Colossians

Lesson notes on the Epistle to the Colossians

Pastor Vincent Sawyer

Victory Baptist Church, Port Charlotte, Florida (seven lessons from Faith Baptist Church, Corona, New York, 1991-92

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"THE POWER OF THE TRUE GOSPEL"

Colossians 1:1-8

4/17/2016

INTRODUCTION: Verses 1-2

Two key phrases: "the word of the truth of the gospel" (v. 5)
"the grace of God in truth" (v. 6)

***All we need is the truth of the Gospel!**

When the true gospel goes forth, its power accomplishes the following:

I. THE TRUE GOSPEL RESULTS IN THANKSGIVING TO GOD (v. 3)

II. THE TRUE GOSPEL CHANGES LIVES (v. 4, 8)

III. THE TRUE GOSPEL PROVIDES UNSHAKABLE HOPE TO THE SOUL (v. 5)

IV. THE TRUE GOSPEL SPREADS WORLD-WIDE (v. 6)

V. THE TRUE GOSPEL PRODUCES FRUIT ON ITS OWN (v. 6b)

VI. THE TRUE GOSPEL MUST BE TOLD to others (v. 7)

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VI. THE TRUE GOSPEL _____ to others (v. 7)

"THE POWER OF THE TRUE GOSPEL"

Colossians 1:1-8

What are some messages that people falsely claim are the gospel?

1. God wants to make us rich.

Some preachers today say that the good news is that God wants to bless us with loads of money and possessions—all we need to do is ask! But the gospel is a message about spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3): God sent Jesus Christ to die and rise again for us so that we would be justified, reconciled to God, and given eternal life with God (Rom. 3:25-26, 6:23; 2 Cor. 5:18-21). Moreover, the Bible promises that Christians will not have material prosperity in this life, but tribulation (Acts 14:22), persecution (2 Tim 3:12), and suffering (Rom. 8:17), all of which will one day give way to unspeakable glory (2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:18).

2. God is love and we're okay.

Some people think the gospel is that God loves us and accepts us just as we are. But the biblical gospel confronts people as sinners facing the wrath of God (Rom. 3:23, John 3:36) and tells people about God's radical solution: Jesus' sin-bearing death on the cross. This gospel calls people to an equally radical response: to repent of their sins and trust in Christ for salvation.

3. We should live right.

The gospel is not a message that tells us a live a better life and so make ourselves right with God. In fact the gospel tells us exactly the opposite: we can't do what pleases God and we can never make ourselves acceptable to him (Rom. 8:5-8). But the good news is that Jesus has done for us what we could never do for ourselves: by living a perfect life and bearing God's wrath on the cross he has secured the salvation of all those who turn from their sin and trust in him (Rom. 5:6-11, 8:31-34).

4. Jesus came to transform society.

Some people believe that Jesus' mission was to transform society and bring justice to the oppressed through a political revolution. But the Bible teaches that this world will only be made right when Jesus comes again and ushers in a new heaven and new earth (2 Thess. 2:9-10, Rev. 21:1-5). The gospel is fundamentally a message about salvation from the wrath of God through faith in Christ, not the transformation of society in this present age.

(The above material has been adapted from Nine Marks of a Healthy Church by Mark Dever, pages 80-90)

http://9marks.org/answer/what-are-some-messages-people-falsely-claim-are-gospel/

INTRODUCTION: Verses 1-2

Two key phrases: "the word of the truth of the gospel" (v. 5)
"the grace of God in truth" (v. 6)

V. 1

"Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ" -

Paul, as in all his epistles, identifies himself and makes reference to his apostleship to lend authority to the words he is about to write (Note: The Colossian believers had heard about him but never met him "face to face").

Apostle = "sent one"; "commissioned one" Paul is an apostle of Jesus Christ in that he was sent by Jesus and for Jesus (Acts 9:15 - But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

"By the will of God" - Paul was not a self-appointed apostle - His mission was the desire of God.

