

LSB Colossians 3:5 - 8 Spirit Regeneration but This Body is Dead

NASB77 Col. 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him 11—a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

Paul has been arguing and defining what theologians call regeneration. Regeneration. Actual, visible, real, change in our lives. The terminology in *new creation*, speaking of every christian, is not some hyperbole. If it isn't real, then you need to check your christian pulse.

To use an abused and worn out phrase because of gross misuse, we are born again. From spiritual death and separation from God, we are quickened to new life, together with Jesus. We are born again into a new and distinctly different life.

We can follow the logic of his argument through chapter 2 and into where we're at here in chapter 3. All of the "if's" and all of the therefore's.

2:6 *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk** in Him,*

Reject worldly philosophy. Reject man made religious rituals and practices. Reject asceticism. Reject extrabiblical spiritualisms, mysticisms.

One by one Paul puts up roadblocks for all of the dead end roads Satan

would have us waste precious time going down. Roads to nowhere.

Paul says we began the journey by faith, and we continue in our journey . . . by faith. We walk by faith. But we DO walk. Christianity isn't stagnant. Christians are going somewhere. We're on the move. Christianity is a walk. And we walk by faith.

But Paul strengthens that faith by explaining the nuts and bolts of what happened to us, what God in Christ did inside of us when He saved us. When He snatched us out of the fire.

He called us out of this judged and perishing world, to safety in His kingdom, His authority to reign, as opposed to Satan's, in this world. He made us citizens of heaven, even though we're here for a little while longer.

He did that by circumcising our hearts. He did a spiritual operation on our hearts, our spirits, our inner being. He quickened us from spiritual death because of sin, to spiritual life, together with Christ, because our sins are forgiven and left at the cross.

He baptised us into Christ with a spiritual immersion. Christ is the water of life and we are immersed into Him. In Him we left our sins, all of them, at the cross, where He paid our debt in full. And in Him we rose from the grave, alive, spiritually, with a new life. And in Him we possess an alien righteousness. A righteousness not our own, it is the perfect righteousness of Christ, given to us. Accounted to those who are in Christ.

Old things have passed away. All things are new. And Paul just keeps building on that argument.

If that is true, don't let people push you around telling you that you need to jump through religious man made extrabiblical hoops. Man made religion is extrabiblical nonsense. Shun that.

Instead, embrace the belief, by faith, that the old you died and your new life

is hidden with Christ in God. We are told to leave this old world behind and turn our thought life towards heaven.

3:1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

How do we do that. We do that by daily spending time, with Jesus, looking into the mirror at His reflection, in this book.

For me, I'm a good audial learner, so I listen to excellent teachers and expositors of this book. That's one way. I can saw and chop wood in the back yard, and listen at the same time. Technology is sometimes great.

I've set up links on our web pages to a banquet feast of teachers that are completely trustworthy. You do need to use judgement. There's a world of nonsense that wants you to listen to it instead. John MacArthur. John Piper. R.C. Sproul. Alistair Begg. To name a few. Even my stuff, as unpolished as it is.

Set your mind on things above. ?? Really? In this culture and cosmos? We live in a generational space that is unique from every other time frame since Adam ate the apple and Satan took over the rule here on this earth.

30 years ago I did a lot of excellent work with Nikon and Mamiya cameras. There are still post cards floating around, a few at the mining park, and maybe some at the convention center from those days.

We had Fujichrome Velvia film, and the color pallette was punchier than real life. The reds would drip off the page onto the floor they were so vibrant, and people loved it.

Then if you got a money shot, a killer chrome slide, you would send it off to a place in Colorado and they made beautiful prints. Like the one in the court house with my signature. Long involved arduous process that was

limited to people like me that knew how to tweek a Nikon camera and the best film to make beautiful prints. Some of the money to form the mining park up on the hill there was procured from our state because of my film photography.

Now my telephone makes prettier pictures by accident than I ever did on purpose. All of that is obsolete. And I can upload a telephone picture instantly, seconds after I took it, to Facebook. But why settle for a still picture when you can have the same thing, in a movie. The Nikon's are practically worthless now.

My point is we live in a time and place when we are barraged during every wakeful hour with images. Non stop.

2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

We embrace the world of non stop beautiful images coming at our minds, all day, every day. But thinking in particular of what Paul so clearly orders all christians to do in that verse, the non stop images coming at me is a diabolical problem. Yes, I believe diabolical is correct terminology.

