**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ Over Carnal Living**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 3:1-4**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to practice the responsibilities that overcome carnal living.**

**Sermon Proposition: The Christian has 5 responsibilities in prioritizing Christ over carnal living.**

**Introduction:** In Chapter 2, Paul warns of the various philosophies (human wisdom) of the false teachers, by stating that such practices offered no help in curbing sinful fleshly desires and indulgences. In Chapter 3-4:6, Paul provides the biblical remedies that effectively impact carnal living in the true believer’s life. These verses spell out some vital implications of the Supremacy of Christ in ethics and behaviors.

**I. Must stand on the new reality. V.1a**

**II. Must seek what is above. V.1b**

**III. Must set your mind upward. V.2**

**IV. Must sacrifice yourself continually. V.3**

**V. Must strive toward the future. V.4**

**I. Must stand on the new reality. V.1a**

 These commands contrast true spiritual living with the false spirituality promoted by the false teachers in Chapter 2. Believers must put their spiritual death and resurrection to new life into practice.

 (**Romans 6:8-14**)

 **Hebrews 5:14** But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

**II. Must seek what is above. V.1b** (Aim, Pursue)

 The focus and pursuit of the believer’s efforts and thoughts are the heavenly places where Christ dwells.

 **Psalm 110:1** The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

 Jesus Christ and what He provides is all the true believer needs for the new birth and spiritual growth.

 (**Romans 12:1-2**)

 **2 Corinthians 6:16-17** And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among *them*. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." **17** Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."

 **Philippians 2:15-16** that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **16** holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

 **Titus 2:11** For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

 The point is that Christian’s lives should be dominated by a pattern and practice of heavenly places, as we live out life on earth, we must bring heavenly direction to our earthly duties. “Seek” means to seek or strive for earnestly. (**Revelation 9:6; 1 Corinthians 7:27**) How does one know what’s going on in Heaven? The Scriptures, the life of Christ on earth, the early churches instruction.

 **Ephesians 1:3** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

 **Ephesians 1:3** puts it this way, Christian’s have been blessed with every spiritual blessing (“in heavenly places”). This refers to every spiritual enrichment needed for the spiritual life in Christ Jesus. The believer doesn’t have to ask for what is already available, but must apply them by faith.

 (**Joshua 1:3-4**)

 The **manner** or **sphere** of this enrichment is in Christ Jesus. The **place** of these “blessings” is in the heavenly realm, as opposed to the earthly realm of idols, human wisdom, legalism, mysticism, or asceticism.

 The place where we seek this, is where Christ currently is. He is sitting in the position of divine authority because He has completed the work of atonement, pleased the Father, and defeated the forces of evil and death itself.

 **Hebrews 2:14-15** Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

 **Ephesians 1:3**

 1. When: eternity past

 2. With what: every spiritual blessing

 3. Where: in the heavenly realm

 4. How: in and through Christ alone

 [**The Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament, p.616**]

**III. Must set your mind upward. V.2**

 (Focus, concentrating) (Keep on thinking on)

 That is the believer is to concentrate their focus on the eternal and not the temporal. Fix (your eyes) on not what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporal but what is unseen is eternal.

 **2 Corinthians 4:18** while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

 Life in this world of the physical, can only be lived with a mind set on Christ, and that life will be better, when Christian lives by an aim and a focus that is beyond this world, in the throne room of heaven, focused on the power and picture of the resurrected, ascended, glorified Christ.

 Paul is not pronouncing material things as evil in and of themselves. Every physical thing God created, including the body and sex is good in their proper use.

 **Genesis 1:27-30** So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **28** Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." **29** And God said, "See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. **30** "Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for food"; and it was so.

 **1 Timothy 4:1-4** Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, **2** speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, **3** forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. **4** For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

 However, since having a physical body does give opportunity for the works of the flesh (morally) (**Romans 7:4-6 printed below**), Paul warns believers against setting and seeking one’s affections in this area and perverting God’s purposes for them.

 **Romans 7:4-6** Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another-- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. **5** For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. **6** But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

**IV. Must sacrifice yourself continually. V.3**

 At the moment of salvation, a Christian died to the evil of the “flesh,” the sin nature, but it was not removed. Also we died to the world (**Galatians 6:14**). (**Romans 6:3-8; Colossians 2:11**)

 **Galatians 6:14** But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

 The word “hidden” communicates the idea that God fully completed the action of salvation and sanctification in the past with permanent results. (**Ephesians 2:8-10**) The term “hidden” also implies both concealment and safety; also invisibility and security. The believer is not yet glorified, but he is secure and safe in Christ, Christ is the believer’s very life.

 **John 14:19** "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

**V. Must strive toward the future. V.4**

 Jesus in the future will be revealed in the fullness of His glory. This is a reference to the 2nd coming of Christ.

 **Revelation 19:11-13** Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. **12** His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. **13** He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. (Rev 19:13 NKJ) **Revelation 19:15** Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

 **Revelation 19:16** And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

 When this occurs, believers will also be gloriously revealed with Christ, this is the blessed hope we look forward to.

 **1 John 3:2** Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

 **1 Corinthians 13:12** For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

 **Colossians 1:27** To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

**Conclusion:**