

Series: *Colossians: The Supremacy and Sufficiency of Christ*
Part 2: *Living out the Sufficiency of Christ (chapters 3-4)*
Lesson: *All Wrapped Up In Jesus, Part 1 - Our Hearts*
Text: Colossians 3:1-4 (L9)
Date: Sunday, March 11, 2012

*Colonial Hills
ABF
Baptist Church*

Key



= Teacher Information



= Discussion Starter

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TEACHING TIP

Pray over your lessons. While I've always known the truth of Psalm 127:1, I don't often apply it as I should. That verse reminds us that "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." As members of the church through which God is displaying His multifaceted wisdom (Ephesians 3:10) and as teachers in the ABF ministry, we are engaged in work that is much more important than the building of a house or the watching of a city. We are laboring to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28-29), a labor that God must bless for it to bear any fruit. Therefore, pray (1) that God will radically transform your heart and life through each lesson; (2) that God will give you understanding and wisdom as you wrestle with the text itself; (3) that God will give you passion and clarity as you teach each week; (4) that God will use His Word to penetrate the hearts and change the lives of those at your table—that we all might be powerful doers of the Word and not hearers only; (5) that God would continue His Word-work in the hearts and minds of your friends throughout the week; (6) that God will use you to humbly be a channel through which His grace will flow and a mouthpiece through which His Word will be clearly heard; (7) that God would magnify Himself by bringing forth "the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:11).



BACKGROUND

You'll notice that I added an element to the title page—"Part 2: Living out the Sufficiency of Christ." I did this to help underline the practical nature of the second half of Colossians. In chapters 3-4, Paul explains the application of his doctrinal teaching in chapters 1-2. We could have entitled those first two chapters—"Part 1: Laying out the Sufficiency of Christ"—to highlight Paul's focus on establishing an understanding of Christ's perfection. Paul now builds on that foundation by teaching how that practically plays out in our daily lives as we live in light of it.

I'd encourage you to listen to one of Alistair Begg's messages on Colossians 3:1ff—either "Living the Risen Life"¹ or "Behaving."² You'll see that I've drawn heavily from his study in this lesson.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Colossians 3:5-11 – *All Wrapped up in Jesus, Part 2 – Our Behavior*

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 of Colossians introduces us to the second half of Paul's epistle to the Colossian believers. We could organize this entire epistle into two main parts:

- Part 1 – "Laying out the Sufficiency of Christ" (Chapters 1-2)
- Part 2 – "Living out the Sufficiency of Christ" (Chapters 3-4)

While we've certainly made some practical application from chapters 1-2,³ we will discover chapters 3-4 to be rich in daily implications. Hinging on a little Greek word translated in 3:1 as "then" or "therefore," Paul begins to build on the doctrinal foundation laid in chapter 1-2 by telling us how to live out the sufficiency of Christ. If Christ is supreme and sufficient, then such knowledge should form the basis of both our worldview and our lifestyle. The sufficiency of Christ should flow from our creed to affect our conduct; it should move from the realm of belief into that of behavior; it should cause our faith to function and our doctrine to engage in discipleship; it needs to grip our minds and then transform our morals. Paul's regular pattern is to form a foundation of doctrinal belief, and then build upon it a structure of disciplined behavior.⁴ From his pattern, we learn (1) that godly belief is intended to issue in godly behavior, and (2) that godly behavior must be grounded on godly belief.

Therefore, it was not a waste of time or an unnecessary journey to have spent eight weeks on Colossians 1-2, for when we fail in Colossians 3-4, we betray a weak foundation and a need to strengthen our footing on the truths of the first two chapters. So, we should never move beyond Colossians 1-2; we should simply build upon it.

¹ Begg, Alistair. "Living the Risen Life," a sermon on Colossians 3:1-4 preached on June 24, 1984. <http://bit.ly/wXQJta>.

² Begg, Alistair. "Behaving," a sermon on Colossians 3:1 preached on March 19, 2006. <http://bit.ly/wGoa3J>.

³ From 1:1-8, we learned that we ought to be regularly giving God thanks for His Gospel work; from 1:9-13, we were challenged to engage in persistent, powerful praying one for another; in 1:15-20, we were compelled to worship Christ for His cosmic nature; in 1:20-23, we were stirred to continue in faith, grounded in hope so that we might inherit the end of our reconciliation; from 1:24-2:7, we were rebuked for our casual Christianity and stirred to labor to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus"; and in 2:8-23, we were cautioned against pursuing spiritual fullness in human philosophy or human effort.

