Amen. Amen.
Praise the Lord for that.
Colossians chapter 3, if you have your Bibles this morning,
tell me to Colossians chapter 3.
Good to see everybody that's here today.
As you're turning, I want to remind you, next Sunday we start our new church here.
In particular, we begin a new Sunday school year
and just want to remind all of our 20-somethings, 30-somethings,
maybe early 40-somethings, we don't check IDs
when it comes to Sunday school class.
But I'm excited that we have begun a new class for that age group.
If you've got little bitties and that has hindered you
from coming to Sunday school, I promise you,
there will be some folks who are more than gladly volunteer
to watch your little ones during Sunday school time.
So come and be part of that.
Just also to encourage everybody that's here.
We're all creatures of habit, every one of us.
I don't like change.
I don't like anything different than I like it just like it is.
And unfortunately, that can get into our church schedule.
But I want to encourage you, if Sunday school
is not part of your Sunday worship routine,
give it a shot.
Not just one Sunday, but make it part of your time.
Just another opportunity to open God's Word,
to fellowship with each other.
So I want to encourage you to make that part.
And also, I'm excited about this new class.
Ethan and Brittany will be leading that.
Colossians chapter 3.
Colossians chapter 3.
If you've been with us on Wednesday night,
we began a study in the book of Colossians a few weeks ago, a month ago.
I'm not sure how long it's been.
We've had six or seven lessons through these first three chapters in Colossians.
And I felt led this morning to continue going right back into that.
So we're going to begin reading Colossians chapter 3.
And this morning, just going to read down through verse number 4.
Again, it's good to see everybody here today.
The Apostle Paul writing to this church,
Colossians chapter 3, verse number 1.
He says,
Lastly, verse 4.
He says,
Let's pray.
Father, we thank you for the opportunity and the privilege.
Lord, the gift just to wake up another day.
Lord, we're not promised tomorrow.
We weren't promised this day, but you have given it to us.

Lord, I thank you for every family that is present here,
for a beautiful church to come and worship in.
But dear Lord, I pray this morning
that you would take your word.
Lord, it is not within thee
to teach or preach.
But Lord, your spirit and your word
will combine.
Lord, it opens the eyes of the blind.
It brings motivation and encouragement to the saint.
It brings conviction.
Lord, that you work through it.
And I pray today
for these next few moments we would give ourselves
to you
and what you have to say
to your church this morning.
Lord, in Jesus' sweet name we pray.
Amen.
Amen.
This morning I want to share with you on the subject of what now.
What now?
I've been thinking this week a lot about that return
and the restoration of the lost son.
Many people refer to him as the prodigal son
that we looked at last week, last Sunday morning.
Thought about the attitudes of this boy.
I mean, you could sum up his entire life,
his thinking in two thoughts and give me
what's really not mine but I want it to be mine.
He wanted the father's gifts
but he didn't want the father.
He wanted his life, his way,
do things however he saw fit.
He wanted blessings without accountability.
He wanted to be his own God, his own ruler.
And the father gave him his choice.
If we want a life
that is outside
the rulership of God and the authority of God,
God gives the man the ability to choose the direction that he goes.
And the Lord, the father in this story,
he honored the request
and we know how the story goes.
This man went out
and after he gathered his stuff together, he went out
and gathered it all,
wasted it all on riotous living.
He squandered all the blessings that his father
had given him.

He ended up in this hog pen and basically about to starve from hunger.
The Bible says when he came to himself, he remembered the goodness of his father.
He remembered
how good his father really was.
No servants at home.
They had plenty to eat.
But while he's in this spot, here's where we get
to the key point.
He saw his sin.
He recognized his sin.
He called it sin.
He recognized his unworthiness
to be a son.
But as that song that you just sang,
that grace is greater than sin,
he said, I will arise
and go to my father
and I'll tell him
exactly what I've done and I'm unworthy of anything
and I love he traveled this road of repentance
but I love that story before the boy
could even get home.
His daddy met him.
A running embrace, he went and kissed his face.
He took a whiff of him and a side of him.
He said,
go get the best robe
and put it on him.
Put rings on his hand and shoes on his feet.
Kill the fatted calf.
There was a feast instead of a funeral.
This great reuniting with his son.
It's a picture of the reality of what God does
in the sinner's life when he sees his sin
and places his hope purely in the God.
But specifically,
I've been thinking about this boy
and this question.
Well, what now?
He'd come home
and maybe head straight for the recliner.
Kick his feet up.
Go to the fridge.
Take a nap.
I don't know.
The scripture
doesn't really tell us that.
But what I'm thinking about is that for us in the life of a believer.
If you've ever experienced
these gifts of grace that the Father gave,

