

## Colossians, Chapter Three, Lesson Two

PUTTING ON LOVE Colossians 3:12-17

### STIMULATE

\*\* Last week in Colossians 3:1-4 we saw three reasons, given to us by Paul, which should compel us to live our lives each day "**Putting Aside Sin**". Do you recall those reasons?

- 1) We have been raised up with Christ. (V.1)
- 2) We have died and our life is hidden with Christ in God. (We are eternally secure) (V.3)
- 3) When Jesus Christ comes again in glory, we will be with Him! (V.4)

\*\* We looked together at eleven areas of sin, both private and social. If the Lord made you aware of a sinful pattern in your life through last week's study, what should you have done with it by now?

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we should be victorious in our effort to be "**Putting Aside Sin**" each day.

### MOTIVATE

\*\* Having dealt with our sinful side last week, Paul turns a refreshing corner this week as he encourages the Colossians (and us as well) to live their life each day by "**Putting On Love**". It should be our desire to become more like Christ. We will see today how learning the Word of God is inextricably linked to "**Putting On Love**" and thereby becoming more like our beloved Savior. Please open your Bibles to Colossians 3:12-17 and let's read through our passage together.

Read passage (V.12-14) (V.15-17)

### *Putting On Love*

### INVESTIGATE

**V.12** \*\* The apostle Paul begins our passage with a reflective look back to our study from last week. With the words "And so", he is connecting what he is about to say with what he said in verses nine and ten. What were the two statements made by Paul last week which referred to our part in our sanctification?

From V.9 - "...since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices..."

From V.10 - "...have put on the new self..."

\*\* It is good to see that by the choices we make, we can be involved in the high calling of bringing glory to God. However, according to Paul, how did we become saved in the first place?

We "...have been chosen by God..." - Our obedience is a choice we make. When we are successful, it is because of God's grace enabling us to obey. But our salvation is something else entirely. We were first chosen by God, at a time when we were still His enemy.

cf. 2Thessalonians 2:13, 2Timothy 1:9

\*\* What further description does Paul add to the fact that God chose us for salvation?

We are chosen and holy and beloved. God elected us to be:

**holy** - hagios (set apart) from sin to Him

**beloved** - agapao (to love) It is amazing that our gracious God would so love us. He uses another form of this word to describe His love for His own Son.

cf. Matthew 3:17, 12:18, 17:5 agapetos

\*\* God has done so much for us, what does He want us to do for Him according to Paul?

"Put on a heart of..." enduo lit. "to put on clothes or envelope in". Paul follows that phrase with six specific things we need to "put on", while we are "**Putting Aside Sin**" each day.

\*\* Here in verse 12, Paul gives us the first five items which need to be included in the wardrobe our heart. Let's look at them one at a time.

**1) compassion** - means "pity, mercy or sympathy", a Christlike characteristic which meets the needs of others who have no resources. cf. Luke 6:34-36 and James 5:11

**2) kindness** - this Greek term is referring to the grace which pervades the entire person. The kind person is truly as concerned about his neighbor's need as he is for his own.

cf. Romans 2:4

**3) humility** - In classical Greek, humility always carried a negative connotation. It took Christianity to elevate humility to a virtue. But it was to be genuine.

cf. Colossians 2:18, 23 with 1Peter 5:5

**4) gentleness** - Closely related to humility, this is speaking of a willingness to suffer injury instead of inflicting it! This kind of gentleness can only be produced by the Holy Spirit.

cf. Galatians 5:22-23, 2Timothy 2:24-25

**5) patience** - makrothumia lit. "long suffering" The patient person does not get angry at others! Remembering how patient God has been toward us, how could we not offer that same patience to others? cf. 1Timothy 1:16, 2Peter 3:14-15

**V.13** \*\* With those kinds of clothes, our hearts are beautifully attired. Now that we are dressed so graciously, how are we to treat one another? What two things are we to do?

1) bearing with one another - anexomai lit. "to endure, to hold out in spite of persecution, threats, injury, indifference or complaints...and not retaliate" cf. 1Corinthians 4:10-13

2) forgiving each other - cf. Matthew 6:14-15

\*\* Before we go any further, why would Paul have to tell the Christians in Colossae to "bear with one another" and to "forgive each other" - what is the problem?

Complaining! If someone wrongs us, we complain instead of enduring and forgiving. This has to change! cf. Philippians 2:14-15

\*\* Instead of complaining, how much are we to forgive?