⁴ Romans 1-11 (doctrine), Romans 12-16 (duty); Ephesians 1-3 (belief), Ephesians 4-6 (behavior).

In Colossians 3-4, Paul is going to apply the key doctrinal consideration of the first two chapters—that is, the sufficiency of Christ—to our every day life. Specifically, he will teach us how to live out the sufficiency of Christ in the following areas:

- In our personal lives—both in our heart and in our behavior (3:1-11)
- In our relationship with the local church (3:12-17)
- In our relationship with our family (3:18-21)
- In our relationship with our daily work (3:22-4:1)
- In our relationship with the unbelieving community (4:2-6)

This week, we're going to look at just part of that first application—living out the sufficiency of Christ in our personal lives, namely in our heart. As we will see in the first four verses of Colossians 3, Paul's admonition can be summarized with one exhortation: "Wrap your heart up in Jesus Christ!" To help us do this, Paul addresses three glorious realities that believers experience "in Christ."

Colossians 3:1-4 (NET)—

Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Keep thinking about things above, not things on the earth, for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with Him.

TO WRAP YOUR HEART UP IN JESUS CHRIST, YOU MUST REMEMBER YOUR POSITION (vv. 1a, 3).

Paul uses three phrases to depict our position or identity as believers. The first and second of these phrases echo Paul's thoughts in Colossians 2:12-13—you are "risen with Christ" (v. 1) and "dead...with Christ" (v. 3). Since we were "baptized into Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:3—that is, we are "in Christ"⁵), whatever He experienced and accomplished for us in salvation is fully ours. As His physical burial proved that He had died for sins, our baptism "in Him" shows that we have died to sin—both its penalty and its dominion (Romans 6:4, 6). Furthermore, as He was raised from death never to die again (Romans 6:9), we were raised from the waters to picture His regenerative work in our hearts to give us a new kind of life (Romans 6:4, 8). What a tremendous position is this! In our identification with Christ in death and resurrection, we have both "newness of life" and "dead[ness] to sin" (Romans 6:1-11—that is, "forgiveness" in Colossians 2:13)—two sides of the same coin in our position "in Christ."

⁵ "Paul emphasizes the centrality of Christ throughout Colossians 3:1-4. By using such phrases as with Christ (3:1); where Christ (3:1); with Christ (3:3); when Christ (3:4); and with Him (3:4), he stresses again Christ's total sufficiency (cf. 2:10)" (MacArthur, John. *Colossians*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996. P. 127.).

Before we consider Paul's third descriptive phrase, let us pause a moment longer on this glorious meditation. Before we hastily remind ourselves that such an unchangeable position should never be a cause for sin (the main point of Romans 6 and an assumed truth in Colossians 3), let us bask a moment longer in the complete and total positional transformation that God has accomplished in us. The reason Paul wrote Romans 6 to warn against the abuse of grace was because he had just highlighted in Romans 5:18-21 the awesomeness of grace! Allow the following commentary on those verses to thrill your mind and draw worship from your heart:

In Romans 5:18-21, we find ourselves in Paul's transition from discussing the righteousness of God in justification (Romans 3:21-5:17) to teaching us of the righteousness of God in sanctification (Romans 6:1-8:17)—both of which are taught in the gospel (Romans 1:16-17). We see that Paul ends his first point on a very high note, contrasting the sin of Adam with the work of Christ. His key point is if Adam's sin made all men sinners and therefore condemned to hell, how much more will Christ's obedience result in righteousness and justification to the one who believes (vv. 18-19)! This truth gives a positive light to what we so often look upon as negative—rules. Our negative perspective (and experience) with rules (the law) reminds us that according to verse 20(a), law was instituted by God so that sin would be known and (in a sense) multiply (by magnification). However, the positive goal of that knowledge and multiplication of sin is so that God's grace can be known and multiply in like (and greater) proportion (v. 20b).

The result, then, of the abounding of sin and the consequent super-abounding of grace is found in verse 21. The contrast between sin and grace is highlighted even more poignantly in Paul's use of grammar. In the first phrase, "reign" is actually the first word in the sentence in the original language and is thus intended to be emphasized. In the second phrase, "grace" is placed first and therefore highlighted. In other words, Paul is saying, "Before you were saved, the king of sin reigned over your life in the dominion of death. It didn't just influence you to make poor decisions or pressure you to rebel against God or annoy you incessantly; it reigned over you—completely, entirely. However, now that you have attained Christ's righteousness by faith, that which is reigning in your life is grace." And Paul has already highlighted in verse 20 how much more powerful than sin is this potentate of grace.

