

#### IV. We have this same hope!

- A. What are the things that the King calls you to put to death? What so-called wisdom promises you security, fulfillment, happiness, or the perfect relationship? How does it turn you away from the King's way of life?
- i. On the Day of Christ's glorious appearing, the wisdom of the cross will make perfect sense.
    - a) *Now* we wonder if we should make the sacrifices.
    - b) On that day we'll only wish we had followed His wisdom more.
  - ii. When you don't get what you want, when people disappoint you, when the car in front of you is going slow in the left lane, you can die to getting what you want, to making people pay, because our glory awaits another day!
- B. Putting to death the things which the world, the flesh, and the devil tell us will bring us fullness of life requires a firm hope in the Second Coming of the Lord who reigns over all.

#### New Living in an Old World:

##### *The Transforming Power of Hope*

Jerry Cisar — May 13, 2018 Ascension Sunday

Text: Colossians 3:1-11

#### Intro: Still Living Under the Old Regime

#### I. The Colossians were in many ways still living as if Jesus was not King.

- A. The Colossians weren't experiencing the full, abundant life of Christ because, although they had believed, they had not yet fully embraced *the wisdom* and *ways* of their new King.
- i. Colossians 1:9-10 They needed a particular kind of *wisdom* in order to live in a way that pleases Jesus, the King!
    - ii. They need to grow in love.
- B. The Colossians and their culture.
- i. The Colossians and their need for greed (3:5).
  - ii. Sexual sin and idolatry were the twin sins of the gentiles who did not know God.
    - a) Sexual sin is a sin of exploitation.
    - b) Greed often oppresses the weak and vulnerable.
- C. The Colossians heard the gospel and believed. but they woke up the next day and still had their old way of thinking.
- i. Paul wants to see Christ fully formed in them, but sees something standing in the way.
  - ii. *The Colossians must purposefully root out the old wisdom and replace it with the new.*

## II. We are not as far removed from the Colossians as one might think.

- A. Syncretism: the bringing together, *synchronizing of*, opposing principles, beliefs, or practices. In syncretism one has contradictory beliefs, but acts as if they are one.

Ed Stetzer: “Traditional religion among the indigenous people often included visiting witch doctors and other types of healers for physical healing and spiritual direction. It's not uncommon for new believers in that context to want to continue visiting the spiritual healers around them. Obviously, visiting those who actively practice witchcraft for healing or spiritual direction dilutes dependency on Christ, changes the gospel, creates a mix of multiple gods, and thereby denies Christ his rightful place as the one and only Lord in the life of the believer.”<sup>1</sup>

“In 2006, a groundbreaking feature-length film revealed the great mystery of the universe—*The Secret* ... followed with a book that became a worldwide bestseller. Fragments of a Great Secret have been found in the oral traditions, in literature, in religions and philosophies throughout the centuries. For the first time, all the pieces of *The Secret* come together in an incredible revelation that will be life-transforming for all who experience it. In this book, you'll learn how to use *The Secret* in every aspect of your life—money, health, relationships, happiness, and in every interaction you have in the world. You'll begin to understand the hidden, untapped power that's within you, and this revelation can bring joy to every aspect of your life. *The Secret* contains wisdom from modern-day teachers—men and women who have used it to achieve health, wealth, and happiness.” (Description of *The Secret*)

- B. Sexual sin and greed, which is idolatry, are every bit as much a part of our culture as they were the Colossian culture.
- i. Believers today are still prone to take advantage of others in sexual sin as well as business transactions.
  - ii. The way of pragmatism is not the way of love.
  - iii. Are not sins of anger and rage and evil speech as descriptive of life in America as they were in Colossae?

## III. But there is hope!

- A. Paul fully intends to see a real transformation in the lives of these believers. Upon what does he base it?
- i. What are “the things above”?
  - ii. Two things have happened that led Paul to instruct them to seek and to set their minds on these things.
    - Christ ascended on High and was enthroned at the right hand of God as Lord and King over all.
    - The Colossian believers have been united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Col. 2) and therefore will also join Him in His heavenly glory when He appears (3:4).
  - iii. The Ascension is the central truth of the Gospel.
    - a) The ascension and resurrection of Jesus are arguably the most significant events in world history.
      - Matthew 6:33
    - b) The King's business, His righteousness, is ultimately summed up in *love*, by which one lays down his or her life for another.
  - iv. The glorious hope of Christ's second coming enables us to walk in the wisdom of the cross and the way of love.
- B. What is the wisdom of the King?
- i. It is *the wisdom of the cross* (Heb. 12:2).
  - ii. The Colossians have this hope.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/june/avoiding-pitfall-of-syncretism.html>