

If ye then be risen with Christ (Quality: good)

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Date: 28 November 2002

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[0 : 00] Dependence upon thee, Lord, for all needed help.

I desire to draw your prayerful attention to Colossians chapter 3, reading the first four verses.

Colossians chapter 3, the first four verses. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.

Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, set your affection on things above.

Not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

[1 : 03] When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall he also appear with him in glory.

On unbelievers living and dying without faith, there is the physical life.

They are dead in trespasses and sins. They come to the solemn appointment of death itself, and faced with eternal death.

Unalterably solemn. The dear people of God, sinners called by divine grace, born again, yes.

They are given physical life. They too were dead in trespasses and in sin.

[2 : 23] But by the grace of God, blessed now with spiritual life. A spiritual life that, yes, brings death in this way.

They will be made dead to the things of this world. And then, when they come to death itself, they fall asleep in Jesus, and enter into the blessings of heaven itself.

That everlasting life, which was bestowed through the death of Christ, made known by the blessed power of the Holy Spirit of God.

For where there is the work of God's grace, there is the assurance of this everlasting life and precious faith.

By the grace of God, that is Jesus. In him, in eternity past.

[3 : 38] They are with him. They are with him. By the grace of God, no more strangers or foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints.

These are they drawn to the Savior. These are they made known and made near by the precious blood of the dear Redeemer.

And ye who were sometimes afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. And in one way, I could not think of a better word, and still cannot, but are under him.

That is, under his dominion. We know that all are under his dominion. I mean that the dear Savior is our Lord and our Master.

And by the grace of God, we love our Master. And loving our Master, we do not think obedience to his commands are just a duty.

[4 : 46] They are in a measure. But it's a loving duty, knowing that those commands are set for our good and for our blessing.

If then ye be risen with Christ. What is this? All the dear saints of God, all whose names are in that book of life, all who will be found in glory at last, are these, beloved friends, that are in him, and therefore were in him in eternity past, in him still when sin entered the world, that did not cast them out of Christ, cast them away from the enjoyment of the presence of a holy God, yes, but still in him.

And he saw me ruined in the fall. What a dreadful sight. Ruined in the fall. Yet, what a wonderful sight. Love me notwithstanding all.

Oh, the wonder of that. And in him, and I love it. Oh, it's been so sweet to me for some time. In him, as he hung on that cross at Calvary.

Why? Because there, dear friend, he was made to be sinned for us. And there, with all our sin, charged to the dear Redeemer, that dear Savior, in that death upon the cross, in the triumph over the powers of evil, in drinking that cup of divine wrath, that there in him, therefore my sin, so great, is cleansed away, because my Jesus has suffered in my room, and therefore in my place.

[6 : 44] And therefore, as the dear Lord Jesus rose again from the dead, and he said, I am the resurrection and the life, therefore in Christ indeed we rise with him.

And so, if ye then be risen with him, in him, he is the head, we are the members.

So, here if ye then be risen with Christ. This, if I know, may bring, and rightly so, concern into those that cannot as yet read their title clear to mansions in the skies, where they long to.

You dread dying without it. My dear friend, pray on. Because these heavenly exercises, these spiritual desires, come from heaven.

And they will lead to heaven. They lead to Christ. Pray on. So therefore, it's a great mercy, when we are brought with that measure of assurance of faith, and this word, if, that ye then be risen with Christ.

[8 : 05] Yes, when a poor sinner on this earth can say, yes, by his grace, I am risen with Christ. It's the same if, in a measure, like, the Lord Jesus said, and if I go and prepare a place for you.

That wasn't an if of doubt. It was an if of time, an if of order, an if of certainty, as I shall. So as, dear people, God can say, as I am risen with Christ, therefore, hear the gracious exaltation, as the word of God, here says, seek, the, those things, which are above, where Christ set it, on the right hand of God.

What, were you seeking for, when you came tonight? You may say, pastor, you don't know what a busy day I've had.

My dear friend, I sympathize deeply with you. The Lord knows that. But now you're here. You may say, well, I've hardly any time to think spiritually all day.

I fully understand that. The Lord knows that. But now you're in the sanctuary. Has there been a moving of your heart? Has there been the upward glancing of the eye, where none but God is near?

[9 : 29] Has there been, Lord, oh, do bless me? Oh, I'm such a sinner. I'm so poor. I deserve thy role. But I do need thy blessing, Lord. Oh, don't let the service go without something for my poor soul.

Do visit me. Seek, says the word of exhortation here, those things, which are above. What are those things, which are above?

All heavenly blessing, all spiritual blessing, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. It's no small mercy to be blessed with providential blessings.

