

6-26-16

SETTING YOUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Colossians 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

Colossians 3:7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Colossians 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

Colossians 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Colossians 3:11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Colossians 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Colossians 3:14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

SEEKING THE THINGS THAT ARE FROM ABOVE

God does not see as we see, and we do not see things as God sees them.

I see how much energy my grandchildren exert in playing.. I think if only that energy could be harnessed for something profitable. But in their minds what they are doing is profitable. Hunting for frogs and snakes ... riding their bikes ... playing their video games..

I Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

So too, in many ways we are children. We have our projects that we think are so important, our business endeavors, our buildings, our properties, our vehicles, our jobs, our bank accounts.

Some people are so consumed with these things that they have no time to be here this morning. They have more important things to do than read the Bible, pray, sing God's praises, and listen to a sermon.

It reminds me of when Jesus was taken before Pilate. Here is what Pilate said to Jesus when He did not answer him:

John 19:10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

He could have said, "Do you not know who I am? I am governor over all Judaea .. Appointed by Emperor Tiberius. I have power of life and death over you."

What did Jesus say to him?

John 19:11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

John 18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

Matthew 26:53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

Compared to Jesus, Pilate was a child playing in his sandbox.
Caesar was no threat; he was just playing his earthly temporal game!
King of the mountain waiting for the next challenger to cast him down!

How cumbered about we are about the troubles of this present life!
How careful we are about nothing.

Now, this morning I would like to place before you a challenge to seek those things which are above, and not the things that are from beneath, where we presently are:

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Why do we gather?

If I could instill in you a desire to seek eternal things ...
If I could inspire you to love Christ more ...
To have a greater thirst for righteousness ..
To have a greater desire to seek heavenly gain ...
To seek Him with a greater passion ...
With every ounce of energy in your soul ...
With every breath you take ...
If I could provoke you to love Him ...
If I could provoke you to be on fire for God ...

THIS IS THE GOAL OF THIS MESSAGE!

SETTING YOUR AFFECTION ON THINGS ABOVE:

Consider:

- I. **WHY SHOULD WE SET OUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE?**
- II. **WHAT WOULD HINDER US FROM SETTING OUR AFFECTIONS ABOVE?**
- III. **HOW DO WE SET OUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE?**

I. WHY SHOULD WE SET OUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE?

- 1. BECAUSE IT IS THERE THAT WE HAVE OUR HOPE.
OUR HOPE IS IN THE RESURRECTION AND NOT IN THIS LIFE:***

**SOME THINGS ARE EARTHLY.
SOME THINGS ARE HEAVENLY.**

The earthly is temporal, passing, does not last. DO WE BELIEVE WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THIS?

II Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

II Corinthians 5:2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

II Corinthians 5:3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

II Corinthians 5:4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

II Corinthians 5:5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

II Corinthians 5:6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

II Corinthians 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

NOTICE THE WORD: IF IF..

IF... Christ be risen....

THE QUESTION WE NEED TO ASK OURSELVES IS THIS:

DO WE BELIEVE HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD???

Either He is risen or He is not!

THIS IS A QUESTION YOU NEED TO ASK YOURSELF... DO YOU BELIEVE HE IS????

I Corinthians 15:14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

I Corinthians 15:15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

I Corinthians 15:16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

I Corinthians 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

I Corinthians 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

I Corinthians 15:30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

I Corinthians 15:32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

Years ago when I planned to build a new house, I didn't buy new appliances for the old house, I didn't buy new rugs for the old house, and I didn't renovate the old - because I was looking forward to the new.

Old bodies... Why is it that we are so cumbered about these bodies?
So worried about how they look and so concerned for them.
Yet we are - why do we not look forward to the new bodies we are promised?

DO WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE?
DO WE BELIEVE THESE TRUTHS?

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

We should set our affections above because that is where we have our eternal residence:

Is there hope in this life?

WHY SHOULD WE SET OUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE?

2. WE SHOULD SET OUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE BECAUSE THAT IS WHERE CHRIST IS: CHRIST IS ABOVE AND SITS ABOVE.

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Do you love Christ?

If you love Him, then you should have your heart focused on Him.

If only I could burn into your heart a love for our Saviour.

John 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Do you want to be loved of God? Then LOVE HIS SON! You can only come to the Father through the Son.

To set our affections above is to set our affections on Christ.
The more we love Christ, the more we will want to set our affections above, where Christ dwells!

