

# Risen But Dead Dead But Risen

Colossians 3:1-3

Rock Hill Baptist Church  
605 Rock Hill Road  
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Pastor David Buffaloe  
731-845-6104  
online at bibleteacher.org



**FOCAL Read Responsively** Colossians 3:1-3 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.**

I remember as a young child going on a “Snipe Hunt”. Have you ever hunted “Snipe”? The main thing you need to hunt snipe is a young ignorant boy. You take him into the woods at night, put a pillowcase in his hand, and tell him to repeatedly call out “Snipe, Snipe”. The theory is that the allusive and mysterious “Snipe” will eventually come out of the woods and run into your sack. May I say that this is a fool's errand, a trick played on gullible children for the amusement of others. And, by the way, it's not funny to the one holding the “Snipe Sack”!

I've done many useless things in my life. Some of these things – the Snipe Hunt, looking for Prop Wash or some other silly thing – I have been tricked into doing. Other useless things I have done because people antagonized or irritated me and I let my temper get the best of me. There is one thing I have never regretted doing, and that is **seeking the high ground of life.** What I'm going to tell you today isn't a “Snipe Hunt”, but it's the only way to joy and peace in this life. **Keep looking upward. Keep following the Risen Lord Jesus.** The Apostle Paul said in another place:

Philippians 3:13-14 ... **[this] one thing [I do], forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things**

**which are before, {14} I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

Listen Beloved: Christianity is a high calling of God. We who have been saved are called to live resurrected lives because the Resurrected Savior lives in us. The main focus of the believer is to always remember **“If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above”**. Seek the high ground. Follow Christ. Glorify God with your whole heart. God inhabits the praises of His people (**Psalm 22:3**) and demands of us whom He has saved that we glorify Him in all that we do. The Lord says **“I will be sanctified [set apart or magnified] in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified” (Leviticus 10:3)**. If His people glorify Him, if His people lift Him up, then God has promised to bless them in all that they do. He tells us:

**2 Chronicles 7:14** If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Look at the command of God. **Humble yourselves. Pray. Seek God's face. Repent of sin. Turn from wickedness.** Isn't that what we are told in our Colossians text. **“Seek those things which are above”**. The first command Jesus ever gave was **“Baptize Me” (Matthew 3:15)**. The second command He gave was to Satan when He said **“Get away from Me, Satan, God alone is to be**

**worshiped and served” (Matthew 4:10)**. His third command was **“Repent, turn away from your sins, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17)**. His fourth command was **“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19)**. Everything that Jesus did focused on seeking the high ground – and He expects His people to follow Him. We should follow Him in baptism. Though Jesus Christ was sinless and pure He was baptized because His Father desired it. **“I must fulfill all righteousness”**. His baptism did not save Him, but it was an outward testimony of His obedience to God. Jesus knew who His enemy was, and Who God was. He would not bow the knee to Satan nor to sin, but rebuked Lucifer soundly. **“You are not God – only God is to be worshiped. Get out of here!”** Jesus never compromised the Gospel of salvation. In this day many people want the Church to condone sin rather than condemn it. Jesus always followed the high ground of Godliness. **“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Turn away from your sin, and turn to God. There is a Door to Heaven, and I Am He. There is a Way to Peace with God and I Am He. The way you are taking will only lead you to the low ground. Come unto Me, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28; John 14:6)**. God never saves a person *in* their sin, but saves them *from* their sin. Once saved, you are to **follow Christ**. Christ has risen from the dead and you, O Believer, have been raised with Him. Keep looking up. Keep following Christ, and He will abundantly bless your life.

**A Christian Is A Person Quickened  
Together With Christ**

**FOCAL** Colossians 3:1 **If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.**

Our text begins with “**IF**<sup>1</sup> ye then be risen with Christ”. This is really not the best way to translate this word. Paul is not questioning the salvation of the Colossians – which is what IF implies – but is saying **SINCE you are risen with Christ**. The Christian is a person who, upon believing in Jesus Christ and all that Christ claims to be true:

- ◆ That He is the Only Lamb of God
- ◆ That He is Your Personal Savior
- ◆ That He is the One Who takes away your sin
- ◆ That I am a sinner
- ◆ That Christ died for me and rose again
- ◆ That Christ gives me eternal life

that person is **quicken**ed or **made alive** by God. You were in a state of spiritual death prior to your salvation. You were hopelessly and helplessly lost, and unable to do anything to make yourselves better.

