

Identity Orientation

Colossians 3:1-4

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2** Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. **3** For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Over the last couple of days our minds and emotions have been greatly impacted by the events that took place in Charlottesville this weekend. These events were fueled by hate and fear that stemmed from deep insecurities. We are grateful that God in His sovereignty allowed us to be focused on Colossians 3:1-4 this morning — a passage that grounds our identity in Christ. When we find our identity in Christ it changes our thoughts and our actions.

I. The Focus of our Identity (vv. 1-2)

In these few verses we are reminded of our mystical union with Christ. Paul reminds us that since we have been raised with Christ we should seek the things that are above. This is a fundamental orientation of our will. Focus is both necessary and possible because of our union with Christ. It is necessary to remember that our identity is not an earthly one. We are not identified by what we do or where we live. It is possible to have a change of focus because our union with Christ severs us from the ties of this world. As we change our focus and understand who we are in Christ, it frees us from earthly insecurity and the resulting fear and hate.

II. The Source of our Identity (vv. 3-4)

The truths found in verses three and four cover the completeness of our lives — past, present, and future. We are reminded that we died with Christ (past) and that our life is hidden with Christ (present) and that we will appear with Him in glory (future). The focus of our lives should be our new identity — “When Christ who is our life...” and the source of being able to live out that identity is the power of the resurrected Christ. As our lives take on our true identity — Christ being our lives — it changes our thoughts and actions and we understand that we are aliens here on this earth.

We NEED to meet together every Lord’s Day to be reminded of who we are. When we meet together it reorients our identity. We need to gather to remind ourselves and to remind each other that we are not primarily mothers, fathers, golfers, UT guys, pastors, or friends. Our lives are Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe in your own words what it means to have your identity in Christ.
2. How should a correct identification with Christ change your thoughts and actions?
3. What are the steps we should do to reinforce our grasps of the eternal truths of identification with Christ? (vv.1-2)

4. What does it mean when Paul says that our life is hidden with Christ in God?

5. What happens when you set your mind on things above?

Going Deeper

1. How would a correct view of your identity in Christ affect the way you interact with people?
2. How will you focus your identity on Christ this week?
3. What is the gauge you use to determine if your focus is Christ? How do you determine if you are living in light of your true identity?