




THE COMPASS

A TOOL FOR DISCIPLERS

Eternal Perspective

Conversation On the Journey

Colossians 3:1-2 will be your primary text with references to others as well. I recommend that you primarily stay in Colossians and just refer to most of the other passages, since it would take too long to look up all of the other ones in parentheses. You may want to look at them all in your preparation, and choose a few to show your disciple, in addition to this Colossians passage. If you really want to look at all of them, this lesson could be done over two appointments, because there is a lot in this one.

In light of our position in Christ, being with Him in the heavenly places, what does Paul exhort us to do and not do?

1. Keep seeking the things above
2. Set your mind on the things above
3. Don't set your mind on earthly things

Why does Paul urge us to focus on things above? Ask your disciple to share their thoughts on this question and then discuss also a couple reasons mentioned below.

1. Things above are eternal.

God is eternal and our relationship with Him is the only relationship that will last forever. (John 10:27-31)

Souls of men and women are eternal – all people will spend eternity in either Heaven or Hell. (John 3:16-18,36; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Thes. 1:5-12)

His Word will never pass away. (Matt. 5:17-18) The writings of every other teacher or philosopher will fade away, but the wisdom of God in Scripture will remain forever.

2. Because Jesus taught that He was coming back and that we should always be ready and looking for His coming (Matt. 24-25).

He will give out rewards to us for faithful service, and in fact, His expectation is that we will be faithful in using what He has entrusted to us.

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This Week's Excursion

Your goal in this lesson is to help your disciple understand the brevity and temporal nature of life on earth. You want them to see the far greater importance of eternity, motivate them to live for eternal, rather than temporal, things and to evaluate their priorities in light of that which is eternally significant.

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Back to Colossians 3:2

Why are we not to set our minds on earthly things?

Because earthly things are temporal – they won't last. Our life here on earth is so brief and is passing away. Consider these verses:

James 4:13-14: "Our life is like a vapor; it appears for a little while and then vanishes away."

I John 2:15-18: "The world is passing away and also its lusts – earthly glory, fame, and worldly recognition is all fading and will pass away."

Matt. 6:19-24: "Do not lay up treasures on earth, because rust and moth destroy them. Earthly wealth will not last, so Jesus told us to lay up treasures in Heaven."

Phil. 3:17-20: "Paul taught that our real citizenship is in Heaven, not on earth." Consider a line representing eternity – infinite in both directions – how would you represent your 70 years on earth on that line? They would probably say, "a dot."



We must consider how we will invest our lives – for the dot or for eternity?

Back to Colossians 3:3-4

Because we are totally identified with Christ - actually hidden - we are secure in Him, belong to Him, are protected in Him, and also suffer with Him. But one day we will also be glorified with Him.

Consider these three future things we can look forward to:

1. We will share in His glory. When He is exalted and honored, when every knee bows to acknowledge He is Lord (Phil. 2:9-11), we, as saints, also will share in His glory and be honored with Him.

2. This future reality of glory helps us endure suffering in the present. Paul spoke of this clearly in Rom. 8:18 and 2 Cor. 4:17. He speaks of an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison – the joys and pleasures of Heaven, seeing the Lord face to face, no more sin, pain, or death.

3. We will receive actual rewards at the Judgment seat of Christ – rewards for faithful service (2 Cor. 5:9-10, 1 Cor. 4:5, Matt. 25:14-30).

The rewards that Scripture indicates seem to be:
We will reign with Christ in His coming kingdom.

We will receive crowns that we can throw back at His feet to express our gratitude for what He has done for us.

Personal praise from Jesus for being faithful servants.

Next Steps

Here are a few application suggestions to drive this home with your disciple:

1. Study the topic of the Judgment Seat of Christ found in 2 Cor. 5 & 1 Cor. 3:10-15.
2. Read and reflect on Matt. 24 & 25.
3. Go with your disciple to visit a cemetery and look over tombstones. Note what people said about life, and reflect and pray over the brevity of life, especially a life not lived in light of eternity.

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In light of the brevity of life and all that lies ahead in eternity, reflect with your disciple on these questions:

1. Where are you setting your mind at this time in your life? Why? Why is it so difficult to keep our mind on things above?
2. Are you living for the dot or the line?
3. Are there any changes you need to make to live more for eternity in your every day life? Changes in what you value? Changes in how you spend your time? Changes in your priorities?
4. When you look back on your life, what things will you want to have accomplished or been true of you?
5. What do you want to be on your tombstone?
6. How can even the temporal things we do be done in such a way as to gain eternal reward?

†End

Side Trails

Transferable Concept: How You Can Help Fulfill the Great Commission. Bill Bright. New Life Publications.

Order at crustore.org

Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. Winter and Hawthorne. William Carey Library.

Order at www.gospelcom.net/wclbooks



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