

New Life

3:1 Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand.² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.³ For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.⁴ And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.

5 So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.⁶ Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming.⁷ You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world.⁸ But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language.⁹ Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds.¹⁰ Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.¹¹ In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us.

Colossians 3:1-11 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- As a child, how did setting your heart on a certain toy or gift affect how you acted and what you thought about?
- When have you been in a situation where you discovered that what you were wearing was inappropriate for the occasion?

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

v.1-4

O: What reasons and benefits does Paul give for setting our hearts and minds on Christ (v.1-4)

I: What do you think Paul means by "things of heaven" and "things of earth" (v.2)?

A: In what kind of situations are you tempted to set your heart and mind on earthly things (v.2)?
How can we set our hearts and minds on things above rather than on earthly things?

v.5-9

O: What do the things Paul writes that Christians are to put to death (v.5) have in common?

I: In what sense does greed equate/equal idolatry; how is greed a form of idolatry (v.5-7)?

I: A Christian's old ways of reacting are compared to a garment that was taken off when Christ was received (v.8-10).
Why is each type of behavior inconsistent with a new life in Christ?

I: In a previous week we looked at 2:20-23 where Paul talks about legalism (in a bad light).
How do you reconcile that passage with the verses here?

A: How can we keep God's perspective on immorality and greed when our culture accepts them as normal? (hint:1-4, 5,10-11)

A: How does falling back into these old motives and actions (v.5,8-9) affect you and your relationships with others?

v.10-11

O: What is the great transformation that Paul gives as the reason for changed behavior (v.9-10)?

O: While a Christian will still struggle with sin/flesh, what resources can help drive life change (v.9-11)

I: Why are these resources better than the "pull up your boot straps and try harder" way that is most common in our society (and in most churches/believers)?

I: In v.11 Paul lists groups of people that had divisions in the Colossian culture.
What divisions do you see today that Paul would have written about if writing to us directly?

A: How can you/we be more intentional about the calling in v.10? How is this different than "pull up your own boot straps?"

A: How has becoming aware of Christ in other Christians encouraged you in your faith?
How has this home group encouraged your faith? How could we encourage each other more?

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray for help in the area(s) where you feel weak, setting your heart and mind on Christ, shedding specific attitudes and actions. Spend time thanking God for the changes he has already made in you and the group.
- **Respond:** Memorize 3:10 this week, and keep it on the forefront of your mind this week as you encounter all different types of people and situations. Look for opportunities where God might be renewing you and making you more Christ like (especially the hard ones).
- **Read:** Next week's sermon (2/21/2010) will focus on Colossians 3:12-17. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." **There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time.** These guides rely heavily upon James Reapsome's &/or N.T. Wright's study guides on Colossians & Philemon (ISBN 9780830830145 & 9780830821921), as well as Ryan Roeder's 2005 discussion guides on Colossians & Philemon.