

Col.2:20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations-

2:21 "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,"

2:22 which all concern things which perish with the using-according to the commandments and doctrines of men?

2:23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

October 12, 2025 Colossians 2:20-3:3 Sermon Title: "Set Your Minds on Things Above"

2:20 Since you have died with Christ to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you submit to regulations as though you were still living in the world?

2:21 "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch"—

2:22 These are all destined to perish with use, based on human commands and teachings.

2:23 Such practices have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility, and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

3:1 Since you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3:3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

【From Today's Sermon】

“Do not taste, do not touch, do not handle’... human regulations... self-righteous worship, feigned humility, and bodily asceticism... These may appear to be acts of wisdom, but they are of no value whatsoever in restraining sensual desires.”

“These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”

"But the one who looks intently and perseveres in the perfect law of liberty is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who acts. This person will be blessed in what they do. If anyone considers themselves religious yet does not bridle their tongue, they deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our Father God is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.“ (James

1)

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is faith working through love. ... I say this: Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ... The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5)

We give thanks for the salvation Jesus accomplished for us and for opening the way to be born again by the Spirit.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

8:3 For what the law could not do, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as an offering for sin. He condemned sin in the flesh,

8:4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

8:7 Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for indeed it cannot.

8:8 The person without the Spirit cannot please God.

8:9 But if God's Spirit lives in you, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.

8:10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

8:11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

8:12 Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have a debt, but not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

8:13 For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

8:14 All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

8:15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons, by which we cry, "Abba! Father!"

8:16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

8:17 If we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Good morning, everyone.

Just when I thought it had gotten quite chilly, lately I've been feeling the heat of the day again. How have you all been?

As Colossians enters its latter half, Paul has now reached the point where he clearly states his conclusion.

2:20 If you have died with Christ to the ruling powers of this world, why do you still live as if you belonged to it?

2:21 Why do you submit to rules like “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”?

2:22 These are all destined to perish with use—human commands and teachings.

2:23 These are based on human commands and teachings, and they seem wise in self-imposed worship, false humility, and harsh treatment of the body, but they are of no value in restraining sensual indulgence.

We desire to live rightly. Yet we do not know how. Sometimes we may think we have succeeded, while at other times we may suffer utter failure. There was a song lyric that said, “Life is three steps forward, two steps back.” But there is no guarantee that we will advance, even little by little.

Last week's sermon touched on the hypocrisy of the scribes. They loved the places of honor at banquets, refusing to yield the seat of honor to Jesus, who truly deserved it, and instead drove Him to a hostile death on the cross. They anticipated Jesus' intention to heal on the Sabbath, deliberately bringing a sick person to the synagogue to find grounds for accusation (such scheming to bring others down is precisely the kind of action forbidden on the Sabbath). They exploited loopholes in the law to interpret it to their own advantage, looked down on others as sinners while remaining utterly blind to their own shortcomings. The Scriptures

recorded many such deeply troubling things.

Mark 7:6 Jesus replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

7:7 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on meaningless traditions.'"

7:8 "You have let go of the commandment of God and cling to human traditions."

7:9 He also said to them, "You have a fine way of setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition!

7:10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and 'Whoever curses father or mother must surely be put to death.'

7:11 Yet you say, 'If anyone tells his father or mother, "Whatever you might have been helped by me is a gift,"

7:12 he is no longer obligated to do anything for his father or mother.'

7:13 Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed on. And you do this sort of thing often."

Luke 13:11 There was a woman who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and was completely unable to straighten up.

13:12 When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity."

13:13 Then he laid his hands on her. Immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God.

13:14 But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day."

13:15 The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water?

13:16 Then shouldn't this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for eighteen years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath?"

13:17 When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame, and the whole crowd rejoiced at all the wonderful things he did.

Luke 6:7 The scribes and Pharisees were watching him closely, looking for a reason to accuse him, to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.

6:8 Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and stand in front of them." So he got up and stood there.

6:9 Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?"

6:10 And looking around at them all, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was restored.

6:11 Then they were filled with fury and began to discuss what they might do to Jesus.

6:12 At that time Jesus went out to the mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God.

Luke 18:9 Jesus told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others.

18:10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed to himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.

18:12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

18:13 But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

18:14 I tell you, this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Matthew 6:1 But be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

6:2 So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

6:3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

6:4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

6:5 And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. I tell you, they have already received their reward.

6:16 And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. I tell you, they have already received their reward.

