

Women's Bible Study – Fall 2018
Colossians: Because of Christ
Juli Fischer – Oct. 31, 2018



Last week Angie left us with these verses.....

You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!" Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires.

So what are we to do? You can try to:

- write in a gratitude journal every day,
- read great books,
- or meditate for long periods of time,
- or train for a marathon, but none of these will touch your wickedness that lurks inside of you.

I have four pictures to show you. See if you can find a common theme.

Pictures of: 1. Football

I have grown to enjoy football a lot!

2. Race

3. Hair in curlers

I remember going with my mother on Friday mornings during the summer to Lou Ann's so she could get her hair done.

4. Table setting

In the first photo- they are set, they are ready, they should not be moved or they will be flagged with offside or a false start.

In the second, they are also set, ready to launch. They also could get a false start.

In the third photo her hair is set. My memories of my mom and her hair not budging!

In the fourth, the table is set. Everything in its proper place. Ready to be used.

The common verb here is to set.

The word set as a verb means to put, lay, or stand something in a specified place. Now we can see what Paul has to say about keeping away from harmful or worldly things. He says in chapter 3, first three verses-

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

I am to set my heart and my mind on things that matter for eternity because Jesus is so wonderful. I am to do an action, not be laissez - faire about it, and the action is to SET our hearts and minds, or put them where they belong. I am to put my heart and mind in a specific placeeternity. Thinking about eternity changes our perspectives. Why does it change? The wonderfulness of eternity with Jesus makes our challenges worthwhile. For example, the Wilsons are here again for a new cancer treatment. And for someone like Karla, who knows very little about the gospel, eternity changed her. Illustration about Karla.

Or maybe it involves the normal day to day worries or concerns we have regarding ourselves or our families.

Some of my questions--

1. When will we retire and will we have enough?
2. Will all of my kids get married? Especially my girls?
3. What should we do about keeping or selling our house?

I find my concerns often go to some sort of security, both for ourselves and for our children. When I am getting worried about something that only affects this world, these verses in Luke always change me. I read these verses to remind myself to SET my mind and heart in the right place.

Jesus said in Luke 12-

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

14 Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?"

15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

16 And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. 17 He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. 19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."'"

20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'"

21 "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Instead of obsessing about these things I should bring them to God each and every time they come to mind. It is hard to do this because my mind has big ruts that it is so easy to go down. Going to a new rut takes work.

But the work is necessary and valuable to be rich towards God.

"Setting" involves reading, praying, listening, singing, thanking, meditation, memorizing, loving, etc. It's being aware that God is fully in charge and we are fully unable to manage life on our own. It's about developing a relationship with God, not a to-do list.

Another important verse on setting our mind and hearts is:

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

I was a worrier as a young child and young adult. I remember being angry at my mom for telling me to go and read Philippians 4:8, which is another great verse for setting. Her favorite verse and I can attest to the fact that it worked.

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

And remember Colossians says we have died to this life and our real life is with God. Galatians 2:20 says-

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

We are not just doing this by ourselves. Our weak vessels are being used by the mighty God for His glory. The God of all and sustainer of all is willing to help us in our fragile state.

Now let's observe the verbs for the behaviors that are not good or right for us.

5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

1. Put to death, deaden, deprive of power
2. Rid yourself completely
3. Strip yourself

These are not weak or passive verbs. These are severe and require action.

Verbs for the right behaviors

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 and over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1. Clothe yourself
2. Be gentle and forbearing
3. Forgive
4. Put on love
5. Let peace rule
6. Give thanks
7. Sing
8. Do it all for God!

I see the work of a patient and loving God toward us in these verbs. They are not easy, but they are gracious. They are not passive, but they speak of dynamite!! We are deeply loved by a magnificent God. These are not behaviors to gain his love, but are an outpouring because of His love.

Let's put this to practical use. Think of something that regularly annoys you.

How can we set our minds and hearts? Go back to the verbs we used.

Joni was a great example.

And I found out my mother was right.

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