

# The Resurrection of Our Lord, Epistle (Colossians 3:1-4), Year A

THE HIDDEN GLORY

Colossians 3:1-4

The Resurrection of Our Lord

Analysis by Michael Hoy

1So if 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 is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Author's Note: The word for "hidden" here (3:3) is used only once in the New Testament in this perfect, indicative, middle or passive of *krupto* (Greek, meaning "to hide"). Even as this hidden life is planted in the middle of this text, this text is also planted in the middle of a larger passage in chapter 2 and 3; all of which is worth reading to get to the hidden kernel of this promising Easter text.

DIAGNOSIS: Earthly Glory

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem): Playing the Earthly Dressing Game

You can just look around to see what the earthly game is all about. You can also look around in this text, which finds itself sandwiched between a whole host of captivating religious traditions on the one hand (2:8, 16-23), greed and lusts on the other (3:5-8). One dresses up in limits ("Do not handle, do not

taste, do not touch," 2:21); the other removes all restraints, but puts on the same old clothing of limitation (3:9). Isn't our life in this world precisely that, sandwiched between don'ts and do's? Nonetheless, we often find ourselves playing along, more often than we realize, and most often to our peril.

#### Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem): Temporal Intentions

Why this fascination, this intention ("setting our minds upon") earthly glory, whether religious or quite secular? Because the alternative is seen as dying—even believed to be so—by the world and us as well. It is an incredibly seductive game, giving false (legalistic) hopes to the religious as well as false (shallow) hopes to those seeking earthly pleasures. Yet it doesn't seem like living unless you play along. Still, what we don't realize is that whatever earthly dressing game we play, we let the world determine our agenda—and dying even in our presumed living.

#### Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem): Captive to Death

Eventually, these roots will bear the full fruits of our captivity unto death (2:8). Indeed, we will not only die with it, but are dying already to any chance of a promising relationship with God.

#### PROGNOSIS: Rising in Glory

#### Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution): Christ, Risen and in Glory

But Christ came for those who are so held captive to perishing. He came to set us free. And he nailed it for us, literally, with his own body on the cross (3:14). In his death, all that is part of our earthly game died with him. And now he is risen from the dead, so that we may be raised with him who is risen and seated at God's hand of power (v. 1).

#### Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution): Promising

## Intentions

All of which gives us a fresh, resurrectional perspective about things. Things are looking up, and so are we (vv. 1-2). Faith in him puts a spring in our lives, even as we die and rise from the spring of our baptism, embracing and embarking on a new life of promise that no power or principality, religious or secular, can shake from us (2:8-15).

## Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution): Celebrating the Hidden Life

With lives filled with promise, we put on the spring clothes, the promising vestments of vision, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness, wisdom, and love (3:10-16). Not for showing off, though, as those with earthly garments of glory so often do. No, the life is “hidden,” buried also in this world, for the very sake of this world, so that when all things are revealed—and we ourselves revealed in all of Christ’s glory—the whole, loved world will come along and play! In the risen Christ, there is no need to limit the shouts and laughter of this wonderful mystery! Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!