

# You Were Raised Right

Studies in the Book of Colossians

Text

Colossians 3:1-4

Topic

Paul reminds us to “seek those things which are above, where Christ is, for [we] died, and [our lives are] hidden with Christ in God.”

Title

*“Hid & Go Seek”*

“So, Mr. Incredible... Do you have a secret identity?”

Without hesitating, he answered, “Every superhero has a secret identity. I don’t know a single one who doesn’t.”

Tony Stark would be one. The genius, billionaire, playboy, philanthropist proudly announced to the world, “I am Iron Man.”

Certain secret identities are just stupid. Do the thick glasses really convince anyone that Clark Kent isn't Superman?

I got to thinking about secret identities because of a couple of things in our verses. Look at verse three:

Colossians 3:3 For you died, and your life is **hidden** with Christ in God.

That word, "hidden..." There's something about me, as a believer in Christ, that is "hidden" from the world.

Next, look at verse four:

Colossians 3:4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will **appear** with Him in glory.

That word, "appear..." Sometime in the future, Jesus is going to "appear," but in a way the world has not yet seen Him.

When Jesus returns, I'm going to "appear," too, but in a way I don't "appear" now.

Those of us who are in Christ have a secret, hidden, identity that the world doesn't see now, but will see in the future. One day, we will be unveiled in glory.

Are we superheroes? No... But we *are* supernatural.

What else would you call a group of enhanced individuals - filled with God the Holy Spirit?

Today we're going to discuss our being hidden in Jesus Christ; and our being unveiled by Jesus Christ.

I'll organize my comments around two points: #1 Jesus Has Hidden You In Himself, and #2 Jesus Will Unveil You With Himself.

## #1 Jesus Has Hidden You In Himself

(v1-3)

If you have valuables at home, here are three of the best hiding places for them:

1. If you're hiding cash, take apart the spring bar that holds your toilet paper. Roll up a stack of bills, stash them inside and reassemble the bar.
2. Put small containers of valuables in a tub of cat litter and then pour the cat litter back into the tub.
3. Any common household item that has a cavity will work as a secret compartment. Think vacuum cleaners, children's toys, etc. (Just be sure family members know about it so your valuables don't get donated or tossed!)

Where do burglars look first?

1. Under your mattress.
2. In your freezer.
3. In your medicine cabinet.

We hide valuables; the things we treasure. God has hidden **you** in Jesus. Whatever else that means, it means this: **He considers you His treasure.**

And He considers you His treasure **right now** - not just in the future when He is done working in you.

Colossians 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Paul was stating a reality, not a possibility. He didn't mean that in the future you will be raised from the dead. That's true, of course, but the verb tense here indicates an action completed in your past.

You have already been raised with Christ. You "were raised with Christ" the moment you were saved. This is how God sees you.

The result of this new position is that you can live *here* as if you were already seated *there*.

Let me give you an example. At my age I hear a lot of talk about retirement. Some people have a definite goal and a solid plan for getting there. A good plan usually involves sacrificing now to benefit later. If you know where you want to retire, you likely buy some property there - maybe even start building on it in your spare time.

The closer you get to retirement the more you pour into your goal and the more you think about and anticipate what it will be like.

**You begin to live here *as if you are seated there already.***

When I realize I am raised with Jesus, I find myself “seek[ing] those things which are above.” In the Greek language it reads, *keep on seeking*. It is a continuous, daily activity.

Listen to folks planning to retire and you’ll overhear them saying that something they’ve found would be perfect for their cabin in the mountains, or their place at the coast. They are always seeking things to furnish the house they’d rather be living in, and that they planned to retire in.

Heaven should permeate our thoughts. “What does this have to do with Heaven?” is a question that should be a kind of litmus test of attitudes and activities.

Paul said there were “things above,” in Heaven. What are some of them that make earth seem pale and dim?

1. First of all, you’ve been promised a sweet retirement home. It’s a mansion being custom built for you by the Lord (John 14). No matter where you would like to retire on earth it cannot begin to compare to what is awaiting you in Heaven.
2. Your home is part of a great heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. It’s described for you in the closing chapters of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It’s made mostly of precious jewels, gems, and minerals. No water shortage there as a great spring flows through it. It’s a “pure river of water of life” that nourishes “the tree of life” that yields incredible fruit.
3. In Heaven and for eternity you will have a glorified and perfect body that is free from any possibility of sin or sorrow or death.
4. Next you’ve been promised an inheritance “incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in Heaven for you” (First Peter 1:4). Anything that God has deposited for me in Heaven is safe and secure. Anything you

might add to your heavenly inheritance by serving the Lord is just as safe and secure.

