

4/21/19 - Col. 3:1-4 - "Risen with Christ" (Easter Sunday)

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[0 : 00] take a time for us all to reflect with all of our hearts on the revelation that this day marks for us who are in Jesus Christ. And although it might seem like a distant reality, something that, you know, maybe even folklore to some, if you're not a believer in this, you know, it's just a bunch of Christian mumbo-jumbo. But regardless, give this a chance.

Give this message a chance this morning to open your heart and open your ears to the message of Easter. Today marks the resurrection of a man that was fully human, but also fully God, something that our minds can't even comprehend, a concept that is so far beyond anything logical. But God made it that way. He died a brutal death on the cross. This was all from Good Friday that many churches celebrated, too, just this last Friday, which marked the death of Jesus Christ and the suffering he endured, the brutal death. And the tomb that was crafted to conceal, the grave that was intended to hold. All were powerless over this sinless man who died a sinner's death, the spotless lamb who was slain.

This is what this day marks for us. Today marks a day in which promises of old became alive, that what these men from all centuries before were saying was going to come. A redeemer was going to come. There's a day in which he made, he went from a lifeless man to a life-giving man. He went from, it's a day from that marks the greatest hope in history in which we all, as a local church, are convinced at this local church of the apostolic testimony, that we read in Scripture that everything that is accounted for his life, his life, death, burial, and resurrection, the gospel is true.

And of this, we are rooted as a church, Youngstown Metro Church. We are established in this church, grafted together, united in Christ by God's grace and provision of Jesus Christ as Savior. For those of us who have become convinced of this, this very hope. We gather in celebration today, and this is truly a triumphal celebration.

[2 : 34] I'm going to read out of Genesis, the very first prophecy of Jesus coming in Genesis 3.15. It says, The Lord says to the snake, the serpent, after deceiving the man and the woman, Adam and Eve, He says, I will put enmity between you and the woman, the snake and the woman, and between your offspring, between Satan's offspring and her offspring, he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

The skull crusher of sin has come, and all sin is taken care of, and it conquered through his death, his burial, and his resurrection. This is good news.

This morning. Let's take a moment to pray as we enter into his word. Father, we come to you with open hands, with an open mind.

Father, we thank you for this word. We thank you for proving this word over time. Father, take us as we are, but allow your Holy Spirit to encourage us to move from where we're at to a different perspective if we need it.

Father, move us from eating, relying on milk, and give us something solid to eat this morning, Father. And it's only by the power of your Holy Spirit to make that possible.

[4 : 05] There's nothing that I can craft to make that possible. We are dependent upon you, so help us this morning, Jesus. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. If we look back, we're going through a series in Colossians right now as a church body.

The whole idea of being rooted, of being watered and growing, is where this church is kind of learning through. That video that you saw during the offering of that tree, starting out with our regrets and then just focusing in on that tree.

And then you just see this massive oak tree just spreading its fruit, spreading its leaves. But it all starts in grounding in God's word. And so us as a church, where we are at, what we're learning, what the Lord is teaching us is found in Colossians.

So in chapter 2, we just went through last week, and Paul spent a great deal of time highlighting the significance of the death of Christ. In all believers, Genesis, the beginning of believers, walk in faith. Beginning with a similar death, personally, in our hearts, with repentance. But because of this death, church, we are not subject, the Colossian church is not subject to earthly practices to get closer to God.

[5 : 27] This is now through faith, holding fast to the head. Colossians 2, 19 actually speaks on this. And we're also not subject to, like, out-of-season regulations and Old Testament rituals, these practices that were required in old Israelite laws that you find in Leviticus and things like that, to add to the gospel, to our faith.

It's all through faith we are saved. And during our first, our previous gathering, when we studied Colossians 2, chapter, or verse 16 through 23, we studied the importance of faith in Christ being superior over submitting to false teachers and extra-biblical methods and means of being holy and drawing close to God.

And it actually served, as we ended chapter 2, it actually serves in a literary context as an introduction to chapter 3, interestingly enough, with the chronological statements regarding the death and risen of the believers.

Today, we're going to be continuing to build upon this previously established form of thought regarding the importance in identifying in Christ's death.

