

# Message Notes

Circumspect: The appearance of wisdom

# Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

**Introduction** – Lowertown gathering

**Introduction #2** - "Thank you, Moms!"

Outdated rules

## Today's Message:

*Be Circumspect: The "Appearance of Wisdom"*  
Colossians 2:20-23

What is *Being Circumspect* mean?

BQ: Why are you doing what you're doing?  
Col. 2:20

e.g. "Don't do \_\_\_\_\_!"  
Col. 2:21

per(s)nickety scrupulosity

Paul's evaluation: these rules are human tradition  
Col. 2:22

Matthew 15:1-9

Paul's evaluation: These rules are useless

Is this that big of deal?

How the church is known by the world

Asceticism in the New Testament

Freud's understanding of renunciation: It is impossible to overlook the extent to which a civilization is built upon renunciation of instinct.

The false dichotomy of Freud

How the gospel and the Spirit of God give us the only rule we need!

## Gospel Application –

- Are you feeling judged because of what you are doing or not doing?
- Do you trust the Bible's warning regarding human rules and traditions?
- How might you move forward today in the freedom that God gives to walk by his Spirit and love others?

## Colossians 2:20-23

20 Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: 21 "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? 22 These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining self indulgence.

## Matthew 15:1-9

1 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 2 "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!" 3 Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.' 5 But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is 'devoted to God,' 6 they are not to 'honor their father or mother' with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. 7 You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 8 " 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.'"

## Galatians 5:13-18

13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 15 If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.



# HOPE LOWERTOWN

ST. PAUL

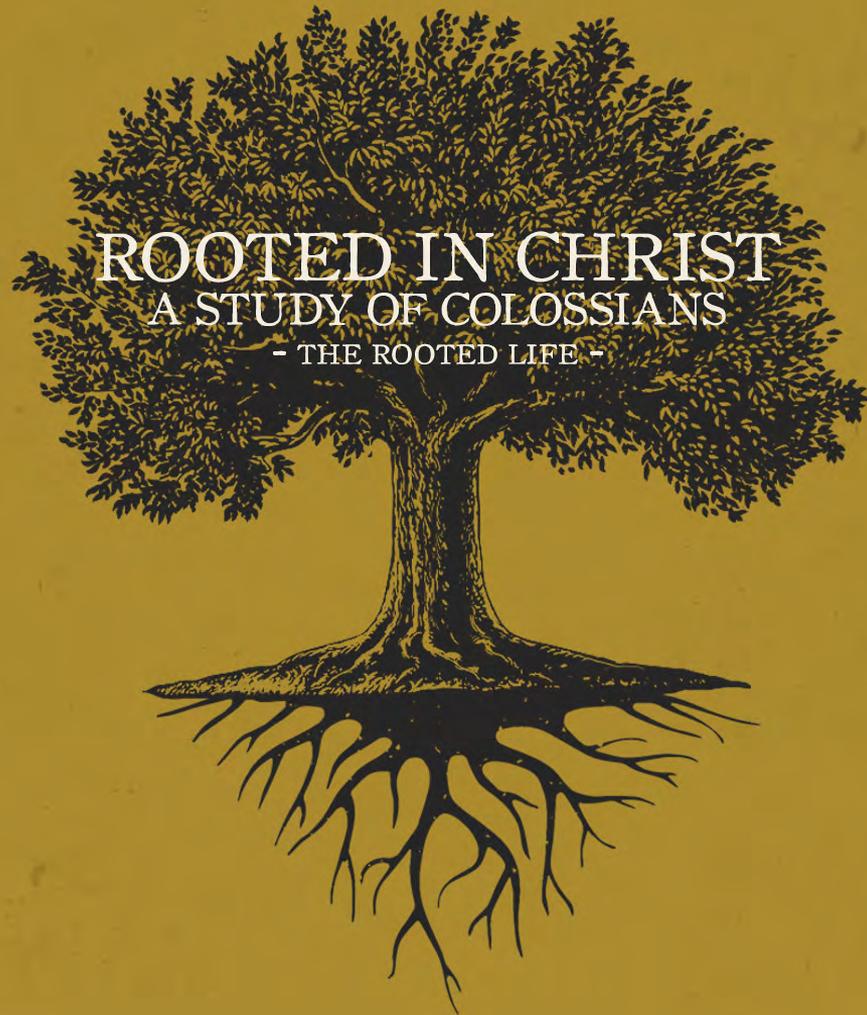
New Location  
Fall 2017

Informational Meeting  
May 21<sup>ST</sup> 11:00am  
Hope West Community Room



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ROOTED IN CHRIST  
A STUDY OF COLOSSIANS  
- THE ROOTED LIFE -

## Colossians 2:16-19

16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. 18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. 19 They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

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Paul is mocking them for their  
“per(s)nickety scrupulosity.”

~ J. L. (“L” stands for Leslie) Holden, *Paul’s Letters from Prison*, 199

**BQ: Why are you doing what you're doing?**

## Colossians 3:1-4

1 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.

