

## Expanded Report: Seek Things Above (Colossians 3:1-4)

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### Prologue: Setting Our Minds on Heavenly Realities

As the family gathered around the table for their evening study, Ryan opened the Bible to Colossians 3:1-4. In this passage, Paul urges believers to shift their focus from earthly things to heavenly realities, reminding them that their lives are now hidden with Christ in God. This powerful teaching calls Christians to live with an eternal perspective, setting their minds and hearts on the things that matter most in God's Kingdom.

“Tonight, we’re going to talk about how our union with Christ should change the way we live,” Ryan began. “Paul encourages us to set our minds on things above, not on the things of this earth. When we understand that our lives are hidden with Christ, it transforms how we view everything around us.”

Ariel, ever curious, asked, “So, Paul is saying that we should focus on heaven more than on the stuff here on earth?”

“Yes,” Ryan nodded. “Paul is reminding us that our true identity and security are found in Christ, not in the temporary things of this world. When we focus on heavenly things, it changes how we live here on earth.”

Alice, holding Mr. Fluffernutter close, added, “So, it’s like when we think about heaven, it helps us make better choices here?”

“That’s right, Alice,” Yaya said. “When we remember that we belong to Christ and that He’s preparing a place for us in heaven, it helps us live in a way that honors Him now.”

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### Key Teachings: Setting Our Minds on Heavenly Things

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#### 1. Our New Identity in Christ

##### 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.”

- **Risen with Christ:**

Ryan explained, “Paul begins by reminding the Colossians that they have been ‘risen with Christ.’ This is a reference to the believer’s spiritual resurrection through faith in Jesus. When we trust in Christ, we are united with Him in His death and resurrection, and we have a new life in Him.”

Ariel asked, “So, we’re not the same as we were before we knew Christ?”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Our old self was crucified with Christ, and now we live in the power of His resurrection. This new life in Christ should shape how we live and what we focus on.”

- **Our Position in Christ:**

Yaya added, “Being ‘risen with Christ’ means that we share in His victory over sin and death. Our new identity is in Christ, and this identity should guide how we think, live, and relate to the world.”

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## 2. Seeking Heavenly Things

### Colossians 3:2

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”

- **Setting Our Minds on Things Above:**

Ryan emphasized, “Paul encourages believers to ‘set their affection on things above.’ This means we should focus our hearts and minds on eternal things, not on the temporary things of this world. Our hearts should be directed toward God, His Kingdom, and the eternal life He promises.”

Ariel asked, “What are the ‘things above’ that we should focus on?”

“The things above are God’s truth, His promises, our relationship with Him, and the future we have with Christ in heaven,” Ryan explained. “These are the things that last forever and should be our priority.”

- **Avoiding Earthly Distractions:**

Yaya added, “When Paul says ‘not on things on the earth,’ he is warning us not to get caught up in the temporary things that can distract us from our true purpose. Earthly things like wealth, status, and even worries about daily life are fleeting. But heavenly things are eternal.”

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## 3. Our Lives Are Hidden with Christ

### Colossians 3:3

“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

- **Our Life is Hidden in Christ:**

Ryan explained, “Paul says that ‘your life is hid with Christ in God.’ This means that, as believers, our true life is now in Christ. Our security and identity are found in Him, and no one can take that away. We are safe and secure in God’s hands.”

Ariel asked, “Does that mean we are protected in Christ?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “Being hidden in Christ means that our ultimate protection and security come from Him. Our lives are safe in God, and nothing can separate us from His love.”

- **Dying to the Old Self:**

Yaya added, “Paul also says that we are ‘dead.’ This refers to the fact that, in Christ, our old sinful nature is dead. We no longer live according to our old desires. We are now alive to God, and our life is found in Christ.”

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## 4. Christ Is Our Hope of Glory

### Colossians 3:4

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

- **Christ, Our Life and Hope:**

Ryan explained, “Paul reminds us that Christ is not just part of our life—He is our life. Everything about us is centered on Him. And one day, when Christ returns, we will be revealed with Him in glory. Our hope is that we will share in His eternal glory.”

Ariel asked, “So, when Christ comes back, we’ll be with Him forever?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “That is the ultimate hope of every believer—that we will be with Christ in glory forever. Our lives now should reflect that hope.”

- **Living with Eternal Perspective:**

Yaya added, “When we understand that Christ is our life and our hope, it changes how we live. We begin to live with eternity in mind, knowing that the things we do now will have eternal consequences.”

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## 5. The Key Teaching: Union with Christ Transforms Our Priorities and Perspectives

### Key Teaching:

The key teaching in this passage is that our union with Christ changes everything about how we live. When we are united with Christ, our priorities and perspectives shift. We no longer live for earthly things, but we set our hearts and minds on the things above—on God’s Kingdom, His truth, and the hope of eternal life. Christ’s resurrection and glory are now our ultimate hope, and this transforms how we view everything else.

Ryan summarized, “Paul is teaching us that our lives are now hidden in Christ. Our identity, security, and hope are all in Him. This should change what we focus on, what we value, and how we live each day.”

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### Practical Applications: Living with a Heavenly Focus

The family discussed how they could apply the teaching of focusing on heavenly things in their daily lives:

1. **Setting Our Minds on Christ’s Kingdom:**

Ariel suggested, “We can start each day by thinking about God’s promises and the hope we have in Christ. We can focus on the things that matter most to Him.”

Alice added, “I can remember that Jesus is the most important thing in my life and that I want to live for Him.”

2. **Living with an Eternal Perspective:**

Ryan encouraged them, “Let’s live each day with the awareness that our true home is in heaven.”

The things we do now—helping others, loving God, sharing the Gospel—will have eternal value.”

### 3. **Finding Security in Christ Alone:**

Yaya reminded the family, “When we feel anxious or uncertain, we can remember that our life is hidden with Christ. He is our security and our hope. Nothing on earth can take that away.”

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#### **Takeaway: Union with Christ Changes Our Priorities**

As the family reflected, Yaya shared a story of a time when she was focused on earthly concerns but was reminded to set her mind on Christ. “There was a time when I was consumed with worries about work and things that didn’t really matter in the long run. But when I refocused on Christ and His promises, I found peace,” she said.

Ariel smiled. “So, when we remember that Jesus is our life, it changes how we think about everything?”

“Yes,” Ryan said, “and when we focus on Christ, we live with purpose, peace, and hope, knowing that our real life is in Him.”

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#### **Key Points Summary**

##### 1. **Our Union with Christ:**

- Believers are spiritually united with Christ, and this union transforms our identity, our priorities, and our perspective on life.

##### 2. **Focusing on Heavenly Realities:**

- We are called to set our minds on things above—God’s Kingdom, His truth, and the hope of eternal life. These should be our greatest focus.

##### 3. **Christ as Our Life and Hope:**

- Christ is not just a part of our lives; He is our life. We live with the hope of His return, when we will share in His glory.
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#### **Key Verse:**

**“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”** (Colossians 3:2)

This passage teaches us that our union with Christ should transform our priorities and how we live. By setting our minds on the things above, we live with a heavenly perspective, focusing on eternal truths and the hope of glory that we have in Christ.