Paul's addition of the phrase: "By the will of God" is meant to distinguish himself from other false apostles who either appointed themselves into the office or were appointed by men (cp. Gal. 1:1; II Cor. 11:13). Paul, on the contrary, was appointed by God!

"And Timothy our brother" - Timothy is apparently Paul's amaneuensis, who penned the Epistle as Paul, under divine guidance, dictated it.

V. 2

"Saints" - lit. holy ones; sanctified ones; Every believer has a holy sanctity imputed by Christ.

"Faithful" - those who are "full of faith" and evidence such faith by steadfastness.

"Brethren in Christ" - only by virtue of our spiritual union with Christ are we brethren. All who have been "born again" into the family of God have the same "Father" - God; wear the same name - "Christian"; anticipate the same "home" - heaven; and inherit the same blessings - SEE Col. 1:12-13.

"Which are at Colosse" - Though the believers are "in (en) Christ" spiritually, they are literally "in (en) Colosse" geographically.

Colossae was:

1) A commercial city - located about 100 miles from Ephesus (near Hierapolis & Laodicea). Colossae was an important trade route, a meeting point for the East & West.

2) A declining city - Probably due to the paganism, worldliness, and false religion, "the city of Colossae slipped into a 'second-class' city." "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

3) A needy city - (i.e. for the gospel) Epaphras was saved at Ephesus (Philem. 19) through the ministry of Paul (Acts 19 & 20). He was apparently the man burdened for those people, and the one who was instrumental in starting this church (Col. 1:7)

4) A predominantly Gentile city

5) A confused city - Many religious hucksters abounded . After the truth reached Colossae, Satan planted his false teachers there to confuse etc.

The false teaching at Colossae "was a deceptive combination of many things: Jewish legalism, Oriental philosophy, pagan astrology, mysticism, asceticism, and even a touch of Christianity. There was something for everybody, and this was what made it so dangerous" (Wiersbe, Colossians, p. 13).

The heretics at Colossae were teaching that Jesus Christ was only part of a total religious system or philosophy. They taught that the secret to a "deeper life"; "spiritual perfection" or "spiritual fullness" was to practice certain formulas, disciplines or rituals.

Such philosophy fails to give Christ the preeminence! (SEE Col. 1:18) (cp. Wiersbe, p. 13).

Is Christ merely one among many answers, authorities, etc.? Should we dilute Christianity by trying to make it harmonize and syncretize and mix with man-made philosophies? Many are doing this today. Perhaps not with the intention of denying Christ, but they are dethroning Him and robbing Him of His rightful place of pre-eminence (Wiersbe, p. 18).

You need the truth found in this Epistle "lest any man should beguile you" (2:4); "lest any man spoil you" (2:8) or "judge you" (2:16).

There are many similarities or parallels between the Ephesian & Colossian epistles (both written about the same time). "However, the emphasis in Ephesians is on the church, the body of Christ; but the emphasis in Colossians is on Christ, the Head of the body."

Since what we believe (our faith) determines how we behave (our actions;, lifestyle), Paul's Epistle can be divided into two major sections - chapters 1-2 are doctrinal; chapters 2-4 are practical.

"Grace be unto you and peace" -

The word order is significant. No one receives the peace of God unless they first of all receive the grace of God.``This wish by Paul for grace and peace to be upon the Colossian believers suggests that even Christians need a continual supply of grace and peace.

God not only gives saving grace but living grace (i.e. grace to live the Christian life).

He not only provided peace with God (Rom. 5:1), but to his trusting children, He dispenses the peace of God (Phil. 4:7).

Note: The only source for grace and peace is God (the Father & Son). No religion or religious person can provide divine grace & peace.

***All we need is the truth of the Gospel!**

When the true gospel goes forth, its power accomplishes the following:

I. THE TRUE GOSPEL RESULTS IN THANKSGIVING TO GOD (v. 3)

Continual thanks & prayers ascended up to Heaven by Paul for what God did for these people.

Do you ever thank God when you hear of people being saved? Though Paul did not personally lead these Christians to Christ, he was rejoicing in their salvation. The reason being that he loved God and loved God's work no matter which vessel or instrument God used to accomplish it.