4 When Christ, who is your life, appears,  
then you also will appear with him in glory.

# Words which change *everything*

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# The reality of being *with Christ*

“we’ve heard about your faith” ...1:4

“the word of the truth, the gospel, has come to you” ...1:5-6

“your love in the Spirit” ...1:8

“the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints” ...1:12

“not shifting form the hope of the gospel” ...1:23

“Christ in you, the hope of glory” ...1:27

“the firmness of your faith in Christ” ...2:5

“as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him” ...2:6

“you have been filled in Christ” ...2:10

# Set heart and mind above

## Colossians 3:1-2

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# Set heart and mind above

▼ ζητεῖτε zēteite

...een raised with Christ,

**set your hearts on** things above, where Chri...

🔊 ζητέω zēteō desire; seek; look for

verb, present, active, imperative, second person, plural | finite verb

Sense: [to seek](#) – to try to get or reach something one desires.

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Sense: [to seek](#) – to try to get or reach something one desires.

▼ φρονεῖτε phroneite

**Set your minds on** things above, not on earthly...

🔊 φρονέω 🗣️ phroneō think; set one's mind on

verb, present, active, imperative, second person, plural | finite verb

Sense: [to concentrate](#) – to direct one's attention and thought to something.

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# Set heart and mind above

## Matthew 16:21-23

21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

# Set heart and mind above

## Romans 8:5-7

5 Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

# Set heart and mind above

## Matthew 6:31-34

31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Paul calls believers to allow the things above, where Christ is, to direct their lives. These are the things that are ultimate and transcendent and contrast with the “philosophy’s” dependence on “the basic principles of this world” (2:8, 20), “human tradition” (2:8), and things “destined to perish with use” (2:22)...All of our lives should be ruled by Christ. Every thought, aim, value, aspiration, and striving should come under his lordship.



Garland, D. E. (1998). Colossians and Philemon (p. 201-202).  
Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

# Your past, present, and future

## Colossians 3:3-4

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# Your past, present, and future

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**Voldemort is my past, present, and future.**

“The Christian life is a process in which, through constant fellowship with the risen Christ and through the operation of his Spirit, the believer is transformed into his likeness, from one stage of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:18).”

G.B. Caird, Paul's Letters from Prison



“  
In Christ, you are.  
Seek him, you must.

If Yoda wrote the book of Colossians



**In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.**

#1 - HOW have you tried to set your heart  
and mind on things above?

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#1 - HOW have you tried to set your heart and mind on things above?

#2 - Because you set your heart and mind on things above, WHAT are some of the tangible benefits you've experienced in doing so?

What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#1 - HOW have you tried to set your heart  
and mind on things above?

“Reading my bible. Thinking acutely about God’s good  
character, his love for me, and how he showed that love for  
me.”

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#1 - HOW have you tried to set your heart  
and mind on things above?

1. By taking some time out in the morning to delight in who Christ is and what he's done for us.
  2. Throughout the day I meditate on his promises.
  3. I talk with my spouse of what God is doing in my life.
  4. In the morning I pray and try to surrender my will to his.

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#1 - HOW have you tried to set your heart  
and mind on things above?

“I ask myself, ‘Will this disagreement matter eternally (or even in a couple of days or hours)? Will this anxiety last forever? Is Christ not bigger than what I’m experiencing right now?’”

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#1 - HOW have you tried to set your heart  
and mind on things above?

“It’s a fight to set your mind on things above. It’s a conscious effort – a fight of faith. Ways in which I do this are listening to worship music, reading my Bible, listening to sermons, meditating on the promises of God, talking theology with friends, prayer, and trying to sanctify the things I do day after day.”

**In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.**

#2 - What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#2 - What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

“I have more freedom knowing that Christ sees all my days with grace rather than ‘good days’ or ‘bad days.’ I don’t feel burdened to live up to anything. I have peace knowing God is for me. To set your heart and mind on things above, that’s liberty from the weight that the world and culture presses into you each day to be a part of it.”

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#2 - What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

“Instead of self-loathing and self-condemnation, I now feel acceptance and patience and love and forgiveness from God. I am beginning to see myself through his eyes instead of my own and others.”

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#2 - What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

I don't have to worry about the future. I'm a college student and the future is very unclear, but I know that ultimately it doesn't matter what I do or where I go, as long as I'm serving the Lord.

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#2 - What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

“I have peace and no longer conform to the bondage of the performance life and I no longer hold people to it. It keeps me from condemning and makes it fun to give mercy and grace.”

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#2 - What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

“My biggest life problem is solved and any other earthly problem doesn't seem so big. My heart longs to follow Jesus and do all which he says is best for our souls. It gives my heart freedom to love those around me without expectation. It also gives me desire to lay down my life for others for the sake of the gospel.”

# In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.

#2 - What is to be gained for the Christian believer who regularly sets their heart and mind on things above?

I think what is to be gained is a perspective of keeping first things first things. When we place too much value on other things, as great as they may be, we begin to practice idolatry and fail to take God seriously. Soon, we are led so astray that we stop looking like Jesus. We need better music, we need better sound, we need building maintenance and new lighting, we need more dynamic preaching. We need, need, need. But we won't take the time to pray. We won't meditate on Scripture, and we won't engage our neighbors with the Gospel. First things first. Second things second. "Seek first the Kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you."

# Gospel Application

**In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.**

# Gospel Application

**In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.**

Are you in Christ?

# Gospel Application

**In Christ, you are. Seek him, you must.**

Are you in Christ?

Are you seeking him –  
setting heart and mind on things above?