

# DECIDING TO DECREASE

## JOHN 3:30 & COLOSSIANS 1:18, 3:17

Text: John 3:30

### **John 3:30**

<sup>30</sup> He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

Introduction:

This was John's great joy and goal.

In this sentence John the Baptist tells his complaining disciples that it is right and proper and necessary that Christ should grow in dignity, and that he himself should be less thought of. He was only the servant; Christ was the Master. He was only the forerunner and ambassador, Christ was the King. He was only the morning star; Christ was the Sun.

John was determined that all things that Christ would be the preeminent One.

Turn to Colossians 1:18, and 3:17

### **Colossians 1:18**

<sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

## **Colossians 1:17**

<sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

We need to practice Christ's preeminence in our life.

Notice we should:

## **1. SEEK THE HEAVENLY**

### **A. We Should Entertain Heavenly Desires**

#### **Colossians 3:1**

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

Paul says that one reason we should entertain heavenly desires is because of our relationship to Christ. We are "Risen with Christ,"

The point that Paul makes here is that since the believer, by his identification with Christ, has been raised with Him, they should "seek" or "strive for earnestly," heavenly things.

### **B. We Should Exercise A Heavenly Disposition**

#### **Colossians 3:2**

<sup>2</sup> Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

The words "set your affection" mean, "to direct one's mind to a thing."

That which commands our attention also controls our action.

Our feet must be on earth, but our minds must be in Heaven...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.

Understand that Paul is not condemning our thinking upon the normal, everyday affairs of life. He is however, saying that our earthly affairs be governed by a heavenly mindset.

Notice not only should we "Seek the Heavenly" but also:

## **2. SLAY THE EARTHLY**

### **A. Mortify The Carnality Of The Past**

#### **Colossians 3:5**

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

#### **Colossians 3:7**

<sup>7</sup> In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

The word, “mortify” means “to put to death, to deprive of power, to destroy the strength of.”

- Fornication must be relegated to the place of death (v.5b)
- Uncleaness must be relegated to the place of death (v.5c)
- Inordinate affection must be relegated to the place of death (v.5d)

This term has the idea of “depraved passion.”

- Evil concupiscence must be relegated to the place of death (v.5e)

This word is not one that we see very often. However, it means, “evil, wicked cravings.”

- Covetousness must be relegated to the place of death (v.5f)

## B. Mortify The Carnality Of The Present

### **Colossians 3:8**

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

The words, “but now” refer back to what Paul has said previously. He clearly indicated that the vices

mentioned in verse 5 were a part of the old life, before salvation. He's not saying that Christians cannot commit these types of sin, but that they are not the natural or common practice of God's children. Paul is saying that now that we have shed that life of evil conduct, whether in action or intent, we are to be careful to rid ourselves of the following equally evil vices.

- Anger must be put to death (v.8b)
- Wrath must be put to death (v.8c)
- Malice must be put to death (v.8d)
- Blasphemy must be put to death (v.8e)

The basic meaning here is "slander...speech injurious to another's good name."

- Filthy communication must be put to death (v.8f)
- Lying must be put to death

**Colossians 3:9**

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

Note:

Too often we Christians are shocked to hear of a believer who commits any of the sins that Paul dealt with in Col.3: 5, but we don't seem to get too bothered about the sins mentioned Col.3: 8 and 9. The fact is, it's all sin to God.

Notice not only should we "Seek the Heavenly" and "Slay the Earthly" but also:

### **3. STRENGTHEN THE CHRISTLY**

#### **A. This Is Done By Constant Renewal**

##### **Colossians 3:10-11**

<sup>10</sup> And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: <sup>11</sup> Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

Paul says that the believer's renewal takes place through knowledge (v. 10).

The Gnostics said that learning the secrets they taught would change one's life for the better. Paul is saying that it is not the knowledge of certain secrets, but knowledge, of the Savior that really changes one's life.

#### **B. This Is Demonstrated By Christly Results**

- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through compassion

### **Colossians 3:12**

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

### **Jude 1:22**

<sup>22</sup> And of some have compassion, making a difference:

- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through kindness

### **Colossians 3:12**

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

- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through humility
- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through meekness
- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through patience – longsuffering
- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through forbearance
- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through forgiveness

### **Colossians 3:13**

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

- Christ-likeness is demonstrated through love

**Colossians 3:14**

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

Notice that Paul stresses the importance of love when he says, “above all these things put on charity” (v. 14a).

Christ-likeness will be enhanced by four things

1. Allow the peace of God to rule

**Colossians 3:15**

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

2. Make a point to be thankful

**Colossians 3:15**

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

**Colossians 3:17**

<sup>17</sup> 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.

3. Feed on the Word of God

**Colossians 3:16**

<sup>16</sup> 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.



#### 4. Seek the glory of God in everything

##### **Colossians 3:17**

<sup>17</sup> 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.