

Col 3.1-4—Living the Resurrected Life

Seek the things that are above, v.1

- I. What it is to *seek*?
 - A. Seeking implies diligent labor and effort, cf. Lk 15.4-10
 - B. So we should earnestly strive and labor after the things that are above. We should pursue them in such a way that those around us would think we cared for nothing else.
 - C. Before we came to Christ, we sought feverishly after the things of earth; but now that we belong to Christ Paul tells us to seek after the things above.
- II. What are *the things above*?
 - A. Contextually it would be the things opposed to the false doctrines of Col 2.16-23 and the ungodly practices of Col 3.5-11.
 - B. Therefore they must be the things which accord with godliness in belief and practice, cf. Mt 6.33.
- III. We must beware of two ways of misreading Paul's charge:
 - A. Paul doesn't mean we don't already have the things we seek, cf. Col 2.6. He's telling us to take what we have in *principle* and seek its actual power and influence in *practice*.
 - B. Neither does he mean we never actually lay hold of what we're seeking. We diligently seek in order to increasingly enjoy what we already have.

Set your minds on things that are above, v.2

- I. This embraces two actions: fixing the *thoughts* and fixing the *affections* on things above. We're to both know and savor the things above.
 - A. This exhortation is the root and cause of the former because the mediations of the mind stir up the affections, which in turn give feet to the will, cf. Rom 12.2
 - B. So Paul's telling us to *so dwell* on the things above in our minds that the heart and will are drawn after them in belief and behaviour pleasing to God, cf. Heb 11.14-16; Ps 42.1-2; Phil 3.7-14

Do not set your minds on things that are on earth, v.2

- I. Christians are not to set their minds on things that are on earth because they're opposed to the things above and greatly hinder a heavenly life.

- A. Rather, Paul says the things that are of earth are to be put to death, v.5, and put away, v.8.
- B. There are of course earthly things which aren't sinful. These aren't to be cast off entirely; but they're to be regarded differently. Our minds and hearts aren't to be set on them as they were when those things were our idols and our "everything".
 1. Instead, they're to be enjoyed in their place as subordinate to things above and we're to guard our hearts against loving them too much, using them unseasonably, and indulging in them immoderately.

Motives to living the resurrected life, vv.1-4

- I. You've been raised with Christ, cf. Rom 6.10
 - A. If you have a share in Christ's death to sin and a share in Christ's resurrection unto holiness, then you must no longer set your minds on things below because you've been raised to a heavenly life.
- II. Christ is seated at the right hand of God, cf. Acts 2.33
 - A. If your Saviour is seated at the right hand of God then your thoughts and affections should be loosed from the things of earth and fixed lovingly and delightfully on things above.
- III. You've died with Christ, cf. 2.12; Gal 6.14
 - A. Having died with Christ to the things of this world, we're not moved by the things of the world in the way we were. Instead, we're moved by things above.
- IV. Your life is hidden with Christ in God
 - A. You live in Christ, are united to Christ, and therefore enjoy an unbreakable communion with the Triune God, 1Jn 1.3; Eph 2.22; 1Cor 6.19; Gal 2.20. For those who enjoy such sweet fellowship, the minding and loving of things below are out of place.
- V. When Christ appears you will appear with Him in glory.
 - A. Christ will gather His church so that they might appear in His favor and fellowship in glory forever, 1Thes 4.17.
 - B. With such a glorious prospect and certain hope, is it not foolish and even shameful to seek and set your minds on things of the earth?
 - C. So let us *live the resurrected life*, seeking the things above and setting our minds on things above and not on things on earth.