



Image of God: NT Foundations
Colossians 3:1-11

- I. Pray and read passage together (Col. 3:1-11)
- II. We live in an age where the following philosophical world-views are uncritically assumed to be true. Share how you have experienced, observed or been impacted by these ideologies:
 1. **Post-modern/relativism:** *no moral absolutes- "no one can tell me what is right or wrong"*
 2. **Expressive Individualism:** *meaning and purpose attained by following inward passions/desires— "Repression of my deepest longings prohibits me from finding my true identity."*
 3. **Identity politics:** *individual identity discovered through isolating and prioritising a single /group of identity markers over others. — "My gender is my identity. My sexuality is my identity. My possessions are my identity" etc.*
- III. Compare the chart contrasting our culture's assumptions with Satan's temptations (see chart) to Eve in Gen.3. Discuss the similarities and the unique challenges this demonic teaching poses to us today.
- IV. Read **Colossians 3:1-4** again. Last week we learned to seek our identity not inward, nor upward, but rather upward. Paul seems to agree here. How does focusing on Jesus help us better understand ourselves? Flesh that out. . . discuss the full implications of Jesus' humanity.
- V. These 4 verses also emphasise our union with Christ. Discuss the implications of Jesus not only being our substitute, but also our representative. What difference does that make?
 - A. **Substitute:** *One who acts in place of another in such a way as to render the other's action unnecessary.*
 - B. **Representative:** *One who acts on behalf of another in such a way as to involve the other in his action.*

- VI. **Colossians 3:9a** makes a definitive statement (grammatically it is a completed action) about our old nature, compare this with Galatians 3:20 and discuss the meaning of this for our daily walk.
- VII. **Colossians 3:10** on the other hand is an ongoing process (grammatically it is a present continuous action). How does this inform our daily walk with the Lord?
- VIII. **Colossians 3:11** points out a few key identity markers (ethnicity, religion, culture, social status). How are we to "prioritise" these in relation to Christ? How does this practically impact our daily walk?
- IX. In light of **Colossians 3:1-11**, how does Jesus' call to discipleship in **Mark 8:34-36** make sense when read in terms of our new identity vs. our old identity?

Expressive Individualism	Satan's Temptation
Happiness is realising your full potential	God wants to keep your eyes closed and stop you from realising your full potential.
Personal autonomy is the path to a meaningful life	Independence from God is the path to life
Follow your heart you will find your true self	Look how good the fruit is and how it will help you gain knowledge
Authentic living comes through breaking with tradition/religion/ other's opinions	Shutting your ears to God is the key to authentic living.
You determine who you really are	You can become like God and your eyes will be open to discovering your true self.