LET ME GIVE YOU SOME REASONS YOU SHOULD LOVE HIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART:

A. BECAUSE IF YOU LOVE HIM YOU WILL BE WITH HIM SOMEDAY..

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Who you love and who you serve is who you will spend eternity with.

Note how the Bible says that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels..
People go there because that is who they serve and love: evil.

Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Jesus in essence is saying ,.. IF YOU LOVE ME, WHERE I AM YOU SHALL ALSO BE.

Another reason you should love him is:

B. You can't have your prayers answered if you don't love Christ.

As you love Christ so you are loved of God and God will hear your prayer..

John 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

John 16:26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

John 16:27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

**C. You should love Christ because of the love He had for you:
IT IS ONLY REASONABLE TO LOVE HIM.**

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Jesus died for us—before we ever did anything for Him..
He died for us while we were yet his enemies.

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Romans 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Romans 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

THINK - WHEN WE WERE HIS ENEMIES HE DIED FOR US.. AND RECONCILED US TO GOD!

How can you even understand such love.

I Corinthians 16:22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

It is not sin alone that sends a person to hell—it is the sin of rejecting our Lord's sacrificial love for us. Think about this.

Your sins have been paid for. The only thing that prevents us from receiving that payment is our rejection of Christ!

D. You should love Christ because of the greatness of his person:

Revelation 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Philippians 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth

WE SHOULD SET OUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE BECAUSE OUR DEATH IS INEVITABLE AND SURE: THIS MORTAL LIFE IS SHORT LIVED, BUT OUR RESURRECTION WILL BE FOREVER.

Colossians 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

God sees the future as being as real as the present. We are surely going to die, so we should reckon ourselves to be already dead.

What hold can the world have on us if we are DEAD? Tax time... can't collect on dead people. This world really has no claim and power over us if we will indeed reckon ourselves dead to sin.

What is our hope?

What is our expectation?

Is it in this life?

Do we live for something here?

Paul said..

Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Our Scripture Song we sang this morning goes along with this message - FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST - TO DIE IS GAIN..

We really do not believe that; the early church did. That is how they faced hardships, persecutions, trials, and difficulties..

Years ago Darrell and Louise Champlin visited our church. I heard Darrell tell the story of how his wife's parents sacrificed to go into the deep jungles of the Congo in Africa to minister to the natives of that nation in the remote jungle regions. I will read the account as he shared it:

"In 1936, Ruth Grings passed away of black fever. I consider missionaries who die on the field to be martyrs. She gave her life for Christ. This left Herbert on the field with five children. They were in the Congo, Africa in a remote village. They had been there for many years without good results and no converts to speak of. The family had to dig the grave for their mom themselves, and place her body into the grave themselves. The villagers watched.

It does not take much imagination to picture the straits Herbert found himself in. But after the funeral a few of the village people made their way to the mission's outposts.. and timidly knocked on the door.. With the body of his wife fresh in the grave.. it could have been easy to imagine this war-torn missionary to be embittered about his loss. Just then the villagers asked Herbert Grings what they need to do to be saved.

He asked, "Why now? I have preached to you for years. What makes you come now?" Their reply was..

"We believe you believe, and you live your belief. We have seen your religion is good for living. But now we see that your religion is not only good for living, but it is good and better for dying, and we want your religion!"

When the darkness of death approaches, when sorrows camp at your doorstep, when trials come, and persecution comes, if in these adversities you are able to say, "For me to live is Christ to die is gain," ... If you not only can say this, but you can also live it, then your faith shines pure. It is then that others can see that your religion is not only good for living, but it is good for dying.

DO YOU HAVE A FAITH THAT IS GOOD EVEN THROUGH THE VALLEY OF DEATH?

DOES YOUR FAITH SAY..

Nothing shall separate me from the love of Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Romans 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Romans 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Romans 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Romans 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Today we have so many Christians who are seeking psychiatrists.

Why was it Paul did not need counseling after all these afflictions?

Why did Paul not say, "I AM BURNED OUT ... "

Who baked Paul a cake when he was in prison?

Who sent him a get well card when he was shipwrecked?

II Corinthians 11:24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

II Corinthians 11:25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

II Corinthians 11:26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

II Corinthians 11:27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

II Corinthians 11:28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

II Corinthians 11:29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

II Corinthians 11:30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

II Corinthians 11:31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

II Corinthians 11:32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

II Corinthians 11:33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

II Corinthians 12:1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

What America needs are more Soldiers for Jesus Christ..

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follow'r of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flow'ry beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy Word.

Paul, when John Mark wanted to go with him on his second missionary journey said, "No.. I am sorry, John, but you got homesick on the first trip and now you disqualify!"

