

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning
Week 42 (October 12-18, 2014)

The book of Colossians gives us lots of practical advice about living the Christian life. We will use these thoughts in our devotions this week.

Sunday, October 12 (read Colossians 3:1-4)

*When Christ, who is your life, appears, **then you also will appear with Him in glory.** (Colossians 3:4, emphasis mine)*

On the day you receive Christ into your heart, you are raised with Him. This means that your citizenship and your home are in Heaven, making you an alien and a stranger on this Satan-controlled planet earth. Therefore, we are to set our **hearts** and **minds** on “things above, not on earthly things” (v. 1-2). The first two verses in this text are my favorite KLUFROG (Keep Looking up–Fully rely on God) verses. Our goal down here is for our lives to be “hidden with Christ in God” (v. 3). A wonderful promise comes next, and it is so important that I printed it with my emphasis above (v. 4). This means that we will be like Him in our new glorified bodies (see 1 John 3:1-3). Is Christ your life? I know that you believe in Him, but is He your life? Do you exist to bring honor and glory to Him? What are the habits and deeds in your life that dishonor Him? We will spend the rest of our week seeking areas in which we can yield to the Lord.

Monday, October 13 (read Colossians 3:5-11)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature . . . (Colossians 3:5a)

Paul commands us to put to death our old lifestyle, which is controlled by our sinful nature. He starts with sexual immorality (fornication), probably because those **physical** desires will present the greatest temptations. The Greek word is “porneo” from which we get the word “pornography.” It includes every sexual sin outside of marriage, whether it is pornography, fantasy sex, actual sex with a partner of the opposite gender, and homosexual sex. Obviously it includes living together out of wedlock, an act that seems to be the norm in America. Another word that has its derivation from “porneo” is “pharmacy,” so this command extends to the use of illegal drugs as well. Wow! No wonder Paul starts there! God knows that our young people’s marriages will never be what they should be unless they obey this command!

Tuesday, October 14 (reread Colossians 3:5-11)

You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. (Colossians 3:7)

Paul adds impurity, lust, evil desires and greed (idolatry) to the examples of ungodly lifestyles (v. 5) and reminds his readers that God’s wrath is coming to those who refuse to repent. He adds anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, and telling lies to the list of sins that are not to be present in the lives of Christians (8-10). I have said before that your list of “used to, but now” experiences should be increasing daily as you mature in your Christian faith (v. 7-8). God does not show favoritism (Romans 2:11) so don’t expect a pass because you are male or female, black or white, or Jew or Gentile (v. 11)! Don’t excuse your sinful behavior by claiming that other people’s sins are worse than yours. The Lord is in the process of molding you into His image (v. 10). Enjoy the process while you wait for Him to call you home!

Wednesday, October 15 (read Colossians 3:12-14)

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. (Colossians 3:14)

Having listed lots of sins, habits and attitudes that are not characteristic of the Christian life, Paul turns his attention to some positive attributes we should possess. He uses the term, “cloth yourselves” to challenge us to **get all wrapped up** in these characteristics (v. 12). This list is similar to the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23. How are you doing in these areas? Has your **patience** improved since we studied the fruit of the Spirit on September 17? He then tells us to be tolerant with others who may annoy us and to

forgive others “as the Lord forgave you” (v. 13). Finally, **love** is the quality that “binds them all together in perfect unity” (v. 14). Wow! We will need a lifetime to perfect these qualities! The good news is this: That is exactly what God has given us!

Thursday, October 16 (read Colossians 3:15-17)

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3:17)

In today's text, Paul continues with his advice to help you in your journey to sanctification. The word translated “rule” actually means, “umpire.” He wants the “**peace of Christ**” to make the call whenever we are tempted to criticize or rebuke our Christian brother/sister, remembering to be thankful for all He has done in our own lives (v. 15). He then commands us to allow the **words of Christ** to dwell in our hearts as we teach and admonish others in the wisdom He has placed in us through His Word. As we joyfully sing songs to Him, He doesn't care whether it is a psalm, hymn, or spiritual song. He only wants us to honor Him in our words and in our music (v.16). Finally, be sure to “do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (v. 17).

Friday, October 17 (read Colossians 3:18-21)

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. (Colossians 3:19)

Today's passage gives you a summary about what is essential for a Christian family. The six words that make up a happy home are **wives, submit (respect); husbands, love; and children, obey**. Whole seminars are devoted to these six words, so I won't go into many details. By nature, men crave respect; women crave love; and children crave boundaries (although they think they crave freedom and independence). It is certainly not natural for a woman to submit to her husband unless she desires to trust God's plan (see Ephesians 5:21-24). It is not natural for a man to put his wife's needs ahead of his own unless he trusts God's plan (see Ephesians 5:25-28). It is not natural for a child to obey, unless he/she wants to grow up and mature in his/her young faith. Fathers, the best chance you have to instill within your child a desire to obey, is to be positive and encouraging (v. 21). Following God's pattern will result in a happier home than you ever thought would be possible!

Saturday, October 18 (read Colossians 3:22-4:6)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. (Colossians 4:2)

The rest of chapter 3 and the 1st verse in chapter 4 establish the proper relationship between the employer and the employee. The most important command is in v. 23-24: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” With this in mind, God reminds us that anyone who truly seeks to be effective in his/her family as well as in his/her job must be devoted to prayer (4:2). While you are at it, pray for my declaration of the gospel that it may change the lives of those who hear (v. 3-4). As you use your time wisely, be sure that you extend the same grace in action and words to others that Jesus has extended to you (v. 5-6)!