

Text: Colossians 3:1-17

Meaning: Paul told the Colossians how to live a heavenly life

Big Idea: We are called to live a heavenly life

Objective: I want the hearers to live a heavenly life

Theme: Battles you must win

1. **WIN THE BATTLE OF THE MIND**

SET – to ponder on, to continually dwell on something, to give careful consideration to something – to focus your attention upon a given person or subject

Set your mind on things above (2 words in the Greek) – MIND UP!

INPUT

Set your mind on the things above. In 2 Corinthians 10 it says that we must TAKE EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST.

We must be careful what we PUT IN OUR MINDS. What should go into our minds? Heavenly stuff! Worship and the Word should go into our words. He talks about that at the end of the chapter. He says we must let the Word of Christ dwell richly within us.

RICHLY – speaks of abundance. Someone who is rich has an abundance of money and material possessions. Paul is saying we must be RICH IN THE SCRIPTURES AND RICH WITH THE SPIRIT.

You don't grow in Christ with a 5 minute drive by devotional a few times per week. We grow in Christ when we DIG IN TO THE WORD! It's only when we MINE THE WORD FOR TREASURE DEEP WITHIN that we truly grow. And not for FACTS SAKE but for FAITH'S SAKE. WE dig into the Word to apply it.

I can honestly say that the times when I have grown the most and sensed the Spirit of God speak to me most clearly are times when I have faced a difficult situation or when I needed a word of wisdom and I dug into the Word and called out in prayer looking for an answer.

OUTPUT

Not only must be make sure to put heavenly stuff in our minds, but we must also speak heavenly things into the lives of others. Paul tells the Colossian believers here to teach and admonish one another with hymns, and psalms, and spiritual songs.

When I begin to pour into others lives for the sake of the gospel now I'm more serious about what is going into my own heart and mind. When I have to teach and disciple others I dig in deeper myself. Some of you are only one teaching opportunity away from really growing in Christ. When I'm teaching others now both my understanding and application of the Word has to grow.

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

2. **WIN THE BATTLE OF THE FLESH**

1 Cor 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Paul said in Romans 7 that overcoming temptation was a constant battle in his life. Our body and our spirit are in a constant war with one another. The spirit wants what Jesus wants, but the flesh wants to fulfill the desires of sin.

4 Common temptations of the flesh:

SEX – *immorality, impurity, evil desires*

MONEY/MATERIAL THINGS – *covetousness*

EGO – *malice, slander, lying to one another*

BITTERNESS – *anger and wrath*

These temptations serve as constant battles for us in the flesh. Just as the Lord told Cain before he killed his brother, "Sin is crouching at the door, and its desire is for you, BUT YOU MUST MASTER IT!"

How do you master sin? How do you overcome temptation? Paul gives us some insight here.

How do we overcome the flesh?

Wasp nest illustration

One of the things you really have to watch out for in Tennessee in the summer is wasp nests, especially around your deck or the eaves and corners of your home. We always keep a can of wasp killer spray around our house just so we are ready to eradicate those suckers at a moment's notice. The reason being that we have children running around our home and the last thing we want is one of them to get stung by them.

Sin is like a wasp nest. The more you ignore it the larger it's going to get, and before you know it your sin will begin to sting everyone else. We have to KILL THE FLESH, eradicate the nest. Don't just sit idly by and let sin grow in your life.

SACRIFICE

Paul tells us here to CRUCIFY the flesh, to PUT IT TO DEATH. Crucifixion in Christian language refers first to the SACRIFICE OF CHRIST FOR US ON THE CROSS. We are told to TAKE UP OUR CROSS DAILY AND FOLLOW JESUS.

To crucify the flesh means to sacrifice that which would lead me to sin.

Romans 13:14

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

What do you need to give up to grow up? GOOD THINGS ARE THE GREATEST ENEMIES OF GREAT THINGS.

If LUST is a struggle then I need to GIVE UP MY ACCESS TO THE INTERNET OR TELEVISION.

If SELFISHNESS OR PRIDE is a problem then I need to intentionally SERVE OTHERS.

If MONEY and MATERIALISM is a problem then I need to GIVE UNTIL IT AFFECTS MY LIFESTYLE.

If BITTERNESS is a problem THEN I NEED TO CONFESS TO ANOTHER BELIEVER AND ENLIST THEIR HELP TO FORGIVE SOMEONE. I also need to go to counseling to talk through the hurt and the trauma and forgive others.

We have to get to the root of the problem and pull the sin tree up by the roots? Questions need to be asked:

WHY AM I SO ANGRY?

WHY AM I SO AFRAID?

WHY AM I SO LUSTFUL?

WHY AM I SO MATERIALISTIC?

SUPPORT

Paul says in verse 11 that Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. So he is saying that in Christ we have all been brought together in one loving family, and we all need Jesus.

After this in verse 16 again he says that we should TEACH and ADMONISH one another.

ADMONISH – means to warn each other. So, we have a responsibility to advise one another and even warn one another when we see our brother or sister heading down a dangerous path.

We need to confess our sins to one another and pray for one another for healing and for strength.

3. WIN THE BATTLE OF THE HEART

He finishes by telling us to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do you make every word and deed all about Jesus? It starts in the heart. It's about desire and motivation.

WHY DO YOU DO WHAT YOU DO? Is it for you or is it for Jesus and others?

GRATITUDE

3 times in 3 verses Paul refers to our needing to be thankful. The way to keep my heart and motivation in the right place is to CHOOSE GRATITUDE EVERY MORNING.

HUMILITY

Paul says here we must put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. In order to put on love I must die to me. Putting on love means no matter what someone else does I'm going to love. Because of the love of Christ which has been poured out in my heart through the Holy Spirit I can love you even when you don't love me back.