We seek them as they are needful for us here on this earth. But above those providential blessings, it is the spiritual blessings.

It is all that thou wouldst bless me indeed. It's those blessings. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.

[10 : 33] And those who have tasted this and have the assurance of it, come again and again to the Lord, again, and keep saying it, Lord. Keep making it known that thou art my salvation.

I've none other. And Lord, indeed, neither is a salvation in any other. There's none other name unto heaven, given among when, whereby we must be saved. What is the blessing you seek for?

It's the blood of Christ. Oh, dare you, dare you to know it? You may not bear to say much, hardly anything at all. But before a holy heart, searching God, are you not able to say, yes, dear Jesus, that's my very desire, because it's all that that precious blood of thine has accomplished and will accomplish.

And it's that blood, amazing, it's the blood of the Son of God, the God-man, the invaluable blood, that washes away all sin.

And my sin, so great, Lord, make it known, even unto me. Bring, Lord, the spiritual blessings of thy grace and mercy into my soul.

[11 : 49] The blessing, well, all blessings, the spiritual blessing, I was thinking of the grace of God, all that grace, which is such a boundless theme that hardly we know how to start to speak of it, and yet, it seems inexhaustible, and it is like a shoreless sea.

I think one of our hymns sets that for. Boundless, a depth that can never be plumbed, a height that can never be reached in the sense of it in our thoughts, but blessed be God, he that gives grace will give glory too, and it will be reached.

We shall enter into heaven at last, but the grace of, that all-sufficient grace, that grace of pardoning grace, that grace of keeping grace, that grace of subduing grace, that submission, that of and everything.

Seize of the blessings. Now, seek, says the dear man here, seek those things which are above.

That is also another thing that you will seek for if you're in the, and you hardly think it can be you. Communion, likeness to Christ.

[13 : 09] You say, me, like Christ, a filthy wretch like me, is that too strong? Have I been too sharp?

Have I painted the picture too dark? My friend, I don't think so. But, blessed be God, here is the way of salvation, here is the blessing to seek after, and to pray for, and to pray, Lord, make them mine.

Therefore, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

This leads us then first to his incarnation, secondly, to his life here on earth, thirdly, to his death on the cross, fourthly, to his burial, fifth, to his resurrection, then his ascension, and then, as we should notice if we're helped through the text, his coming again, but before, there's between one of his ascension, his intercession, and then his coming again.

Oh, what a mercy to be bound up in that glorious chain. And friend, you've just been saying, there's therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

[14 : 46] Blessed be his name. That is true now at this moment, because seen in Christ, their sins are washed away. You can't see them.

You long to see them. Pray for it. Seek after it. Look up. Don't look in. Pour not on myself too long, lest it sink me lower.

Look to Jesus, kind and strong, and was it full of pity? Join with power. Words of that effect. Seek after these things.

Now, Christ, that, as the word of God here says, setteth on the right hand of God. This expression, setteth, signifies a work done, a work finished, and it is a finished work at Calvary, an all-glorious work, a triumphant work.

It is the overcoming of the power of Satan, of the powers of darkness, of evil, and is the assurance that the Lord God of Nebitant reigns, and though in heaven, and though exalted high, he knows what sore temptations mean, for he has felt the same.

[16 : 06] Is it no comfort to you, friend, that you've got one in heaven that knows all about your struggles, all about your temptations, all about your loneliness, all about your perplexities, always a great comfort to me.

Oh, I know my Jesus knows, and not only does he know, you see, I might know and do sometimes your troubles, your sorrows, and are always pleased to try and pray with you, but so often I'm powerless, not to pray, I hope, but powerless to help.

But Jesus not only knows, but he has the power and the willingness to help and to draw near and to comfort. And if it may be with you at this time, you have some long-standing trial or perplexity and see no way out of it, no way through it, and no one else knows about it, you are bearing it alone, and it seems to get worse instead of getting better, it seems as though Jesus does not care, I say that very reverently, and we come to that place, perhaps sometimes, almost, does he care?

My friend, he does. And this too, that if there is a waiting time, if there's a further testing time, then do rest assured of this, that grace will be given.