Grace reigns and dispenses its power "through righteousness," the righteousness of Jesus Christ which you already received by faith. So, since you were by faith on the day of your salvation clothed and completed in His righteousness "unto eternal life," there is never a time

when you are without God's grace! It is always reigning in your life! And although some may rebel against their leader, a powerful ruler will always prevail. So it is with grace! Even though you might not be reading God's Word to receive grace (Acts 20:32), even though you might be neglecting prayer which is said to give grace (Hebrews 4:16), even though you may be avoiding those who can minister grace to you through fellowship (Ephesians 4:29), grace still reigns and rules in your life, because you stand clothed in Christ's righteousness which is the never-ceasing means of God's grace to you. Just as sure as you have the righteousness of Christ, so you stand complete in the grace of God. As a child of God, you might flee from His work in your life, but you never leave the boundaries of this kingdom of grace through righteousness.

Behold the glory of grace! Behold the ability of Jesus' righteousness! Behold the power of the gospel! This is your position! Let it thrill your heart, as you wrap yourself up in thanksgiving for what Jesus has accomplished on your behalf!

The third phrase that Paul uses to highlight our position in Christ is, "your life is hid with Christ in God" (v. 3). What a beautiful picture—we are "in Christ," and thus "with Him" we are hidden in God! We are tucked away in God, in such a hiding place that no evil shall ever remove us, no harm shall ever over take us! We are in such a place that will only give way to full glory, for "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, [but] it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." When Paul meditated on this, it gave him immense joy, and "the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). Thus, we would be wise to give as much thought to our precious position as Paul did—see, for example, his lengthy joy-exuding meditation on our security "with Christ in God" in Romans 8:31-39.

Illustration: I remember a time when one of my sisters received a gift from a boy she was interested in at the time. He brought a huge box to our home, beautifully wrapped. My sister tore through the wrapping paper, opened the box, and discovered a slightly smaller wrapped box inside. She pulled out that second box and unwrapped it, only to discover a third box inside it. This happened several times until the actual gift was finally uncovered. I don't even remember what the gift was; I just remember how hidden it was within all those boxes. That's the picture of our position "in Christ"—we are completely hidden in God because we're wrapped up with Christ.

Application: We are all wrapped up with Jesus in our position, and that's what we must daily remember in order for our hearts to be likewise enveloped. Before Paul addresses any earthly relationships to which the sufficiency of Christ will apply, he targets our heart. The heart is a throne on which someone or something will sit—is it filled with Jesus Christ, or has it been producing idols? Solomon implores us to "keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23), and his life illustrates the difficulty that befalls

those who fail to do so. The best way to “keep your heart” worshipping and enthroning Jesus Christ is to preach to yourself every day the incredible gospel of grace—that in spite of yourself, and simply by faith, you have been graciously wrapped up in Jesus Christ so that you might have joy everlasting. By first remembering our position in Christ, we will maintain our infatuation with Christ.

Our behavior will follow our heart and reveal our heart, so we must be very careful about who/what has our heart. Does Jesus have your heart? Is your heart all wrapped up in Jesus Christ? Are His thoughts and His perspective the most important counsel that you could receive today? Are His character and His ways a glorious recollection for you? If you are convinced that Christ is supreme and sufficient, then you must allow such a belief to mesmerize your heart, flowing out in love for Jesus, worship of Jesus, and delight in Jesus.



How do we become mesmerized by Jesus? What can we do so that our hearts are thrilled in such a way that we can honestly sing “I’d Rather Have Jesus...”? *Meditate, meditate, meditate; study, study, study – Paul is the example in this; his heart was passionate about Jesus, not from occasional devotions or Sunday church, but from a lifetime of enjoying a relationship with Jesus through tons of time in His Word and in prayer. This is the path to spiritual fullness—missing this is to be “taken captive” by what is deficient (2:18); not being willing to commit to this is a sorrowful, shameful, and perhaps damning choice. Also, learn to relate everything in life to Jesus Christ—He is, after all, a real person who has real bearing on your life.*

Just a thought: I wonder if some of us will get to glory some day and think to ourselves as faith becomes sight and religion becomes reality, “Wow, I’m really here, but I realize now that I completely missed the point in life. Thank you, Jesus, that you were still sufficient for my salvation!” And the praise will all be His!

