

Seek the Eternal

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[0:00] I greet you in the name of Jesus this morning. It's been good to be here and appreciate the lesson that we've learned, we've heard this morning.

It goes well with the message, I believe, but trusting is a great part of obedience, is it not? If we trust the Lord in all things, it's much easier to obey, is it not?

Turn to Colossians chapter 3. We will begin here. I believe the challenge that I want to bring this morning is to seek the eternal.

You know, we live in this world. We live here. We have a lot of earthly responsibilities. But in all of that, in all of life, we must have our priorities right and have eternity in view.

We must always live our lives in the light of eternity. You know, we had visitors this summer and learned to know them and appreciate them.

[1:33] And Friday night, their son was killed in a motorcycle accident. He was 18 years old. You know, he should have had another 60 years.

But somehow, somehow he, the Lord saw fit to take him. We have no promise of tomorrow.

So today is the day of salvation. But in Colossians chapter 3, read the first six verses.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

[2:36] Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth. Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

For which things sake, the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. Notice, we just heard a lesson on obedience.

And here, this verse, it says, the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience. That is how important obedience is.

Back to verse 1. Are we, all of us, that are born again, we are risen with Christ. We are, we have that new life in us.

And now that we have that new life, you know, we talked a lot about that last Sunday. But now, we have that new life.

[3:41] We must set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth. What does it mean to set our affection?

You know, it's, it's, it comes down to our priorities. And Jesus talked about these things. He said to, to lay up treasure in heaven, not on this earth.

And, and seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And all these things shall be added unto you. Set your affection.

Set your, have your, your ultimate goal in life is the eternal. Eternal. The eternal. Yeah, I had to think of Isaiah.

You know, he was already a prophet and he was serving the Lord. But when he got a vision of the eternal, when he got a vision of the eternal, eternal, and he saw the glory of God, it changed him.

[4:53] It changed him. It, it, it made him a, a different man than what he was before. Our affection, the things that we, that motivate us, the things that we go after, the things we love.

Do we love heavenly things? And are we engrossed in, in following after the heavenly? Or are we taken up with going after pleasure in the things of this world?

Where is our affection? What, what are we going after? You know, I, we, Wednesday night in our group, we, we talked about, we were in 2nd Timothy chapter three.

And, you know, this chapter, these verses have sit out to me for quite some time now.

He, he starts chapter three here. He says, know also that in the last days, perilous times will come. And what will bring those perilous times?

[6:11] He says, men will be lovers of their own selves. And he goes on, he has a whole list of things. And they all stem from selfishness. They all stem from self-love.

They all stem from having our affections on earthly things and on our own self. You know, in Colossians there where we read in verse five, he, he says, mortify your members upon the earth. And, and in that list, he says, inordinate affection. So he, I believe either we will have our affection set upon heaven and heavenly things, or we will have other affections.

And those are called inordinate. They're not legitimate. They are not heavenly, but they take us the wrong way. And he admonishes us here to mortify those things, including the wrong affection. He says, set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.

[7:30] Our old man is to be dead. It is to be, to be kept on that cross. And, you know, Yesterday, our brother put a verse on our chat.

And let me just, let me just read that. It's in Matthew, Matthew 16. It fits so well. We'll read a few verses there in Matthew 16.

Matthew 16. Matthew 16, verse 24 through 27.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. You know, how many times do we look at what is right and what is the will of God and we draw back from it? Why? Because it doesn't feel good or it's uncomfortable or, you know, we'd rather take the easy route or we'd rather go do something, you know, to experience some pleasure instead of doing the will of God.

[9:00] But Jesus said, if we, if we draw back, if we want to save our life, we will lose it.

How does that work? You know, if we, if we, if we do not deny ourselves, if we do not take up our cross and willingly follow him, it will bring death.

It will bring spiritual death. That is why it is so important that we have that eternal vision, that vision of eternity.

And what is eternal and what is temporal? What will last? You know, we, especially maybe when we're young, we think, oh, we have a long life.

We have a long life and we, we, you know, we, we want to live it to the fullest. But only a life lived for Christ.

[10:15] We'll bring the, the end result that we desire. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it. Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

You know, he doesn't even answer that question. Why? Because there's nothing we can give.

There's nothing we can do to, to, to give in exchange for our soul.

Why? Because we cannot pay that. Christ paid it for us and we must give ourselves to him.

For the son of man shall come in the glory of his father with his angels. Then he, then he shall reward every man according to his works.

[11:25] And in all of life, remember this. Remember this little phrase. When the son of man comes, it says here, he will reward every man according to his works.

And we'll come across more verses that, that bring out the same thing. Our works. Why? Because our works show what's in our heart.