Not, you may say, I don't seem to overcome at all, your head's still above the water, you're still praying, you sometimes I've almost wondered whether the prayer's almost gone out of my heart, and yet, you pray, and you sometimes get tried about that, well my friend, try a few groans, a few sighs, there may be much more prayer in those groans, Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee, so, here, it says, seek those things which are above where Christ setteth on the right hand of God, and there again we are reminded that our dear Saviour there ever lives to make intercession for all that come to God by him, he's the Lamb in the midst of the throne, blessed be God, oh wonderful, I just go back because a thought came to my mind and it slipped but it's come back again,

[18 : 32] I said to those of you that may be waiting and a trial and difficulty, I was going back on the address I gave on a Friday night here, I leave that for a moment because I hope to let you have a copy over Christmas and pray the Lord will bless you, but in it was reminded me, you know, when God sent Moses into Egypt and there he said that he would be with him and was going to bring his people out, but things got worse and Moses went to God and said, thou hast not begun to deliver thy people at all, this may be a purpose, I don't know why the Lord should bring it back to my mind, but I leave it, I must bold adventure, then the first word in the next chapter is God's week, now, thou shall see what I shall do, God was about to his time, his way, oh my friend, may grace be given all to endure in, so needful is it not, to have one to intercede, one as a mediator between a holy God and the sinner, to bring the two together through the precious blood of the dear

Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to have that high priest, the priest who would offer sacrifice, Christ offered himself, the priest who would instruct the people, the priest to teach his own dear people, and advocate, to plead your cause, oh friend, you've nothing to plead, have you?

Oh, you can say, Lord, I deserve thy rule, I deserve sin, I deserve to be banished from thy sight, but oh, there's one who pleads, and he never fails, as he never does it, anything he does, but I was thinking as an advocate, if ye then be risen with Christ, see those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, oh, may our eyes be lifted up from all the commotions of the world, all your inward commotions, all your inward battles against sin, all the temptations of Satan, look up, poor sinner, he lives, this dear Jesus lives, he is this same Jesus, set your affection on things, on things above, not on the things, on the, now I did venture just to make a reference of one or two words on this because my mind cannot grasp it quite so clearly, one or two instances to give an illustration of affections set, it means a determination, it means a continuance, it means that your mind is taken up with it, doesn't it?

For example, in the first book of the Chronicles, chapter 22 and verse 19, when David was making preparation for the building of the temple, he himself was not to build it, now he says, set your heart and soul to seek the Lord, your God, set your heart and soul, the great work is before us, seek God, plead his help, and again, dear David, again, speaking of the preparation, he said, I have, because I have set my affection toward the house of my God.

Now you seekers, I want to speak very kindly, can you get out of that? You know you can't, you love the house of God, you feel I'm worthy to be here, you be afraid to be left out, you keep seeking, you're pleased to come, and oh friend, keep coming, keep praying, and set your affection on it, pray for God to bless.

[23 : 16] And then the next word that I came across was this, in Psalm 78, verse 7, and it's a word of encouragement, I feel, particularly for us to pray for the young.

I know to pray for all, but that the generation to come might know them, that's what God has done, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, grandparents, great grandparents, also have a duty, that they might, their children, that they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Friend, can't we say amen to that? If, and I believe we are, I know I am, burdened for the young, I know I must be nearing the end of my life here on this earth, I think of the dear young friends here, I think of the dear children, I think of the little babes.

Now, this I know God lives, that's our mercy, but, oh, how we pray, that their hope, by the grace of God, might be set on God.

Now, wait a minute, what about you? Is your hope set upon God?

[24 : 57] And then one more reference, where we read in the 91st Psalm, because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him and set him on high, because he hath known my name.

He set his love upon me, so he's in trouble. God says, I'll be with him, I'll help him, and bring him safely through.

I made a note just of those few references, which I thought would be, I trust, a help, and it's ever so sweet. You know, when we come to the word of God, sometimes we find a little bit of treasure, don't we?

love of God. It's wonderful, isn't it? Oh, it is wonderful. I feel I must just digress just for a moment, and reading the other morning, I said, I think in prayer, sometimes we tremble at the word of God, and sometimes we stand amazed at the word of God.

And if I can just find the reference now, it was a word in the Psalms that I came across, perhaps I can't just deliver, I would have remembered the word, but it was so sweet to me, as I came to read it, that the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, and call upon him in truth, and this was a he will fulfill the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

[26 : 33] Oh, friend, what a precious word this is, what words of sweet encouragement, but that was just a little aside. But now we must hasten on. Set your affection on things above, not on the things on the earth, that is, meditate upon it, desire after these things, and though when he says not on the earth, it doesn't mean to say to be careless or indifferent with their daily calling, God forbid, that all things be done decently and in order and in the fear of God, but try above everything.

Put God first. Now, the third verse, for ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. What does this mean?

Surely a born-again sinner is alive. He is, God's spiritual life, but he's now dead. I know, not completely in the sense of it, because we've got the old Adam nature, but in spiritually viewed dead, because you are dead now to all hope in yourself of your salvation.

