Colossians 3

A Short Summary of The Epistle to The Colossians — Chapter 3

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Chapter 3

A risen Christ is all that remains, risen out of death and sat down on high, and they risen with Him. If that was their position, Paul besought their to seek those things that were above where the Christ sat at the right hand of God; (Col. 3:2) they were to set their mind on things above, not on things on the earth, (ver. 3) for they had died, and their life was hid with the Christ in God, He was their life; -- just as the twelve stones of memorial were set up in the midst of Jordan, and other twelve stones were to be taken out of Jordan and set up in Gilgal to remind the Israelites of the cutting off of the waters of Jordan by the ark of the covenant, and of their passage through into the land of Canaan, -- so the Christians were to remember that they had died, and that their life was hid with Christ in God (see Josh.ua 4:1-10, 20-24). (Ver. 4) He would soon appear, and when He should appear they would appear with Him in glory. How secure is the Christian! as to death and judgment, it is behind him; he has died with Christ. As to his life, it is hid with the Christ in God. No one can therefore pluck that life out of Christ's hands. As to the future it is certain glory. When He shall appear they shall appear with Him in glory. Thus the position into which Paul puts the Colossians is dead and risen with Christ, looking up to heaven where their life is, and looking forward to their appearing with Him in glory. In the first chapter, their hope was laid up in heaven. Here it is their life. Thus as to their standing, all was perfect, they were but waiting for the glory -- they were not in the flesh at all. As to that, they were dead with Christ. Christ was their life, outside flesh. (Ver. 5) Nevertheless flesh was in them, so they were to put to death its members. Notice not the members of the body -- those are to be yielded to God (see Rom. 6:13). Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and ye are not your own (1 Cor. 6:15, 19, 20). It is here the members of the old man. What were they? Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil lusts and covetousness, which is idolatry. Everything is an idol which man covets. I have died with Christ, and risen with Him in order that I may put to death. "To put to death" is a very different thing from "to die." The one is done once and for ever, the former is a daily thing. The children of Israel did not cross the Red Sea or Jordan twice. Nevertheless they had to learn themselves afterwards and had great struggles and conflicts. After Israel crossed the Jordan they encamped in Gilgal, and it was here they were circumcised (see Josh. 5). The reproach of members of the flesh in activity cause the wrath of God to come on the children of unbelief. These Colossians had also formerly lived in them. But not only are the outward gross sins to be put off, but also anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy speaking, and lying. All these things belong to the old man which they had put off. Now they had put on the new man which was daily renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. This goes a little beyond Ephesians where the new man is looked at in the absoluteness of the new creation. Here it is not only created, but renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. In this new creation there was neither Greek nor Jew, uncircumcision nor circumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free,

but Christ is all, and in all. They had put off the old man, and they were daily called to put off his deeds; they had put on the new man, once and for all, now they were called to put on his fruits. These were bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance towards one another, and forgiveness towards one another, if any had a quarrel against any, as the Christ forgave them. But love was the chief thing. It was the bond of perfection. Gifts might abound (see 1 Cor. 12), but without love they were worth nothing (1 Cor. 13). The peace of the Christ, too, should rule in their hearts; whereunto they were called in one body: outside in the world was enmity and hatred -- inside was peace and love. The word of the Christ, too, should dwell in them, and whatever they did in word and deed, they were to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. What precious thoughts of God! The forgiveness of Christ is our model. The peace of Christ is to rule in our hearts. The word of Christ to dwell in us richly. Singing and joy is the result. The three first-fruits of the Spirit come out here -- love, joy, peace; but it is the love of Christ, the joy of Christ, the peace of Christ. All the relationships of life remain. And the Lord's name introduced to sanction them all. 37 If they were wives, they were to submit themselves to their husbands; if they were husbands they were to love their wives; if they were children, they were to obey their parents -- it was well-pleasing to the Lord; if they were fathers, they were not to provoke their children; if they were servants, they were to obey, not looking to men for their approbation, but as fearing God. All these duties towards one another were seen and noticed by the Lord, and He would give the reward. There was no respect of persons with the Lord.

37. The name Jesus is connected with salvation. The Christ (with the article before it) with His official glories, now taking out a Church to be His bride, during the time of His rejection as King. Lord with responsibility and government.