When the Hebrews got whining and complaining about their hardships ...

Paul said..

Hebrews 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Hebrews 12:4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

In other words.. no one has beaten you, imprisoned you, or stoned you, and you're complaining - you're expected to be faithful unto death!

If you can't be faithful in peace, how could you be faithful in times of war?!

How often I have seen Christians get sick and complain and lose faith, gripe and cry. How would they do if they were to suffer persecution?

I had one person who got sick and was dying in the hospital. When I went to visit him to pray with him, he turned his back on me, and pouted like a baby.. Do you think such an attitude makes you prepared to meet your Creator? There will be a rude awaking on Judgment Day.

Remember there were three crosses on the day that Jesus died..

The two thieves represent all of humanity: the one thief in humility said. "LORD REMEMBER ME WHEN THOU ENTEREST THY KINGDOM," and the Lord said to him, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise!"

The other thief turned his face away from the Lord, and I believe perished in unbelief.

DEATH IS INEVITABLE FOR ALL OF US!

Will we face death trusting in the Lord?
Or will we face death bitter and rejecting Christ?

The Bible says the wages of sin is DEATH.

It is sure thing, and if we love Christ and set our affections on Him, death will be gain for us.

II. WHAT WOULD HINDER US FROM SETTING OUR AFFECTIONS ABOVE?

Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Colossians 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

Colossians 3:7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Colossians 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

All the things that the world has to offer is cheap—compared to the riches of Christ.

In our natural state we are too base to understand this.

If you have a pet and you offer that pet a piece of bread or a \$100 bill, which one would the animal take and receive? The dog had no realization of the value of a \$100 bill. So too, why would we trade the riches of things above for the pleasures of sin for a season?

Revelation 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Revelation 22:15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

So our text says:

Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Colossians 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

Colossians 3:7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Colossians 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

Mortify:

FORNICATION: 4202 Porneia, por-ni'-ah; from 4203; harlotry (includ. adultery and incest); fig. idolatry:-fornication. -- Dictionary Trace --Prneuo, porn-yoo'-o; from 4204; to act the harlot, i.e. (lit.) indulge unlawful lust (of either sex), or (fig.) practise idolatry:-commit (fornication).

UNCLEANNES: akatharsia, ak-ath-ar-see'-ah; from 169; impurity (the quality), phys. or mor.:uncleanness. akathartos, ak-ath'-ar-tos; from 1 (as a neg. particle) and a presumed der. of 2508 (mean. cleansed); impure (cer., mor. lewd or spec. daemonic):-foul, unclean.

INORDINATE AFFECTION: path'-os; from the alt. of 3958; prop. suffering ("pathos"), i.e. (subj.) a passion (expec. concupiscence):-inordinate) affection, lust. ^ patho. See 3958.

----- Dictionary Trace -----
ascho, pas'-kho; includ. the forms (patho, path'-o) and

(pentho, pen'-tho), used only in certain tenses for it; appar. a prim. verb; to experience a sensation or impression (usually painful):-feel, passion, suffer, vex.

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EVIL CONCUPISCENCE: pithumia, ep-ee-thoo-mee'-ah; from 1937; a longing (espec. for what is forbidden):-concupiscence, desire, lust (after).

pithumeo, ep-ee-thoo-meh'-o; from 1909 and 2372; to set the heart upon, i.e. long for (rightfully or otherwise):-covet, desire, would fain, lust (after).

COVETOUSNESS: leonexia, pleh-on-ex-ee'-ah; from 4123; avarice, i.e. (by impl.) fraudulency, extortion:-covetous (-ness) practices, greediness.

THESE WILL ALSO HINDER US FROM SETTING OUR AFFECTION ON THINGS ABOVE:

Anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Colossians 3:9 **Lie not one to another**, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

These are the sins of the flesh that anchor us to this world.
Unlawful passions that will hinder us from desiring eternal things.

These will corrupt our affection.
These are deadly diseases to our spiritual taste buds.

As we feed ourselves on these deadly devices of the world, we are plagued by all sorts of destruction to our spiritual heart and life.

Young people—the world will try to allure you through its lust. Why will you transgress for a piece of bread?

The world will make you think you are a freak of nature if you are a virgin. NONSENSE! God wants you to keep yourself morally clean for your future husband or wife.

WHY?

It will protect that future marriage. Chances are if both the bride a groom enter marriage as a virgins.. 90% greater chance of having a strong marriage.

It will give you a good conscience before God.

It will guarantee you a greater place of service for Christ.