the other question that we ought to ask ourselves is,
what now?
It's impossible to overstate
to overstate the significance of the new birth.
It's impossible to overstate
that life does not begin until God gives a man life.
We've got to begin there.
But the reality is we all have to ask ourselves,
well,
what now?
Can I tell you this isn't the end of the story.
It is just the beginning
of the story.
Salvation isn't the end of all things.
It is the beginning of all things.
And there is a what now
that is to occur
in the life of the church and in the life of the believer.
And Paul specifically begins to address this now
in chapter 3,
verse number 1.
A few things I want to share with you this morning.
I'm not going to be able to get it all in.
Lord willing, we may pick this back up tonight.
But I just want to look at chapter 3,
verse number 1 through verse number 4.
And the what now in the life of the Christian.
Now listen,
I just got to be as plain as I can be.
If you've never experienced the gifts of God's grace,
if you've never seen your sin,
called it sin,
and turned and placed your hope purely
in the grace of God and the work of God on the cross,
this sermon ain't for you.
It's not intended for you.
We've got to begin where we were last week.
But friend, if you have,
this pertains to the man that is preaching to you today.
It pertains to every single
born-again Christian in this room.
What now?
What are we ought to do?
Number one, we're to seek.
Look what the Bible says here.
Chapter 3, verse number 1.
Paul says,
If ye then be risen with Christ,
seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth
on the right hand of God.

Set your affections
on things above, not on things of the earth.
For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.
When Christ, who is our life, shall appear,
then shall you also
appear with Him in glory.
But it says
specifically in verse 1,
If ye then be risen with Christ,
seek those things which are above
where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
Folks,
this is too little letter,
too little word here.
If,
it doesn't mean hope so may, the action is best translated as sins.
Paul's not asking a question right here.
It is a reminder of what's already been done.
All we've got to do is go look back at a few verses.
Verse 13,
he says, And you being dead in your sins
and the uncircumcision of your flesh,
hath He quickened together with Him,
having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances
that was against us which was contrary to us,
took it out of the way,
nailing it to His cross.
He's reminding these people of the word that God has already done in their life.
He's reminding them
of who they were,
that they indeed, brother of the Lord,
have been risen with Christ.
These things have been done,
but now He's simply stating
the next thing that must
be done.
There's a what now.
He says, You are to seek those things which are above
with Christ in it.
We are to seek.
That word seek is really interesting to me.
It doesn't just mean
to look for.
It doesn't just mean to gaze around.
What it literally means
is to search for in an effort that you are trying to find that you may obtain it,
that you may actually have it,
that it become yours.
I was thinking about me playing golf.
Every time I go and play golf,

I keep golf balls in my bag, but every time I go,
I'll buy a sleeve of golf balls.
Normally a couple,
three,
four sleeves of golf balls, there's three to the sleeve.
I know that I'm going to lose at least two or three sleeves when I play golf.
And the reason I lose these balls when I play golf, I'll hit them in the woods.
But here's my look for when I hit them in the woods.
I'll take one quick peek and say, I can't find it and I'll drop another.
I ain't looking real hard.
If I see it, I see it.
If I don't, I don't.
I ain't that really worth it.
It ain't that big of a deal to me.
Golf balls
don't cost a whole lot.
So I just kind of gaze around and if I find it, I find it.
Last year, I went to Iowa to deer hunt for five days.
I got in a tree before dark and I came out after dark.
I never left a tree stand.
And I'm telling you, I didn't go to sleep one time.
I had my binoculars out.
I was quiet.
I was looking.
They say, Preacher, what's the difference between that golf ball and them deer?
One, I wanted to put my hands on.
I mean, what I searched for, I looked for,
I wanted to obtain it.
And Paul's writing right here.
He says, you now, what now in your life?
You've been born again.
You have been dressed in the robe of righteousness.
You have been risen with Christ.
He says,
now seek for in a way that you may obtain and have
and make your own.
Those things which are above where Christ is.
He gives us a location
of where we're supposed to look.
Those things which are above where Christ is.
What do we find where Christ sits?
You may feel free to disagree,
but I don't think this has got a thing in the
world to do with streets of gold or gates of pearl
or crystal river.
What do I find
where Christ sits?
Friend, I find peace.
I find joy.
I find rest.