"...just as the Lord forgave, so also should you.."

We have been forgiven everything, how could we not totally forgive others?

cf. Ephesians 4:32

**V.14** \*\* Alright then, having dealt with that very thorny problem, Paul now returns to complete his list. What is the sixth piece of Godly attire for our hearts?

**6) "...put on love..."**

\*\* How important is love, when compared to all of the valuable things which Paul has already listed?

"And beyond all these things..." - Love goes beyond all efforts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, endurance or forgiveness. If "those things" are not prompted from a heart of love, they amount to legalism and are worthless. cf. 1Corinthians 13:1-3, 13

\*\* How successful is "love" in maintaining the unity of the body of Christ?

It is always the "perfect bond" and will always maintain the unity desired by our Lord for His saints to enjoy. cf. Ephesians 4:1-3, John 17:17-21

**V.15** \*\* Well we are looking pretty good, having put aside sin and put on love. What are we now open to experiencing according to Paul?

The "...peace of Christ..."

\*\* Is that peace a neutral or idle presence in our life? Do we just lie back and say, "I have such peace"?

No - The peace of Christ is to "rule in [our] hearts". The term literally means "to act as arbiter". In classical Greek the term was used to describe the activity of an umpire or official in deciding the outcome of an athletic contest. Our relationship with Christ put us at peace with God, but that same peace is to rule the decision making process of our hearts.

\*\* Paul again refers to our calling, but what does he add to the fact that we have been individually called by God to salvation?

We have been "called in one body". We are not to act as loners, hermits, mavericks or individuals who think we can make it on our own.

\*\* What is the preoccupation for the body of Christ?

We are to "be thankful". If there is anything which should describe the local assembly of believers, it should be thankfulness. cf. Hebrews 13:15

**V.16** \*\* If we want to be victorious in our effort to daily be "**Putting On Love**", and thereby becoming more like our beloved Savior - what are we going to have to do according to Paul?

"Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you..."

This just might be my favorite statement in Scripture regarding our responsibility as Christians. We know that this passage is a parallel to what Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:18-6:9, but in that passage he began with "be filled (or controlled) with the Spirit".

The parallel significance of these two passages is that the Holy Spirit can control your life only as God's Word is poured into your heart!

\*\* What are we equipped to do, once God's Word has been "richly" deposited within us?

"...with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another..." We are quite familiar with Romans 15:14 where Paul says, "...that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to admonish one another". This is why, as Christians learn God's Word they can then use it for the building up of the body. cf. Ephesians 4:11-12

\*\* What is the specific source of our teaching and admonition, according to Paul?

Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

Psalms (Encouragement) - i.e. Psalm 92:1-2

Hymns (Praise to God) - i.e. Philippians 2:6-11

Spiritual songs (Testimony)- i.e. Revelation 5:9-10

\*\* What attitude was to accompany all of this singing?

An attitude of gratitude. Again, Paul takes us back to the need for giving thanks.

\*\* How do we know that this thankfulness is genuine?

It is coming from our "hearts" to God. cf. Matthew 15:7-9

**V.17** \*\* Is there any one guideline, by which we should live, even if we are faithful in our "**Putting On Love**" and learning the Word of God?

Yes - "...do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..."

\*\* What does that mean?

To do everything (whatever we do in word or deed) in the name of Jesus is to act consistently with who He is and what He wants. cf. Romans 13:14 and 1Corinthians 10:31

\*\* This too, could be cranked out in the flesh. What will prevent us from doing that in His name?

If we are genuinely giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ! cf. Ephesians 5:20 (all things)

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* Besides being chosen by God for salvation, what other description did we see today regarding our relationship to God?

We are "**holy and beloved**" - set apart to God, who loves us with the same kind of love which He has for His Son!

## **DELINEATE**

\*\* What did our heart's wardrobe look like? What are we to put on each day?

1) Compassion 2) Kindness 3) Humility 4) Gentle- ness 5) Patience and 6) Love

\*\* What was the one thing Paul asked us to avoid?

Complaining!

\*\* What were we to do in place of complaining?

Forgive others.

\*\* How much are we to forgive - each day?

"...just as the Lord forgave you..."

### **EVALUATE**

\*\* How does your heart's attire match Scripture? Are you letting the Word of Christ dwell within you to the point that it is making you more like Christ?

### **ACTIVATE**

\*\* May everything we do "in word or deed" be done in the name of the Lord Jesus!

Closing prayer