But we have to live with it. Images, ad infinitum ad nauseum, are like the atomic bomb. Impossible to un-invent. We have to somehow live within a barrage of images. Non stop mind manipulation by images.

And now we have the added plus that the beautiful movies and images aren't even real. Computer generated movies of tripe designed to evoke an emotional response from me. My personal favorite. I just love it when someone asks me "how does that make you feel". Jim's trigger.

A little rant. Have you noticed lately that when something big happens, like the death of Jubilant Sykes, you have these vulture You Tube creators that string a bunch of images together with a commentary that is AI generated in the hope of getting enough clicks to get a pay check from You Tube. It's sort of nauseating. A non human AI voice whining on and on

with AI generated nonsense. Another Jim trigger.

The onslaught of images was one thing when they were actual real images, but now the onslaught isn't even real. It's computer vomit.

2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

This command requires new focus and effort that wasn't required of me, ... even a year ago. The onslaught of AI content has doubled down the need to actually focus on what this verse orders of me.

And then verses 3 and 4 cement the argument. Christians are not citizens of this broken world. We are citizens of heaven. So Paul says, why are you wasting time and effort on this place?

Would I trade the reality of my citizenship in another world for anything here? If somehow a trade was possible, and I could have the wealth and influence of Elon Musk, in trade for my citizenship in heaven, that would be an instantaneous hard no. The richest man in this world is in dire poverty in comparison with the wealth I have been given, freely, in Jesus.

So Paul argues, live that way then. Set your mind on the place and the things where your citizenship is, in heaven, and stop wasting time on stuff here that is going to be burned up.

OK, then, verse 5 is the next logical step in his argument;

5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

You can follow the logic. We have new life, a new citizenship, in heaven, and our stay here on earth is temporary, the days are numbered, and if you think about eternity as opposed to a few hours and days in time space continuum, our lives here are 5 minutes long.

How should we then live, while we remain here on earth, under the ownership of Him who purchased us and rescued us out of this condemned and judged world, with His own shed blood.

The answer to all of these deep arguments is vs. 5

5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

One teensy weensy problem. My earthly body didn't get the memo. Remember, we discussed, last week; Positional truth and practical truth.

That's why that word - consider - is there. This is a positional truth that I have to embrace and enforce on a practical flesh. My spirit was quickened from death to new life when Jesus came into my heart. My flesh was not.

immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed,

I'm a realist and I have to report, those things are very much alive, and I might add, at war with my new life, my new person, the regenerated me who is looking into the mirror of this book, and being incrementally changed.

Paul says to consider the members of my body as dead. It gets stronger. In other passages, Paul says we are to crucify those things. Listen to what Paul spells out to the christians in the region of Galatia.

Galatians 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

So here in Colossians, Paul says consider your members dead to these things, but to the Galatians, Paul says it stronger still. Crucify your flesh with it's old worldly passions.

I want to spend some moments speaking of a particular problem that is included here in Paul's list, because it is the measure of a culture, a measure of our generation.

5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Paul lumps in greed here with all of these other more physical desires. Immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire . . . those are all exterior problems, but greed in inside me. Similar fire, but it burns inside, instead of outside.

Greed here, is the same word that is translated in other places as covet. Coveting. Wanting what you do not have, wanting what you did not get, is coveting, and this is shocking. Coveting what you don't have, that someone else does have, wanting what you didn't get but thought you should have, is equivalent to idolatry.

That gives a whole new twist to images. Pictures make me want things that I don't have.

I've been following a discussion on Facebook. This guy has a Model A coupe that was rebuilt in 1938 specially to outrun revenueurs. It was built to outrun the federal cops while hauling whisky. So it's got a 1936 Ford V8 engine and transmission that was more than twice the original horse power.

And this thing is a survivor. The guy who had it built went to prison in 1949, for being a bootlegger. And he put the car in a guy's care, he was going to get it when he got out of jail, but he never returned, and the car was stored indoors clear until the original caretaker died in the late 1990's.

Then it got sold and has been bouncing from collector to collector, in it's original state as a bootlegger car. No one has changed it.

I just drool over stuff like that. Survivor stuff that's as real as it gets. If I could have that, I'd have so much fun, and it would make me happy. Really? Of course not, but I'm sharing with you how coveting works. We see pictures of things that would gratify, our flesh.

You know, when Jane Austin was writing her chick porn, sorry ladies, that's what it is, it was the 1810's. She didn't have images for the eyes so she worked very well with images in your minds eye. The perfect prince who rescues the poor maiden, is different in the mind of every reader. Perfect in their minds eye. No image needed. But generations of women covet THAT man.

