

Things Above

God bless you in the name of Jesus Christ. It's so wonderful to be back with you again and to have the great joy of sharing God's Word together. This morning, I would like to start in the great book of Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:1 – 3

This being dead in trespasses and sins goes all the way back to Genesis 3. To be dead is to have no life – and what was lost in Genesis 3 was spirit-life. In losing spirit, man lost his connection with God, he transferred the authority that God had given him to God's enemy, and became limited to information that could be gathered by the five senses. Thus, man was subject to the course of this world and ultimately to the prince of the power of the air.

Ephesians 2:4 – 6

God loved even when we were dead in sin. Remember, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son. We, like all mankind, were by nature children of wrath. But God is rich in mercy, so we did not get wrath, but rather, we were quickened (made alive). We received that holy spirit of promise that was mentioned in chapter 1. And not only that, but we were also raised up together and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ. When Christ was raised from the dead and ascended, he was set at God's own right hand in the heavenly places. And as far as God is concerned, we are right there with him.

Ephesians 1:20 – 23

Ephesians 2:7 – 10

In the ages to come, He will shew, exhibit, the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us by all that Christ has done for us and in us. None of this was our own doing. It is all by God's grace towards us in Christ Jesus. So we are already (in God's eyes) seated in the heavenlies and in the ages to come (sometime in the future), He will exhibit the exceeding riches of His grace towards us.

I wanted to read this section of Ephesians with you because it helps us to understand a passage in Colossians. Let's turn to Colossians 3.

Colossians 3:1 – 4

In verse 1, when the word that is translated "if" precedes something that has already been established as true, it can be understood to mean "since". God's Word has previously stated that we are risen with Christ (Ephesians 2:5,6; Colossians 2:12). Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, and we are right there with him.

Verse 2 tells us to set our affections, our thoughts, on things above not on things of the earth. It can be so very easy to get caught up in the affairs of this world. What did this world leader say, what did other world leaders do, what is happening here, what is happening there, who did what to whom, who is offended, and so on and on and on.

That's not where we are to set our thoughts. As the children of the Most High, we don't want to be caught up in the course of this world anymore than is absolutely necessary. We have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear son (Colossians 1:13). Are we aware of the world? Sure we are – but we are not caught up in all the malarky.

Verse 3 starts with the word “for”. This is introducing the reason why we set our thoughts on things above. Our lives are hidden with Christ in God. When something is hidden, it is not readily visible, not out in plain sight. Today, you do not see Christ on earth; he is hidden. If you want to find out about Christ, you must go to the Word of God to see what is said about him.

John 5:39

Luke 24:27, 44, 45

The Word of God makes known Christ. And we can find out who we really are in the Word of God as well. It’s not what others say about us that counts – it’s what does the Word of God say that is important.

And then in verse 4, Christ is going to appear at some point and then we will appear with him in glory. That’s who we really are. That’s God shewing in the ages to come the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

So that is how we are to think of ourselves and deal with the world. Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). As the song says, This world is not my home, I’m just passing through.