

**“Christ Is All and In All”  
Paul’s Call to Be Renewed in Christ  
(Col. 3:5-11)**

**Intro: What is the ultimate goal or purpose of our lives as Christians? To go to heaven? Yes! To be a part of the church? Yes. But how did Paul answer that question in his letter to the Colossians?**

**If we follow Paul’s argument in the book of Colossians we can see that it flows logically and persuasively toward a clearly defined goal. We see:**

**Paul’s thanksgiving for the Colossians conversion to Christ**

**Paul’s prayers their commitment to Christ.**

**Paul’s portrayal of the preeminence of Christ.**

**Paul’s credentials as an apostle of Christ.**

**Paul’s exhortations to hold fast to Christ**

**Now to what end or purpose has Paul said all these things? Let’s see what the evidence suggests.**

*Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:5-11)*

***The call to be renewed in Christ***

*One cannot read this paragraph without seeing the analogy between the first physical creation and a second spiritual creation.*

**Renewed according the image of Christ!**

*In the first creation, mankind was “made in the image of God” (Gen. 1:26).*

*In this second creation, the Christian is “being renewed according to the image of the one who created Him”.*

**Renewed by the word of God!**

*In the first creation a lifeless body became alive through the energizing breath of God!*

*In the second creation a spiritually lifeless man is quickened by the indwelling word of God!*

**Renewed to oneness in Christ!**

*In the first creation mankind was made one and diversity came from that oneness (i.e. all the distinctions of race, ritual, language, status*

*came about). In this second creation, Christians in all their former diversity are again made one again in Christ!*

This is a oneness that is not based on race—“no distinction between Jew and Greek”.

This is a oneness that is not based on ritual—“no distinction between circumcised and uncircumcised”.

This is a oneness that is not based on language—“not distinction between barbarian, Scythian”

This is a oneness that is not based on status—“no distinction between slave and freeman”.

*This is a oneness that is based on two essential things!*

The preeminence of Christ over everything!—“Christ is all!”

The presence of Christ in everyone!—“Christ is in all!”

**Paul affirms that the church is a new creation of God in which Christ Himself as the fullness of the divine nature bodily (Col. 2:9) is all and in all! Like Adam, He is the head of a new creation of humanity who exalt Him as preeminent and imitate Him in all things! This is the goal and purpose of Paul’s letter! This is the overarching conception of the Paul’s letter to the Colossians.**

**But what does this mean practically?**

**Being in the new creation means first of all that we must lay aside anything that Jesus wouldn’t do!**

**Everyone is familiar with the positive principle WWJD; but maybe we ought to make another bracelet “WWJND”!! As part of the new creation there some things that disciples must lay aside in order to be made in the image of Christ.**

**We must lay aside sins of lust**

*Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.*

Already Paul had stressed that disciples “die” to the old man. Now he exhorts them to make that principle practical—“Consider them dead!”

The first category of sins is of a sensual or sexual nature (Paul uses various terms that call attention to sexual misconduct in its various aspects).

Fornication—every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse

Uncleanness--moral uncleanness or impurity suggesting that “dirty” nature of sexual misconduct.

Passion—passion suggesting the emotional impulse that results in the sin

Evil desires—suggesting the intellectual predisposition upon which a person acts to become immoral

Covetousness which is idolatry—suggesting the inward motivation that targets a certain person for immoral activity.

Here the reference is to greed or avarice of a sexual nature as

suggested by the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment: You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. But here Paul enlarges that such greed is in fact just another form of idolatry—the idolizing of lust! Such sins invoke the wrath of God and the Colossians had lived in them. But now they are being called upon to lay them aside as “new” men!

**We must lay aside sins of anger**

*But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.*

Clearly these are various forms of selfish anger, not righteous indignation. Again Paul stresses a family of words that give emphasis to different aspects of sin:

Anger—the emotion of selfishness produced by another

Wrath—the acting out of anger

Malice—the inward bad feeling toward another

Slander & abusive speech—the outward verbal expression of anger; speaking against another (Greek word from which we get “blaspheme”); abusive speech

**We must lay aside sins of dishonesty**

*Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices*

It is interesting that Paul's list repeats the concerns of Jesus' own Sermon on the Mount as He appealed for an exceeding righteousness that puts away anger, lust, and dishonesty (Mt. 5).

**When we think of Jesus we cannot imagine Him in any of these sins.**

His approach for women was always pure. He loved them; but He did not allow Himself to act in lust.

His anger was a righteous indignation based on the honor of God, not a selfish one.

His speech and action were always honest

So we are called upon to put away the things that He did not practice!

**Conclusion: This is of course only the first part of the picture Paul gives; but the answer to our initial question is clear. The goal or purpose of our relationship to Jesus Christ is to experience a spiritual renewal in which the sins of the old man are laid aside and the character of Christ is put on!**

**How about us? Has the goal or purpose of the religion of Christ been achieved in us? Has it caused us to put away or lay aside the features of pre-Christian life?**