Transition: In order to wrap your heart up in Jesus Christ, you must first remember your position—that you are already wrapped up in Jesus Christ. Secondly, in order to wrap up your heart in Jesus Christ, you must maintain your priority.

TO WRAP YOUR HEART UP IN JESUS CHRIST, YOU MUST MAINTAIN YOUR PRIORITY (vv. 1b-2).

This point naturally flows out of the first—if I’m already wrapped up in Jesus Christ (in position), then I should stay wrapped up in Jesus Christ (in priority). Paul explains the believer’s priority with two points.

1. *You must be heavenly oriented.*

Paul twice tells us to focus on (lit.) “the things above” (vv. 1-2), and he clarifies what he means by contrasting it with “the things on the earth” (v. 2).⁶ The believer is to prioritize—focus on, orient himself around, be attuned to, be preoccupied with—heavenly things, because that’s where His supreme, sufficient Christ is, “seated at the right hand of God.” In order to understand how to start doing that, we need to figure out what “the things above” are.

First, regarding quality, heavenly things are invisible, spiritual, and eternal. We cannot see spiritual things, and we probably won’t sense them either. Such “above things” are not physical, at least not to human perception. And these things are not temporal, but are rather unchangeable, incorruptable, and everlasting. These things have to do with the heavenly realm in which God dwells and from which He operates in contrast with the earthly realm which is all we see. So, while these things are indeed “other worldly” and invisible, they are nonetheless very real.

What, then, are these “things above”? Scripture tells us about many invisible, spiritual, eternal realities that belong to those who are “in Christ,” and we will be helped to consider several of them by looking at the author’s definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1.⁷ According to that verse, there are certain realities about life in Christ that are “expected” (i.e., “hoped for”) and “not seen”—that is, much of our life in Christ is invisible and heavenly; it’s spiritual. For example: the history that our faith is based upon (i.e., the history of Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection as recorded in the Gospels) was not seen by us; the exchange of sin for righteousness was never

⁶ “Paradoxically, before Christians can reach the world, they must first leave it. In Galatians 1:4 Paul affirmed that Christ “gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age.” Christians are of Christ’s kingdom, which is not of this world (John 18:36). We have overcome the world through faith in Christ (1 John 5:4–5). Although we exist in this world physically, spiritually we are already citizens of heaven (Eph. 2:6).

Our spiritual growth, joy, and fruitfulness require that we maintain a proper perspective on this world. We are “strangers and exiles on the earth” (Heb. 11:13), because “here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come” (Heb. 13:14). “Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Phil. 3:20). We are “aliens and strangers” on this earth (1 Pet. 2:11). We are in the world, but not of the world. Until we realize that basic truth and live it, we will be ineffective in reaching the world with the truth of the gospel” (Ibid., pp. 123-125).

⁷ For more meditation thoughts over Hebrews 11:1, read “The Invisible is the Utmost Reality: Living by Faith” at <http://wp.me/p1mGTB-aK>.

witnessed; the declaration of forgiveness and adoption was never heard; the reality of moment-by-moment interaction with God through Christ cannot be seen; the intercession of our great High Priest for us before God is invisible to us; the actuality of a heavenly throne room in which the Creator of all sits cannot be seen; the smiling face of our benevolent, loving Father is not evident to our eyes; the help of the Holy Spirit cannot be glimpsed; our personal house and eternal inheritance reserved for us in heaven is not perceived; the promise of eternal life after we die cannot be visualized.

Therefore, we admit that when we got saved, nothing visibly or physically changed. But *everything* changed spiritually and invisibly (i.e., heavenly) for us. We were *really* changed from being enemies to children of God; we were *really* changed from being destitute to spiritually rich; we were *really* changed from being condemned bearers of wrath to being overwhelmed recipients of gracious love; we were *really* changed from being citizens of earth—a realm ruled by the master of darkness, wickedness, and death—to being citizens of heaven—a realm ruled by the God of hosts, the Creator of the universe, the Sustainer of all life, the Giver of all grace; we were *really* changed from being owners only of stuff on earth that will be consumed with fire to being inheritors of an actual home in heaven; we were *really* changed from never being able to get in to see our president to always being able to get in to the very presence of our God and Savior; we were *really* changed from having God against us to having God for us, even when life doesn't look like it; we were *really* changed from death being annihilation at best (from man's perspective) to death simply being the beginning of experiencing God on an unimaginably greater level; we were *really* changed from imperfection to perfection.

