

Complete In Christ

A study in the book of Colossians

Lesson Six “Put On Tender Mercies”

We have seen the errors the Colossian church was entangled in. Now Paul points them toward the direction they should be walking in....from the **old man** to the **new man**; from living for **self** to living for **God**; from **selfishness** to **self-denial**; from the **sinful nature** and the lusts of the flesh to the **fruits of the Spirit** and agape love.

So opposite are the two, so contrary to one another, that we know outside of the power of the Holy Spirit it would be impossible for us to go from the one to the other. And yet, again we see the command of Paul in verse 12, telling us to “**put on** therefore.....” Like a garment, he calls us to clothe ourselves by an **act of our will**, a conscious **choice**.

Oswald Chambers once said, “We have to **work out** the salvation God has **worked in**.” There is a part that **only God** can do, and there is a part He leaves to us. The fine lines where one leaves off and the other begins can sometimes be difficult to discern, but that **my will** is involved is just as clear in God’s Word as is the sovereignty of His grace.

“The clothes we wear are what people see. Only God can look on the heart. The outward signs are important. They reveal something of what is inside. If charity is there, it will become visible outwardly, but if you have no charitable “feelings,” you can still obey the command. Put it on as simply and consciously as you put on a coat. You choose it; you pick it up; you put it on. This is what you want to wear. Do you want to dress like a Christian? Put on Christ. The act of honest obedience....the fruit of love for Christ....is your part. Making you Christ like through and through is His part.” Elizabeth Elliott

Read Colossians 3:12-17

- 1) List the 5 things Paul tells us to “put on” in verse 12.

In verse 13, Paul tells us we should be, “Bearing with one another and forgiving one another.”

- 2) What do you think it means to “bear with” one another? What specifically might this mean to you personally? How might you apply this in your life? (See Romans 12:15; Romans 15:1; Galatians 6:2.) Share your thoughts.

In Verse 15a, Paul says, “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...”

The Amplified Bible describes peace as, “Soul harmony which comes from Christ, acting as umpire continuously in our hearts, deciding and settling with finality all questions that arise in our minds.”

- 7) Look up Isaiah 26:3. How does this Scripture tell us this peace is obtained?

Verse 15 continues with, “.....to which also you were **called**...”

- 8) Do you realize that peace is something we are **called to**? Hebrews 12:14 tells us to “**pursue peace.**” Look up the following Scriptures and list some of the **practical ways** we can pursue peace: Ephesians 4:29-32; Philippians 2:1-4 & 2:14-15; 2 Timothy 2:23-25.

Verse 16a tells us to “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...”

- 9) We know that for our own spiritual growth and maturity we need to be nourishing ourselves by feeding on God’s Word. As we examine Colossians 3:16, what are some other reasons we need to do so? Look up the following verses in Psalm 119: Verse 9, 97-101, 104, 105, 130, 133. Record the reasons you find here.

OPTIONAL: If you have time, prayerfully read through Psalm 119 in its entirety and on a separate sheet of paper, jot down every reference you find there to the **Word of God**, and the **reason** the Psalmist gives to **why it is so important**. Share your findings with the group.

- ❖ Does reading through Psalm 119 stir a hunger in your heart for God’s Word and how important it is for us to ingest it on a regular basis? Have you found yourself neglecting to set apart a time each day to feed on God’s Word? We can all get caught up in the busyness of life and each day’s demands, but neglecting to nourish ourselves on God’s

Word as our spiritual food will result in a weak and unhealthy spiritual life, just as a poor diet will affect the health of our body. Ask the Lord to help you find a time in your schedule each day to feed on His Word and make an intentional choice to keep that appointment. This is not a “legalistic” exercise. Schedules change as things come up, but making a point to set a time aside each day and make it a habit is crucial for all of us to grow in our relationship with the Lord and our ability to minister to others.

10) What are the different ways we see in verse 16 of Colossians 3 that we are to edify one another?

11) In what ways have you been specially edified by others in the Body of Christ?

We're told in Verse 17a that “...**whatever** you do in **word** or **deed**, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus....”

12) There are probably many things you do that you feel you are doing in the name of the Lord.....but, **all things**? All of our words? All of our actions? What does this really mean? Define what the phrase, “**in the name of the Lord Jesus**” means and then share how we can apply this command to **all things**. Use a Bible dictionary and/or commentary to research your findings. If you have neither in your library, you can find great resources online.

Verse 17 continues by telling us we should be “Giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

- 13)** Giving thanks is something we are exhorted to do all throughout Scripture. We touched briefly on thanksgiving in Lesson One of this study, and Paul mentions it twice in the 6 verses we’re covering in this lesson alone. In verse 15 he couples thankfulness with **peace**. What are some of the other things we see **coupled with thanksgiving** in the following verses? 2 Chronicles 5:13; Nehemiah 12:27; Isaiah 51:3; 2 Corinthians 9:10 & 11; 1 Timothy 2:1; Revelation 7:12.
- a. Have you experienced that a thankful heart has brought the benefits of these other things along with it?

 - b. Share what you are most thankful for today.
- 14)** What is your greatest take-away from Lesson 6 of our study in Colossians?

God's purpose for our sanctification is that we would be a witness to the world of His love. In 1 John 4:17, we are shown love's completed work and purpose, being that, "...as **He is, so are we** in the world." Our **love for one another** is the **evidence of our love for God**; the **evidence** that we belong to Christ. It is the transforming work of God's Spirit in shifting our focus **from self**, to the One Who **poured Himself out**.....and to all those He poured Himself out for.

Paul told the Philippians in chapter two, verse 17, that he saw himself as being, "***poured out like a drink offering for the sacrifice and service of (their) faith.***" God has filled each one of us with His Spirit so that we, too, might **pour ourselves out** for the edifying of others.

"FREELY YOU HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE" (Matthew 10:8)

"Each Christian is a dispenser. God has supplied each one with gifts that He has selected (He does not offer an array of options), with the good of all in mind. When we imagine that these gifts are for our own mere satisfaction, we are forgetting they are intended for **service**. All that I have is meant to contribute to the needs of others, and what I need will be supplied through God's dispensers. Thus, He unifies and harmonizes the whole church, which is His body, making each dispenser **indispensable**, for each dispenses a grace which is peculiarly his."

Elizabeth Elliott

This study was written and prepared by Shawn Van Hook, revised 2021

LIVING  TRUTH