Like Paul, we should be thankful for what God does in the lives of others.

II. THE TRUE GOSPEL CHANGES LIVES (v. 4, 8)

V. 4

The false teaching that spread through Colossae was that true spirituality was achieved through external reforms; "these false teachers tried to change people from the outside, by means of diets and disciplines" (Wiersbe, p. 14).

Whereas the Bible teaches that true spiritual growth comes from within.

You don't change the inside of yourself by reforming on the outside; rather you let God change the inside and the outside will change as a result of internal changes.

V. 4 & 5

Note: "Faith...love...hope" - this trio of virtues are seen together in I Cor. 13:13; Rom. 5:2-5; Gal. 5:5-6; I Th. 1:3, 5:8; Heb. 6:10-12, 10:22-24; & I Pet. 1:21-22.

"Faith in Christ" - the object of your faith is all important!

"Love . . . to all the saints" - the word "all" shows this love to be -

1) Unconditional -
2) Impartial -

"Love" (agape - cp. v. 8) - This supernatural, unselfish attitude only comes to the one who has faith in Christ. This love only comes from God (I Jn. 4:7).

v. 8

The Colossian's love was produces by the Spirit and was real objective proof of the genuineness of their faith, and the reality of their salvation.

The little book of 1 John makes this abundantly clear! Those who are saved will love other believers!

1Jo 3:11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

1Jo 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

1Jo 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

1Jo 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

1Jo 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

1Jo 3:23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

1Jo 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

1Jo 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

1Jo 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

1Jo 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

1Jo 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

1Jo 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

1Jo 4:21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

III. THE TRUE GOSPEL PROVIDES UNSHAKABLE HOPE TO THE SOUL (v. 5)

The virtues of faith and love (v. 4) were in the lives of the Colossians "because of (or by means of; through - "dia") the hope" that they had (v. 5).

The fact that we know (for certainty) that we will be with Christ in glory encourages us to put more faith in Him and to love Him more.

Our hope is the source for our faith and love.

Have you ever noticed that people who are anticipating future happiness are more cheerful and loving? (EX: upcoming wedding; Friday's at work, etc.) EX: watching children just before Christ or a family vacation. The bright prospect that awaits them transforms them. So it is for the Christian.

"The hope which is laid up" - The believers' "hope" is Christ and all the spiritual blessings that are linked to Him. The key blessing being eternal life - Titus 1:2 - "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

Such a hope we have not seen with our eyes, but it is "laid up" or stored up on reserve in Heaven. Such a gift awaits the child of God; and such a gift will never be taken off of "Heaven's shelf" or our "name tag" removed from it!

"Whereof (regarding this "hope") ye heard before (previously) in the word of the truth of the Gospel."

In other words, such a guaranteed hope was originally heard and believed by the Colossians by the true gospel message (which they learned from Epaphras - v. 7).

But apparently some religious tricksters (2:4); some worldly philosophers (2:8); some legalistic Judaizers (2:16); some mystical angel worshippers & vision seekers (2:18) and some ascetic body neglectors (2:20-23) were causing some of the Colossians to doubt the sufficiency of Christ and to stumble.

The Christian's hope is not here today and gone tomorrow. It does not drift with the tides of life. Rather, God calls it an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. (Heb. 6:19).

Those outside of Christ have no hope.

> I Thes. 4:13 - "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."
>
> Ephes. 2:11-12 - "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

IV. THE TRUE GOSPEL SPREADS WORLD-WIDE (v. 6)

The true gospel not only came to the Colossians, but god said that it had also come in "all the world" - God never intended His gospel to be a "white man's religion" nor to be limited to America. Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). . . "go ye therefore and teach all nations" (Mt. 28:20). The Gospel was right on course in Paul's day,; it was spreading globally.

V. THE TRUE GOSPEL PRODUCES FRUIT ON ITS OWN (v. 6b)

"And bringeth forth fruit" - present tense, middle voice, participle - meaning that the Gospel is continually producing fruit on its own or by itself. God's gospel alone changes lives! Salvation alone transforms!

