theme of the letter is to show the supremacy of Christ in the life of the Christian. And Paul is writing in this way to the church in Colossae because of the challenges they are facing from the philosophies around them, from the culture of the city, and from the legalism that was rearing its head around them in different ways, leaving them as Christians insecure in their faith, feeling that they were inadequate as the children of God, and therefore losing their sense of joy and happiness and peace in their faith.

And we noticed also that with all of the events in Colossae, that these events are not dissimilar to what happens in our own culture, in the world in which we live, and the different ways in which our faith is challenged by the culture around us, and especially through secularism and the different ways in which we can be influenced by the culture around us, without us actually realizing that.

[1:51] And it's always important for us to bear in mind that we are influenced by things that we would never think would ever change the way that we think at all. But that is not the case.

Wherever we are in life, we are influenced by what takes place outside of us. And in the last two sermons, we saw, first of all, something of the life of faith and salvation as God's gift, to understand that salvation is not about what you and I are going to do in order to achieve something.

It is the free gift of God. And two weeks today, we saw something of the life of faith and the freedom that you have in Christ Jesus, highlighting the way in which we are united to Him.

We are in Him. We highlight the prepositions that are key to understanding our salvation and our security as those who are the children of God.

And as Christians today, we are inseparably linked with the Lord Jesus, so that no matter what He did, we were with Him then. No matter what He does today, we are with Him.

[3:05] And no matter what He will do in the future, we are with Him. We are united to Him and we are with Him. What do you think today of the life of faith and participating in kingdom life?

It is great to know that the truths that are foundational to our lives as the people of God. But these truths are there, not so we can simply rest in the truths, but so that in recognizing the truth, that we can go forward and live as the children of God.

And so today, the life of faith and participating in kingdom life. The first thing we want to see is that there is direction in life.

And the direction is brought before us where we read at the beginning of this chapter, if then you have been raised with Christ, that's who you are, seek the things that are above.

There is a pursuit going on. Energy is spent going in a particular direction. And all of us, no matter how old or young we are in life, we are doing our own seeking.

[4:22] We are looking for the things that are going to give us satisfaction. We rise on the Lord's Day and we are deciding certain things for our satisfaction.

We tend to leave these things behind as we rise on our Monday morning and we are seeking other things during the week for our satisfaction. Our desires are all consuming.

They take up all of our energy and we spend our time looking for these very things that we think will give us satisfaction. And perhaps even in the middle of the service itself, your desire may be focusing on something outside of the service where you think you will find satisfaction.

But what God wants us to do is to seek the things that are above. Things that are above the culture in Colossae. Things that are above the legalism of Colossae.

Things that are above where Christ is. Jesus told us here in the Gospel of John, I am from above. [5:32] You are from beneath. He is the one who came down from heaven. Heaven is his home. It's the dwelling place of God.

And those who are believers in Colossae, they are to spend their energy seeking their satisfaction in the things that belong to the dwelling place of God.

And when Paul is calling them to do so, to continue to do so every day of their lives, he is conscious of one particular thing alongside of that. That is that they will struggle.

Because he draws attention to the things that create that struggle because they lose their sense of direction and they lose their orientation and suddenly they are seeking their desire in the things of the earth.

The things that belong to culture in Colossae and life in Colossae. Where so many people are finding their satisfaction separate from the things which are above.

[6:35] they will know that they will meet with a struggle. And God today wants you to seek him now and forever.

He wants you to spend all of your energy seeking the things that belong to your salvation. And when God is asking you to do so, he knows that so many other things will clamor for your attention. So many other things will demand your time. In the week that is to come, as we wake up at the beginning of the week, tomorrow morning, we will understand that there is a clamor for time, a clamor for our attention, a clamor for our energy.

And that clamor can so often dampen our desire for the Lord Jesus. Dampen our focus on the things that are above, things that belong to heaven.

And so today for you and for me, we are commanded first of all, to seek the Lord with all of our hearts, to come to believe in the Lord Jesus. But that is only the beginning of our seeking.