But you know what else I find when I look
where Christ sits?
I find holiness.
I find reverence.
I find the Lord himself.
See, the problem is is many of us want one
without the other.
And that was the case with his lost son.
He wanted the joy.
He wanted the peace.
He wanted the benefits.
He wanted all of those things.
But what he didn't want there
was the package deal.
And Christian,
these things
are a package deal.
They come together.
Peace comes with holiness.
Rest comes with the Lord.
All of these things come together.
And Paul's now writing to this church and these Christians
seek those things which are above
where Christ sits.
And I guess the question that I just felt
compelled to ask myself this week and to ask you
is for the lost sheep, the lost coin,
the lost son that's been found.
What are you really seeking?
I mean,
seeking in a way
that you may obtain it.
Seeking in a way
that it may be yours.
I had an opportunity this week to speak at the FCA at Belmont.
And I was so encouraged in one little classroom.
We had 49 kids in there.
And I got to talk to them and I opened, I began with this quote that I heard
from a coach many, many years ago.
He said, look at me, Brian, he knew I wouldn't give him my all.
He said, if you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time.
There's a lot of spiritual application in that.
If you aim at nothing,
you'll hit it every time.
But I also said something to these young people that I want them to get.
It's great to have a goal.
It's great to have something you're aiming for.
But we got to be very careful in not making our goals our God
instead of making God our goals.
What we're seeking for matters.

And I honestly believe
the lack of satisfaction, the lack of joy,
the lack of peace isn't because we haven't found what we've sought after.
We have sought after the wrong things.
Jesus said,
what did Jesus say?
Seek ye first
the kingdom of God
and his righteousness.
Then all these things shall be added unto you.
I want us to see the what now in the lives of this church and the life of me.
He said, you're to seek these things.
He says, now we're to set.
If you didn't be risen with Christ,
seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
Now he says,
set your affections on things above,
not on things of the earth.
See, this is about more
than just the desires of our heart.
This is about a setting and commitment
of our mind.
This word set means to direct your attention,
to ponder,
to hold a view.
But what it literally means is to stay there.
I want you to see the picture that he's talking about here, Natalie.
Paul's writing to this church.
Hey, you've been born again.
You've been dressed in the robe.
All of these things have happened in your life.
But it is not over in New Bethel.
Now as a church,
we are not to seek the things of this earth.
We are to seek
after God.
He's to be
our first possession,
our first purchase,
our first pursuit,
everything in life.
It revolves around him that we're looking for
him in a way that Paul says that I may know him.
He already knew him but he knew he hadn't scratched the surface of all that he was.
But that is my goal.
That is my aim.
And now,
it's not just something I desire.
It is where I'm setting my mind.
See,

