

Centripetal Faith: Part 5—Worship Text: Colossians 3:1-17

Warming Up

Questions:

1. *Growing up, what did you find meaningful about worshipping with a community of faith?*
2. *What about worship did you find confusing or difficult?*

Digging In

Read **Colossians 3:1-4**.

Questions:

1. *What do you think it means to “set your hearts on things above?”*
2. *What purpose do you think Paul had in emphasizing that “we died”?*

A lot of times it is easy to read “earthly things” as “physical things”: rocks and trees, politics and politicians, houses and homes and people and places. But pay close attention to what *Paul* says he means by “earthly things”.

Read **Colossians 3:5-8**.

Questions:

1. *What do all these “earthly things” have in common?*
2. *Why do you think Paul associates many of these things with idolatry?*
3. *Which of these “earthly things” do you think we tend to do well at talking about?*
4. *Which of these “earthly things” do you think we tend to **avoid** talking about?*
5. *Which of these things do you think we do a good job of removing from our lives?*
6. *Which of these things do you think we do a lousy job of removing from our lives?*
7. *Paying attention to your answers from questions 3-7, why do you think we are good at talking about and avoiding some things and not others? (Try and be specific to Paul’s list.)*

Read **Colossians 3:9-14**.

Here is Paul defining what he means by the “things above”. “Above” language wasn’t just used in his world, but also ours. We say “raise the bar” or “set your sights higher.” Notice what is included in *this* list...

Questions:

1. *What do these “above things” have in common?*
2. *What feelings and thoughts come up for you when Scripture tells you to “forgive as the Lord forgave you?”*
3. *Which of these virtues do you think we excel at?*
4. *Which of these virtues do we need to do serious work on?*

Sending Out

Paul ends these lists of the things above and the earthly things with an invitation. It is an invitation to worship, be church, be active together in the work of the church. Notice...

Read **Colossians 3:15-17**.

Questions:

1. *What aspects of worship do you see Paul inviting this church to engage in?*
2. *Which of these aspects of the worshipping congregation are most life-giving to you?*
3. *Which of these aspects of church do you find to be the most challenging?*
4. *How does regularly gathering in worship help us set our hearts and minds on these above, rather than on earthly things?*
5. *Would our neighbors say that we as a church have our hearts and minds set on things above, or on earthly things, according to these lists? Explain.*

Closing

Take a moment in silence to come before God and ask the question, “*What word or phrase or idea or moment does God want me to remember from this morning and carry with me this week?*”

Close with prayer.