[7:50] Because when Paul is saying to them, seek the things that are above, seek for the rest of your life, the things that are above. It's an activity which will take up and consume the whole of our lives.

And that's challenging. That the values we see in the world around us will not be our values. That the thinking we see in the secularism that surround us will not be our thinking.

That we will be focused on the things that belong to our salvation. That our lives will be our lives.

That our lives will be different. That we will walk counter to the culture in which we live.

And that therefore we will be known and seen as those who desire the kingdom of God. And Paul wants to drive home the kind of motivation for that.

That the driver for their seeking. And the driver is that their desire should be aligned with the kingdom of heaven to which they now belong.

[9:05] Seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. As Christians they are to recognize the reality of the kingdom to which they belong.

And the reality of where Jesus now is. that the Jesus who died on Calvary's cross. Who was buried in the tomb. Who was raised from the dead on the third day.

Is now seated at God's right hand. And we read in Psalm number 110. That God himself said to him. Sit at my right hand. Until I make your enemies a stool for your feet.

Your desire today as the child of God. Will be driven by the things which are above. Because you understand that Jesus is at God's right hand.

As the one who has freed you from your sin. Freed you from the penalty of sin. And has entered into the place. Which he is preparing for you.

[10:08] As the one who prays. Who intercedes now for you. And in that. That very Psalm itself. It reminds us of the kind of citizens.

That belong to this kingdom. How the citizens are going to be recognized. And we read on through the Psalm. And we see the way in which. It speaks of.

Your youth will be like dew in the morning. They will be arrayed in holiness. They are going to emerge from the culture in which they live.

And they are going to be markedly different. And they are going to be markedly different. Because they are like Jesus. Because their life is aligned with the kingdom of God.

And the rules for God's kingdom. And the Jesus whom they serve. And whom they follow. Is the Jesus whom they recognize as king. They are more than supporters.

[11:09] Who are following a leader. The Christian is a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Bound up in obedience to their king.

The Lord Jesus Christ. At God's right hand. And that's the direction for you life and for mine. Today and forever more.

And that's the driver. That Jesus is my savior. That he is also my king. And because he is my savior. I am his disciple. And because he is my king.

I am walking the paths of the kingdom of heaven. As these are set before me. In the word of God. The direction.

What direction is your life taking you? What direction is your life taking you? In seeking the things that you think will satisfy? Nothing will satisfy you.

[12:09] Other than what Paul calls in his letter. The fullness that we have in Jesus Christ. That's satisfaction. That's the focus of our desire.

These are the things that we long for. We are different to the world around us. We are counter to the culture in which we live. There is direction.

Secondly. There is discipline. There is that sense of the ability to overcome our feelings.

To overcome our failings. In many ways to overcome who we are. In order to achieve the goal. And the discipline depends.

On our disposition. Our tendency. To act in a particular way. And Paul draws attention. To that disposition.

[13:11] Here in these verses. As I read on into the second verse. Set your minds. On the things that are. Above. There is a deliberate.

Internal action. That takes place. In the child of God. Where they are deliberately. Setting their minds. On the very things. That belong. To the kingdom of God.

And the very setting of the mind. Is something that. Precedes. Our desires. What I desire today. Or tomorrow. Will depend on.

Will arise from. The things that I set. My mind upon. And that is one thing. That we can say about. Setting your mind.

On. Anything. It shows itself. In determination. We could say.

[14:08] That it shows itself. In stubbornness. It shows itself. In persistence. When you set your mind. On something.

No one is going to change. Your mind. Not. The folks. Closest to you in life. They will not change. Your mind. You're set. On a path. And that's.

What Paul is referring to here. That we are stubbornly. And persistently. Pursuing. A push in life. Because. Our minds.

Are set. Firmly. Upon that. If I can use. Computer illustration.

To. To. To show something. Of what Paul is doing here. And. We can think of the. Operating system. On our computer. That manages. All the. Hardware.

[15:03] That allocates. All of the resources. On my PC. To ensure. That whatever. Program I'm running. Will run. Smoothly. And because of the. Operating system.