a good desire is a good thing.
But folks, it ain't worth anything for a man
that's not fully committed.
This is about the commitment
of our minds.
Again,
we're given a location.
What does Paul write right here?
Set your affections
on things above,
not on things
of the earth.
Folks,
when our mind, listen to me this morning,
or the Bible,
when our minds
aren't set here
is when things begin to unravel in our life.
Matthew chapter 16
came to my mind last night as I was studying.
Jesus is there and he's in the region of Caesarea Philippi.
Y'all all know
this passage of Scripture,
this scene.
Jesus is there and he's become popular and he asks the people, he said, who do men say that I am?
And they said, well, everybody,
by the way, everybody still has an opinion about who the Lord Jesus is.
Some say you're John the Baptist,
some say you're Elijah,
some say you're Jeremiah,
some say you're one of the prophets.
And it was sort of a leading question.
What they really wanted to know is who do you say that I am?
At the end of the day, what my mom,
what my dad, what my brothers,
what anybody,
what you think about the Lord has no bearing upon what,
who do I say?
And Peter,
he says, thou art the Christ,
the son of the living God.
And Jesus says, amen, Peter,
you did not come up with this on your own, but my Father in heaven revealed this to you.
It is one of the best scenes in all of Scripture.
That is in verse number 17.
Turn with me, Matthew chapter 16, verse 21.
Same place,
same setting,

same man,
same group of people.
Britain,
he had just got the answer right.
And it says in Matthew 16, 21,
it says, from that time forth began Jesus
to show it to his disciples that he must go into Jerusalem
and suffer many things of the elders and of the chief priests and scribes
and be killed and be raised again the third day.
Jesus says, I have come
to seek and save that which is lost.
I have come for the cross.
Peter,
the same man, he said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God.
In verse 22,
then Peter took him
and began to rebuke him,
saying, be it far from thee, Lord,
this shall not be unto thee.
But he turned and said unto Peter,
get thee behind me,
Satan.
Y'all, that's strong.
Five minutes ain't passed.
They're in the same context.
You say, what's the problem?
What happened?
What happened to this man who had just got it so right?
I'm going to tell you what happened,
why he just got it so right and now he got it so wrong.
He did not set his mind.
Jesus said,
here's the problem.
Get thee behind me, Satan,
for thou art an offense unto me,
for thou savest not the things that be of God,
but those that be of man.
He began to desire
man's things over God's things.
He thought like a man instead of thinking like the Lord.
He did not set his mind.
He was thinking about things below
and not on the things of the earth.
And folks,
that's a very easy thing to do,
but it is a disaster when it happens in our lives
specifically as believers.
For some reason,
I feel like I have the opportunity
or I have the freedom.

I love Matthew Hester.
Every time I look out there, he's always looking at me.
I feel like I can pick on him a little bit.
A young father,
wonderful career,
two wonderful children,
and a beautiful wife.
I got to marry them.
Can I warn you all of something?
You're blessed
in many ways.
Seek,
seek, seek,
seek the things which are above what Christ is.
Set your mind on things above,
not on the things of the earth.
Don't mean we can't have things.
Don't mean we can't enjoy things.
But when we begin
to put other things above God things,
there's a what now in the life of a believer.
And when we get it wrong,
everything goes to a fiasco
and it falls apart.
A man who just claimed Christ now says, you're an offense to me.
There's a what now to this thing,
church.
We haven't arrived.
I've got to seek and keep seeking.
I've got to set and keep setting.
I've got to remain committed.
I've got to make sure.
And folks, this ain't just for young people.
My wife, she's about to retire to me and my thing.
Boy,
you start getting close to retirement.
Guess what you start thinking about?
You start thinking about retirement.
I'm doing math and I've got all this stuff away
and I'm thinking about all the things here and there and there.
And can I tell you
what she said to me one time?
Boy, I didn't know I was going to say this.
She said, Brian, are there any preachers that you respect that ever retired?
She said, I hate you.
Not is there any preachers that ever retired,
but is there any that I listen to that I respect
that have just checked out?
And there may come a day that this old fat boy can't do it anymore.
I mean, I don't have the hell.

But the reality is
if I ever get to a place when I start taking the things on this earth
and I make them more important than God,
when I start seeking all of these other things
instead of seeking the Lord,
all of this stuff is going to begin to unravel.
Hey,
there's a what now.
You've been saved.
Hallelujah.
Now really fix your eyes on Him
that you may know Him and to be intimate with Him and close to Him
in such a way now that everything about you
revolves around Him.
That's what Paul's right.
He said we're to seek and we're to set.
He also says something else.
He says we are to know.
We're to know what we are,
who we are,
and where we are.
Look what he says in verse number three.
He says, For ye are dead
and your life is hid with Christ in God.
When Christ who is our life shall appear,
then shall you also
appear with Him in glory.
We are to know,
to know,
to know
who and what we are.
Paul says, ye are dead.
It says in verse four, Christ is our life.
Now y'all follow me folks.
This isn't some irrelevant scholarly theology.
This is a blessed fact
where we find our purpose and our identity.
Can I tell you what happened at Calvary?
I can't see it.
But in Him,
the old me died with Him.
In Him,
the new me
was made alive in Him.
When God cleansed me,
He claimed me.
When He pardoned me,
He purchased me.
And the moment of my new birth,
I lost my rights to my life