The problem, then, is not with these realities, but with our poor vision and misplaced priorities. We are physical human beings who live in a physical and visual realm. Furthermore, our culture indoctrinates us with the teaching that what we can see and experience physically is the utmost reality and that the invisible and spiritual is fit only for science fiction books and an occasional musing.

No, we must “walk by faith and not by sight” (II Corinthians 5:7). we must embrace the “foreigner status” of God's children and prioritize our true citizenship. “We are ‘strangers and exiles on the earth’ (Heb. 11:13), because ‘here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come’ (Heb. 13:14). ‘Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ’ (Phil. 3:20). We are ‘aliens and strangers’ on this earth (1 Pet. 2:11).”⁸ Therefore, we must be “preoccupied with heaven...[and] with the One who reigns there...—His purposes, plans, provisions, and power. [We must] view the things, people,

and events of this world through His eyes and with an eternal perspective.”⁹ Yes, we must be heavenly oriented to have our hearts wrapped up with Jesus Christ, because heaven is His throne and our everlasting home.

Some would say that a person can be “so heavenly minded that he's of no earthly good.” Scripture argues that perhaps we're so earthly minded that we are of no heavenly use. Thus, the only way to be of any earthly good is to be heavenly minded. We must ask ourselves, “Would my heart still be lifted up even if _____ (an earthly thing) were taken away?”

2. *You must be fully oriented.*

Paul uses two present active imperatives that stress continuing action to compel us to wrap our priorities up in Jesus Christ. He tells us to (lit.) “keep seeking” (v. 1) and to (lit.) “keep thinking about”¹⁰ (v. 2) “the things above.” “Seek” carries the idea of a search or pursuit, which encompasses your affections, your zeal, your desires. The Septuagint uses this same Greek word in Jeremiah 29:13—“And ye shall seek me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.” Jesus likewise promised, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). The prioritization of our pursuits upon heavenly things will alone be fulfilling. Ironically, we may actually forfeit earthly provisions by seeking after them. They will be added to us, however, when we set our sights upon God and pursue Him. Therefore, since God is our life, we are foolish to pursue anything other than the Psalmist's pursuit—“O God, thou art my God! Early will I seek Thee. My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, to see Thy power and Thy glory” (Psalm 63:1-2).

“Keep thinking about” probably suggests the means or starting point of our heavenly pursuit. We're prone to desire, long for, and pursue those things that we have spent a lot of time thinking about. This is true for any team owner pursuing a top prospect, any CEO seeking to win over a key partner, and any man seeking to woo his true love. If Paul's first command tells us to prioritize our pursuit upon “the things above,” then this command tells us to prioritize our mindset on those things. As one commentator puts it, “‘You must not only seek heaven, you must also think heaven.’ The believer's whole disposition should orient itself toward heaven, where Christ is, just as a compass needle orients itself toward the north.”¹¹

⁹ Ibid., p. 127.

¹⁰ The KJV translation, “set your affection” is a bit misleading as to the point of this command. The first verb really has to do with one's affection, while this second injunction simply has to do with one's thinking or mindset.

¹¹ MacArthur, p. 128. Imbedded quote by Lightfoot in his *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1879/1959. P. 209.

⁸ MacArthur, p. 125.

**TO WRAP YOUR HEART UP IN JESUS CHRIST,
YOU MUST ANTICIPATE YOUR PROSPECT (v. 4).**

Illustration: “Of Robert Murray McCheyne, the devout nineteenth-century Scottish pastor and evangelist, a friend once said, ‘The man of whom I speak seemed to have got up to the full height...and to have entered into the secret places of the holiness of God.’”¹² In other words, McCheyne was a “heaven minded, heaven pursuing” believer. The same could be said of A. W. Tozer, Adoniram Judson, Hudson Taylor, and an innumerable host of believers who joined those listed in Hebrews 11 to live a life that prioritized “the things above,” and who wrought wonders because of that priority.

Application: What is your priority in life? Have you been blinded by what you can see? Has your earnest love for Christ been cooled by the temporal, visible, and physical—not just the things, but perhaps the spirit, mentality, schedule, agenda, routine of “earth”? Have you ever paused to consider all the realities that you cannot see, that are nonetheless a very part of who you are “in Christ”? Are you wearied by the temporality and insufficiency of “things on the earth”? Or are you still in love with those things? Where is your heart? What is your pursuit? What is your mindset? Are you seeking heaven? Are you thinking heaven?