We're going to be building on that, and specifically how that reality demands a natural response with respect to that death. Because at the moment you died, for the Christians who are joining us today, the moment you died, as many reflect on this from the Good Friday, the payment of sin was paid in full.

[7 : 08] However, if it ended at Jesus' death, if Good Friday just happened and that was it, he died on a cross, he went in the tomb, and that was the end of the story, there would be no approved transaction.

Without the resurrection, the transaction would be insufficient funds, as we hate to see when we swipe our cards. But he rose.

The transaction was approved through the resurrection. But we gather today celebrating the resurrection, and with those who come confidently to God, knowing the tested, credible evidence of this to support such a miracle.

This is why we gather. The significance that this resurrected Christ has in our lives, that while in chapter 2, what leads to the identification of a believer's death in Christ, united with that death by being repentant, by dying to sin, but now today we are going to look at the believer's identification in the resurrected Christ.

Just as his own death led to his resurrection. Please join with me in reading Colossians 3, verses 1 through 4.

[8 : 35] Colossians 3 says, The first point we're going to be discussing this morning is, raised with Christ, drawing a new focus.

Verse 1 says, If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is seated, at the right hand of God. If then you have been raised with Christ, building upon, if then, some translations say, therefore, tying in previous context here, if then, drawing off of, especially, Colossians 2, verse 20, which says, If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world. It's tying, it's saying, If then you have died, and now if you have been raised. It's tying the two, death and life. So that which has died, will have been raised.

That which is repentant, will be restored. Lord. It's swinging from this end of death with Christ, united in Christ's death, with now, united with Christ in his resurrection.

And it says, To seek things that are above where Christ is seated, at the right hand of God. Things above relate to the central focus of where Christ is. It's not any mistake, or it's not any question.

[10 : 18] Paul makes it very clear of what he's talking about. You don't leave this text and say, Seek things that are above. Hmm. Well, you stumped me there, like you left me guessing there.

But it says, Where Christ is. Seated at the right hand of God. Paul makes it clear what he's speaking about. This is where he is seated.

He's drawing attention again to the supremacy of Christ over all things below him, on earth, created, where Christ rules, and he shares with God's power, which is why this verse says, At the right hand of God is a status of power and authority.

This verse calls to refocus the things sought after. And focus is almost a form of art, if you can imagine. Focusing is sometimes something that is trained in the training process of race car drivers, for instance.

I knew a guy who did some training with race cars in my former life when I thought it was cool to have a fast car. And it's still kind of cool, but I just can't fit my kids in there.

[11 : 36] And they have a part in the training which you prepare for the worst in this. You are trained on how to control an out-of-control spinning car.

Because one of the most difficult lessons to teach a new race car driver is controlling an out-of-control vehicle. And the key to it is to keep your eyes on the safe area of the road rather than the danger, the hazard.

Because a natural tendency, if you have experienced Ohio crazy weathers and your car goes whipping through an intersection doing 360 spins or anything, if you haven't, thank God.

But you see this when a car is spinning out of control. Sometimes the natural tendency is to focus too much on the obstacle, the hazard, the danger, and the thing we are trying to avoid.

But experience teaches us and drivers of these cars that if you keep your eyes on the hazard, you will sooner or later hit that hazard dead on.

[12 : 48] The mind has a natural tendency to draw the direction of a vehicle scientifically proven to the hazard and you hit it. But if you maintain your focus, if you turn your attention away from the hazard and to the safe area of your path of travel, it is known that that is going to actually draw it naturally to a response of taking that car into safe territory.

And this makes me think of a spiritual principle in the Bible, kind of like what we're talking about. Instead of concentrating on the sins we want to avoid, we are told to focus on positive actions Christ desires for us to seek things that are above where Christ is seated.

But the Bible is more than a moralistic instruction book. It has a lot. It can say great things to our morality, but it's more than that too.

It is a source of life in the very essence of which must drive the very act of what we're seeking. It must be in the driver's seat, which leads to the importance of setting one's minds.

In verse 2, it says, And interestingly enough here, church, the act of seeking is completely dependent upon the set of your mind.

