**The Focus of Your Life**

Colossians 3:1-4

**Introduction**

If you’ve ever watched traffic, you may have noticed that every driver is going somewhere. They are all seeking something; they all have their mind on something. Some may be looking at their cell phone; some may be looking straight ahead while heading to work; some may be listening to music; some may be laughing with their friends. But their focus—that which they are seeking and that which is on their mind—is what determines their direction and speed. In life, we focus our attention on many things: cell phones, sports, relationships, kids, jobs, rules, problems. Our focus determines our direction. The Colossians needed a shift in focus. If they focused on earthly things, their lives would move in a worldly fashion. We will consider the situation of the Colossians and see how it connects to the focus of your own life.

1. **The believers in Colossae were prone to make earthly things the focus of their lives.** 
   1. At one point, earthly pleasures were their focus.
2. They were driven by fleshly appetites that were still tempting. (3:5)
3. They were driven by worldly pursuits.
   1. Once they were saved, all this changed. They had to live differently.
   2. The teaching of the false teachers was appealing because it offered a different way to live.
4. There was a focus on rules. (2:16, 20-21)
5. There was a focus on religious practices. (2:23)
6. There was a focus on religious knowledge and experiences that would transport them into the heavenly realms. (2:18)
   1. While it all looked good and made the leaders look good, it was still man-centered and thus tied to earthly things. It had no connection to the Source of true spiritual growth: Christ. (v. 19)
7. The Colossian believers had two strikes against them: Their flesh liked this world, and the false teachers taught them to use earthly means for heavenly results.
8. The problem: Both were tied to seeking things on earth. Both set their minds on things on earth.
   1. Paul wrote to them with the solution: Paul led the Colossians to think in a different way. “He starts with Christ who is in heaven and how He is to impact their lives on earth.” (Lincoln)
9. **Paul makes it clear that, after their salvation, there had to be a shift of focus to heavenly things. (3:1-2)**
   1. They should seek those things which are above. (v. 1a)
      1. “Seek” – pursue; endeavor to obtain; strive for or after; aim at.
      2. “Those things which are above” *-* in a higher place;heavenly things.
   2. They should set their affection on things above. (v. 2)
      1. “Set your affection” – think; set one's mind on; be intent on; orientation of the will. (Matthew 16:23, Romans 8:5, Philippians 3:19-20)
      2. It is going to require a continual effort.
   3. As believers, we should continually set our minds on things that matter most.
      1. We need to allow heaven to navigate our way on earth.
      2. We are to make our “heavenly status the guidepost for all our thinking and acting.” (Moo)
      3. We should set our values according to God’s values.
      4. “It means that the practical everyday affairs of life get their direction from Christ in heaven. It means further that we look at earth from heaven’s point of view.” (Wiersbe)
      5. Christ is mentioned four times in these four verses. “Since you have shared in Christ’s resurrection, your aims, ambitions, in fact your whole outlook, are to be centered in Him, in that place of highest honor where God has exalted Him.” (O’Brien)
10. **Central Idea: The Colossian believers should shift their focus from earth to heaven because Christ is the center of their lives.** 
    1. Christ is the central focus of heaven.
       * 1. He is sitting on the right hand of God (v. 1b); in a certain place, as a mark of high distinction and great honor. This is a reference to Psalm 110:1; there are 33 references or allusions to this passage in the New Testament.
         2. If He is the central focus in heaven, it only makes sense that He should be the central focus of your life.
         3. If He is worthy of worship and praise in heaven, then He is worthy of worship and praise on earth. If He is honored and valued in heaven, He ought to be honored and valued on earth.
         4. Whatever His interest in heaven, ought to be our interest on earth.
    2. We have identified with Christ. Our lives are bound up with His.
11. This is a “summons to adopt a mind-set that reflects our new identity in Christ…new life in Christ does not absolve Christians of their responsibilities to one another…but provides…a new motivation to live them out appropriately.” (Moo)
12. We are risen with Christ. (v. 1a) The ground of the new Christian life lies in Christ's resurrection and the believer's participation in the resurrection life and power of Jesus. (2:12, Ephesians 2:6)
13. We died with Christ. (v. 3a) The reason we should set our minds on heavenly things is that we have died to the things of this world. A dead man doesn’t respond.
14. Our lives are hid with Christ in God. (v. 3b) The word “hid” means to conceal or cover; to disappear from view; figuratively, as preventing someone from being harmed by anything. We are kept safe and protected by God. The fact that it is in the perfect tense of the verb indicates that it is something that was accomplished in the past that has ongoing results into the present, and the fact that it is in the passive voice indicates that it is something that God has accomplished.
15. Christ is our life. (v. 4a) Since the believers of Colossae are complete in Christ, they should center their lives around the things that have to do with Christ. He has removed the charges of your past. He has given you new life for the present. He has promised you a glorious future. What or who is more worthy of your attention?
16. Christ is returning! (v. 4b) Our lives are currently hidden with Christ in God. The world doesn’t know who Christ is. The world doesn’t know who we really are. We don’t even know who we really are in Christ. It will be revealed when Christ returns! (I John 3:1-3)
17. **Application: If Christ has done all this for you and has promised to do more, don’t you think He ought to be the central focus of your life?** 
    1. Evaluate your focus in life. Are you focused on yourself or Christ?
18. What do you have on your mind as you go throughout your day?
19. When you sing with the congregation, is it directed to the Lord?
20. Do you initiate conversations with the intent to share Christ with others?
21. Does your music selection direct your attention to Christ?
    1. Redirect your focus to Christ.
       1. Read Paul’s letter to the Colossians once a week for the next four weeks.
       2. Ask another believer to share their salvation experience with you. Share your testimony with them as well. A great way to get your focus back on Christ is to remember what He did.
       3. Use a concordance to read the numerous passages that speak of Jesus.

**Conclusion**

There are many things and people vying for your attention. Find a quiet place this week to spend time with the Lord. Begin each day with Him as your central focus in life.