Now we've got AI. So I'm flipping through Facebook because I'm a bit bored with what's on TV, or it's commercials, and I'm looking for something that's interesting, like the survivor bootlegger car, and bingo bango, an AI image of 5 teeny bopper girlies in bikini's who, if you look at their faces, they must be quintuplets, they're all so similar, and they're perfectly formed. Oh my.

I didn't ask for that image to pop up! Not helpful! But if I hover there for a second or two, the facebook algorithym says, oh, this person spent a moment gazing at this, lets give them 20 more. Not even real people! Computer generated girlies. Don't tell me Satan isn't busy with AI.

I know what Paul would say. It's our passage this morning. If the world is drowning you in images that affect your desires and cause you to covet what you did not get, do not have, you're engaging in idolatry. Serious business. And AI just magnified the problem about a thousand fold.

6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

I am designed, built, and owned by God for His intended purpose of worship. Whatever steers me away from that . . . is idolatry. And idolatry, my coveting of this worlds shiny things, not God, is cause for wrath.

That's a pretty high bar, right. If that's where the bar is set, is there anyone God isn't mad at? Because the human condition is the human condition. Especially me. Wolfram has a longer useful attention span than I do.

The answer is a single narrow possibility. God is in fact angry at every living sinner in this world, and the only escape hatch, is being immersed into Jesus. In Christ, God is pleased with me. In Christ, the sin and idolatry is removed. In Christ, acceptable worship and fellowship with my Creator and God is possible.

In Christ, His Holy Spirit comes and fills me up with godly desires and godly energy that displaces the world's empty shiny things. There's an ancient treatise with the best title I've ever read. Thomas Chalmers, Saint Andrews College, Scotland. He wrote a book titled;

The Expulsive Power of a New Affection. We've all experienced that. Our thoughts were trained on something, until something better came along, and we never thought about the previous thing again.

That's what Paul calls for here. We are so in love with Jesus, knowing Him better and more fully, daily, spending time with Him in His word, walking through this world with Him, by His indwelling Spirit, that the old affections of this world are set aside. A new and better love has captured us. Old things are neglected, then left behind. Forgotten.

It's replacement theology. Christ has replaced my loves for shiny things in this world.

We all fall short. We all fail in many ways. Our old self is still doing battle. Daily. But verse 7 is key. There is hope, even for me, in what verse 7 states.

6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

In verse 7, for born again christians, regenerated alive in Christ christians, the past tense in verse 7 is hopeful.

Before I was a christian, my life was defined by all of the sinful things Paul lists for us in verse 5. I walked in them. I was living in them. There was no other alternative even possible.

immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed drive every unsaved person's life. Paul uses two defining terms. We **walked** in them. We **lived** in them. Before. Before Jesus, that stuff drove everything.

Christianity is a before and after, or it isn't real. There has to be change. New life. Sanctification.

The doctrine of sanctification says we are called out of the old life, and by the indwelling Holy Spirit, living in us and empowering us to have victory over our old self with all of it's desires, we incrementally are being changed.

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

I no longer walk in the world's gutter. I no longer live a life helplessly driven by sinful desires and lusts. I no longer covet what someone else got that I didn't get.

In fact, the apostle John, in his epistles, 1 John in particular says if you walk continually in sin, you're not a christian at all. There has to be a distinction. A before and an after.

Paul writes to the Corinthians this exact truth. There has to be a before and an after for real born again christians. He says in chapter 6 in 1 Corinthians:

*9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were (past tense!) some of you; **but** you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.*

If there is no change; If you are still walking in sin, the same as before, there's no distinct before and after caused by being born again, regeneration, in Christ, then you are not a christian. We don't walk continually, in sin. We don't continue in a life style of sin.

Verse 8 is that after to the before; *8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.*

But now. There is a distinct after. A changed from before "now". But now . . . things are different. Behold, old things have passed away, all things are new.

That's as far as we're going to get in Colossians I think until 2026. We'll pick it up here and finish our tour through galatians, ephesians, philippians and colossians. We're getting close.

But this morning I want to close by asking the question, is there a distinct before and after, Christ, in your life.

Did He come into your heart and make all of your priorities different and new. Did your love for the indwelling Jesus cause you to expel old worldly things that you walked in before?

A marriage changes everything. Every priority is changed to accomodate

the different life with a life partner. How much more so our lives when Jesus comes to live inside our hearts. Everything changes. Or it wasn't real.