[14 : 20] I'm going to do that again. The act to seeking is completely dependent upon the set of your mind.

For instance, if our minds are set on good things, we will naturally seek good things and vice versa. If we seek bad things, if we set our mind on bad things, we're going to seek bad things naturally. We see in this verse biblically a great divide in the Christian life. It's drawing a line of our actions. It's saying what we set our mind determines our seeking and thus the direction of our Christian lives. If you can recall, Peter had a hard time with the setting of his mind which led up to Good Friday, the Good Friday narrative.

Matthew records in Matthew 16, starting in verse 21, Matthew records, From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.

[15 : 32] Verse 22 says, And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, Far be it from you, Lord. This shall never happen to you.

But he turned and said to Peter, Jesus said, Get behind me, Satan. You are a hindrance to me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.

The set of our minds comes first. The condition of our minds comes first, church, which pervades the seeking of conversations, of friendships, of studies, of work, and even play.

When this occurs, church, it enhances our fullness in Christ. Seeking and setting your minds, this actually reminds me of what the psalmist writes in Psalm 119, and it actually reveals the key.

Psalm 119, verse 15, says, I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.

[16 : 41] That to meditate is to fix your eyes. That the whole point is to do a little work up here of setting your mind in order to do his ways.

And just like in Peter's case, if he was actually truly setting his mind on the reality of what Scripture has proclaimed about this Jesus, that he must suffer, he must die this brutal death, he would have known and expected Jesus to go about this in full obedience and not try to stop him.

But in so trying to stop him, he rebuked him as if regarding to him as Satan. It's the mind who calls out to the Lord before the stresses of the day beginning.

When we wake up in the morning, it's the mind that says, Lord, set my mind on things that are above to be the driving force of that which I seek today.

The interesting component of what Scripture tells us is that the mindset is a deliberate act of the will. If you think about it, it's entirely in our control, the set of our minds.

[17 : 52] As the psalmist says, I will meditate. However, it is also entirely powerless without the help of the Holy Spirit. And as this verse continues, it leads us to the second point, which is hidden and revealed with Christ, a hope secure.

For those who are being restless this morning or if you're like, when's this guy going to be over? I have two points today. Mark this down in history at this church.

Two points today. Verse 3 continues. It says, For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Read with me. Turn to your Bibles.

Look at it. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. In regard to dying to the old way of life, the Christian becomes hidden with Christ.

Speaking of repentance to sin, that something within us dies. In chapter 2, it talks a lot about this death and what happens within us.

[19 : 02] It actually relates it to circumcision, which is the cutting off of our hearts, the sinful nature of our hearts. And I want to hit this really hard for you this morning and the importance of what's actually being said here regarding hidden.

Because a believer actually experiences a spiritual death when they are baptized into the body of Christ. And this is done by the Holy Spirit through inner, it's called regeneration, within us, within our souls.

1 Corinthians 12, 13 says, For in one spirit we all were baptized into one body. The baptism leads to one body, all done by the Holy Spirit. Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, no matter what your culture or context is, all are made alive.

All were made to drink of one spirit. Romans 6, 3 and 4 says, Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were buried, therefore with him, by baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in the newness of life.

[20 : 29] There's such a close reality and importance here of being hidden and the concept of being hidden in Christ. Christ. This hides us with Christ because we are all in Christ and Christ in God and we are inseparable.

We are secure. Saving faith does not come and go when we feel like it. It is something that secures us and we are part of that which is above.

Being united in his resurrection. His fullness has passed into our emptiness. His fullness has passed into our emptiness. His righteousness into our sinfulness and his life into our death.

It's by the Holy Spirit. And we see an anticipated future in verse 4 which says, when Christ who is your life appears then you also will appear with him in glory.

Think about what that verse is saying. Considering the timeline of redemptive history starting from the very foundations of this world.

[21 : 47] From our standpoint here as a church in this current century our lives are still hidden with Christ. in God. At this very moment.

And we live in a period called the end times. It's a time period between the resurrection of Christ and the second coming. They were in the end times the day after the resurrected Christ.

