

“Christ is All”

Colossians 3:5-11

Context

- Paul's letter addressed to Christians
- Theme: Jesus is the Pre-eminent One, our all sufficient savior. “He is everything!”
- As opposed to vain philosophy, Juaistic ceremonialism, angel worship, asceticism, etc. (Col 2:23)
- If then, we have been raised with Christ, seek and set your minds on things that are above, where Christ is.

(3:5) “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry”

- Put to death - imperative command, active voice. Work that we need to do.
 - NASB - “*consider the members of your earthly body as dead*”
 - (Romans 6:1-23) - emphasizes: both aspects of work and understanding, Paul's understanding of the progressive nature of sanctification,¹ and his confidence that we have the power to obey.²
- List of sins within ourselves
 - Obvious outward sin
 - Hidden thought life (Matt. 5:27-30)
 - Covetousness (1 Thess. 4:3-8) note the use of πλεονεκτεῖν - to overreach
 - Example - David and Bathsheba breaking the 7th and 10th commandments
 - The progression of sin (James 1:14-15)
 - Idolatry - the worship of self

(3:6) “On account of these the wrath of God is coming.”

- This exhortation both points up the inevitability of God's judgement while also extending mercy

(3:7-8) “In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.”

- You must put them all away - another imperative command
- List of sins in relation to our neighbor
 - Wrath and anger - an outburst of emotion; a furnace or fire
 - Malice - an evil inclination of the mind, scheming
 - Slander - βλασφημίαν; and shameful language - abusive speech

(3:9-10) “Do not lie to one another seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”

- Lying to one another - simple lies and hypocrisy
- Having put off and put on - past tense; temporal relationship to the main verb
- Which is being renewed - present participle describing the new self (Romans 12:1-2)
- Edenic imagery
 - Idolatry (Gen 3:5); Covetous overreach - (Gen 3:6)
 - Fig leaf loincloths and hiding (Gen 3:7-8); the old Adam
 - The image of its creator - (Col 1:15) the new Adam

(3:11) “Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

- Paul's audiences struggled with racial, religious, cultural, and social issues.
- Christ, the new Adam, is all, and in all

¹ See also: 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 1:6; 3:12-13; Ps. 84:7; Prov. 4:18; Mark 9:24.

² Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Dr. Tom Gill (Bridge-Logos, 2003), 283.