If it is functioning. The way that it should. Then the. Application will run. Smoothly. And things will happen. Like that. And that's something. Of the way.

In which. The lives. Of the children of God. Should be. Setting the mind. As like the. The operating system. And the default. Is. To have our minds.

Fixed on the things. Which are above. And be. Because. That's how we set our minds. We use. All of our resources. All of our energies. They're used.

Together. In the whole process. Of deciding. The things. That are in heaven. Where Christ. Is. Is. Is. What happens.

[15:58] To my operating system. When it becomes. Corrupt. It may not. Grind to a halt. But. My computer. Will not produce.

The things. That it should produce. It will produce. Some kind of. Mishmash. Of rubbish. That has no. No help to me. And in the goal. Which I'm trying to achieve. It will not.

Get me there. And your life. And my life. Is sometimes. Like that. Our determination.

To. To fix. Our minds. On the things of God. Things of. The kingdom of God. Becomes. Corrupted. By the. By the sin of our own heart.

In the first place. But by the influences. Of what. Take place. Around us. There may be the influences. Of my. Of my friends. Of my school friends.

[16:54] There may be the influences. Of. Of friends. That I spend time. In recreation with. There may be the influence. Of those. That I work with. External influences. Can.

Quietly. And discreetly. Corrupt. My thinking. So that I'm no longer. Stubbornly. Persistently. Looking at the things of God. And following that path.

And you and I. Have to be so. Careful. As God's children. Against such.

Corruption. We can. Have. Our. Software. That guards. Against. Our system. Being. Being. Corrupted.

By external. Influencers. We have to have the shield. That closes off. The influences. Of the world. So that our minds. Are working. Clearly. And Peter.

[17:52] In first Peter one. He speaks about. The way. In which. We are to prepare. Our minds. For action. And. And the image. There is. Is of the people.

Who. Who walked around. In long. Cloaks. Down to. To their feet. And when they're going. To prepare. To do anything. Then they have to. Tidy up. Their cloak.

They have to. Tide under their belt. So that there is no. Restriction. On their running. Or on their activity. And you. And I. May ask ourselves.

Today. What are the things. In our lives. That we need to. Tidy up. And sort out. Some of which. We need to get rid of. And there are things. We just need to make sure. That they're in the right place. And not taking the place. Of my Lord. And my Savior. Tidying up our lives.

[18:49] Putting on the belt. Of truth. As Paul says. And doing so. So that we may run. And serve. The Lord Jesus.

The discipline. How determined. Are you today. To follow the paths. Of the Bible.

And of God's kingdom. How stubbornly. Resistant you are. To outside influences. And how much. Does your life show. That you know. Where you are going. You know. What you want to do. And you know. Why. You want. To do them. And thus.

Paul. Draws attention. To. That need. Of discipline. In their lives. He wants. Once more. To. Draw their attention.

[19:46] Their attention. To what should. Drive them. And that is. In this case. Not. Their alignment. With the. The kingdom. Of heaven. But their.

Alignment. With their. New. Identity. It's. Who you are. It's. Who I am. And it's.

Setting my mind. On the things. That are above. Because of. Who we are. And that's. What Paul says. In verse number three.

For you have died. Your life. Your old life. Is behind you. That's come to an end. Your life. Is hidden. With Christ. In God.

It's. A mysterious. Insight. Into. Who we are. As the children. Of God. The next verse.

[20:40] Begins with. When Christ. Who is. Your life. Not only. Do we. Believe. In the Lord Jesus. Not only. Do we have faith. In him. And are saved. By him.

But he is. Our life. There is that. Intimate. Union. With him. That the life. That I live. Now. It's not. My own life. And my life.

Is hidden. With Christ. In God. It's the very. Source. Of the. New creation. Life. In my heart. That is found.

In God. Himself. And my. My mindset. And the way. In which I live. My life. Is deterred. By. Who I am. As somebody. Whose new life. In Christ Jesus.

Finds its origin. In God. The life. That I live. Is nothing less. Than the life. Of God. You know. Present in my heart. And that's what drives.