Nothing outside of the power of the Gospel is needed to reconstruct a broken life; nothing outside of God's salvation is necessary to rehabilitate those who formerly were drowning in debauchery.

The heresy that was spreading around Colossae was that something else was needed to produce victory over the flesh. To such a false teaching, Paul responds in the book of Colossians.

"The Gospel is essentially a reproductive organism, a plant whose seed is in itself" (Lightfoot, p. 135; cited by Vaughn, Colossians, p. 24).

The critical test also has the words "bearing fruit and increasing (growing by itself") (cp. NASV).

The gospel not only produces real life altering fruitfulness, but it causes such fruitfulness to flourish, to grow, to increase! As a person matures in his understanding of Christ and His salvation his productivity for the Lord will also increase.

"Since the day ye heard of it" - Fruitfulness begins on the very day one hears and believes the Gospel. [There is no delay for fruit to begin sprouting out of the life of a new convert. Since the holy Spirit is the one who produces such fruit (Gal. 5:22) and since He comes into the life of a person the moment he believes, the Spirit also immediately produces His fruit. Especially the fruit of love (Col. 1:8)]

"Knew the grace of God in truth" -

"Knew" - & - to directly come to know something; to fully know; to personally recognize.

"in truth" = i.e. the grace of God as it truly is; to not know the grace of God in truth is to not know the grace of God.

There is only one true message. It is that Christ is sufficient for eternal life and abundant life!

VI. THE TRUE GOSPEL MUST BE TOLD to others (v. 7)

Epaphras was no apostle. He was simply an ordinary layman whom God used to evangelize the cities of Hierapolis, Laodicea, and Colossae.

"Ye also learned of Epaphras" - Ye learned from Epaphras. Epaphras diligently told the true gospel to the people of Colossae.

"Fellow-servant" (sun & doulos) - a slave together with God's slave, Paul.

"Faithful minister" (diakonia) - a household servant.

CONCLUSION:

In Colossians, you will find key words such as "fullness"; "perfect"; and "complete."

Over 30 times Paul uses the little word "all" to stress the complete sufficiency of Christ. In Colossians, Christ is declared to be pre-eminent, all powerful, and our only authority. The Christian does not need to look elsewhere to have his needs met.

Nothing outside of Christ and His Word is needed. No "additives" to the Christian life are required. Jesus can do it all! and only Jesus can do it all. He is our all! He is our very life! (Col. 3:4).

Paul's only gospel message was "Christ, and Him crucified." (SEE I Cor. 2:1-5).

"A MODEL PRAYER LIST"
(How to Intercede for Others)
Colossians 1:9-12
9/21/91

INTRODUCTION:

***When you intercede for other believers, pray as Paul did!**

What did Paul pray for? Follow this model prayer list:

I. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD FULLY KNOW GOD (v. 9)

(Pray for the spiritual "mind" of the saints)

A. Intercede for their spiritual wisdom (to do God's will)

B. Intercede for their spiritual understanding (to know God's Word)

II. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD FAITHFULLY WALK WITH GOD (v. 10)

(Pray for the spiritual "feet" of the saints)

A. Intercede for a fruitful walk

B. Intercede for a growing walk

III. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD BE FORTIFIED WITH STRENGTH BY GOD (v. 11)

(Pray for the spiritual "muscle" of the saints)

A. Intercede for their strength to endure

B. Intercede for their strength to remain joyful and thankful

CONCLUSION:

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Colossians 1:9-12

9/22/91

INTRODUCTION:

Definition "intercessory Prayer" -

To "intercede" is to meet with God, and to plead on behalf of others.

The Holy Spirit intercedes for us - Rom. 8:27.

Jesus Christ intercedes for us - Rom. 8:34.
Lk. 22:32c - "I have prayed for them"

Heb. 7:25 - "He ever liveth to make intercession for them"

As Baptists, we believe in the "priesthood of the believer" - we all can approach God on behalf of each other.