How do we train our thoughts to be oriented toward “the things above?” How do we discipline our pursuits to prioritize heavenly prizes? *Confess your sin of distraction to God, and ask for grace to refocus you upon your priority of Christ; use your devotional time to think about “things above,” perhaps using a book by someone whose life was characterized by an eternal perspective to help you; practice talking to God throughout the day as if He were always at the other end of your bluetooth; interpret life for your family through a heavenly perspective—this will force you to start thinking this way, since you are discipling others to do the same; sacrifice some other pursuits that distract you from your most important priority; prioritize the church, which is one visible reality that points to innumerable invisible realities— if you are not faithful engaging with the church, you probably are not faithful prioritizing Christ; start with the first point and preach to yourself your position of being wrapped up in Christ in the heavenly places.*



What are the results of a believer’s prioritization of “things above?” *Godly distinction (“You’re not from around here, are you?”); evangelistic appeal (“I want what he has!”); fulfillment of the gospel ministry of 1:24-2:8 (“Eternity is my rest”—Hebrews 3:12-4:13); God’s glorification (“Why are you so different?”).*

Transition: To wrap your heart up in Jesus Christ, you must remember your position and maintain your priority. Finally, Paul teaches us in verse 4 that to wrap your heart up in Jesus Christ, you must anticipate your prospect.

Paul ends on a triumphant cord. He summarizes the first two points with a beautiful phrase—“Christ, who is your life”¹³—and then highlights the believers prospect with the rest of the verse—“When Christ...shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.”

The dictionary defines “prospect” as “the possibility or likelihood of some future event occurring.”¹⁴ The believer’s prospect is redefined as “the promise and guarantee of this future event occurring.” Right now, the world cannot see that we are “seated with Christ in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 2:6); it cannot perceive that “our life is hid with Christ in God” (v. 3). But, in the future, God will pull back the curtain on our lives so that the universe will see what He has done for us.

Since Jesus is our life, He is also our glory—as certainly as He has become our life, He has also guaranteed its climax in glory.¹⁵

Illustration: When you travel to Time Square in New York City, you can look around and see posters that say, “Appearing in concert with _____. 7:30 p.m. on Friday, May 25, 2012.” This passage tells us that we are scheduled to appear in glory with Jesus Christ!

Application: “Let the pessimist look down, let the fearful look around, but let the Christian lift his eyes and look up”¹⁶—all those whose life is hidden with Christ. This is “the light at the end of the tunnel” that makes all the struggle of service (1:24-2:8) and sanctification (3:5-11) in the present worth it all (cf. Romans 8:18). But, this is one of those “things above” that you must “see” by faith and live in light of now.

CONCLUSION

The sufficiency of Christ will have no impact until it takes root in our hearts first. Sanctification will be slow, service will be stagnant, and evangelism will be ineffective until our hearts are all wrapped up in Jesus Christ. Therefore, “may the Lord establish us in our position, convict us about our priorities, and remind us that our prospect is to see Jesus and to be made like Him—then our lives will be framed in a way that He desires.”¹⁷

¹³ “That’s what it means to be a Christian. Christ is my life! He is my *raison d’être* [i.e., reason for existence]; he is my love; he is my future; he is my hope; he is my security in the face of death. He is my life!” (Begg, “Living the Risen Life.”)

¹⁴ *New Oxford American Dictionary*

¹⁵ “Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your *real* life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you’ll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you” (Peterson, Eugene H. *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002. Colossians 3:3-4.).

¹⁶ G. T. Manley quoted in Begg, “Living the Risen Life.”

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

You are calling out to me,
And I hardly hear Your voice,
In my tiny world of troubles,
I have to make a choice.
Will I give it all to You,
Or ignore Your humble cry,
You say "follow Me," and I,
I am torn inside.

Refrain:

I will follow You,
No matter where You go;
My life is not my own to pick and choose.
I've been purchased with Your blood,
and You deserve to be on my throne.
I know what I must do—
Deny me or deny You.

You never said it would be easy;
In fact, You said it would be hard.
This uphill road that I am traveling,
Is bound to leave me scarred.
But not a day has passed,
That You have left my side.
Jesus, You are always faithful,
To help me when I cry.

And when I reach the otherside,
You'll be there with open arms.
No more trials or tribulations,
No more painful tears to cry!
And I will see Your face before me,
Shining brighter than the sun.
And I will sing Your praise forever,
And hear You say well done.

Ending:

I will follow You,
No matter where You go;
My life is not my own to pick and choose.
I've been purchased with Your blood,
and You deserve to be on my throne.
So wherever You are,
It could never be to far.
Lord, You have my heart.

¹⁸ "I Will Follow You," a song by Luke Hermann.