

Theme: The power of the Christian life - with its heavenward goals and desires - is not found in our renewed efforts and promises to follow Him. The power for that new life is not in what we do but in what Christ Jesus has done. Until we know who we are "in Him" we will struggle with how we are to live "in Him."

Background:

Transition from how we used to live to how we must live.
The change is tied to what has happened to us in Christ.

Introduction:

- Most people view the Christian faith as a list of moral imperatives like "The Golden Rule" or the "10 Commandments"
- In truth, it rests on God's "declaratives" (3:3&4)

Where is the power of the Christian life? In our past, present and future with Him.

I. Where You Belong

A. Not to this world

- You died to the powers, patterns, and pressures of this world.

B. With Christ

1. Raised from the dead (3:1; 2:12&13)

- a. In Him Who is seated in power
 - At the right hand of God! (Acts 2:33-35; 5:31; Romans 8:4; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 3:21)
- b. With Him
 - United by faith to Him Who has all power and authority
- c. With Christ - in God
 - Unusual language, doubly secure
 - Divine security (cf. John 10:28&29)

2. Secure In Him

- a. Doubly secure
 - With Christ in God (3)
- b. We belong to Him and with Him
- c. "Hidden" in Him

C. Be a "Declaration" of Faith (2:12)

II. Where We Live (or maybe: How do we live?)

A. Pursuing "things above"

1. Seeking

- a. What do the Gentiles seek? (Matthew 6:25ff)
- b. What does the believer seek?
 - 1) Same things as the Gentiles?
 - 2) New desires, new purpose!
 - Storing treasure in Heaven (1:5)
 - Seeking fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22)

2. Setting our minds - Deliberate engagement to turn our minds toward Christ

- a. On things above
- b. On Christ!
 - To be imitators of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1)
 - Not "what He has" - but Who He is!

NOTE: This is Imperative! - and it is an "imperative"

- 3. By what means?
 - By the means of grace God has provided
 - B. And "earthly things"?
 - 1. Detachment from this world? OR
 - 2. Godly engagement
- NOTE: The challenge? To live knowing our life is hidden in Christ - but not hiding Christ.

III. Where We Will Be (4)

- A. When He returns...
 - When our "hope" (and that of all creation) is fulfilled (1:5; Romans 8:21)
- B. Christ is our life
 - Experiencing fully what we only know now in part (Philippians 1:21; 1 Corinthians 13:12)
- C. All revealed
 - 1. His glory is not now revealed - but veiled.
 - 2. Sharing perfectly in the resurrection (1 John 3:2-3)
- D. The consummation

IV. In the Meantime...

- Where is the power of the Christian life?
- Not in the imperative "do" - but in the declarative "done" with Christ in God!
- This is the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.