Intercessory prayers are found throughout the Scriptures:

Abraham prayed for Abimelech (Gen. 20:7).
Moses prayed for Israel (Ex. 32:11-14; Num. 14:11-21).
Moses prayed for Aaron (Deut. 9:20).
Samuel prayed for Israel (I Sam. 7:5-8 *I Sam. 12:23)
David prayed for Israel (Ps. 25:22, 28:9).
Job prayed for his family (Job 1:5) and friends (42:8, 10).
Israel prayed for Babylon (Jer. 29:7).
Daniel prayed for Israel (Dan. 9:3-19).
Jesus Christ prayed for all believers. (Jn. 17)

Whom should we intercede for?
"For all men" (I Tim. 2:1)

--Political leaders (v. 2-3)
(Mayor, governor, senators, President)

--Unsaved people (v. 4)
Paul prayed for his people Israel to be saved (Rom. 10:1).

--Your enemies (Mt. 5:44)
EX: Stephen Acts 7:60 - "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"

--Especially pray for fellow-believers (Eph. 6:18)
Pray for physical and spiritual healing (Ja. 5:14-f)

Why should we intercede?

"Help, LORD, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men" (Ps. 12:1).

None of us is exempt from our need for other's prayers.

Prayer support is needed even by spiritual leaders.

Paul needed it - Rom. 15:30-32, II Cor. 1:11, Eph. 6:19-20; I Th. 5:25, II Th. 3:1 (cp. Heb. 13:18).

The only One who never needed prayer was Jesus Christ.

"Pray for us" (Heb. 13:18).

--Colossians 1:9

V. 9

"For this cause" - Because of the report of Epaphras about their "faith in Christ" (v. 11) and subsequent "love in the Spirit" (v. 8).

"Since the day we heard it" - Many well-meaning Christians today pray hard and long for unsaved relatives to come to Christ, and then stop praying for them once they are saved. Actually, Paul prayed hardest and longest for the saved, those who knew and loved Christ. Don't neglect your priority prayer requests -- to pray for God's children and those of the household of faith.

Note: Paul never personally met the Colossians, yet he prayed for them with such fervency! What love for God and His children!

"Do not cease" - We have not stopped. New converts need the most persistent and fervent prayer support. Paul was aware of the devil and his attacks on young believers.

"Desire" = to desire of God; to ask of God.

Prayer "cliches" are often unclear, vague, non-specific requests -

> --"Lord, bless the missionaries, my pastor, etc. (bless them how?)
>
> --"Be with Mrs._____" (if they are saved, the Lord is already with them - Heb. 13:5).

***When you intercede for other believers, pray as Paul did!**

--What did Paul pray for? Follow this model prayer list:

I. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD FULLY KNOW GOD (v. 9)

(Pray for the spiritual "mind" of the saints)

"That" - introduces the content and purpose of Paul's prayer

"Be filled" - passive; only God can give such a filling - therefore, prayer and dependence is essential.

"To be filled" with such thorough knowledge of God's will is to have it pervading our thoughts, affections, and purposes, and plans (Nicholson, Kregel, Colossians, p. 39)

"Knowledge" - direct knowledge
a complete knowledge
a full knowledge

The secret to know God's will is to know His Word.

A. Intercede for their spiritual wisdom (to do God's will)

"Wisdom" - in O.T. = applying the knowledge of God's will to life's situations

B. Intercede for their spiritual understanding (to know God's Word)

"Understanding" - perception; insight; seeing the whole picture; to be able to put together the facts of God's Word and to draw Biblical conclusions.

In a similar prayer for the Ephesians, Paul prayed for the following:

1. We all need to fully know God's salvation (Eph. 1:17-19)

1) Confidence in God's salvation (v. 18a)
2) Completeness of God's salvation (v. 18b)
3) Capability of God's salvation (v. 19)

2. We all need to fully know God's love (Eph. 3:17=19)

II. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD FAITHFULLY WALK WITH GOD (v. 10)

(Pray for the spiritual "feet" of the saints)

"Walk worthy" -

"Walk" = to live your life

"Worthy" - to live a life that conforms to the holiness of God. To live a life that matches His standards; that is equal to what He deserves.