While, yeah, each and every day every minute we're getting closer to this time where we will be revealed appear with him in glory. We are in the end times in redemptive history right now.

between the resurrection and the second coming of Christ. Or as Paul records it here in Philippians 3 it is as the future glory to come which we will not only be raised with Christ just simply raised we're actually given a new identity a physical identity and we'll have an appearance in likeness of Christ.

Philippians 3.20 says but our citizenship is in heaven and from it we await a savior the Lord Jesus Christ who will transform our lowly body to be his glorious body by the power that enables him even

to subject all things to himself the supremacy of Christ.

[23 : 12] friends I don't know how else to put it but the tomb was empty the tomb was empty this is not made up this is not folklore this is not an incredible testimony of what actually happened the soldiers obviously had no benefit of they would benefit from saying the body was in there still because their lives were at stake the soldiers guarding this tomb people say oh it was a different tomb oh yeah the soldiers actually acknowledged that it was that tomb because they said the disciples have taken it if you really wanted a credible testimony of this day in history in redemptive history you wouldn't have had women in this culture be the first ones to testify that Jesus is risen they would have put some men in there they would have taken the soldiers he appeared before 500 eyewitnesses accounting of this resurrection in the flesh and if this were a lie would the very first very closest disciples who followed

Jesus all that time through his life on this earth through his ministry on this earth would they have died afterwards after Acts 2 and the movement of Acts and you see the persecution of the church begin would they have really died over a lie no honestly if you put us in that perspective and our lives were at stake over a lie we'd probably be like oh yeah no I'm good you don't have to drive those nails through my wrist no it was a lie we're good I'm good I'm gonna go home now and return the tomb was empty for this very truth it's said that 90,000 Christians die each year for this very truth annually many with a very chance of denouncing the faith to save their own lives but they choose death and are murdered for their faith and if you are in Christ and even if you are not in Christ

God loves you while we were still sinners Christ died for us the same God who suffered a great brutal death had obedience to God in mind and that was redemption and through this obedience through Christ's life his death his burial and resurrection all together those who are far from Jesus are able to draw near to him the divide that sin has created the enmity that sin has created that Genesis speaks about is now bridged and those who are far from him draw near to him and those who have drawn near to him are hidden in him at this time in history and we will we will be revealed with him when he appears again and if you are not in Christ today it begins with faith believing this the tomb was empty believing in this thing that they call

God's amazing grace the future is filled with great hope for those who place their faith in Christ and the entire Christian hope rests upon and is contingent upon that resurrection for those who place their faith in that message are to experience a new life which is a result from the forgiveness of sin and the freedom from sin the worship team may get prepared as we come to a close if you're in Christ today is the set of your mind focusing on a heart that is transformed by this what would your browser history church for those in Christ listen up I'm almost done what would your browser history say about the set of your mind your computer your phone what would the walls of your home say about the set of your mind the way of which we seek is driven by the set of our mind this is important today church if the set of your mind is not compelling you to seek things that are above remove all the garbage of this life

Republican Democrat whatever it's Christ one side another side black white up or down we're Christ all are united in Christ those peripheral things are not the central thing it is Christ Christ is the way of which you seek driven by the set of your mind the set of your mind is not compelling you to seek the things above have you truly identified in Christ's death sitting here this morning has this really been something within your heart that has changed or are you just going about the motions through your life let us be challenged with this this morning if you are not in Christ this morning for non-Christians this life will not last forever your casket will not include your money market account it's not going to include any room for your cars for your money with any status shoot by 100 years from now they're not going to care about

[29 : 41] Brent who pastored Youngstown Metro Church you know some churches are filled with all these murals and books full of these past pastors you walk past it as if it's just an old dusty book you don't know what happened in that life this life is not going to last forever and the status and the fame that you think is important right here in this life means nothing to submitting and surrendering your life to Christ dying and repenting of your sin and in so doing raising life in a new hope do not wait a minute any longer in your life turn your life to him today not 50% not 99.9% Jesus wants 100% death to sin he wants you to experience the freedom from sin which Christ bore in his death and set free through his resurrection the payment was accepted in full the funds were sufficient please join me in prayer over the