Jesus talked about fruit and you will know a man by, by his life. You will know a man by his fruit.

You will know, you will know what is in a man's heart by what he does and by the life he lives.

And he will know a man by his life. Deny himself. Deny ourselves. You know, are we...

Do we have our affection set on things above? Are we mortifying the works of the flesh?

[12:39] Are we keeping under? Are we taking up our cross daily? Are we trying to satisfy the flesh?

Are we governed by the Spirit of God or are we governed by self? You know, in Timothy, I'm going to go a little further here in those verses in Timothy.

He says, men will be lovers of their own selves. And then verse 3, he says, without natural affection. There we have that word affection again.

And despisers of those that are good. And lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. And all the things that we skipped. All of those things, they're in that category.

But then, you know, let's remember. The Apostle Paul was writing this to Timothy. And ultimately to the church.

[13:51] You know, when we think of these things and living a selfish life and a life that is ruled by self, we want to think of the world out there.

But he's addressing the church. I believe these are things that can creep in. These are things that if we do not live that crucified life, if we do not deny self daily and take up our cross daily.

These are things that creep in. And when they do. When they creep in. Then the power of God is not evident in our lives.

You know, that's the next verse. He says here in 2 Timothy 3, 5. He says, these people, they have a form of godliness. But denying the power thereof from such turn away.

You know, why would such people deny the power of God? It is because the power of God has withdrawn from them.

[15:04] If we live a selfish life, then self is on the throne and the spirit of God will not empower us.

And so all we have left is a form. We have a form of godliness. We can still look right. We can still go to church and put up a show.

But where's the power? They have a form of godliness. But they deny the power. If we do not have the power of God in our life, maybe our affection is not on heavenly things.

Maybe our affection is set to fulfill the desires of the flesh. Temporal or eternal?

Are we living for eternity? Do we ultimately make our decisions in light of eternity? Or do we make our decisions in what feels good and what brings us the most pleasure?

[16:20] How is it? We heard that verse, rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. And many times people living a selfish life, they don't want to look at that as rebellion.

How is rebellion as witchcraft? I'll tell you how it works. I'll tell you why. Witchcraft is seeking a power from another source other than God.

And when we rebel against God, we are in another power. We are working by another power other than the power of God.

And it is viewed in the eyes of God. It is seen. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. I'm going to go to Matthew 6 and read a few of these verses that I quoted.

In Matthew 6, we have Jesus talking here. Verse 19.

[17:54] Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doeth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doeth corrupt, where thieves do not break through nor steal.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. You know, such a familiar verse. But do we realize what this simple verse is saying?

That where our treasure is, that's where our heart will be. Are we gathering treasure here on earth? And are we gathering in for self?

Or do we have eternity in view? And are we laying up treasure in heaven? How is it with us today?

No man, verse 24, can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.

[19:08] Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Are we serving God or are we serving mammon?

Are we serving, are we a servant, a slave to the things of this life, to our material possessions?

Are we serving God? Are we serving God? Do we have our affection set upon things above?

Or is our affection set upon earth and the earthly and selfishness? He continues on, but we'll just skip down to verse 33.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

You know, if we put the kingdom of God first in all things, we put the kingdom of God first in every decision of life, I believe his blessing will be with us and upon us.

[20:20] And it says all these material things, all these other things will be added to us. In chapter 7, verse 21, he says, Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven.

He that doeth the will of my Father. In verse 18, he says, A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

[28 : 20] By taking heed according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee.

Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee. Have we hidden the word of God in our hearts that we would not sin against him?

In 2 Corinthians 4. 2 Corinthians 4.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels. And he goes on in verse 8. We are troubled on every side, but not in despair.

We are persecuted, but not forsaken. We are troubled on every side, but not forsaken. Cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.

[29 : 24] That the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body. You know, here the apostle Paul is sharing a little bit of his testimony.

And just giving a glimpse of the things he's going through. And the apostle Paul, maybe more than about anyone else we have record of.

He sacrificed what he could have had for eternity. Notice what he says here.

He endures these things. Troubled on every side and persecuted and bearing in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus. And we which live all are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake.

That the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

[30 : 27] He was saying that as he lays down his life, the life of Christ comes forth and ministers to the people he was ministering to.

Oh, yes. Now let's read verse. Let's start again in verse 16. For which cause we faint not. Actually, we need to read the verses before that.

Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, shall present us with you for all things are for your sakes. That the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

For which cause we faint not. For which cause we faint not. But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. The outward man perish.

You know, the Apostle Paul and his example and the things that he wrote. And the admonition he left. And the testimony that he left.

