



The Masters Mission International

Developers of International Disciple-making Movement Leaders
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Dear Brothers, Sisters, Partners and Friends,

As I reflect on all the blessings of 2021, I give thanks to Lord for the vision and mission He has commissioned us to and for your friendship, partnership, prayer and financial support. You all remain in my prayers. While reviewing various passages of Scripture and evaluating my walk with Jesus, my soul has been stirred to send you all some words of encouragement. I specifically want to remind you of **Things to Retain, Release and Remember in 2022**.

Colossians 3:1–4 (ESV)

¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

- Today is the first day of 2022 and **what better time is there:**
 - To reflect on the year that ended yesterday & look forward into the New Year that begins today?
 - For God's people to examine their walk with the Lord?
 - To take a close look at where we find ourselves in our relationship with Him.
 - To evaluate ourselves and see where we are, have been and where the Lord wants us to be in 2022.
- Beginning a New Year is like moving from an old place to a brand new one
 - It requires deciding **what things are best for you to:**
 - **Retain** (Hang on to & put to good use)
 - **Release** (Let go of, properly dispose of or just plain throw on the dump)
 - **Remember** (Where you once were, are now, and will be in the future)
 - **It's a second chance to:**
 - Leave accumulated junk behind & bring your valuable possessions into a new setting
 - Recover some good stuff you forgot you had because it's been buried under the jumble
 - Remember to live like you know you truly can.
- While cleaning out the old place, we are bound to find some things that are very important to us.
 - These are the things we need to hang on and put to good use in our new place.

Things to Retain in 2022:

Retain Our True Identity

¹If then you have been raised with Christ,

- The word "**if**" is not a statement of possibility, it's a declaration of a **spiritual reality**.
- Our True Identity is the **spiritual reality** of our **spiritual position**!
- The **spiritual reality** is that: all believers died to the penalty & power of sin **when** Jesus died on the cross.
 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 6:23).
 - For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace (Rom. 6:14).
 - 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 (Gal 2:20).
- We who have been redeemed by grace through faith are **already** dead to sin and alive to a **new life** in Jesus!

Retain A Correct Focus and Mind Set

^{1b}seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above,

- Since we have been raised to a new life in Jesus, we are told to “*seek those things which are above*”.
- “*seek*” is in the Present Tense, Imperative Mode here, so it literally means to “*continually be seeking those things which are above*”.
- We are to focus our thoughts on heavenly things not earthly things.
- We are to set our minds on the things of God and on the things that bring glory to Him.
- We are to focus on:
 - **A clean, holy life**, 3:5—9
 - ⁵**Put to death therefore what is earthly in you**: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
 - ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming.
 - ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.
 - ⁸But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.
 - ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices
 - **A deeper knowledge of Jesus**, 3:10
 - ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.
 - **Godly virtues**, 3:12-17
 - ¹²Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,
 - ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.
 - ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
 - ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.
 - ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
 - ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
 - **Holiness in our home life**, 3:18-21
 - ¹⁸Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
 - ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.
 - ²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
 - ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.
 - **Holiness in our social life**, 3:22-4:1
 - ²²Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.
 - ²³Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,
 - ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.
 - ²⁵For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.
 - ^{4:1} Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.
 - **An effective prayer life**, 4:2-4
 - ²Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.
 - ³At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—
 - ⁴that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.
 - **A fruitful witness**, 4:5-6
 - ⁵Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.
 - ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

- While Col. 3:2a tells us what we are to **Retain**, 2b, 5--9 says what we **MUST Release**, literally: **Put to death!**
^{2a}Set your minds on things that are above, ^{2b}not on things that are on earth...
- ⁵**Put to death** therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
- ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming.
- ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in the
- ⁸But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.
- ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.

Things to Release or literally (**Put to death**) in 2022:

Release the Remnants of the Flesh

⁵**Put to death** therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

- “**sexual immorality**,” **any** sexual activity (including in your mind) that takes place outside the confines of a marriage relationship is a sin and must be put away from our lives.
- “**Impurity**,” beyond the acts of the body into the very thoughts of the minds and the motives of the heart.
 - In **Matt.15:19—20** Jesus explained: “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”
- “**passion**,” a lusting for forbidden things.
 - God has made certain things off limits; but, **passion**/lust seeks out those things and longs for them.
- “**evil desires**,” speaks of a mind that longs for forbidden things.
 - The person with this kind of mind may never commit evil on a physical level, but they live in a fantasy world where their most wicked thoughts are acted out in the heart and mind.
- “**covetousness**,” refers to the insatiable desire to possess more than one has been given by God.
 - It is a refusal to be content with what you have as the gift of God.
 - It is placing the things you desire ahead of God and of His will for your life, that’s why it is called “**idolatry**”.

⁸But now you must **put them all away**: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

- “**anger**,” This word refers to a deep, smoldering, bitterness that dwells in the heart and makes the person tend to lash out in both words and deeds.
- “**wrath**,” is anger that boils over into sudden, explosive outbursts.
- “**malice**,” is anger mixed with a desire to do harm or damage to another person.
- “**slander**” is when we insult, belittle or defame God and/or other people and often happens through gossip.
- “**obscene talk from your mouth**” refers to any & all speech that attempts to hurt and wound someone.
 - This includes the things we say in a “moment of anger.”

⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have **put off the old self** with its practices

- A “**lie**” is not only a fabrication, it includes any form of falsity. Any attempt to not be upfront or plain spoken is the act of lying and tactic of the devil (John 8:44).
- Any remnants of the flesh from 2017, must be “**put to death**” (5), “**put away**” (8), “**put off**” (9) in 2018.

Things to Remember in 2022: (Col. 3:3—4)

³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Remember dear child of God:

- You have died to sin and to the influence of this world (Col. 3:3a).
- You were given new life in Jesus (Col. 3:3b).
- You are in the process of taking full residence in your New Eternal Home (Col. 3:4).
- Who you are and what you have in Jesus (**Col 2:6–14**).

⁶Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,

⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.
⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,
¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.
¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,
¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.
¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,
¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

- The Lord has plans for you. **(Jeremiah 29:11—13)**
For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.
You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart .

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen”. (Ephesians 3:20–21 ESV)

Have a blessed and eternally prosperous New Year.

Sincerely Yours,

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