You are not trusting in your own good works. You are not looking to the world. You know that cannot save you. You are dead to the things of this world. You want to be dead to all sense of error.

You want to keep close, as it were, to the dear Lord Jesus Christ. Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. Ye are dead to the world, dead to a nominal religion, a dead religion, artificial religion, but you say your life is spiritual, that is here, hid in God.

[28 : 17] All that life, to think of that precious life, through the precious blood of Christ, do you think that Satan's going to take away the life?

Do you think that that one thus led by the Spirit is going to be plucked by Satan and dragged down to hell? God forbid.

This life that is hid, as we read here, with Christ in God. Oh, one's staggered.

Just to think of the tremendous words, Christ in God. Made known, of course, by the Holy Spirit. Your life is bound up in the Trinity.

It's hid, and that word hid, means it shows that there is indeed a security in that life, and also that it's secret.

[29 : 21] And yet it's made known. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. That comes, I think, in Psalm 25, if I remember rightly.

I remember my dear grandfather wrote it in my Bible, on my 21st birthday, as the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant.

And look at this life. This life is because one died on the cross, and nothing is going to overthrow that death. Nothing is going to overthrow those that are in Christ. Your life is hid.

The world cannot see it. And if the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. But it's a life that's revealed. And though we know so little, and in a measure we only see through a glass darkly, but we are led step by step to a deeper knowledge, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Oh, what a wonderful word this is. Oh, what a secret hiding place. There is here, your life is hid with Christ in God.

[30 : 29] And here I think of, you may think of one or two illustrations, of course, you may think of the seed that's hid. It's out of sight.

But it's life there be manifest that you may trace out in the spiritual experience, with the wheat particularly, as an example. First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.

Then you think of the root. As you have, we've had it here, rooted, and built up in him, and established in the faith, as you've been taught, abounding therein, with thanksgiving.

Rooted. No, you can't see that root. It's hidden, it's deep, and your life proceeds from that root. is like the branch in the vine. I've told you about that vine I used to see in Wales, outside that cafe, or like a restaurant place, where it was like a large conservatory, and the trunk of that, and it was almost like a trunk coming up, and then the branches came, but I couldn't see the root.

Out of sight. But it was there, rooted in Christ. Then like the foundation. You see these tremendous buildings that go up today.

[31 : 48] We can't see the foundation. It's there because that foundation is sure. No, because we are in Christ, therefore, that life will never die.

And that can be no separation from him and the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Now, what does it say? When Christ, who is our life, because of his death, upon a life I did not live, upon a death I did not die, another's life, another's death, I rest my whole eternity.

That's it, friends, is our life, and shall appear. Then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

What a word is this, what a prospect. Friend, we hear of things on the face of the earth, violence, increased violence, increased wickedness, and the world's torturing, as it were, to its ruin.

But God lives, God reigns, and the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. And that is assured. We know not when, but he will come.

[33 : 07] He that testifies these things says, surely I come quickly, who is our love, shall appear. And when he comes, he won't, I say this with the deepest reverence, won't return to heaven alone.

No. The dead in Christ shall rise and bring with them as I feel the souls of the redeemed to be reunited to the body, the dust that is raised, to be raised incorruptible, and to dwell with him forever and ever.

And I do like these words, ye also. Oh, some of us can say, yes, Lord, I believe it's me. Some of you say, I hope it is.

Pray for it. Father, I will that these also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. Oh, these also.

This is the bride of Christ. The bridegroom's coming. He's given himself for it. He loved the church and gave himself for it. And therefore, as I say, he is coming to claim his bride, to see the trophy of his sufferings.

[34 : 23] Again, I'm reminded of those words in the Hebrews. It is appointed unto man once to die, but after that the judgment. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, that unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation, looking for him.

And you'll look for him when you've looked to him. And a friend, you may say, I can't say I'm looking for him, but can you say I'm looking to him? Can you mean to say that there's no looking in your soul and desires of your heart to the dear Savior that died on that cross?

to look to him is the preparation for looking for him. And this is the certainty of being found in him at last.

And so we have this present you shall appear with him in glory. And there, my friends, to behold him without a veil between, there to enter in to the blessings of heaven.

And I have not seen nor ear heard neither entered into the heart of man what the Lord hath prepared for them that love him. Oh, prepare us, gracious God, for that great moment and work in us by thy Spirit bring us through and grant to us that that entrance at last into glory thy word declares blessed are they that keep his commandments that they may have right to enter in by the gate into the city.

[36 : 08] And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.