[21:36] That's what moves. That is. The very thing. That makes. My life. What it is. And of course.

There is. A hiddenness. In a relationship. With the Lord Jesus. Is. You are here. Today. And you love. The Lord.

With all of your heart. You are alive. For God. God's life. Fills your heart. I cannot see it. Others cannot see it.

It's hidden. It's invisible. But the fact. That it's hidden. And invisible. Does not lessen. The fact. Of its reality. And of its powerful. Influence.

In life. It is hidden. Right now. It is invisible. But the reality is. That it is. There. And because. It is there.

[22 : 32] Although. The. The. The. My life being hidden. May speak about. God's protection. And God's power. And God's care. Primarily. It speaks.

Of who I am. And. Who I am. Drives me. In setting my mind. On the very things. Of the kingdom. Of heaven. Of heaven. Do you know. Who you are. As the child of God. Do you know. That you are. The child of God. Are you persuaded. Assured. In your heart. That you are. The child of God. Then there is. There is no issue.

There is no problem. Your life. Will be. Lived in this way. Your assurance. Of being the child of God. With the life of God. Will ensure.

[23 : 28] That. Your mind. Will be set. That your desires. Will be fixed. And that's. The direction. Of. Life. There is a gospel song.

Entitled. Who I am. By. By Ben Fuller. And the chorus. Goes like this. Who I am. In the eyes. Of. The father. Who I am. His love.

Set. Free. Who I was. I left. At the altar. I am huge Lord. I. Believe. Who are you.

Can you. Say. Before God. Today. Who I am. Is. Someone. That your love. Set. Free. Who I am. Is. Someone. That has left.

My life. Of rebellion. Behind. Who I am. Someone. That belongs. To you. And because. I belong. To you. I will live.

[24 : 25] My life. For you. My mind. Will be. Fixed. Upon you. The discipline. Who are you? What does your life.

Look like? How does God. See your life? What's your way. Of thinking. In life. Is your mind. Set. On the things.

That are above. For your life. Is hidden. With Christ. In. God. And finally. There is a.

Destiny. For those. Who are struggling. In Colossae. For those. Who are. Rediscovering. The supremacy. Of Jesus Christ.

In their lives. There is. A certain. Destiny. See. And that's what we. For the read of. In version number four. When Christ. Who is your life. Appears. Then you also.

[25 : 20] Will appear. With him. In glory. The glory. Of Christ. Today. Is. Invisible. To the human eye.

We read about it. In the bible. We learn. We learn about. Where Jesus. Gone. We learn about.

What he is doing. What his position is. At the throne room. Of God. But we can only.

Begin to imagine. What his glory is like. We imagine it. On the base of the bible. But our minds. Can never reach. To the heights. Of.

Recognizing. The glory. And the beauty. That belongs. To Jesus. At God's throne. Today. But the promise is.

That he will. Appear. We could say. Without being. Against the word of God. We could say that he will.

[26 : 21] Reappear. He appeared once before. To take away our sin. Then he returns. The second time. For salvation. To. To take his people.

Into his. Lasting. Kingdom. And time after time. In the bible. That is the sense of. Looking forward to.

The day of the return. Of. Of Jesus himself. And Jesus himself. Repeatedly. Spoke of that. In the gospels. When the son of man. Returns. Will he find faith.

On the earth. When the son of man. Returns. In all of his glory. And John. Goes on to say. We don't know.

What he looks like. But. We know that. When. He appears. We will see him. As he is. And we will be like him. There is a program. And the program.

[27 : 17] For us today. Is. To live the disciplined. Life. Of the children of God. As we await. The. Final stage. In the. God's program. For salvation. The return.

Of the son. When. Time. As we know it. Will terminate. And when all the new things. Will begin. And when there will be no time. And. Nothing.

But the paradise. Of God. Jesus. Will. Return. He is. On the throne. Until God.

Makes all of his enemies. A footstool. For his feet. And then. He will return. And. As that psalm.

Goes on to say. He will drink of the brook. In the way.

