

SERMON: THE CHALLENGE OF THE RESURRECTION

Colossians 3:1-4

(1) If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.

Introduction

For Christians, life in the here and now is lived in the light and power of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior. In these four verses, Apostle Paul declares the theological and practical implication of living a resurrected life. Our values and our aspirations are different after we accept Christ as our personal Savior. They are polar opposites to the values and aspirations of the world.

Paul challenges us to maintain what sociologists call “status congruence.” Your dress, your behavior, your speech, and your possessions should affirm your status. You would not, normally, expect a billionaire to drive a hoopty. You would not expect an English professor to use incorrect grammar, unless he or she was trying to make a point. Each society has implied expectations for the status one carries. Whether we like it or not, once we hang Christian by our name, higher expectations are assigned to us. These higher expectations are assigned by society and more importantly by God, who created us and provided the way of eternal salvation. Yes, there is a double standard-maybe even a triple standard. In this passage of Scripture, Paul is challenging us to rise and constantly maintain the highest standards of thoughts and actions. Let’s delve into these four verses.

Exposition

1. The Reminder.

(Sometimes We Forget Who We Are And Whose We Are.)

(We Are Identified With Christ.)

(We Are Risen Spiritually With Christ.)

2. The Request And The Responsibility.

(Seek Noble Things.)

(Set Your Mind On Noble Thoughts.)

(Our Greatest Desires Should Be Spiritual - Not Secular.)

3. The Reason.

(A New Person Has Been Resurrected.)

(The Old Person Is Dead.)

(No Resurrection Without A Crucifixion.)

4. The Results

(A Better Life Here And Now.)

(Giving Above Getting.)

(Serving Above Ruling.)

(Being Righteous Above Being Right On Every Issue.)

(Listening Above Proving Your Point.)

(Forgiving Above Avenging.)

5. The Reward.

(We Have Hope.)

(We Shall Reign With Him.)

Closing Thoughts

Of course, no one is perfect, but let's do our very best to let our lights shine before the world so that the Father can get the glory. In a resurrected life the fruit of the spirit is in "full harvest."

This upward aspiration of the resurrected life was expressed perfectly in the hymn, ***Higher Ground.***

"I'm pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining every day;
Still praying as I onward bound,
Lord plant my feet on higher ground.

Lord, lift me up and let me stand,
By faith, on heaven's table land;
A higher plane than I have found;
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

End Note

It is pretty much common knowledge that the Greek word the King James Version translates as “if” in verse one, should really be translated as “since” or “because.” Here’s how I would translate the first portion of the first verse: “Since you have been resurrected with Christ, keep on seeking those things which are above.”

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