

## Introduction (Please turn to Colossians 3)

I don't want a lot for Christmas, There is just one thing I need  
I don't care about the presents, Underneath the Christmas tree  
I just want you for my own, More than you could ever know  
Make my wish come true, All I want for Christmas is you, yeah

What do you want for Christmas? What treasure are you hoping for, yearning for, this Christmas...really, it boils down to asking yourself, "What do you want...really?" Where is your mind? As you want, you think, as you think, you act, as you act, you are.

[Col 3:1-2 NIV] 1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

[Colossians](#) - this is a letter, written by Paul the Apostle, to people who had become disciples of Jesus through his preaching to them, who lived in the ancient city of Colossae. Colosse (co-low-see) was on the Lycus (lee-coos) river, in Asia Minor, and a key city along a major trade route. Have you been raised with Christ? What does that even mean - when Paul preached about Christ to someone - and at some point they were raised with Christ. Be raised with Christ. THEN - Set your hearts on things above where Christ is. THEN - Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. What do you want? As you want, you think, as you think, you act, as you act, you are.

## #1 Do You Want To Be Raised With Christ? (Please turn to Romans 6)

That sounds good. Sounds amazing. We all will die...physically...and we can even spiritually, in our hearts and minds...while we still live.

Nancy Visch...friend, in his 60's, athletic, healthy, huntsman, [IRONMAN](#) competitor...discovered he had skin cancer, died in 6 weeks.

Nancy was like, get yourself checked out. I did. Turns out I had five precancerous moles and one that was actual cancer on my nose - turned out to be benign, but was a type if left

untreated will become cancer.

Since death is inevitable, being raised with Christ sounds amazing – but what did it mean to Paul the apostle? What does it mean to you? Even if you think you “know” what it means, does your “want”, “thoughts”, “actions” and “being” show that you know or have been “raised with Christ?” If someone followed you around all day, saw what you did, or did not do, said or even thought, the attitude you really have under that veneer of holiday cheer, would that person be like, “Yep, raised with Christ, with a heart and mind set on things above?” Newsflash, there is someone following you around all day – and it is not Santa Claus. There is no place to hide your thoughts and attitudes from God. Two things you can be sure of – he has a list, the book of life, and he’s gonna check it twice, once when he puts your name on it and again when you are judged. Oh, the second thing he is coming to town (I have no idea when) or you’re going to him.

[Rom 6:1-8 NIV] 1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

[Rome](#), both an ancient city and a legendary empire. Here is the Apostle Paul again writing to people he has converted to Christianity. He is reminding them of their conversion experience and he elaborates on the teaching of being raised with Christ to a new life.

Vs 1-2 – In order for them to experience being raised with Christ – they needed to repent of their sin. That means to completely change your mind, your attitude, your thoughts, about what the bible calls sin. Sin is both what you do, sins of commission, and those range from obvious sins like sexual immorality, impurity...as well as heart sins like being merciless, unforgiving, critical, slanderous, or greedy...evil thoughts/attitudes. Sin is also what you do not do. One of the scariest things is to be numb to what God calls you to do – like sharing your faith, studying the bible with people, confessing your sins, and going after actually getting disciplined. When we are committing the sins of omission, we can think, “I’m not doing anything...just hanging out....same old, same old.” This “Not doing anything” and “same old,

same old” is what we say when we have no purpose and are not doing anything for God. God calls every single one of us to a powerful and meaningful life, full of his purpose. God wants us to change how we think...to change our mind set. It starts with us being willing to **die to self**, die to sin, and refuse to live a sinful or “doing nothing” lifestyle.

Vs 3-4 – When someone is baptized into Christ, they are baptized (spiritually) into his death. Last week, to see Jose baptized was so inspiring. The week before, to see nine be baptized into Christ at our congregational service. To realize, over 500 people have been baptized in 2023. Truly the year of miracles. Buried with him and raised with him – how, through your faith. (please turn to Colossians 2) It is your faith that saves you. Without faith, there is no power in baptism at all.

Colossians 2:12 “[**Col 2:12 NIV**] 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

This is why I did not just baptize Paisley and Dimitry as infants. They need to have their own faith and own convictions about God, about Jesus dying for them, and it needs to be their faith – not mine – at their baptism. (Please turn to Acts 2:38) So we know, through our repentance (dying to self) and our faith (that Jesus died for us, and was raised again) when we are baptized are raised to a “**new life**” in Christ.

*What else is baptism FOR?*

[Act 2:38-41 NIV] 38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” 40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Peter explains Jesus is the Son of God, proved it by miracles, and he was crucified for our sins, died, was buried and raised again on the third day. They ask Peter what to do – he tells them to REPENT AND be baptized FOR: The Forgiveness of sins AND the gift of the Holy Spirit. That’s what baptism is FOR. Taking away all the sins you’ve committed and will commit hereafter. It’s the moment you and God are united, and the moment you are raised with Christ to a new life in Him. It is for your salvation (vs 40). If you REPENT, accept that Jesus is

the Son of God, died on the cross for your sins, and rose again on the third day and you believe in your heart and [confess](#) with your mouth "**Jesus is LORD**" you will be saved.

Please turn back to Colossians 3. Do you still have this heart? Filled with gratitude? Is your mind and heart really set on things above today, on the reason for the season, what are you building? What mindset are you building in your relationship with God, are you building a case for your rationalizations in religiosity and lack of engagement, justifying the lack of purpose, are you living in a mindset of criticism and zero impact because it's somebody else's fault? Checking out by just "checking in?" Or, what are you building in your relationships? Are the people in your life reinforcing a mindset, a heart set, on things above? Are your relationships creating a feedback loop of encouragement, purpose, spiritual depth, confession? Aside, let's not confuse confession with criticality or complaining...or venting. Venting is not repenting. Where is your mind, what have you been wanting? What do you really want for Christmas?

NIV Colossians 3:1-4

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

## #2 Do you want to set your mind and heart on things above?

NIV Psalm 42:1-5,7-8

For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah. As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the

Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me— a prayer to the God of my life.

My prayer this morning... I must become way more intentional about my relationship with God. I need a clear plan as well as a change in my mindset. Can't just be sustaining. I really need to change how I view prayer. I need to next level my walk with God. I know I can do better with him. Get up even earlier to walk with him first. Intentionality without accountability is pointless...a pipe dream. Intentionality without clear goals and metrics...it's just empty words. 2024 - year of blessings...I want more God. (Please turn to Malachi 3)

Why set your heart and mind on things above...why be reborn and raised with Christ through repentance and baptism?

[Mal 3:17 NIV] 17 "On the day when I act," says the LORD Almighty, "they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him.

God acted on the day he died on the cross for his treasured possession. All he wants for Christmas...is you.

I don't want a lot for Christmas, There is just one thing I need  
I don't care about the presents, Underneath the Christmas tree  
I just want you for my own, More than you could ever know  
Make my wish come true, [All I want for Christmas is you.](#)

*Prayer for communion*