

United With God

Colossians 3:1–17 (NIV)

Because we are united with Christ, our old life has died and our new life must reflect the character of God.

A. Introduction

1. Good morning church. Today we continue our series in the book of Colossians.
2. And the message today is very direct: Where your mind goes, your life follows.
3. Christianity is not about behaviour modification. It is about mind transformation.
4. Because if the mind is not renewed...The life cannot be transformed.
5. The environment around us shapes us more than we often realise.
6. What surrounds our minds eventually influences our hearts.
7. And he said, "Even when I'm not there, I still think like I'm there."
8. Church, that is exactly how the world works. It gets inside your thinking.
9. Paul says: if you belong to Christ, your mind must be reprogrammed by heaven.
10. In Col 3:1 Paul says: "Since then you have been raised with Christ..."
11. That is identity. Not trying to become something. You already are in Christ.
12. Then he says: "Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is..."
13. And again: "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."
14. Church, that is not suggestion. That is instruction.

B. A New Identity Requires a New Lifestyle

1. Paul starts with identity: "You have been raised with Christ."
2. That means: Your starting point is not earth anymore. It is heaven.
3. Our feet remain on earth, but our identity, values, & direction come from heaven.
4. You are not trying to reach God. You are seated with Christ.
5. Every person's life is shaped by identity.
6. What we believe about ourselves influences how we live.
7. Christianity is not simply changing behaviour; it's a transformation of who we are.
8. Paul reminds believers You have been raised with Christ. Your old life has died.
9. Col 3:3 "For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."
10. Hidden means: protected secured anchored not easily shaken
11. Being united with God means:
 - a. Christ becomes our focus.
 - b. Christ becomes our foundation.
 - c. Christ becomes our example.

C. Look Up - Set Your Mind On Christ

1. We have been raised with Christ (Col 3:1)
2. What captures our attention shapes our affection, which then shapes our actions.
3. Salvation isn't an improvement of the old life; it's a new Christ created life.
4. The resurrection of Jesus brings a new direction, purpose, & new way of thinking
5. Don't let Earthly things control us, ensure eternal values shape decisions.
6. The question becomes: What controls my thoughts, priorities, and desires?
7. Christ is not an addition to life. Christ is life.

D. Look Back – Put Away The Old Life

1. A new identity requires leaving behind the old way of living.
2. Col 3:5: *“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature...”*
3. Paul lists attitudes and actions that destroy our relationship with God.
4. Then he says something powerful: *“You used to walk in these ways...”*
5. Meaning: That was your old life. - Not your current identity.
8. What you tolerate becomes what you normalize, which becomes what you live.
9. So Paul says: Put it to death. Not manage it. Not negotiate with it. Put it to death.
10. God accepts us in Christ, therefore, we put sin to death.
11. The old identity has been replaced. Paul pictures changing clothes Col 3:9–10
12. The believer removes the clothing of old life, putting on the character of Christ.
13. Colossians 3:11 *“Christ is all, and is in all.”*
14. Our greatest identity is we belong to Christ.

E. Look Within – Allow Christ To Transform Your Character

1. Now Paul says: *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people...”*:- Chosen. Holy. Loved.
2. *“...clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience.”*
3. A unified life with God produces these qualities.
4. Notice this: You don’t just take off the old life, You put on the new one.
5. Then Paul says: *“Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”* Colossians 3:13
6. The standard of forgiveness is not: *“Forgive when people deserve it.”*
7. The standard is: *“Forgive as Christ forgave you.”*
8. Forgiveness does not mean ignoring wrong or harmful behaviour
9. It means releasing personal revenge and trusting God’s justice.
10. Because Christ has changed us, we now live differently.
11. We put on Christlike qualities. Forgiveness becomes a mark of Christ’s people
12. And then: *“Put on love, which binds everything together in perfect unity.”*
13. Because love is not a feeling, it is the foundation of Christian living. (Col 3:14)
14. Love holds everything together, the garment that completes Christian character.

F. Look Out – Let Christ Influence Everything You Do

1. Now Paul goes deeper: *“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...”* Col 3:15
2. The peace of Christ isn’t an absence of storms; it’s a presence of Christ in storms.
3. You don’t live from earth up = You live from heaven down
4. You don’t react from old identity = You respond from new identity

G. Conclusion — Living Unified With God

1. Because we are united with Christ, seek Christ above everything else.
2. Remove the old ways of our former life & put on the character of Jesus.
3. The Christian life is not simply about trying harder.
4. It is about becoming who God has already made us in Christ.
5. Our identity changes first — then our lifestyle follows.
6. The question is not simply: *‘Am I trying to live like a Christian?’*
7. The deeper question is: *‘Am I allowing Christ to live His life through me?’*
8. Because when Christ becomes our life, transformation becomes our testimony.