

A Road Map to the Christian Life

A study by Steve Tillis



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The “With Christ” Life (Colossians 3:1-4)

Arrangement:

Therefore if you have been raised up **with Christ**,
keep seeking the things above,

where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on the things above,

not on the things that are on earth.

For you have died and

your life is hidden **with Christ** in God.

When Christ, who is our life,
is revealed,

then you also will be revealed **with Him** in glory.

Digging Deeper:

1. Notice the phrase “with Christ,” and it’s past, present and future implications.
2. *Raised up* – A past completed action, something that is true of you.
3. *Seeking* – Practically, to seek the things above, involves giving your attention to Jesus.
4. *Setting* – The best Christian lives come from minds that are fixed on heaven.

Questions:

1. What does it mean to be raised with Christ?
2. Why would someone need to “keep seeing things above,” and “set their minds on things above?”
3. How else might we describe the “with Christ” life?

Application:

1. What does this text teach me to believe?
2. What does this text teach me to do?

Quotes:

"Through Christ's Spirit, the believer is in complete union with the victory of Christ's resurrection, and he lives that resurrection presently in heavenly union with his beloved Savior, even as he continues to journey on earth."—William D. Dennison

O happy soul that lives on high
While men lie groveling here!
His hopes are fixed above the sky,
And faith forbids his fear.—Issac Watts

Taking Off the Ugly Clothes (Colossians 3:5-9a)

Arrangement:

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead

to immorality,
impurity,
passion,
evil desire,
and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,
and in them you also once walked,

when you were living in them.

But now you also, put them all aside: anger,

wrath,
malice,
slander,
and abusive speech from your mouth.
Do not lie to one another,

Digging Deeper:

1. Verse 5 is a vice list about sexual sins.
2. Verse 8 is a vice list about anger.
3. Verses 6-7 simultaneously encourage and humble us as believers.

Questions:

1. What does it mean to consider yourself dead?
2. Why do you think sexual sins and sins of anger are so predominant in the vice lists?
3. What do you think a world free of these two lists would look like? What do you think a church free of these two lists would look like?

Practice:

1. Walk yourself through the vice list given above and in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; and Ephesians 4:25-31. Spot the areas in which you frequently find yourself tempted and ask the Holy Spirit to convict and cleanse you of these sins.
2. Don't wait until you are on the conveyer belt to try to defeat temptation.
3. The following is an adapted list of affirmations from Kenneth Boa for defeating anger and sexual temptations.

Temptation to Anger

1. This is sin. (James 1:20)
2. I do not want to sin. (Ephesians 2:4-7)
3. I do not have to sin. (Romans 6:11)
4. God is in control. (Romans 8:28)
5. I will walk by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Sexual Temptation

1. I will damage my relationship with God and my family if I do this. (1 Corinthians 6:18)
2. I will not degrade this person but I will praise God for His glory and goodness.
3. I will find my sufficiency in God alone.
4. I am no longer under the power of sin. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

A New Humanity (Colossians 3:9b-11)

Arrangement:

since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices,

↳ and have put on the new self

↳ who is being renewed to a true knowledge

↳ according to the image of the One who created him—

a renewal in which there is no *distinction between*

↳ Greek and Jew,
circumcised and
uncircumcised,
barbarian, Scythian
slave and freeman,

but Christ is all, and in all.

Digging Deeper:

1. *Have put on* – We have been clothed with the robes of Christ's righteousness and now needs to practice what this privileged position entails.
2. *New self* – The new self is new because it has been created in the likeness of God.
3. *Renewed* – We are "constantly being renewed" to a new quality of life, which describes a process that will continue the rest of our earthly lives and is essentially synonymous with sanctification.
4. *True knowledge* – It pertains to both heart and mind, is experiential, and has God's holy will as its object. (Romans 12:2-note)
5. *No distinction* – Race, standing, culture, and social caste.

Questions:

1. Has the new nature been put on you?
2. What's the difference between true knowledge and false knowledge?
3. What makes it possible to treat all people as equal?

Cross References:

1. (Psalm 51:10; Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:26-27; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 45-49; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:16)
2. (1 Corinthians 7:17-24, 12:13; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:15)

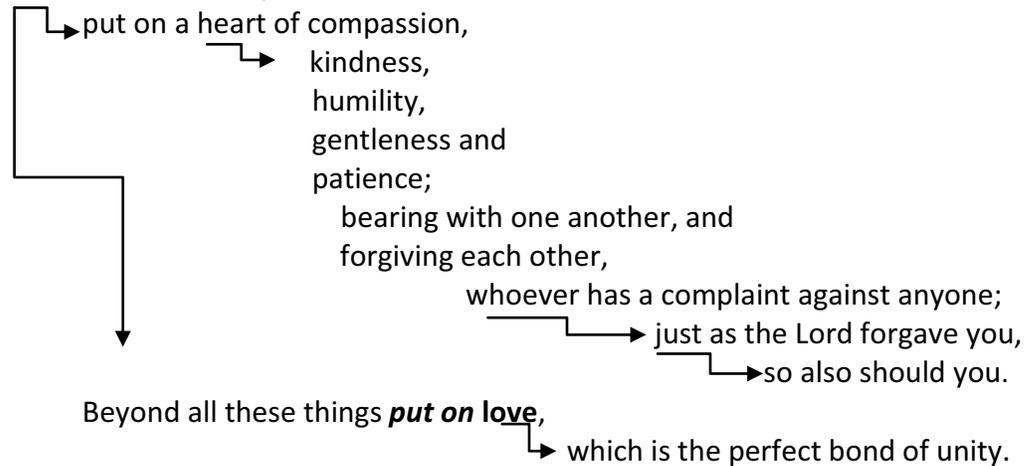
Practice:

1. Try to be Christ to all people and see Christ in all people.
2. Begin embracing those who are different than you at church through service and physical contact.
3. Remind yourself everyday that you are a new person in Christ.