Revelation 14:3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

Revelation 14:4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

Young people watch the dress styles that you like. Just because all the other young people are dressing like that.. Remember that many of these styles originate with immoral rock crowd and by association they make you look immoral.

III. HOW DO WE SET OUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE?

1. PUT ON THE NEW MAN:

This new man is Christ in you...

Colossians 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Colossians 3:11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

We do not, by nature, live or act like Christ.

There is no super race ethnically when it comes to putting on Christ. No! We need to be born again to become this new creation—a new creature. This is how we set our affections above. We do so by receiving Christ and becoming a child of God.

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Ephesians 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Ephesians 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

Ephesians 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Ephesians 2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

To put on Christ is to be like Christ, to operate like Christ.

Before I was saved, before God quickened me, before I received this gift in my heart, I lived in the world, for the world. My desires, my goals, my ambitions, my dreams were to be a success in this life. When Christ came into my heart, these were no longer my dreams and ambitions.

People ask me—how it is that I have stayed at the Elkdale Baptist Church for 33 years? When I first came to the church, I had people say to me, “You probably will only be here a short time before moving on to a bigger church.” That thought was foreign to me. I am here to serve Christ, not make a name for myself. The reason I have stayed is because God never told me to leave. I have no ambitions except to serve Christ, and one place of service is as good as another. In the Congo jungles, ministering to lost tribal people, is as noble a ministry as ministering to a large congregation in some great city.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

It amazes me how blind people are to this truth, and how they pursue ministry the same way I pursued success in the world before I received Christ. Do we really think we can fool God? The Pharisees did. Do you realize the Pharisees were the politicians of the day and the religious leaders?

Years ago I resolved in my mind that God has given me all the tools to serve Him successfully in West Clifford, PA, as He did in any other part of the world or city. There are no such things as stepping-stone ministries. We do not operate like the peoples of this world.

Just a few months back another rock and roll icon committed suicide because of a physical ailment that impeded his ability to play music. His life was wrapped up in his success, and when that success was hindered by age and debilitating health, he concluded ending his life was his best option!

In the world people run for Senate, then become Secretary of State, hoping someday to make it big and be President. They couldn't care less about being a good Senator; they couldn't care less about being a good Secretary of State (look at Benghazi); they are just jumping stones to the White House. So too, people use churches as stepping stones to larger ministries. How sad!

2. Follow the example of Christ and live the life that Christ would have you to live:

I Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Colossians 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Colossians 3:14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

I love the saying that young people developed, “What Would Jesus Do?” Only problem is that those who use that saying often live a life that Jesus would never live, and do things Jesus

would never do (mostly because of ignorance of Scripture). Apart from the Bible and the Holy Spirit, you cannot know the real Jesus..

3. Saturate Your Life With the teaching of the Word of God:

The world wakes up and goes to bed by their theology, "EAT DRINK BE MERRY, TOMMORROW WE DIE.... "

I was a minstrel of the world, but the Lord gave me a new song.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

The world talks and sings songs about immorality. They sing about the activities of the flesh:

Drinking, partying, drugs, and immorality.

We need to be singing about Christ and Biblical truths.

4. *If we are to set our affections on things above, we need to make it a full-time endeavor:*

Colossians 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Whatever we do all the time, Christians—not part time—but full time!

What is our short life all about? Is it not to love the Lord with all our hearts? SET YOUR AFFECTION ON THINGS ABOVE..

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Strong's defines the word *affection* as follows..

Basically that which interest you, What you care about, your concern for..

G5426 *phroneo*, fron-eh'-o; from 5424; to exercise the mind, i.e. entertain or have a sentiment or opinion; by impl. to be (mentally) disposed (more or less earnestly in a certain direction);

intens. to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience):-set the affection on, (be) care (-ful), (be like-, + be of one, + be of the same, + let this) mind (-ed), regard, savour, think.

affection care likeminded mind minded regard regardeth savourest set think thinkest understood

We can think of it this way:

What you set your affection on is what you value, love, and treasure.

Jesus challenged Peter concerning his affections when he said to him, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"

What were the "these?" I assume the "these" were whatever was competing for Peter's heart and affections ...

The greatest of all our Lord's commands is to love Him more than anything or anyone else.

So He may ask us,

WHERE DO YOUR AFFECTIONS LIE?

Are our affections above? Where He is...

or

Are our affections below? Where we are ...

What is our supreme command in this life?

Matthew 22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Matthew 22:38 This is the first and great commandment.

Does He have all your affection? If He does, then you can say:

Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.