You have all, I am sure, been to funerals. In this area the pastor always leads the funeral procession. He walking in front of the casket as the dead body is brought into the

---

1 Robertson (Word Studies in the Greek New Testament) states: Condition of the first class, assumed as true, like that in [Colossians 2:20](#) and the other half of the picture of baptism in [Colossians 2:12](#) and using the same form *sunēgerthēte* as then which see for the verb *sunegeirō*.

Associative instrumental case of *Christōi*.

assembly of the Church. The pastor drives so as to lead the hearse to the funeral site. Now I mean no disrespect here, but I cannot remember one funeral where, at the end of the eulogy, I turned to the casket and said “Do you have any words that you would like to add?” I cannot remember one time when, at the completion of the sermon, the body of our beloved dead sat up and said “May I add a few words?” It’s just not possible. The loved one has departed from that body and has went to be with the Lord. We now consider that body to be *physically dead* - and that which is dead cannot contribute to the living.

Just as the physically dead cannot contribute to the physically living, the *spiritually dead are different from the spiritually alive*. The day you called upon Jesus the Holy Spirit of God visited you and *made you spiritually alive*. The Bible calls this “**quicken**ed” or “**quicken**ing”.

**Ephesians 2:5-6 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by (grace ye are saved;) {6} And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:**

You were spiritually dead. Now you are spiritually alive. You were bound under the corruption of trespasses and sins. Now you are made alive, and freed from slavery to sin. You are **quicken**ed together with Christ. Christ is resurrected from physical death, you are resurrected from

spiritual death. Christ has been raised to Heaven, **and our quickening has raised us up together with Him.** We are creatures made to **sit in Heavenly places.** We are no longer servants of hell!

**Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;**

You are **quickened together with Christ, and have been forgiven every trespass you made against the Eternal and Immortal God.** Yes, you are still enclosed in this “body of sin”. Yes, this weak and mortal flesh still holds us. But Beloved, the God **Who searcheth the hearts (Romans 8:27)** no longer considers you a child of hell, but willingly and freely accepts you as a Child of Heaven, and Eternal Son, one who has been promised

1 Peter 1:4-5 ... **an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, {5} Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation** ready to be revealed in the last time.

**Illustrate** Your Heaven is secure, reserved for you. **You are kept, guarded, by the very God Who upholds this universe.** Think about that for just a moment. Think of just the **sun.** The sun is like a vast hydrogen bomb. *Every second, 4 million tons of hydrogen are destroyed*

*in explosions* within the sun - did you hear what I said - *4 million tons!* Yet the sun continues to burn day after day. The center of the sun is so radioactive that a piece of it the size of a pinhead would be "hot" enough to kill a man 100 miles away - yet the sun remains whole.

**You can fit a million earth inside of our sun, yet our sun is actually quite small compared to the red star Antares.** *Fifty million of our suns could fit inside of Antares.* But Antares isn't anywhere near as big as the Milky Way galaxy. Billions of stars, including super giants like Antares, as well as countless comets and asteroids, make up the Milky Way galaxy. But the Milky Way galaxy isn't anywhere near as big as the universe. *There are billions of other galaxies in the universe.* And yet, filled with billions of galaxies, the universe is almost totally empty. The distances from one galaxy to another are beyond our imagination.<sup>2</sup>

**It is this God Who keeps you, Who guards your salvation. You are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.** What do we need to fear? Saved by faith, you are called into service to Him.

### **The Living Should Not Walk With The Dead**

**FOCAL** Colossians 3:1-2 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.**

<sup>2</sup> Contemporary Illustrations For Preachers, Teachers, & Writers Editor Craig Brian Larson, Baker Books, p. 83

We who are **born again** are called to **seek those things which are above**. The word translated “seek<sup>3</sup>” is a Greek word which means “**keep on passionately seeking**”. This word can have a negative or a positive thrust. For instance, when the Angel Gabriel came to Joseph he told him:

**Matthew 2:13 ... Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.**

Herod was *passionate* about keeping his throne, and wanted to kill the baby Jesus because he saw the Lord as a threat to that throne. Evil passion drove this spiritually dead creature. Listen Beloved: when God saved you He changed your appetites. Our passion should be Heavenward. That which drives the Christian should be a willingness to love the Lord Who saved Him. Jesus said:

**Matthew 6:33 But seek<sup>4</sup> ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**

By the way, the above use of the word “seek” is *exactly*

3 Present Active Imperative of G2212, ζῆτέω, zēteō, dzay-teh'-o, Of uncertain affinity; to *seek* (literally or figuratively); specifically (by Hebraism) to *worship* (God), or (in a bad sense) to *plot* (against life): - be (go) about, desire, endeavour, enquire (for), require, (X will) seek (after, for, means). Compare G4441.

