

Living the Resurrected Life (Part 3)

By Jim Hollandsworth

All born-again believers have died with Christ and have risen with Him. We need to not only accept these statements as truth, but also depend upon the reality of them in our lives. When we do, then we will be enabled to appropriate God's grace by faith to put off sins and put on spiritual graces. Apart from this, our daily living and service for Christ will be characterized by fleshly self-effort and works-sanctification, which is displeasing to the Lord.

In Part 1 we gave the first prerequisite for living the resurrected life: *Reckon your position in Christ*. In Part 2 we gave the second prerequisite: *Rely on your provision to put-off and put-on*. Let us now consider a third prerequisite.

Prerequisite #3: Love what God loves

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Colossians 3:1-2

Of course, God loves the heavenly, not the earthly. For the earthly is the realm of Satan and unrighteousness. Since we have risen with Christ and, according to Colossians 1:13, have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His Son, we are to seek those things which are above. We are to love what God loves.

What is Paul talking about? Notice the phrase "set your affection." This word *affection* is the speaking of the soul. Indeed, it is talking about the thoughts and the feelings. It is the idea of fixing your soul – your mind and emotions – on the things of the heavenly realm rather than the things of the earthly realm.

Do you recall the time in Matthew 16 when Jesus announced to the twelve disciples His impending death and resurrection? What was Peter's response? He recoiled in horror and rebuked Jesus, saying, "Be it far from thee Lord, this shall not be unto thee." How did Jesus respond to Peter? He said, *Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence to me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men (Matthew 16:23)*.

The word "savor" is translated from the same Greek word that is translated "set your affection on" in Colossians 3:2. To savor something is to enjoy it completely; to revel in it; to delight in it; to bask in it. Peter, by not reveling in God's heavenly plan, was actually opposing it and siding with Satan. He was not savoring the things God savors. That, dear Christian, is what you are doing when you are not living the resurrected life, when you are not setting your affection on (savoring) the things above. This is a chronic problem in Christianity.

Do you savor the things of God? Do your thoughts and feelings continually revolve around the throne room of God – where Jesus is at the right hand of the father? Be honest! Is there unrighteousness in that place above? God forbid! God loves righteousness for He is righteous, and He hates evil. What about that evil in your life – that sinful habit over which you have not gotten victory? Can you honestly say that you are savoring the things of the throne room of God, the place where blood is continually being sprinkled on the mercy seat?

Ye that love the Lord, hate evil. Psalm 97:10

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: Proverbs 8:13

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Matthew 6:33

Pursue His agenda, not yours. Make His ambitions your ambitions; His passions your passions. Content yourself with His expectations, not yours. *My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him (Psalm 62:5)*. That is not the way most twenty-first century Christians live their lives. How many are caught up with the things of this world? Maybe not the blatant sins of this world – such as adultery or idolatry – but the subtle philosophies of this world which are so contrary to the heavenly realm.

If modern Christians could get a glimpse of God almighty seated on His throne and the Lamb of God at His side, I am convinced much would be exposed that would cause us to recoil in horror. If you could see your true spiritual condition, as God sees it, would you cry out, as Isaiah, “Woe is me! For I am undone!” Would you come unglued in His presence because of His holy gaze piercing into your innermost being? Would you need coals from off the altar to cleanse your filthiness? Would you have to cry out, “depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!”? How much of the world is in you, unbeknownst to you?

Love not the world; neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him 1 John 2:15

Be not conformed to this world. Romans 12:2

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4

Get honest, dear saint of God. You have risen with Christ but you are not living the resurrected life. You are not seeking those things that are above, the things of the eternal realm. You are not savoring those things that God savors. You are bound up with this world system, and it is killing your spirituality.

This third prerequisite – to **love what God loves** – leads very naturally into our fourth and final prerequisite.

Prerequisite #4: Appear with Him in glory

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:4

The tendency is to view the phrase “in glory” as a place, that is, “in heaven.” But I would contend that it is more consistent with the text to view the phrase “in glory” not as a place to which we go but as a quality to which we aspire. That quality must be evidenced here and now if we expect it to be evidenced in the eternal realm.

The word “appear” in our text is typically interpreted as referring to the rapture – and it could possibly refer to the rapture. However, the rapture is not anywhere implied in the context of this passage, so I am not inclined to think it is referring merely to the rapture.

To *appear* is to make manifest or show openly. Hold that thought for just a moment and notice there are two words in italics early in the verse – the words *who is*. Those words were added by the KJV translators, but they are not in the original language. So let’s drop those words and get the full meaning of this verse. When Christ – *your life* – is made manifest (or we could say, openly declared by your life), then and only then will you appear (will you be made manifest) with Him in glory. Glory is not heaven; glory is exaltation that is connected with Christ’s brightness.

I believe glory was Adam’s clothing before the fall. Adam was literally clothed in Christ’s brightness until he sinned. When lost the brightness, he felt naked and guilty. Man was originally designed to reflect Christ’s glory. Sin has stripped that away. But Christ living within the believer makes it possible at least in some degree for a believer to shine forth, to reflect the glory of God, even in our present, sin-cursed world. Those who live the resurrected life here and now on this earth are manifesting the glory of Christ to this world, and Jesus is reciprocating by manifesting Himself together with that shining one. If you glorify Christ regularly on earth, then in the eternal state you will glow with His brightness for evermore.

Those who reflect His image now, will reflect it brightly then. Those who don’t live the resurrected life and consequently don’t shine forth the glory of God in this life will not be glorified in the next. Is this concept not confirmed for us in another passage of Scripture?

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18

When we are living the resurrected life, reflecting Christ’s glory, we are transfigured into His image into greater and greater degrees of glory. Not surprisingly, it is the Spirit of God Who does this work in us. It is like an ascending spiral – from glory to greater glory.

Are you living the resurrected life? Are you reckoning your position in Christ? Are you relying on your provision to put-off and put-on? Are you loving what God loves? Are you appearing with Him in glory? There’s much at stake.