when God gave me life.
And this is not a burden to run from.
It is a blessing to embrace that the Christian now
is dead to himself.
He is dead to all of this.
That now his life
is hidden there.
He is the Lord's.
I'm His possession.
I belong to Him.
I'm a child of the King.
Paul said,
hey, what now?
Seek Him.
Set your mind on Him.
But recognize clearly what you are now.
Do all of this.
It revolves around Him.
Why is this so important?
Friend, because if you're a Christian,
it's only in Him
that you're really going to truly experience life.
He said, for you are dead.
And He is our life.
We had a swimming party at my house yesterday.
The whole Wayne's family
come up to my place.
When you have grandkids,
they'll cause you to spend more money than you got.
So a few years ago, I put in a swimming pool.
So my grandbabies,
that's my grandbabies pool.
It ain't even mine.
It's theirs.
Well, a bunch of other people come up yesterday.
My nephews and nieces and everybody else.
And now Allah had to share her floats.
She had to share her pool.
What I'm getting at is we're naturally selfish people.
And some of us are of the honest opinion that are Christians that this is our life.
That somehow the Lord
is just some trinket that we've added to it.
He's my get out of hell free card.
He's my ticket to get into heaven.
But I can just do as I want, whatever I want, with who I want, that this is mine.
And friend,
that's the furthest thing from the truth.
This is His life.
That I lost rights to my life
when He gave me life.

But now I stand.
As a child
of the eternal God.
That's who I am.
I'm not just a daddy.
I'm not just a son.
I'm not just a brother.
I'm not just a preacher.
I'm not just a husband.
But I'm a new creature
of the eternal God.
And it is Him that I have life in the old me that's gone.
Paul says, know who you are, people.
Know who you are.
Know what you are.
But I love this.
He says, know where you are.
Look at verse number 3.
For you are dead
and your life is hid with Christ
in God.
Dick, you got all over this at Sunday school this morning.
Folks, if the what and the who
speak to our identity and purpose.
The where
speaks to our protection
and our security.
What happens when a man is born again?
What happens
when his son comes home
and he put his faith in the goodness of his father
for any changed him?
What I'm getting at is when God rescued me and redeemed me,
when He cleansed me, when He claimed me,
the Bible says that He hid me
in Himself.
I love verse 3.
For you are dead
and your life is hid with Christ
in God.
Now, I've got to be painfully clear right here.
Folks,
the Bible knows nothing
of a faith that saves
that doesn't change.
That's cultural Christianity.
It's not biblical Christianity.
The Bible
knows nothing
of easy believism.

Narrow is the gate.
The Bible knows nothing of a new tree
that doesn't bear fruit.
That is not biblical salvation.
That is cultural salvation that has made us all comfortable that we can simply
pray a prayer one time and ask God to do something
and the rest of our life go unchanged.
That is not salvation at all.
But can I tell you what else the Bible teaches?
Is that salvation is a supernatural work of God and when God
pursues that lamb
and He finds that lamb He takes that lamb and
He is secure in the hands of the shepherd.
It's a deed of God never to be undone.
When He saved me
He hid me in Himself.
Himself.
Praise God!
Paul says know what you are.
Know who you are.
Friend, know where you are.
Now folks,
this isn't a license
to go out and live lazily.
It's not a license to live carnally.
It's not a license to live sinfully.
What it is,
it's a motivation
to live holy
and wholeheartedly to the Lord.
Brother Dickey was talking about at the Sunday school this morning.
this whole idea
that people believe that Baptists can get saved and go and do whatever they want.
We act like we're victims but you know what?
We're not victims.
We've done that to ourselves.
We've done it to ourselves
because we claim to be a Christian but our life looks nothing like a Christian
but we tell people we're saved and we're going to heaven
and the world looks at us and goes, you've lost your mind.
No,
what Paul says is this is
the motivation now
to live holy and wholeheartedly to the Lord.
Where do you get that from?
Let's just keep reading.
Look what he says here in verse number 6.
Verse number 5, verse number 4.
When Christ who is our life shall appear
then shall you also appear with him in glory.

