

Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Colossians 3:1-2

I love history! You can look back in time and easily see the destructive beliefs and habits that were common to that culture. I tend to ask myself if I would have had the same destructive beliefs if I had lived in a specific time in the past. For example, shouldn't the Germans had known that the Nazi party was evil? A few Christian Germans like Dietrich Bonhoffer stood up for what was right, but the majority did nothing. When you study the history of Germany, you see the economic disaster that was the result of WW1 and the punishment they received from the victorious countries. Therefore, when Hitler began blaming the Jews for all their problems, it was easy to fall in line. Would you have stood up in opposition?

In Colossians 3:1-17, Paul is giving advice to a new group of Christians on how to live in contrast to their current culture. He states that the key is to focus on Jesus for direction and not your culture. Just because the majority states it is okay, it does not mean it is okay with God. Looking into the past allows us to clearly see what is right and wrong. Focusing on God's word and His commandments also allow us to see clearly. To overcome destructive behavior, we must clearly see what God desires from us. Why was Bonhoffer able to see the destructive and evil beliefs? Because he had dedicated himself to be a disciple of Christ. He understood that Christians were called to be fully committed to God to the point of self-sacrifice.

Our culture has many destructive behaviors. Different groups blame others for their life struggles. Very few people take accountability for how they behave. Immoral behavior is explained away as following their heart and doing what is best for themselves. And actions that go against God's commandments are rationalized as okay because that is just the way things are today. Our challenge is to honestly look at our own actions and beliefs and compare them with what God desires from us. If we are honest, we will discover areas of our lives that need to change. You might not be able to change the world, but you can focus on the things of God and live a life that pleases Him. Maybe you will influence someone else to see clearly through faith.

Read Colossians 3:1-17