He will come. Victoriously. He will come. Gloriously. And as John says. Every. Eye. Will. See him. Even.

[28:11] Those. Who. Pushed him. Jesus. Is coming. Again. And you will see him. And I will see him. And everyone will see him.

And there will be no mistaking. We will know. Who he is. And we will certainly know then. Who. We are. He is going to return.

And that will be the revelation. Of his glory. And it will also be the time. When the. Invisibility. Of. Of. The life. Of the child of God.

Will disappear. When the cover will be taken off. And when. Our union with Christ. And. Our witness with Christ. And all that he does.

When all of that will be revealed. In great glory. We shall be. Like him. We.

[29:07] Says Paul in Romans 8. If we suffer with him. If we are disciplined. If we live the life. Of the children of God. If we suffer with him. We shall also. Be glorified.

Together. By. Says Paul in Philippians 3. By the way. In which he uses. His power. To bring everything under his own.

Control. And influence. That he is able to change. Our lowly body. To be like his. Glorious. Body. What a change.

It's not. Simply that. What's. Invisible. Will become visible. But in that. Process of becoming visible. There is a great. Transformation. When corruption.

Puts on incorruption. When we leave. Dishonor behind. And when we are raised up in glory. When we are made. Like. Jesus. The display of.

[30:09] Who we are. The joy. Of that day. Will be. Unspeakable. It will be. Time for praise.

At a new level. Time for understanding. Of things that we haven't. Appreciate before. It is time. To follow the Lord Jesus.

In his shepherding office. In his eternal. Kingdom. And today. For ourselves. We need to think about.

Participating in the life. Of God's kingdom. We need to. Examine ourselves. And look at the direction. Of our lives. Where do we seek.

Satisfaction. We need. To look at. The things that we set. Our minds upon. We need to be disciplined. To ensure. That we walk in God's paths. And we do so.

[31:06] As those. Who await. The glorious. Revelation. When. The invisible work of God. Will be displayed. To ourselves. And. Before the gathering.

Of all of the people of God. And before. God's eyes. God's eyes. Himself. When God will see. At last. That we are transformed. Into the very image.

Of his. Eternal. Son. May God help us. To live that kind of life. And may God bless us. So that. In that day. We will rejoice. In seeing.

The glory. Of Jesus Christ. May God bless his word. Let us pray. Most. Gracious God. Our. Saviour. Our. Father in heaven.

Our shepherd. Our guide. Our king. And our Lord. Help us. O Lord. Today. To appreciate. All that you are. In our lives. All that you have already done.

[32:01] All that you have promised. Yet. To do. And give to us. The desire. And the direction. And the discipline. Empowered. By your Holy Spirit. In our hearts. That we may live for you.

Day by day. And have joy. In following you. As your disciples. In the world. And coming at last. On the day of. Your return. To enter into.

The everlasting glory. Into which you will gather. The whole church. Of Jesus Christ. To be forever more. With you. So bless your word. And to mercy we pray. For Jesus sake.

Amen. The glory of the psalm. Psalm number 31. Psalm number 31.

Psalm number 37. Psalm number 37. Psalm number 37. Psalm number 37. Psalm number 37. And we're seeing verse 20 to 24. From verse 20 to the end of the psalm.

[33:10] Your presence hides and shelters them. From those who plot to take their life. And in your tent you keep them safe. From evil tongues that stir up strife. From verse 20 to the end of the psalm.

And the tune is Warrington. Amen. Your presence hides and shelters them.

From those who plot to take their life. From those who plot to take their life. And in your tent you keep them safe.

From evil tongues that stir up strife.

The Lord be praised because he showed the wonder of his love to me.

[34:26] When in the city I was trapped. Surrounded by the enemy.

In my alarm I roughly said that I was hidden from your eyes.

But when I called to you for help. In grace you listened to my cries.

Oh, love the Lord, all you his saints. The fateful will be kept by God.

But he will give the proud thereto Be strong, take heart Open the Lord After the benediction I go to the main door.

[36:08] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.

Amen.