5. Then there are the people who have preceded you to Heaven - loved ones who loved the Lord and are awaiting a reunion with you. You'll know them fully, as they were intended to be by God, and they will know you.
6. The last thing I'll mention is the most precious of all. It's Jesus Himself. You'll get to see Him, know Him, be with Him forever.

How can you be certain of these “things above”? You can be certain because “Christ is [there], sitting at the right hand of God.”

**The physical resurrection of Jesus Christ is your guarantee.**

The “right hand of God” is the seat of authority and power. Read through the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ and you'll see just how much authority and just how much power your Lord has and wields.

That, then, is how we were “raised.”



Ours is a spiritual resurrection in Jesus Christ that has us seated in heavenly places. It only makes sense to live now in the anticipation of what awaits me then.

Why do we not always live the way we were “raised”? The world, the flesh, and the devil conspire to divert our attention off of Heaven and on to material things. I forget I am seated in Heaven and instead of investing my time, treasure, and talent where it is safe and secure, I squander it on earthly pursuits.

*Two little lines I heard one day,  
Traveling along life’s busy way;  
Bringing conviction to my heart,  
And from my mind would not depart;*

*Only one life, twill soon be past,  
Only what’s done for Christ will last.*

*Only one life, yes only one,  
Soon will its fleeting hours be done;  
Then, in ‘that day’ my Lord to meet,  
And stand before His Judgement seat;*

*Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

Colossians 3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

We are to “set [our] minds” by a place - by Heaven. The “things above” that we just discussed in verse one are the real standards by which to “set” our lives. The “things on the earth” must not be allowed to take priority.

Seriously - What are you investing in? Is it Heaven - or is it here?

Money isn't the only metric, but it is one that will tell you a lot about whether you are investing here or in Heaven. Survey the New Testament and you'll find that your giving is to be willing, regular, joyful, and sacrificial.

It either is; or it isn't. One commentator put it this way: “Handle your money in such a way as to show that God, and not money, is your treasure.”

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

When you are born-again, you “die” to certain things, notably *to sin* and *to the Law*. Listen to how Paul described it in the Book of Romans.

Romans 6:6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Romans 6:7 For he who has **died** has been **freed from sin**.

At the Cross you “died” with Jesus and became “freed from sin.” You were set free from both the *penalty* and the *power* of sin. As long as you are on the earth in your unredeemed physical body you must deal with the *presence* of sin. But you can deal with it as though you were dead.

Can a dead person sin? If you believe you are dead to sin, you’ll look at sin in a different light.

Also at the Cross you also “became “dead to the Law.”

Romans 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become **dead to the law** through the body of Christ...

It means that instead of trying to live according to the principles of God's outward Law you are enabled to live by the power of His inward love.

Then Paul said "your life is hidden with Christ in God." Albert Barnes says that this word "hidden" is used of buried treasure. We've seen the things that are safe and secure that are awaiting you in Heaven - your mansion, the New Jerusalem, your new body, your inheritance.

What this phrase is telling us is that Jesus also has something to look forward to in Heaven.

**He has you to look forward to! You are His treasure.**

The Lord can't wait, to use an earthly expression, to bring you to Heaven and show you off to His Father.

This is also a strong statement about your security as a believer. If your “life is hidden with Christ” then your salvation is secure. It is an unassailable hiding place.

The assurance of salvation is thought, by many, to be a license to sin. They reason that if I am saved no matter what then I have no incentive for holy, godly living. So they inject some doubt about whether or not you are truly saved as a method to motivate you.

Paul thought otherwise. He thought and taught that the more you understood your security in Jesus Christ, the more you’d live in a manner pleasing to Him.

You may as well live now as if you are already in Heaven. Your home is waiting for you there. Your city and citizenship are there. Your wealth is being stored up there. Those you love who love the Lord will forever be there.

If your mind is not fully set on the things above, **hit reset.**

## #2 Jesus Will Unveil You With Himself

(v4)

*Extreme Makeover* ran on ABC for four years. Each episode featured two people whose looks were changed in an effort to transform their lives. It was accomplished through the skills of doctors, a plastic surgeon, an eye surgeon and a cosmetic dentist, along with a team of hair and make-up artists, stylists and personal trainers, known as the "Extreme Team."