Look at verse 5.
Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth fornication,
uncleanness, inordinate affection,
evil concupiscence, and covenants which is idolatry.
Paul says now,
hey, it's time to get about killing sin.
Amen.
Lord willing, we're going to hit that a lick tonight because he keeps going.
Know what you are.
Know who you are.
Seek and set.
Know who you are.
But now he goes into
it's time to put things to death.
It's time to put off some things.
It's time to put on some things.
Paul's writing that his church what now?
Know what you are.
Who you are.
Know where you are.
Love this.
He says, know where you'll be.
Look at verse 3.
He says, for you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.
When Christ,
who is our life,
shall appear,
then shall you also appear with him in glory.
Folks,
there is a day coming that is beyond my ability
to explain
or to comprehend.
But what I know from the truth of God's word is that all who are in Christ,
all that belong to Christ,
every one of them will be with Christ eternally
in glory.
And there is nothing,
no nothing,
no nothing
that can stop this great reunion day.
That there's coming a day that the groom will come to claim his bride.
There will be a wedding feast that trumps all wedding feasts.
There will be a day
when Christ comes and he wipes every tear from every single eyes that mortality
will give way to immortality.
Paul's writing about the present.
Seek him.
Set your mind on him.
Know what you are, Ricky, that the old man's gone,
that your life is found in Christ.

Know that he hid you in himself.
But don't forget one day,
friend, where you will be.
Where you will be.
I was getting ready for church this morning and was thinking about this verse.
It's not just a verse.
It's a fact.
That,
and this is what we can't really,
I can't comprehend it.
That this isn't up for debate.
This is done.
That no matter
what happens here,
whether I get cancer or Russia invades or the stock market crashes
or anything else that's happened
because he who he is and he's done what he's done
and I am who I am in him.
He's made me a promise
that when I come back you're going to be with me in eternity and glory.
Now you tell me
that'll cause a man to live lazily and carnally and casually.
No friend, not at all.
It's not until we recognize what we are
that we can truly live.
I want to ask you this morning for the author if you'll be thinking of a song.
Have you experienced
the work of God?
Have you traveled this repentant road that we read about in Luke chapter 15?
Have you seen your sin
and have you called it sin?
Have you confessed it to God?
Have you repented to God?
Have you come to God
and placed all of your hope
all of your future all of your past all of
your presence at the throne of God's grace?
Friend, if not then there will be no help for you there is no hope for you
but the reality is
if you have and I believe many of you have
I don't know who has but here's what I know
if you have there is still plenty left for all of us to do
that the what now
needs to begin at New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church today
that we seek
after the right things things above not on
things on earth those things where Christ says
that we set our minds fully committed
to the things above not the things on the earth
that I recognize

who I am
the old man is gone
the new man is alive
and he is our life
where we are
where we are
can you think of a safer place to be
that with Christ in the Father
no I can't
but one day where we will be
what now though
it has to start
it has to start now
let's pray heavenly father
lord I thank you for your word I thank you that you are who you are
lord that you are the only one that can quicken a man you are the only one
that can change a man you are the only one that can save a man
but lord that your grace is greater than every one of our sins
and it's not through our work
it's through yours that life
is found
that salvation is found
oh but dear God you are so clear
lord this is the beginning of things not the end of it
lord and the evidence that I truly have been found
is that I seek differently
I set differently
I walk differently
I worship differently
I love differently
I submit differently
because you have made me different
lord I pray today that you would have your way
in this invitation time
lord may your will be done
in Jesus sweet name I pray amen let's stand please One, two, one.