

## A Earthly or heavenly mindset?

### ❖ Our focus (Colossians 3:1-4)

- Starting from the reasoning that we have been raised with Christ in baptism (Col. 2:12), Paul urges us to follow Jesus to the place where he went after his resurrection: the throne of God (Col. 3:1).
- Of course, we will only be able to do this physically when Jesus takes us there at his Second Coming (Col. 3:4). In the meantime, we must set our sights—our goal—on heavenly things (Col. 3:2).
- We have “died,” and our life “is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). The life spoken of here is the one we receive when we accept Christ.
- But that life, to remain alive, needs to be nourished daily (2 Cor. 4:16). Every day we must seek the “things above,” “fixing our eyes on Jesus” (Heb. 12:2 NIV).

### ❖ Dying to earthly things (Colossians 3:5-6)

- Since we have risen with Christ and live thinking about the heavenly, we must put to death what prevents us from fulfilling our goal: the earthly.
- So that no one is mistaken, Paul points out the fundamental pillars of earthly thinking (which he will later develop in more concrete points): “sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry” (Col. 3:5 NIV).
- Human nature has not changed much since Paul’s time, as we are still surrounded by the same passions that violate both the letter and the spirit of the Ten Commandments.
- And why must we “put to death”—abandon, eliminate—these things from our thoughts and actions? Because they bring “the wrath of God” and are therefore incompatible with our heavenly nature (Colossians 3:6). Kill the earthly before the earthly kills you!

### ❖ To cloth oneself with the celestial (Colossians 3:7-11)

- In true proverbial style, Paul adds to the five pillars of earthly thinking five earthly acts to avoid: “anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene language” (Col. 3:8 NIV), and ends with a sixth act—the worst of all: “Do not lie to one another” (Col. 3:9 NIV).
- Paul assumes that we have already “put off the old self with its practices” (Col. 3:9 NIV). We have removed our “filthy clothes” when we have allowed Jesus to take away our sins (Zech. 3:4 NIV).
- Stripped of those garments, we need to put on “fine garments.” Clothed in these new garments, we are continually renewed, growing in holiness day by day (Col. 3:10).
- As we are renewed by the work of the Holy Spirit and the study of the Word, the barriers that separate us from one another disappear (Col. 3:11).

## B Characteristics of the new life in Christ:

### ❖ The bond of perfectness (Colossians 3:12-14)

- We are “God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved” (Col. 3:12 NIV). Peter tells us that this brings us great benefits and a great responsibility (1 Pet. 2:9). But how does one of God’s chosen ones behave (Col. 3:12-13)?
  - (1) With tender mercy
  - (2) With kindness
  - (3) With humbly
  - (4) With meekness
  - (5) With long-suffering
  - (6) Forbearing one another
  - (7) Forgiving yourselves
- And all of this within the context of the bond of perfectness: love (Col. 3:14). And these are our benefits and responsibilities:
  - (1) BENEFIT: By behaving this way, we are a blessing to both others and ourselves.
  - (2) RESPONSIBILITY: May our conduct glorify God, and may it encourage others to believe in and follow Jesus

### ❖ The heavenly Food (Colossians 3:15-17)

- Colossians 3:15-17 shows us how to feed our heavenly nature (and it turns out that we cannot feed it in isolation, but we need the fellowship of the church for this):
  - (1) Letting the peace of God rule us
  - (2) Remaining unanimous as one body
  - (3) Being grateful
  - (4) Studying the Bible extensively
  - (5) Teaching each other what we have learned
  - (6) Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
  - (7) Doing everything in the name of Jesus
- “Singing is a weapon we can always wield against discouragement. By thus opening our hearts to the rays of light from the Savior’s presence, we will find health and receive His blessing” (Ellen G. White, “The Ministry of Healing,” p. 196).