"All pleasing" = to gain God's smile on their lives.

"Now I pray to God that ye do no evil...that ye should do that which is honest" (II Cor. 13:7).

A. Intercede for their a fruitful walk

"Being fruitful" - continuous fruit-bearing

B. Intercede for a growing walk

"Increasing" = to grow in the same spiritual knowledge mentioned in v. 9. We grow as we bear fruit!

Note: the dative phrase "in the knowledge of God" could be:

1) Locative dative - to grow in spiritual knowledge

2) Instrumental dative - to grow by gaining spiritual knowledge

III. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD BE FORTIFIED WITH STRENGTH BY GOD (v. 11)

(Pray for the spiritual "muscle" of the saints)

(See Eph. 3:14-16)

"Strengthened" - continually being made strong by God (passive).

The word points to ability or power.

"According to His glorious power" - Our power comes from God's power. Without Him we can do nothing! (Jn. 15:5)

A. Intercede for their strength to endure

"Patience" = the ability to "remain under" pressure without giving up (without quitting or running)

"It's always too soon to quit."
"By perseverance the snail reached the ark"
--Spurgeon

"Longsuffering" - the ability to endure "much heat" without blowing up (without retaliation).

B. Intercede for their strength to remain joyful and thankful

"With joyfulness" - means that Paul prayed that the Colossians would endure and remain patient while not losing their joy in doing so.

V. 12

"Giving thanks" - a continuation of what Paul meant by "joy." (v. 11)

He prayed that the Colossians would be thankful to God who made them "meet" (qualified) to receive a portion of the saints inheritance which is in light (i.e. in Heaven; where God, who is Light, dwells - cp. I Jn. 1:5; I Tim. 6:16)

CONCLUSION:

Note: The Characteristics of Paul's Prayer -

1. He prayed for spiritual blessings, not mere material or physical things.

2. He did not pray that they would have some new additional spiritual experience; but that they would come to realize the blessings that were already theirs.

3. He prayed that the Colossians would have a balance of knowing right and doing right and being right.

Note the order:
Knowledge (v. 9) ------- Walk (v. 10) -------- Strength (v. 11)

No one can walk right unless they know the truth. And strength is a result of both knowing and walking right.

"Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor!"

(Job 16:21)

"THANK YOU, LORD!"
Colossians 1:12-14

9/29/91

INTRODUCTION:

***God is worthy of our thanks!**

5 Reasons:

I. HE QUALIFIED US (v. 12)

(So that we could be fit for Heaven's home)

II. HE RESCUED US (v. 13a)

(So that we could be far from Satan's darkness)

III. HE TRANSFERRED US (v. 13b)

(So that we could be found in Christ's kingdom)

IV. HE REDEEMED US (v. 14a)

(So that we could be free from sin's bondage)

V. HE FORGAVE US (v. 14b)

(So that we could be free from sin's penalty)

CONCLUSION:

"THANK YOU, LORD!"
Colossians 1:12-14
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"THANK YOU, LORD!"
Colossians 1:12-14

9/29/91

INTRODUCTION:

Hymn - "Thank You, Lord" (p. 486)

> "Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul;
> Thank you, Lord, for making me whole;
> Thank you, Lord, for giving to me --
> Thy great salvation so rich and free."

Contrary to the teaching of the Colossian heretics (which taught that something more, additional, etc., was needed outside of Christ for complete salvation and forgiveness), God, in Colossians 1:13-15 reaffirms that our salvation is complete and full in Christ!

For such a salvation we should be thankful!

***God is worthy of our thanks!**

5 Reasons:

I. HE QUALIFIED US (v. 12)

(So that we could be fit for Heaven's home)

"Made us meet" = to make one qualified; sufficient; fit; enabled (cp. II Cor. 3:5-6)

In and of ourselves, we do not qualify for Heaven! We are not entitled to Heaven; we have no rights to go to Heaven!

But God in His loving grace qualified us for such a privilege.

"Partakers" = lit. to have a portion or part of an inherited lot in Heaven.

