

Weakness | Leading Through Personal Holiness

Colossians 3:1-11

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but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct

—1 Peter 1:15

I. There is often little difference between believers and non-believers. (3:1-2)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

—Colossians 3:1-3

II. The Truth about Personal Holiness (Colossians 3:1-4)

For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

—2 Corinthians 5:21

1. We have been made holy by faith in Jesus; this is justification. (3:1-3)
2. We are called to pursue a life of personal holiness; this is sanctification. (3:1-2)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

—Colossians 3:1

2Set your minds on things that are above, not on

things that are on earth.

—Colossians 3:2

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you...

—Colossians 3:5a

3. The certainty of our justification is to motivate the effort of our sanctification. (3:1-3)

III. The Challenge of Personal Holiness (Colossians 3:5-11)

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you...

—Colossians 3:5a

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

—Colossians 3:5

But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

—Colossians 3:8

- a. We still have remaining sin to fight and kill. (3:5-8)

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

—Galatians 5:16-17

- i. Be intentional. (1 Cor. 9:26-27)

So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. 27But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

—1 Corinthians 9:26-27

- ii. Be self-aware. (1 Cor. 10:12)

let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

—1 Corinthians 10:12

iii. Be on guard. (1 Pt. 5:8)

On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.

—Colossians 3:6-7

b. We don't always take personal holiness seriously. (3:6-7; 9-10)

On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

—Colossians 3:6

For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son,

—Romans 8:29

But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

—Colossians 3:8-10

c. There is no excuse that is a good excuse for not pursuing personal holiness. (3:11)

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

—Colossians 3:11

IV. Justification is a one-time decision; sanctification is a daily, ongoing choice. (2 Tim. 2:22; Heb. 3:13)

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

—2 Timothy 2:22

*exhort one another every day, as long as it is called
“today,” that none of you may be hardened by the
deceitfulness of sin.*

—Hebrews 3:13

Study Questions

1. It was stated in this week’s message, that too often we lose our ability to influence others (as Christ-followers) because we’re no different than they are. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? Practically speaking, how should our life and behavior affect our witness to others? Explain. Also, discuss why it’s important that a spiritual leader’s life reflect his profession of faith.
2. Does the idea of pursuing personal holiness feel like legalism to you? Explain. Read Colossians 3:5-10. How might Paul’s exhortations here be seen as legalism if we don’t understand the gospel? Finally, discuss how Colossians 3:1-4 provides insight as to why pursuing holiness is something we should naturally want to do.
3. John Owen wrote: Be killing sin or it will be killing you. Put these words into your own words. Why is killing remaining sin in our lives necessary if we’re to grow in godliness as spiritual leaders? Also, how might our Gospel influence be crippled if we don’t? Explain. Close out your time together by discussing practical ways we can be actively killing sin.