

## LG Notes on Colossians 3:1-11

We continue to think about how to be fruitful on our frontlines, we're thinking about moulding culture

More just and peaceful, more loving, and respectful,

How can we make our communities more supportive and inclusive?

In short how can we by the way we live our lives as Christians bring the Kingdom of God closer? How can we mould culture?

In chapter 3 he writes, "So if you have been raised with Christ, seek things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1),

he is taking the next step in the narrative, moving from Resurrection to Ascension.

We set our minds on what is above, because the risen one is the ascended one whose rule is now "from heaven."

Paul tells the Colossians that rather than getting too worked up about the false lord on the throne in Rome, They should subject their lives to the risen Lord at the right hand of the Father.

We have been buried with Christ, we are raised with Christ, we are subject to the ascended Christ. In verse 4 Paul finishes by saying, "When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you will also be revealed with him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). Death, resurrection, ascension, second coming.

That is your story, In this story is your identity in Christ. It's what makes you a Christian

It is the story we tell every week at the table and from the pulpit. Go live that story, Paul says. This story in your life is what will mould culture on your frontline.

Living that story is what will make you fruitful.

It is the foundation on which we build.

Paul says "put to death ... whatever in you is earthly" and illustrates that with a list of sexual sins,

We need to be clear that this is not an attack upon sexuality as a good gift of our embodied lives

but a critique of sexual practices that tell a story that is outside of the story of Jesus.

An economic ideology of unlimited growth and unrestrained consumption leads to promiscuous sexual practice.

Multiple sexual partners is just good capitalism

- This too is outside the story of Jesus

and a church that will preach against sexual immorality of individuals without addressing the idolatrous greed at the heart of our economy does not have the courage of St. Paul.

But Paul is not finished yet

If we are truly to live the new life of Christ and mould the culture around us to become more like the Kingdom of God, we must name the abusive language that is in our mouths and in our ears every day.

And rid ourselves of it. But why is this so important and why does Paul use such strong language as putting to death and ridding ourselves of these things?

Because, says Paul, that is the life of the old self which needs to be stripped off like soiled clothing

as we are clothed "with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator" (Colossians 3:10).

There is the whole point of Paul's letter to the Colossians.

A renewal and deepening of knowledge – a new mind

so that we might be restored to our original calling as those created in the image of God – a new life.

And perhaps the elephant in the room is how we do this, how can we answer these questions?

- How we rid ourselves of these things that surround us every day?
- Should we be playing football in a country with human rights record like Qatar?
- Should we work for companies that produce weapons?
- And if we do, how can our presence be salt and light, how can we mould culture?
- How can we be fruitful on our frontline?

It seems to me what we are called to do is be open to the Spirit's leading, the answers can be found Eph 3:20-21.

Amen