A New Morality (Colossians 3:12-14)

Arrangement:

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved,



Quotes: “What we do flows out of who we are.”—Dunnam
 Barclay calls the qualities found in this passage “garments of Christian grace.”

Digging Deeper:

1. *Compassion*: Christian care motivated by a heart of love.
2. *Kindness*: Holding your neighbor’s good as dear as your own.
3. *Humility*: “Of the earth,” hummus, humble. A pervasive sense of who you are in God’s kingdom.
4. *Gentleness*: Self-controlled because you are God-controlled.
5. *Patience*: Long-tempered.
6. *Forbearing and forgiving*: To refrain from anger, to back off. Forgiveness is at the center of our Christian experience and is the model for how we treat others.
7. *Love*: The will to good for another. It is the most excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:31). It is the chief of the Christian graces: faith, hope and love. It is the first mentioned in the list of the fruit of the Spirit.

Questions:

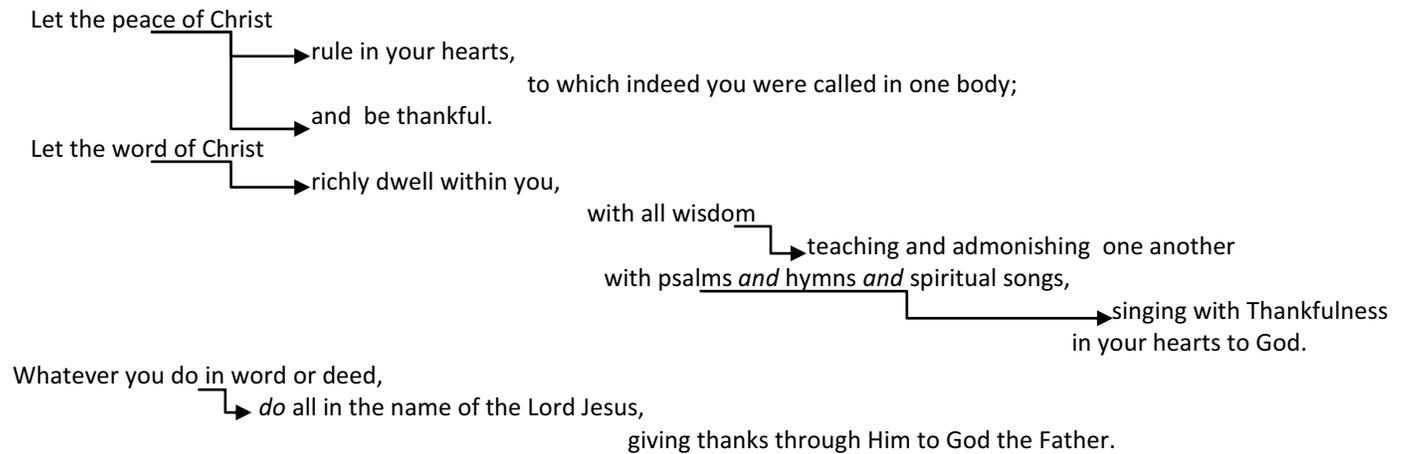
1. Is this kind of life possible or just wishful thinking?
2. What is my track record? Am I like Charlie Daniels who said “when I have a choice between good and bad I choose bad two out of three times”?
3. What is my plan to make this a reality in my life?

Practice:

1. Capture a vision in your mind of what life would look like if these virtues were common place in your life.
2. Have a come-to-Jesus meeting. Take some time to really make a heartfelt intention to change.
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to help and guide you as you begin to “do” everything Jesus said and “did.”

Harmony and the Rich Life (Colossians 3:15-17)

Arrangement:



Quotes:

“No heart is right with God where the peace of Christ does not rule... when a man loses his peace, it is an awful proof that he has lost something else; that he has given way to evil, and grieved the Spirit of God. While peace rules, all is safe.”—Adam Clarke

“Do try, dear friends, to get so full of the word of Christ in all forms of it, that you may run over with it. You know, it cannot come out of you if it is not first in you. If you do not get the word of Christ into you, you will not be instructive in your general conversation.”—Spurgeon

Digging Deeper:

Peace – This word has a connotation of wholeness and well-being. Christ’s peace brings unity or oneness.

Rule – The peace of Christ is the divine umpire in the Christian’s heart and life.

Richly dwell – This term means to make oneself at home. So the word of Christ should be at home within you. Are there areas of your house that need cleaning so His word can be at home in your life?

Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs – Psalms are those poems set to music which involve relationship with God. Hymns are those songs which bring glory and praise to God and spiritual songs is a broad title covering music in both categories.

Questions:

1. How do unity and gratitude set the tone for your life and spiritual growth?
2. When the word of Christ richly dwells within us, what 2 activities will we be involved in?
3. What does it mean to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus?

Practice:

1. Continue to memorize this passage of scripture.
2. When you feel yourself entering a time of stress or anger ask the Lord for his peace to rule in your heart.
3. Get involved in disciplining others and sing praises to God.
4. Never forget that all that you do in the Christian life is powered by the resources of Christ.