

Sunday, March 14, 2021—Colossians 3:5 Mortify Therefore Your Members

Introduction

- Last Sunday we concluded our consideration of the opening section of Chapter 3 by looking at the catching up of the body of Christ in verse 4. In doing so, we observed that not only is Christ our life, but He is also our hope.
- Verses 1-4 serve as the staging ground for what Paul is going to be teaching throughout the rest of the Chapter. Recall the three tenses in Colossians 3:1-4 that serve as the basis for our life and service to Christ.
 - Past Tense—“If ye then be risen with Christ. . .”
 - “Seek those things which are above” (Imperative)
 - “Set your affection on things above” (Imperative)
 - Present Tense—“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”
 - Future Tense—“When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”
- The believer’s past, present, and future is encapsulated by Christ. In the present we are both dead and alive. Christ is our life.

Colossians 3:5

- **Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:**
- **Mortify**—is a verb in the active voice and the imperative mood i.e., it is a command. This is the third such verb in this chapter. The English word “mortify” carries the following relevant meaning according to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*:
 - To subdue; to abase; to humble; to reduce; to restrain; as inordinate passions.
 - Mortify thy learned lust. Colossians 3:5
- The Greek word rendered “mortify” carries the following meanings:
 - make dead, to put to death, slay
 - to deprive of power, destroy the strength of

- Romans 4:19
 - Hebrews 11:12
- Romans 8:13—is the only other occurrence of the word “mortify” in your King James Bible. Here is a translation of different word Greek that clearly means “to put to death.”
 - Matthew 10:21, 26:59, 27:1
 - Romans 7:4
- **Therefore**—based on the truth set forth in verses 1-4. The doctrinal truths set forth in the first 4 verses are the wellspring out of which we to live our lives here on planet earth. Our old earth suit has been infused with Christ’s spiritual life from above “therefore” we are commanded to mortify our “members which are upon the earth.” Doctrine always comes before practice.
- **Members which are upon the earth**—the first meaning of the English word “member” is “a limb of animal bodies, as a leg, an arm, an ear, a finger, that is, a subordinate part of the main body.” Paul is instructing the Colossians to “mortify” or put death the sin that resides in their “members.” This is practical application of positional truth.
 - Romans 7:5, 23—the law of sin resided in our members, because the sin nature resides in our bodies. Paul is therefore instructing the believer to “mortify” and put to death the authority that sin working in our members has upon the believer.
- Colossians 3:3—believers are dead but alive. The old you who you were in Adam needed to be killed to bring about a new creature. Reform of the old man was not possible. It needed to be crucified.
 - Romans 6:3-4—because of our identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection we have capacity to “walk in newness of life.”
 - Romans 6:5-6—our “old man” i.e., who were in Adam has been “crucified” with Christ the result of which is that we no longer need to serve the sin that resides in our members.
 - Romans 6:7—we “are dead with Christ”
 - Romans 6:8-10—Christ is our example.
 - Romans 6:11—we need to “reckon” what is true of Christ to be true of us as well.
 - Romans 6:12—“let” is a present active imperative. On the basis of our “old man” being “crucified” and us being “dead with Christ” we no longer have to let sin “reign in” our “mortal” bodies.

- II Corinthians 5:17
 - Romans 6:13—we now have the capacity to “yield” our “members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”
 - Romans 6:14-19—because we are new creatures in Christ we have to capacity and ability by the indwelling Holy Spirit to “yield” the appendages of our old earth suit as “servant to righteousness unto holiness.”
- Colossians 3:5—is talking about the practical application of the positional realities.
- Philippians 3:39—read about the example of Paul from pages 37 & 38 of *Lifetime Guarantee* by Bill Gillham.
 - “Flesh refers to the old ways or patterns by which you have attempted to get all you needs supplied instead of seeking Christ first and trusting him to meet your needs.”