6:17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,

6:18 so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father who

is unseen. And your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 23:2 "For the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

23:3 Therefore, whatever they tell you to observe, observe and do. But do not do according to their deeds, for they say and do not do.

23:4 For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move one of them with one of their fingers.

23:5 Everything they do is done to be seen by others. They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long.

23:6 They love the place of honor at banquets and the front seats in the synagogues.

23:7 They love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called 'Rabbi.'

23:8 But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers.

23:9 And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.

23:10 Neither be called 'Teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ.

23:11 So the greatest among you must be the servant.

23:12 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

23:13 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

23:14 [Woe to you, hypocritical teachers of the law and Pharisees! You devour widows' houses and for a show make long prayers. Therefore you will receive a more severe judgment.]

23:15 You hypocritical teachers of the law and Pharisees! Woe to you! You travel over land and sea to make a single convert, and when you succeed, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.

23:16 You blind guides! Woe to you!

You are blind guides. Woe to you! You are bound by "the powers of this world," "the living things of this world," "regulations like 'Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,'" "human regulations and teachings," "self-righteous worship and ostentatious humility," "accompanied by bodily mortification," "appearing to be wise deeds," "all of these are things that will run out when used," "and in truth, they are of no use whatsoever in restraining the indulgent desires of the flesh."

Paul cuts straight to the heart of the matter, decisively criticizing and cutting away the

meaningless efforts filled with human pride and deception.

Unrestrained lusts. People seek self-gratification, turning inward. Though conscience should sense this breeds conflict with others, the nature of the flesh knows no bounds.

James

3:2 We all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

3:3 See how a horse is controlled: though it has a bit in its mouth, the rider can steer its whole body.

3:4 Or take a ship: though it is large and driven by strong winds, it is steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.

3:5 Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, yet it boasts of great things. See how a small fire can set a great forest ablaze.

3:6 The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. Among the parts of the body, it is the one that defiles the whole body, sets on fire the course of our life, and is itself set on fire by hell.

3:7 Every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

3:8 But no one can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

3:9 With it we bless our Father in heaven, and with it we curse people made in God's likeness.

3:10 Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be.

3:11 Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water?

3:12 Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt spring yield fresh water.

3:13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

3:14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.

3:15 Such wisdom does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.

3:16 Where there is envy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and every evil practice.

3:17 But the wisdom from above is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

3:18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

4:1 Where do the conflicts and quarrels among you come from? Do they not come from the desires that battle within your members?

4:2 You covet and cannot obtain, so you kill. You covet and cannot get, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

How can we guard against our innate nature, our unrestrained fleshly desires? How can a person be born again?

It is only by dying to the flesh and living by the Spirit.

John 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

3:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."

3:3 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, unless a person is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

3:4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, though you are now without the assurance of seeing him.

1 John 3:9 Whoever is born of God does not sin, for God's seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

3:10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

3:11 We ought to love one another. This is the message you have heard from the beginning.

Galatians 2:19 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2:20 The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. But now I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2:21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing.

Colossians 2:19 and do not hold firmly to the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its joints and ligaments, grows with God's growth. From this Head, the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

2:20 Since you have died with Christ to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you submit to regulations—

2:21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”— ...These things have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed worship and a false humility and severe treatment of the body, but they are of no value in restraining sensual indulgence.

3:1 Since you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3:3 For you have died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

You have been raised with Christ!!

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Seek the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

You have died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Christ is the essence of salvation. Christ is the foundation of the world. Let us not be swayed by fleeting joys and sorrows, but give thanks for Christ's salvation. Let us lift our eyes upward toward Christ, not be drawn to earthly things, and press onward looking only to Him who died and rose for us. For our life is surely hidden in the resurrected Lord Jesus, protected so that no one can lay a finger on it. We can courageously confront sin and evil and be victorious.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful. And let us serve God with reverence and awe, giving thanks.

12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

James 4:5 Or do you think it is a trivial matter when Scripture says, “God is jealous, and he desires your obedience”?

4:6 But God gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

4:8 Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

4:9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom.

4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

◇Prayer: **Heavenly Father God, we thank you for today's worship.**

As Romans 8 says, “What the law could not do because of the weakness of the flesh, God did.” None of us could keep and fulfill God's prescribed teachings. No one can boast of fulfilling God's law through their own deeds. Therefore, may we acknowledge our imperfection in wisdom, ability, and will, rely on the Holy Spirit as God's help, and always wait expectantly for His guidance. Please lead all those who suffer into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and our neighbors. Use us. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.