

Fit for ministry

Colossian 3:1-12

Colossians 3:1-14 (WEY)

1

If however you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, enthroned at God's right hand.

Comment [1]:

The concept of seeking the things that are above is wanting to know God's mind on things. Some would say knowing God's will but it is more than that, notice it says if you have risen with Christ that is - if you call your self Christian, if you have placed your self into His being. If you say your a Christian. Notice it doesn't say if you are a Christian you will naturally look to things above, no the statement is for us to proactively look to what Christ wants us to. What comes next?

2 Give your minds to the things that are above, not to the things that are on the earth.

Comment [2]:

Note it say Give your minds. The King James Version says:

Set your affection on things above, it gives the idea that we are to develop a fondness for the things of God.

I love the way it says here:

3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Comment [3]:

In my mind, for me I have this mentality that things that were a priority before are not important any more. Also I love the imagery of your life is hidden with Christ in God. It gives a feeling of being wrapped up in God. The Greek gives it this idea of being hidden securely and safely. Hidden from harm if you like.

4 When Christ appears—He is our true Life—then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Comment [4]:

Do we actually think of this? When Jesus comes back we will be with Him in glory. Don't get the idea this is talking about heaven. It is talking about being glorified - given credit of being special. Sure it will happen in a heavenly time and space but what is being talked about here is our state in that time space environment. We will be glorified!

The Greek for glory us dosage kind of means dignified and honoured. Yep that's us.

So where does that leave us down here. After all we ain't gonna get much glory down here. So the author here gives us a way to live. A way to live a set of things to eliminate and a set of things to enhance any fitness process there are things to set aside and things to develop. This is our training programme.

5 Therefore put to death your earthward inclinations—fornication, impurity, sensual passion, unholy desire, and all greed, for that is a form of idolatry.

Comment [5]:

Get rid of these things. Put to death means get rid of.

Look what has to be eliminated

Fornication,
impurity,
sensual passion,
unholy desire,
and greed

Comment [6]:

Interesting list.

Fornication - porneia

Adultery, and incest. Interesting that this was a problem back then

Impurity- uncleanness. The Jews had ruled, from the OT about what was pure and clean

Sensual desire - pathos a sensual focus

Unholy desire - forbidden longing

Greed- covetousness or fraudulence.

Why all these things? They are mental attitudes that affect our actions.

Remember seek the things of Christ. In other words get your minds on God.

First Principle of Fitness for Ministry is: **1. Get you minds on God.**

Why? Because the things mentioned God doesn't like. Look what is said here.

⁶ It is on account of these very sins that God's anger is coming,

See those things cause God's to get angry.

Then there is this funny part.

⁷ and you also were once addicted to them, while you were living under their power.

You may think that I was never addicted to those things. Nor under any power from them.

That is one of Satan's big tricks to let you think you are not as bad as all that. If you really cant think of anything that causes you grief in that small list your better than me that is for sure. But as well as that, you probably haven't evaluated your life from God's perspective. And besides, if that list doesn't nail it for you, try the next verses.

⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of every kind of sin—angry and passionate outbreaks, ill-will, evil speaking, foul-mouthed abuse—so that these may never soil your lips.

⁹ Do not speak falsehoods to one another,

Oh dear now this brings it back doesn't it. Yep that's us. Just like we learnt last year from the first part of Romans. We all sin. It affects us all. So get rid of it. Deal with sin.

Second principle of Getting fit for ministry: **2. Deal with sin.**

I love the way the author shows us sin but shows us where God is at with our sin. Look at the rest of that verse and the verses following.

for you have stripped off the old self with its doings,

¹⁰ and have clothed yourselves with the new self which is being remoulded into full

knowledge so as to become like Him who created it.¹¹ In that new creation there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free man, but Christ is everything and is in all of us.

As Christians this is our state before God. New self, new clothes, remoulded, re made and not just remade but remade like we are designed to be.

Third principle of being fit for ministry: 3. Accept who you are in Christ.

Now we get to the real bones of the fitness programme.

¹² Clothe yourselves therefore, as God's own people holy and dearly loved, with tenderheartedness, kindness, lowliness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

¹³ bearing with one another and readily forgiving each other, if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, you also must forgive.

Clothe yourself, or put on as another version puts it. The greek has exactly that idea. You put it on. A deliberate act of choosing and wearing these attributes.

Get the list.

Tenderheartedness,

Kindness

Lowliness of mind

Meekness

Longsuffering

Bearing with one another

Forgiving.

Put it all on. Yep put on a tenderness to those who you minister to and with.

Yep put on a kindness to those you minister to and with

Put on a lowliness of mind, don't think yourself better than them basically with those you minister to and with.

A meekness to those you minister with and to.

A longsuffering, in other words be patient with those you minister to and with.

Bear with each other, put up with the differentness of those you minister to and with.

Forgive those you minister to and with.

I think you get the point here. Take it easy on people. And there is one more biggy that goes with it.

¹⁴ And over all these put on love, which is the perfect bond of union;

Mm love. We can say that our modern concept of love is all warped and twisted but rather than criticize it let's use it.

How do we treat those we love?

Then that is how we are to treat those we minister with and to.

Love 'em.

Now loving takes practice, yep that is what the list is about. Practical ways to love. Notice that. All those things we are to clothe ourselves with or put on are practical loving techniques.

Are you ready for this year??? Can you cope with what's ahead.