EX: Prudential Insurance has a commercial exhorting people to "get a piece of the rock."

In Christ, we have an eternal piece!

The saints' inheritance is in light, because God is light, and His radiance pervades Heaven!

I Jn. 1:5 - "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

I Tim. 6:16 - "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

God's "light" is in contrast to Satan's "darkness." (v. 13)

II. HE RESCUED US (v. 13a)

(So that we could be far from Satan's darkness)

"Delivered" = to rescue

Jesus Christ is called "the deliverer."

Rom. 11:26 - "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion a Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Jesus Christ refused deliverance from the cross, so that He might deliver us from the power of darkness (Mt. 27:43 - "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.").

Jesus delivered (rescued) us from eternal death (II Cor. 1:10 - "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.").

Jesus delivers (rescues) our lives from utter ruin and evil (II Pet. 2:9 - "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.").

Jesus will deliver (rescue) us from the future wrath of God (via Rapture) (I Thes. 1:10 - "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come").

"From the power of darkness" = lit. "out of the authority of the darkness" (cp. Luke 22:53 - "This is your hour, and the power of darkness").

"Authority" = the ruling power

"The darkness" = the specific realm of Satan

Before conversion, we were under the rule of darkness. We were slaves to sin (Rom. 7). We were in bondage to Satan.

"Darkness" in Scripture points to:

1) spiritual blindness (ignorance) (Jn. 1:5; I Jn. 2:11; Acts 26:18)
2) a love for sin (Jn. 3:19)
3) falsehood (I Cor. 4:5)
4) the unregenerate world (II Cor. 6:14)
5) the realm of demons (Eph. 6:12)

NOTE: The aorist tense verbs "made us meet. . . delivered . . . translated" point to a once and for all (final and complete) salvation.

III. HE TRANSFERRED US (v. 13b)

(So that we could be found in Christ's kingdom)

Note the contrast: "Delivered from (ek) darkness"
"Translated into (eis) kingdom"

"Translated" = to transfer; to remove from one place and transplant to another. Lit. to change the place where one stands.

The word was often used to signify deportation of a body of men or the removal of them to form a colony (Eadie).

"This word was used to describe the deportation of a population from one country into another. History records the fact that Antiochus the Great transported at least 2,000 Jews from Babylonia and Colossae." (Wiersbe, p. 46)

Just as God rescued O.T. Israel from bondage in Egypt and transferred them into His promised land, so the Lord has rescued us from the bondage of the world, and has placed us (positionally) into the kingdom of His dear Son.

"Of His dear Son" - of the Son He loves (cp. Mt. 3:17; 17:5).

To love Jesus Christ is to love the One who is closest to the heart of God the Father.

IV. HE REDEEMED US (v. 14a)

(So that we could be free from sin's bondage)

"In whom" - refers to the "Son" (v. 13).

It is in Christ that we have (present tense) redemption.

Redemption - One who has a complete release based on the payment of a price.

The word redemption was used of the "deliverance of slaves from bondage or of prisoners of war from captivity" (Vaughan; p. 34).

NOTE: By His death Jesus did not pay a ransom to Satan to free us; but His death satisfied the holy demands of the Triune Godhead, and thereby God freed us

Is. 53:11 - "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify man; for he shall bear their iniquities."

"Redemption" = with the Greek prepositional prefix, this word is a strong word for redemption. It has not only the force of describing a ransom payment, but also includes the removal of the person once the ransom is appropriated by faith. God has accepted the payment of His Son and has subsequently yanked (pulled) the believer away from the penalty and dominating power of sin.

God has graciously liberated us from the guilt and doom of sin and has placed us into a life of liberty ("newness of life") (Rom. 6:4) (Vines, p. 264).

"Through His blood" (KJV) - the blood of Christ is the ransom price that was paid. Christ's bloody death is always referred to as the means by which we receive redemption.

I Pet. 1:18-19 - "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb

without blemish and without spot."

God said to the O.T. Jews, "Ye shall be redeemed without money" (Is. 52:3).

