*Grace Group Study Guide
Greater> Week 17
Colossians* 3: 1-4

*"In the movie Gladiator, General Maximus Decimus Meridius seeks to stir his cavalry to fight
well in the imminent battle against Germania. Addressing his troops, he challenges them* to
*give their very best. He makes this profound statement:* ***"What we do in life echoes in
eternity. "***

*These words from a fictional military leader convey a powerful concept that is* of *particular
significance* to *believers in Christ. We are not just taking up time and space on a rock that's
floating in the universe. We are here with the opportunity to make an eternal difference
with our Jives.*

*Jesus Himself said, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust
destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matt. 6:20). Having the perspective*of *living for eternity can make all the difference in this world.*

*How can we learn to set our minds "on things above"? (Col.* 3:2). *A good way to begin is to
discover what our eternal God values. Throughout the pages* of *the Bible, He reminds us
that He values people above possessions and our character above our performance. Those
are the truths that last forever. Embracing them can bring an eternal perspective to our
daily living.* - *by Bill Crowder (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids,
MI. "*

That illustration gives one insight into what we can do to look and think through a heavenly
perspective and I think there are many more as evidenced in scripture. Before we look at
them though, let us remember the difference between working to make ourselves more
attractive to God versus acting in obedience to His word.

Along those lines, Harry Ironside said *"It is* of *all importance that we realize that we do not
stand before God on the ground* of *responsibility. The responsible man failed utterly* to *keep
his obligations. There was nothing for him, therefore, but condemnation, but our Lord Jesus
Christ has borne that condemnation; He voluntarily, in infinite grace, took the place* of *the
sinner and bore his judgment upon the cross. Now in resurrection, as we have seen, al/ who
believe are not only given* a *perfect representation by Him before the throne* of *God, but we
ar.e in Him in virtue* of *being partakers of His life. "*

John MacArthur writes concerning Col. 3:2, *"Paul is not advocating* a *form* of *mysticism.
Rather, he desires that the Colossians' preoccupation with heaven govern their earthly
responses. To be preoccupied with heaven is* to *be preoccupied with the One who reigns
there and His purposes, plans, provisions, and power. It is also* to *view the things, people,
and events* of *this world through His eyes and with an eternal perspective .... When
Christians begin* to *live in the heavenlies ... they will live out their heavenly values in this
world* to *the glory* of *God. "*

This might seem like a silly exercise meant for 2nd graders, but Bruce Goettsche gives some
examples of ways we can "look up" during our day to day operations.

Pause often to look at the clouds (Ps 19:1, 2, 3,4, 5, 6) and think of the day when Christ
will come inthe douds (Re 1: 7)

Hear the thunder (Ps 29:2,3) and rejoice that the God who made the powerful storms (Ps
107:25; Ps 107:29) is the God who holds your hand and loves you with an everlasting love
(Ps 100:5).

See the people around you and remember that these are people that matter to God (l Ti
2:3,4, Isa 45:22, Isa 55:1, Ezek 18:23).

See a hearse or cemetery and remember that death is not the end, but a beginning, a
victory, a home going (Job 19:25, 26, 27).

Use the quiet moments in a waiting room to recount God's promises (2Pe 1 :3,4) and to
fellowship with Him in prayer (Ps 24:6, Ps 27:4, Ps 27:8).

In the times of conflict turn to Him before we respond in anger (Ps 37:8, Pr 14:29, Pr
16:32, Ep 4:26,27; Ep 4:31, Jas 1:19, 20)

Pause to look at the day lilies (Ps 12:27) or a sunset (Ps 19:4, 5, 6), or a star-filled night
and marvel at the creative splendor of God (Ps 8:3, 4, Isa 40:26)

**What things cause you to contemplate "things above?"**

Now that you've done a little thinking on the heavenlies, consider verse 4 - specifically
w~ere Paul says Christ is our life. This is not a metaphor, this is a reality. Think upon these
verses:

John 11 :25 - Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me
will live even if he dies,

John 14:6 - Jesus \*said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to
the Father but through Me.

John 20:31 - but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,
the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

2 Timothy 1:1 - Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise
of life in Christ Jesus (Where is real life found? In what sphere? CHRIST)

1 John 1: 1 - What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with
our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life.

1 John 5:12 - He who has the Son has the life; he '!'Iho does not have the Son of God does
not have the life.

**It's a marvelous truth to behold - this reality of Christ our life and our lives being**
**hidden in Him. And it is because of that reality that Paul charges us to let it affect
every aspect of our lives.**

"Your Lord and Master has gone up to heaven. You profess that he represents you, and that
you have gone up there in him and with him. Then do not seek the things that are down
here below, the things of earth; but live where your life has gone. Where your treasure is,
there let your heart be also. "Seek those things which are above." - Charles Spurgeon