



MESSAGE GUIDE

For Nov. 16,
2025



Colossians 3:1-11
Rick Grover,
LEAD PASTOR

COMPLETE 5: COMPLETELY CALLED

1. WHEN YOU EVER BEEN WAITING FOR A CALL, HOPING YOU'D GET THE CALL, BUT YOU NEVER DID GET THE CALL?

When you don't get the call, you're hoping for, it's very easy to fall into the trap of the "stinking thinking" that says, "I'm not good enough. I'm not smart enough. They don't want me. I'm unseen. I'm unheard. I'm not wanted." But the tragic part, is when we take those experiences that all of us have had in one way or another, and we dump that on God.

Someone, maybe a friend or a family member says, "Wow! I just got the call...from God! He loves me. He wants me. He's called me to serve. He's called me to do this or that. Isn't it amazing?!?" And you smile and nod your head, but you think to yourself, Well, it must be nice. Good for you. God sees you. God hears you. God calls you. But there must be something wrong with me, because I haven't gotten any "call." Maybe God forgot my number.

We are in the fifth week of our series called, Complete, where we're discovering that we are complete, whole, fulfilled through nothing else other than Jesus Christ who is the fullness of God in the flesh. In fact, that's pretty much the main point of what Paul writes about in his letter to the church in Colossae, which we know as the book of Colossians in the New Testament. In Colossians chapter 3, Paul continues to address this theme by helping us see that being complete in Christ leads us to the reality that we are called by Christ.

Complete in Christ = Called by Christ.

In other words, part of our fullness in Christ means that He has called us, and that calling—which is for all of us—means there are some things we have to leave behind, and there are some things we have to pick up and embrace. We are complete in Christ; thus, we are called by Christ to leave behind ... and pick up and embrace.

2. WHAT WOULD BE SOME THINGS ONE MIGHT NEED TO LEAVE BEHIND TO FOLLOW THE CALL OF CHRIST?

3. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS ONE MIGHT NEED TO PICK UP AND EMBRACE TO FOLLOW THE CALL OF CHRIST?



MESSAGE GUIDE

For Nov. 16,
2025



Colossians 3:1-11
Rick Grover,
LEAD PASTOR

Read Colossians 3:1-4.

Here's where we begin with the reality that we are complete in Christ. "Since, then, you have been raised in Christ." This opening phrase of Col. 3:1 can be translated, "If then you have been raised with Christ," or "If therefore..." or "Since, then."

So, here's the Greek lesson. This phrase is a conditional clause which assumes the reality that believers have been raised with Christ. It is stating what is true rather than something that is a possibility. Here's the breakdown. Colossians 3:1 begins with the phrase: ei oun. Now, In the Greek NT, if ei and oun are joined together, it is called a positive conditional clause, so that what follows the clause is the truth rather than a possibility. This, by the way, is the same clause and expression back in Col. 2:20— "Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world..." (Colossians 2:20, NIV) This is stating a truth—you really did die with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world—it's not a possibility; it's a reality.

So, why is this so important? Because If we don't see that we are truly made complete in Christ, we will never embrace that we are called by Christ. Maybe if you feel like you aren't really called by Christ, you don't have a role in the body of Christ, you're just a church attender, not a church member, you're not really a part of what's going on, then maybe it's because you're not sure if you've really been made complete in Christ.

The reality is we are complete in Christ, so we are called by Christ to live for Christ. That's what leads to the next part of the text. Since you are complete in Christ, you are called by Christ to...Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. (Colossians 3:2, NIV)

This is where Our choices are governed by our calling. We choose where we focus. We choose our mindset. We choose the attitude of our heart. We can't always control what happens to us, but we can control how we respond to what happens to us. We SET our minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Now, there's a misconception here that we have to clear up. The misconception is that since we set our minds on what's above, we're not concerned about what's here on earth. "We're so heavenly minded that we're no earthly good." But what Paul writes couldn't be further from that mindset. We're focused on what's above, so that we participate in bringing what's "above" to what's "below." The great apologist of the 20th century, C. S. Lewis, once wrote, "If you read history, you will find out that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next." (Mere Christianity, 118)

Here's the truth of the matter: When we set our minds on things above, we care most deeply for what's happening in our world, because our minds become more shaped by Christ's mind. In fact, Paul goes on to write, For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:3, NIV) And he even says, "Christ, who is your life" in v. 4.

4. SO, WHAT ARE THE "THINGS ABOVE" THAT YOU CAN PUT YOUR MIND ON?



MESSAGE GUIDE

For Nov. 16,
2025



Colossians 3:1-11
Rick Grover,
LEAD PASTOR

Here's how it all ties together: Being complete in Christ leads us to the reality that we are called by Christ which compels us to live for Christ.

Complete in Christ: First step. (Colossians 3:1)

Called by Christ: Second step. (Colossians 3:2-4)

Live for Christ: Third step. (Colossians 3:5-4:1)

We live for Christ through what we have to put to death and what we have to put on. (The first part we'll wrap up here, the second part we'll dive into next Sunday.)

- Put to death therefore what is earthly in you. (Colossians 3:5-11)
- Put on then, as God's chosen one, holy and beloved.... (Colossians 3:12-4:1)

So, living the Christian life flows out of our identity in Christ—we are complete in Christ, and we are called by Christ. That's our identity. That's who we are. But it doesn't stop there. It's not an ID card you have in your wallet. "Yes, I'm a card-carrying member of Jesus' church," and that's it. Our identity guides our actions. The Christian faith is an active faith—it's a lifestyle. When we are setting our minds on things above, our feet begin to follow. We begin to move. Here's the way Paul put it in verses 5-11:

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. (Colossians 3:5-11, NIV)

This is not some puritanical, behavior modification of finger-pointing judgmentalism. This is about new life! If we want the new life, we have to get rid of the old life. If we want to put on the new self (v. 10), we need to put off the old self (v. 9). We do this not to earn God's love, but because He already loves us. He has made us complete. He has called us. And now He empowers us to live for Christ—to let go of what we need to let go of, in order to grab ahold of what we need to grab ahold of.

5. WHAT THINGS IN YOUR LIFE IS JESUS CALLING YOU TO PUT TO DEATH? THE THINGS THAT SIMPLY DON'T FIT WITH YOUR NEW SELF.

Let's all encourage one another to put off the old self, so that you can put on the new self, because you are complete, and you are called, by Jesus Christ.