At the end of each episode, the participants returned to their friends and families to reveal their new looks to their loved ones, who were not allowed to see the incremental changes during the process.

We will experience the most extreme makeover of all time: Our glorified resurrection bodies. That unveiling will be spectacular.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

“Christ... is our life” can be taken many ways:

- “Christ... is our life” reminds us that we have eternal life in Jesus Christ.
- “Christ... is our life” reminds us that we have Jesus living in us by the Holy Spirit and can now live life in His power.
- “Christ... is our life” reminds us that we are living forward to the time we find ourselves in Heaven and in eternity.
- “Christ... is our life” reminds us that nothing and no one else can satisfy us. Everything and everyone must be subordinate to Him in order for us to live to the fullest.

As much as I would like to talk about the rapture, that is not the appearing of Jesus that Paul was referring to. He was looking past the rapture to the Second Coming of Jesus.

We know it's the Second Coming because that is when we “also will appear with Him in glory.” It's a *return* to earth, not a *removal* from earth.

I think this would be a good time to describe what happens when a believer dies. The Bible tells us there are three different possible states of existence:

1. We begin life in our current human bodies.
2. We will in the future, at the return of Jesus, be resurrected or raptured and have glorified human bodies.
3. For believers who die prior to Jesus coming to raise the dead, there is an intermediate state between death and the resurrection, during which time we look forward to the resurrection of our body.

We read in Second Corinthians that when a believer dies, they are absent from the body, but immediately, consciously present with the Lord.

It is further affirmed by Jesus' comments to the thief on the Cross, "And Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise'" (Luke 23:43).

The apostle Paul said he had a desire "to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far" (Philippians 1:23). Death meant he would immediately see Jesus.



But if you die, *you are not in your glorified body until Jesus returns to resurrect you.* Paul described it as being “unclothed.”

What is this “unclothed,” intermediate state like? The information isn’t plentiful, but we do have an example of saints in this intermediate state.

On the mount of transfiguration, two Old Testament saints appeared with the Lord. They were Moses & Elijah. Now those guys, along with **all** the Old Testament saints, have not yet been resurrected. They still don’t have their glorified bodies.

Nevertheless, the disciples saw them, and immediately recognized them. That tells us they had substance.

It’s possible that you have a temporary body in the intermediate state. I think it more likely that your spirit has substance as it awaits the resurrection.

Jesus is coming to resurrect the dead in Christ and to rapture those who are alive and remain.

- If you've died prior to His coming you will be raised into a glorified body.
- If you are alive at His coming you will be changed and transformed into your glorified body.

We're in Heaven for the duration of the seven-year Great Tribulation. At its close, in earth's darkest hour, we return with Jesus at His Second Coming.

Yes, it is the unveiling of Jesus to the world; and it will be glorious. **It's our unveiling also.** We "appear with Him in glory."

Listen carefully to this. It is Second Thessalonians 1:10 in the Amplified Version.

"When He comes to be glorified in His saints [on that day He will be made more glorious in His consecrated people], and [He will] be marveled at and admired [in His glory reflected] in all who have believed..."

Jesus will be revealed in all His glory, **but part of that revelation will be in His glory being reflected in you and I in our glorified state as we return with Him.**

The angels in Heaven, and the people on the earth who survive the Tribulation, will see the radical physical and spiritual transformation that has occurred **in us**.

It will be a climactic unveiling after which we will forever be on display as illustrations of what the power and grace of God have accomplished in those who accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

All this is currently hidden from view. We are “hidden with Christ in God” in the sense that no one sees our future glory.

### **They will:**

- We are promised that “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).
- We are promised that “He also predestined [us] to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29).
- We are promised that “and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when

He is revealed, we shall be like Him (First John 3:2).

Superheroes usually save the world, if not the galaxy. When Jesus returns in glory, and us with Him, it will be world-saving.

The Lord Himself once said that, “unless those days [of the Great Tribulation] were shortened [by His return] no flesh would be saved” (Matthew 24:22).

*O hope of glory, our Christ will return!*

*We will be raptured, with glory transformed;  
Glorified with Him, Himself to enjoy,  
In His full likeness we then will be formed.*

*O hope of glory, our Christ will return!*

*Waiting and watching, we faithfully serve,  
Running the race, pressing on toward the goal  
That we the Kingdom's reward might deserve.*