4 This is *exactly the same word, the same Tense, Voice, and Mood of the verb* as is found in our focal text (see footnote above) or G2212, ζῆτέω, zēteō

the same word as is used in our focal text in Colossians. The Lord said “**keep on passionately pursuing the things of the Kingdom of God. If you will do that, all these other things (the blessings of God on your life) will be yours!**”

Where's your passion? Is it on worshiping and pleasing the Lord, or is it in worshiping and pleasing yourselves or those around you? The Eternal God could have taken you to Heaven at the point of your salvation. Like Enoch of old you could have have been ...

**Hebrews 11:5 ... translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him:** for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Nothing stopped God from translating you, from taking you to Heaven. “**You who were far off are made close to God by the blood of Christ**” (Ephesians 2:13). Nothing keeps you from Heaven. But God in His infinite wisdom decided to leave you on this earth so that you could lead others to Him. You should not spend this precious moment of time that God has allotted to you to work for Him in doing foolish, dead things. **Living creatures are called to serve the Living Lord.**

**Illustrate** Two cars met on a narrow one-way bridge. One man leaned out of his window and yelled, “I never back up for fools!” The other called out, “I

always do," as he reverses his automobile.<sup>5</sup>

The most important thing a Christian can do is **the Will of God**. Our passion should be to do His Will. When our Jesus walked this earth *even as a child* He repeatedly said:

**Luke 2:49 [do you not know] that I must be about my Father's business?**

His Father's business was not carpentry. That was Joseph's business. Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to save souls. He was more concerned about saving souls than He was in eating or drinking. He said:

**John 4:34 ... My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.**

Jesus left the splendor of Heaven because He is **passionate about you. His love for you consumes Him.** He said:

**John 6:38-40 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. {39} And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. {40} And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which**

**seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.**

The Son was passionate enough about us that He was willing to die for us. The Heavenly Father is passionate enough about us that He sent His dear Son to give Himself for us. The Spirit of God is passionate enough about us that He is willing to live inside of *every believer quickened by faith*. He stays with us, interceding for us, praying for us, guiding us.

How dare we ever take the low road? How dare we ever choose hate over love, disunity over harmony, division over the Body, self over the Savior? Beloved, we are called into Light. Let us walk as Children of Light.

**Ephesians 5:7-10 Be not ye therefore partakers with [the unbelieving world]. {8} For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: {9} (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) {10} Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.**

and again:

**1 Thessalonians 5:4-5 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. {5} Ye are all the children**

<sup>5</sup> from Dr. Joe McKeever,  
<http://www.joemckeeper.com/mt/archives/000590.html>

**of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.**

Let others see you pursuing the high ground, the high calling of Christ. You are no longer dead in trespasses and in sin. Walk as children of light.

**Illustrate** Gibbie McMillan, Baptist Men's and Disaster Relief Director for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, tells of something that happened in his pastorate some years back.

"We had had a great worship service, and 12 people had made decisions for the Lord. I was sky high. As I was standing at the door, shaking hands with the people as they left, a woman came up to me with her eyes blazing. She said, 'I'm not going to stand for it! If it happens again, I will not be back at this church!'"

Gibbie continued, "I wondered what in the world could have upset her so much. As she ranted and raved, I just stood there placidly. Finally, I turned and looked all around me. She said, 'What are you doing?' I said, 'Trying to figure out what you're talking about.' She said, 'What I'm talking about is that tie you're wearing!'"

Gibbie said, "I reached up and pulled the tie off and handed it to her. I said, 'If this tie ever comes to church again, you'll be wearing it!'"<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.joemckeever.com/mt/archives/000590.html>

**Illustrate** Dead things pollute the air with their decomposing smells. One of the worst smells I can think of is the smell of a Tennessee skunk newly run over on the highway. You had better *immediately* turn off your air conditioner if you see the corpse of one of those little victims. Though dead, if you pass over it the stench will quickly fill the interior of your car. Dead things pollute the world of the living. If you are called into New Life, see to it that you are not a polluter!