[31 : 35] I believe he willingly laid down his life that others might benefit and might reap eternal benefits.

And might reap the gospel and the power of the gospel of Jesus. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal.

What are we looking at? How do we live our life? What dictates the decisions that you make in life? What dictates that?

Is it the temporal, the here and now? Or do we have that long range view? The view of eternity?

[32 : 45] Do we always have eternity in view in the decisions that we make? And how we live our life? The things that are seen are temporal.

They will pass away. All of these things here on earth that we spend so much time and money for.

They will pass away. They're temporary.

That's, I believe, what that word temporal means. It's temporary. But the things of God, the things that we do for the kingdom of God, they are eternal.

Are we laying up treasure in heaven? Are we building our kingdom on this earth? For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

We think this life is so permanent. And this life, it's worth living.

[34 : 01] And it's worth living for. But listen, let's get a glimpse of eternity and compare, even if you live to 100 years old.

It's just a little flash, a little glimpse compared to eternity. Which one is worth your time?

Which one is worth preparing for? Which one is worth laying up treasure for? Is it not eternity?

Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Let's start reading again.

Verse 8. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

[35 : 21] You know, in our present day, in our life today and every day, let us labor to be accepted of our Lord Jesus, to live a life that is pleasing to him, to live a life that he accepts, to live a life that is beneficial to the kingdom of God.

I believe it's in the Amplified. It says to strive earnestly to please him, to strive earnestly to please God.

You know, many times we have to make that decision. Are we going to please God or are we going to please men? Are we going to please God or are we going to live for ourselves?

I believe we make those decisions every day. We strive earnestly to please him.

We labor that we may be accepted of him. Do we strive to be accepted of him? And now he brings in a little more incentive.

[36 : 42] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

You know, there's a day coming when we will give an account. You know, just like the parable of the talents. You know, Jesus gave that parable, how the master, he gave talents to his servants, and then he went on a journey.

And when he came back, he brought those servants in, and they had to give an account of what they had done with what he had given them. Someday we will give an account of what we have done with what God has given us.

We have that treasure in our heart, in our life. What is it? It is the spirit of the living God.

It is the power of God within us. What are we doing? Are we living for self, or are we living for him?

Are we allowing him to use us?

[38 : 12] We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them, which glory in appearance and not in heart.

You know, there he brings in again those same people. They have a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. They have their affection on earthly things, and so all they can do is to have a good appearance, to appear as if they're a Christian, to appear as if they're right, to appear as if they had the power of God.

That's why he says, we don't know men by... The kingdom of God is not by word, but in power. You know, when men glory in appearance, they do not have the power of God, and they will not have it.

[39 : 38] But he tells us that we might have an answer to them, which glory in appearance and not in heart.

And let me just tell you, if your heart is right, your appearance will be right. Amen. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead.

You remember we went over this last Sunday, I believe, and we talked a lot about how we all have the sentence of death upon us, but Christ gave his life for us, that we can have life, that we do not need to die, but that we can have eternal life, and that he died for all.

He died for us, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.

What less can we do but live for him? He died for us. Yes, what less can we do but to give our life to him, to set our affection on things above, and to live for him every day of our life.

[41 : 10] Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.

All things are become new. That old life, it is passed away. Has it passed away? Are we still seeking after the things of self?

Are we still seeking after the things that benefit us instead of the kingdom of God? All things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.

You know, he's not just saved us, that we can just live a happy life and go to heaven. No, but he's, along with saving us, he's given us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

[42:41] For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Beseech us. He beseeches us. He begs of us that we not receive the grace of God in vain. You know, the grace of God that so freely shed abroad, and it's ours, if we will but walk in it in faith, if we will but give ourselves to him, that he can give himself to us, and use us, use us to reconcile this lost and dying world back to a holy God.

We are ambassadors for Christ. We are his ambassadors. If we are a new creation in Christ, then we are also his ambassadors, representing the Lord Jesus, representing the kingdom of God here on this earth.

That is a very high and a holy calling. Do we recognize that?

That everywhere we go, every day as we go out, we represent the Lord Jesus here on this earth. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.

[44:47] Seek those things which are above, not the things of this earth. where is our affection today?

What are we living for? What are we giving our life for? Is it for the heavenly or is it for the earthly? How is it? Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that you've given yourself through Jesus to us that we can have eternal life.

And Lord, as we have this life in us, help us, Lord, to set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

To live our life for you, not to live our life for self, not to follow the dictates of self, but to follow the leading of the Spirit of God within us.

[46:10] Help us, Lord. Help us, Lord, to live our lives for you each day, each moment of every day, that when you call us home, we will have nothing to be ashamed of, but we have lived our life for you.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.