

How Our Identity in Christ Impacts the Way We Relate to Others

Colossians 3:1-17

Wisdom Fest 2025 Workshop

June 29, 2025

Introduction:

Discussion Question - What typically determines how we relate and respond to other people?

The Foundation of How We Relate to Others– Union with Christ (3:1-4)

Union with Christ is the intimate, unbreakable, Spirit-forged bond between the believer and Jesus Christ, in which the believer partakes of all the benefits of salvation, from regeneration to sanctification to glorification, all to the glory of God.

The past-tense nature of union with Christ

“You have died” – verse 3

What are the practical ramifications of this truth?

- *Christ now lives in me* - Galatians 2:20 (“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”)
- *Freedom from the power of sin* – Romans 6:6-7 (“We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin.”)

“You have been raised with Christ” – verse 1

What are the practical ramifications of this truth?

- *Renewed desires and mindset* – Colossians 3:1 (“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”)
- *Power to walk in newness of life* – Romans 6:4 (“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”)

The present-tense nature of union with Christ

“Your life is hidden with Christ in God” – verse 3

What are the practical ramifications of this truth?

- *Eternal security and protection* – John 10:27-29 (“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”)
- *A new and anchored identity* – 1 Peter 2:9-10 (“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”)

The future-tense nature of union with Christ

“You will also appear with Him in glory” – verse 4

What are the practical ramifications of this truth?

- *Assurance of future glorification* – Romans 8:28-30 (“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”)
- *Hope amid present suffering and injustice* – 2 Corinthians 4:16-17 (“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.”)
- *Reason for holiness of life* – 1 John 3:2-3 (“Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.”)

Discussion Question – Are any of these benefits particularly precious to you personally?

The Transformation of How We Relate to Others (3:5-13)

From self-serving desires to self-denying love (5-9)

From worldly labels to equal value in Christ (11)

From a self-protective posture to grace-filled engagement (10-13)

From withholding forgiveness to granting forgiveness (13)

Discussion Question – With which of these categories do you struggle the most? How can you apply the truth of your identity in Christ to that struggle?

The Principles that Govern the Way We Relate to Others (3:14-17)

The love of Christ (14)

The peace of Christ (15)

The Word of Christ (16)

The name of Christ (17)

Discussion Question – What would happen if you applied these 4 principles to all of your responses and interactions with others (both the hard and the good)?