

**RELATED SCRIPTURES**

**STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 10.23.22**

Matthew 6:33 | Psalm 27:5-6 | Galatians 2:20

**SUMMARY**

There's a tension that exists for all those who believe in the saving work of Jesus. In his letter to the church at Colossae, Paul specifically emphasizes that our favor with God rests *solely* on the merits of Jesus applied to those who believe in him (Colossians 2:9-15). Additionally, he reminds the church that rituals and additional "work" to earn God's favor were useless; Christ has already completed all the work required by the law of God (Colossians 2:16-23). As Paul continues, his instruction might seem contrary to everything he just emphasized. Paul enumerates a list of things the believer should and should not do (Colossians 3:1-17). When reading these lists, it might suddenly appear as if work is to be done to gain God's favor. This is the tension—we are an *already-not-yet* type of people. With Jesus, we have been crucified. This means God's justice (because of our sin) has been satisfied. With Jesus, we have been raised. He was raised because he is righteous, and that righteousness has been applied to us. This means—at this very moment—we have been justified. The work of justification is complete—this is the "already." With that, the work of sanctification (the process of being made holy like Jesus) is ongoing—this is the "not yet." So, Paul makes the point; though our legal status before God is set, we remain in a struggle with sin and are implored to die daily unto sin and live unto righteousness. Since we are united with Christ, we can deny our sins and "let the peace of Christ rule" in our hearts. Putting on the "new self" does not gain us newfound favor with God; instead, it is a natural byproduct of hearts united with his.

**GROUP QUESTIONS**

From the sermon or your direct reading of Colossians 3:1-14, share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you.

Can you detail ways you have "put on the new self" throughout your journey with Christ? What areas in your life have you seen evidence of dying unto sin and living unto righteousness?

What are some practical, specific ways we can engage in sanctification? How can we press on when we feel like we've hit a wall in our Christian growth?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

**CLOSE IN PRAYER**

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.