

# THE AMBITIONS OF A CHRISTIAN

**BIBLE TEXT** : Colossians 2:20-23; 3:1-25

LESSON 411 **Junior Course**

**MEMORY VERSE:** "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above" (Colossians 3:1).

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

### **Colossians 2:20-23**

20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

### **Colossians 3:1-25**

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

## **Bible References:**

### **Notes:**

#### **Desire**

What is the thing you are most eager to do in life? What is your ambition? Do you want to be a musician or a singer so you can play or sing in the church services? Do you want to be a missionary? Do you want to preach the Gospel? All these desires to be helpful and do good in the world are from God, and a person wants to do them so he may please Jesus.

Today we are reading more of the letter Paul the Apostle wrote to the Christians in the church at Colosse. Paul was inspired of God to write these words, and his letter was preserved and written in the Bible. God wants all Christians to read this letter. It has helped many people through the centuries since that time and will help the people of today just as it helped the people of Colosse.

#### **From Death to Life**

The people to whom Paul was writing had been truly converted. They considered themselves dead to their former way of life. They had put away their own ways and desires and were living after the example of Christ who came to earth to do His Father's will (**Hebrews 10:7** 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.). Some of them were Jews who had brought their sacrifices to the Temple in Jerusalem as a matter of form, and some were Gentiles who had tried to please their gods of wood and stone. But they all had come to realise that their efforts to make themselves good had failed. They were still conscious of their guilt before God.

When they had repented of their sins and believed in Jesus as their Saviour, their sins were forgiven and they were made righteous through the death and resurrection of Christ. In obedience to the command Jesus gave before He went back to Heaven, they had been baptised in water as a witness to the world that they were dead to their old life and were risen with Christ to live a new and different life.

#### **Seeking Things Above**

Now the beautiful Christian life that is theirs is set before them: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." They are instructed to set their affections, or minds, on heavenly things and desire His will above every earthly desire. They were to occupy their minds with the things of God, not with things on the earth.

Each day before our minds are occupied with school, friendships, play, we should take time to be with Jesus. The 15th and 16th verses of our text suggest an order for morning family worship or private devotions. "Be ye thankful," suggests prayer: "In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). Letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom suggests reading and meditating upon a portion of Scripture. "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," suggests the singing of a hymn or two.

Then, when during the day temptation comes, think of Jesus

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

14 And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them.

20 Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.

22 Servants, obey in all things

and remember that your life is hid with Christ in God — hidden from the world. They do not see in your heart the sweet communion you have with Jesus, but they do see the happiness that shows in your face.

### **Separated from Sin**

Being dead with Christ, we were separated from our sins when we were saved. Our sins were "mortified," or killed, or destroyed. In order to keep our salvation, we resist any temptation to sin that would defile the temple of the body that God created to be a place for His Holy Spirit to dwell.

When we were saved we also put off what might be called sins of wrong temper. We were delivered from an uncontrolled temper, a get-even spirit, hurtful words, and lying.

### **Putting On the Graces of God**

Now that the sins we used to commit have been put off, we have the graces of Christ, which are compassion, or tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering. These are to be added to our life in ever-increasing measure.

We are to bear with and be kind to our brothers and sisters in the home, our friends at school, those in the church and outside even though they do not always do the right thing. We are to follow the example of Jesus. He forgave us and we must forgive others. The Bible says, "Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?" (Matthew 18:33).

### **The Love of God**

Above all, or in addition to all these beautiful traits of Christian character, we are to put on, or add, charity, which is another word for the love of God. You may say, "I have the love of God in my heart already." That may be true, but Christians are told to abound yet more and more in love. It is that quality that brings all Christian character to perfection.

In all this, whatever kind or helpful word or deed we do, we are to do it because Jesus wants us to do it, and after His example.

### **Rules of Conduct**

Paul's letter continues with rules for pleasant, profitable living in the family, at school, and at work. Mother and father are to be kind and work together in the home. Mother is to honour father, and father is to be loving and strong. They are to discipline, teach and correct the children, and the children are to obey. Why is it so very important to be obedient? Because "this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

We find all through the lesson today, that the things we do and say, the way we live, are to please Christ. When we go to school and when we go to work we are to obey those who are in charge, not just to get a good grade, not just to please our employer, but because God wants us to be obedient, and he is pleased when we are.

### **Eternal Reward**

Whatever a person does in this life of good or evil is seen by the God of Heaven and earth. He sees all; He knows all; He is altogether just, and we shall receive a reward if we serve the Lord Christ. "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."

### **QUESTIONS**

1. What does it mean to be "dead with Christ"?
2. What ordinance do we observe as a witness to the world that we are living a new life with Christ?
3. What does it mean to set our affections on things above?

*your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

4. What does it mean to "mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth"?
5. Name some sins that might be called sins of wrong temper.
6. What graces are we to continue to put on, or add to our lives, as Christians?
7. Why are we to forgive others?
8. What is the "bond of perfectness"?
9. What two verses in our text give a plan for family worship?
10. How should a Christian family live?