

*All That Matters*  
**Lesson 7—Raised**  
**Colossians 3:1-17**

The Christian lives in two realms or domains – the created realm and the spiritual realm; the fallen order and the redeemed order (Colossians 1:15-20). Although we still exist in the fallen world, the things of Christ and His Kingdom are to take preeminence in our hearts and minds.

**I. Colossians 3:1-4**

The first command – “Set your heart on things above where Christ is” (v. 1, NIV).

Matthew 6:33

The second command – “Set your minds on things above” (v. 2).

“The term implies more than a way of thinking; it includes values and loves as well. It could well be translated “delight in things above.” In contrast with this second command, which speaks of values, the first command refers to desires. Since basic desires proceed from the heart (Jesus’ words in Mark 7:15), the NIV correctly inserts the word “heart.” The first concern is moral; the second, mental” (Richard R. Melick, Jr., *The New American Commentary*, Logos).

With Christ, he has died, he is risen, and he will appear in glory. There is a perfect balance here between the “already” and the “not yet” that are so characteristic of Paul’s teaching on the Christian life. The new age has dawned, and Christians already belong to it. The old age, however, is not yet wound up, and until they die (or until the Lord “appears” again in His second coming) their new life will be a secret truth, “hidden” from view (from others, much of the time: often enough, from themselves too) (N.T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*, Logos).

This next section involves individual and corporate responsibilities. Since the believer is “in Christ” and is to set their mind on things above, they are to be dead to the things of the world and alive to Christ. They are also to “take off” the old nature and “put on” the character and virtues of Christ. Verses 1-4 enable you to put into practice verses 5-17.

**II. Colossians 3:5-9**

The ability to “die to” and “take off” the old nature are dependent upon verses 1-4.

To “put to death” you must cut off the source of temptation.

## *Take off the Old*

Immorality – to engage in sexual immorality of any kind

Impurity – cultic and moral impurity

Passion – lustful passion

Evil desire – bad, harmful

Greed – intense and selfish desire to acquire more and more

Anger – relative state of anger, fury

Wrath – state of intense anger with outbursts of fury

Malice – feeling of hostility and strong dislike, with a possible implication of desiring to do harm

Slander – accusations that defame another’s character or reputation, meant to harm or injure

Abusive speech – offensive and insulting, obscene, shameful speech

Lie – communicate what is false, with the evident purpose of misleading, deceive

Many Christians tend to concentrate on one list or the other: one knows of Christian communities that would be appalled at the slightest sexual irregularity, but which are nests of malicious intrigue, backbiting, gossip and bad temper, and, conversely, of others where people are so concerned to live in untroubled harmony with each other that they tolerate flagrant immorality. The gospel, however, leaves no room for behaviour of either sort (N.T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*, Logos).

### 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

When a tide of passion or a surge of anger is felt, it must be dealt with as the alien intruder it really is, and turned out of the house as having no right to be there at all, let alone to be giving orders. This is often harder than it sounds, but it must be constantly attempted, in reliance on the grace which continually renews the life of the Christian (3:10; cf. 2 Corinthians 4:16) (N.T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*, Logos).

“In short, be in actual practice what you say you are (by divine act)” (F.F. Bruce, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: Ephesians and Colossians*, p. 266).

Because of these the wrath of God is coming.

### III. Colossians 3:10-14

There is no distinction or division among God’s people – those created in His image.

“The humanity which has been straightened out according to the perfect model, that of Christ (1:15-20; 2:6), has no excuse for such behavior. The standard now is the life of Heaven (3:1-4). They do not behave like that there” (N.T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*, Logos).

## *Put on the New*

Heart of compassion – show mercy and concern, lamenting

Kindness – beneficial for someone, loving affection, public proclamation of honor

Humility – humble attitude, servile

Gentleness – gentle, pleasant, mild, in contrast with harshness

Patience – state of emotional calm in the face of provocation or misfortune, long suffering

The practical application of these virtues:

Bearing with one another

Forgiving one another

Loving one another

Galatians 5:6; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Romans 13:9-10

### **IV. Colossians 3:15-17**

When we put on the love of Christ, peace will rule in our hearts.

Let the peace of Christ “rule” – let it be the umpire.

The center of Christian living is grateful worship, which is to effect “whatever we do”: since “all things” have been created through Christ and also in principle, redeemed through Him...Jesus, the true divine and human image of God, the One whose cross secured our reconciliation, is the reason for our gratitude, and the One “through whom” we can now offer that gratitude to the Father Himself (N.T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*, Logos).

We are to do it all, “In His Name.” This is the principle through which we filter all decisions. Will this action, or word honor Christ? Will I be accurately reflecting Him? Every act and every word are to be an act of worship.

“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father” (Colossians 3:17).