**If You Are Saved, Consider Yourself  
Dead To This World**

**FOCAL** Colossians 3:2-3 **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.**

Passion always follows action. The words "set your affection"<sup>7</sup> in the above text is actually the command "keep on exercising your mind over". The New International Version translates this verse as:

Colossians 3:2 **Set your minds on what is above, not on what is on the earth.**

<sup>7</sup> Present Active Imperative of G5426, φρονέω, phroneō, *fron-eh'-o*, From G5424; to *exercise the mind*, that is, *entertain* or *have a sentiment or opinion*; by implication to *be* (mentally) *disposed* (more or less earnestly in a certain direction); intensively to *interest oneself* in (with concern or obedience): - set the affection on, (be) care (-ful), (be like-, + be of one, + be of the same, + let this) mind (-ed, regard, savour, think.

**Illustrate** If you are saved, your minds should be set on Christ. If you were a television, that's that channel that you ought to be tuned into at all times. When the Apostle Paul was being attacked for loving the Lord, he did not focus his mind on the attacks – **but He focused on Heaven**. Look what he said:

**Romans 8:18 I consider<sup>8</sup> that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.**

“Yes, I've suffered. The Churches I founded have often turned against me. People I thought were friends betrayed me. But O, I've looked upward and seen my Risen Savior. I know the glory that shall be revealed in me one day *because of Him* is unimaginable! That's where I look.” When Paul was tempted to put himself first *he changed channels* and looked upward. He said:

**Philippians 2:3-5 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. {4} Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. {5} Let**

---

8 Present Middle Indicative of G3049, λογίζομαι, logizomai, *log-id'-zom-ah-ee*, Middle voice from G3056; to *take an inventory*, that is, *estimate* (literally or figuratively): - conclude, (ac-) count (of), + despise, esteem, impute, lay, number, reason, reckon, suppose, think (on).

**this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:**

The world says “me first” but Heaven cries “**we have the mind of Christ. Be like Jesus in all things. Seek the high ground. Set your mind on the high ground.**” Paul left everything to serve Jesus, but gained everything by serving Jesus. Nothing mattered to him but the praise of the Lord Who saved him. He said:

**Philippians 3:7-10 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. {8} Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, {9} And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: {10} That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;**

If you are saved, **consider yourselves dead to this world**. You're still in this world, yes, but your home is above. One day you will stand before Jesus. If you have been saved you will not be cast away, but every work

that you have done will be weighted on the scales of eternity. God will check that work to see its value. Did the work honor Him? If so, you will receive reward. If not, that work will be burned.

**1 Corinthians 3:14-15** If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

**{15} If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.**

God gave you two great gifts at the point salvation. He gave you eternal life – if you have believed in Christ. He also allowed you to live and to partner in this life with Him. Imagine that! We are given the opportunity to add to the Kingdom of Heaven. We are given a chance to win rewards and to win souls to the Kingdom. People watch God's Church. You are the Bible that the unsaved will read. What message are you giving the world? **Chuck Swindoll** wrote:

**Illustrate** “After His Sunday messages, the minister of a church in London got on the trolley Monday morning to go back to his study downtown. He paid his fare, and the trolley driver gave him too much change. The minister sat down and fumbled the change and looked it over, counted it eight or ten times. And, you know the rationalization, "It's wonderful how God provides." He realized he was tight that week and this was just about what he would need to break even, or at least enough for his lunch. He wrestled with himself all the way down that old trolley trail that led to his office. And finally he came

**to the stop and he got up, couldn't live with himself, walked up to the trolley driver, and said, "Here you gave me too much change. You made a mistake." The driver said, "No, it was no mistake. You see, I was in your church last night when you spoke on honesty, and I thought I would put you to the test."**<sup>9</sup>

The world puts us to the test every day. Will you stand up for Jesus? Will you look up to God, dear believer, and live your lives for Him?

And if you do not truly know Christ as Savior and Lord, will you join with us today? God loves you, you know? May He by His Spirit touch your hearts and lead you to His side.

---

<sup>9</sup> The Tale Of The Tardy Oxcart Charles R. Swindoll, Word, p. 304.