

Notes on Colossians 2:16 - 3:4. Freedom in Christ. 15/5/22

Context. 2:13-15. God took the initiative to make them (us) alive with Christ even when they were 'dead in their sins' (see Eph. 2:1-10). God forgives us all our sins, through the death of Christ. Through the death of Christ (in our place, implied) God cancelled our legal debt so our sins could be forgiven (Gal. 3:13; 2 Cor. 5:21) and we could live new lives in fellowship with Christ. How do we practice holiness – the Christian life?

1. 2:16-19. 'Therefore...' Believers have a new freedom because they have been made 'alive with Christ'. God has made them new people through Christ therefore they are now able and called to live new lives. Paul indicates that we need to first recognise who we are, which is inextricably linked to Christ.

2. 2:20-23 'Since you have died with Christ ...' Paul says, why do you submit to all sorts of rules and regulations to try and achieve holiness. If we have died with Christ, we have received God's forgiveness (Col. 1:13-14). and are set free from the bondage of sin and from trying to win His favour. As those who have been reconciled to God through Christ's death, we are declared holy (1:22). This frees all believers from the need to follow the rules and regulations of the old covenant. Other rules and regulations created to bring holiness are also unable to ensure holiness.

3. 3:1-3 'Since you have been raised with Christ...' So as holy people we are to live holy lives. We are to practise – to learn to be who we are. Christians are to actively resist attitudes and behaviour which belongs to this earth (to our old life) and to actively pursue those attitudes and behaviours which characterise the new risen life (Christ-like actions). As members of God's new family believers are now to **live as members** – live the new risen life. This new life is the starting point of the daily battle with temptation, and the need to put our daily trust in Jesus Christ.

4. 3:4. 'When Christ, who is your life, appears...' Living our lives in fellowship with Christ and serving him prepares us to be with him in glory forever.

Reflection/Response. What has changed since we have died with Christ? What does it mean to live having been raised with Christ? BB