V. HE FORGAVE US (v. 14b)

(So that we could be free from sin's penalty)

"Forgiveness" = literally it means to send away, to leave, to let go (cp. Mt. 13:36; I Cor. 7:11-13).

When God forgives, He cancels the penalty and sends away (removes) the sin far from His holy presence. He no longer holds it against us.

The word "forgiveness" "speaks of the removal of our sins from us, so that they are no longer barriers which separate us from God." (Vaughan, p. 34).

"We have" (right now!) - For the Christian, forgiveness is not a blessing of the past. It's a reality of the present.

Though we commit sins in thought, word, and deed daily (and for these we need daily forgiveness to enjoy our salvation), we do not need to regain a position of purity and forgiveness before the eyes of God. We are forgiven!

Knowing we have been forgiven helps us enjoy our salvation! The feeling of being free is great!

"Forgiveness is not an excuse for sin; rather, it is an encouragement for obedience" (Wiersbe, p. 47).

He forgives our trespasses ("paraptoma: - Mt. 6:14; Eph. 1:7); our debts (Mt.

6:12); and our evil thoughts (cp. Acts 8:22).

In verse 14, the word is "hamartion" ("sins") - a reference to every time we have missed the mark of God's standard of perfection.

All sin is a missing of the mark, a coming short of the glory of God. Therefore, it needs to be forgiven.

Because God has forgiven us all our sins, "Satan cannot find anything in the files (of God) that will indict us!" (Wiersbe, p. 47).

CONCLUSION:

"CHRIST IS PREEMINENT!"
Colossians 1:15-20

10/6/91

INTRODUCTION:

***Christ is preeminent!** (He holds first place over everything)

Six reasons why Jesus is preeminent:

I. HE IS GOD MANIFESTED IN VISIBLE FORM (v. 15a)

II. HE IS THE "FIRST-BORN" OVER ALL CREATION (v. 15b)

III. HE IS THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE (v. 16)

IV. HE IS THE ETERNAL SUSTAINER OF CREATION (v. 17)

V. HE IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH BODY (v. 18-19)

VI. HE IS THE PEACE MAKER BETWEEN SINFUL MAN AND A HOLY GOD (v. 20)

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"Image" - Gk. "eikon" meaning a manifestation, representation, or copy.

"In Greek thought, an image shares in reality what it represents." (Reinecker, p. 567)

"The invisible God" - the Father is invisible, being purely Spirit in essence (Jn. 4:24). The Son, however, is the manifestation (appearance) of Him who cannot be seen (Jn. 1:18).

NOTE: Since no one has ever seen God (the Father) at any time (Jn. 1:18), all references to man seeing God ("the LORD") must be references to man seeing Christ! (EX: Is. 6; Rev. 20:10ff).

John 1:18 - "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

"Declared" = to reveal or make known

John 12:45 - "And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me."

SEE: John 14:6-9

"...He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Such a statement could not be true if Jesus were no in essence God very God!

Cp. Col. 2:9 - "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

Christ in "bodily" form (in a visible form) contains (presently) all of the fullness of deity!

The KJV says: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16).

In Heb. 1:3, the Lord Jesus is called "the brightness of His glory" (Christ radiates the brilliant, splendid light of God"). . . the express image of his person" (Christ is the precise or exact representation of God's being, essence, or nature). A strong assertion of deity!

"Since no mere creature can perfectly reveal God, Jesus Christ must be God" (Wiersbe, p. 49).

II. HE IS THE "FIRST-BORN" OVER ALL CREATION (v. 15b)

"Firstborn" = (prototokos) - the term is a descriptive title not a verb that would imply birth; it is not a term of origin but of authority. In Hebrew thought the word referred to a title of preeminence or supremacy (cp. Col. 1:18).

"The word emphasizes the preexistence and uniqueness of Christ as well as His superiority over creation. The term does not indicate that Christ was a creation or a created being" (Reinecker, p. 567).

"Firstborn" simply means "of first importance, of first rank" (Wiersbe, p. 48).

Cp. the phrase: "Firstborn from the dead" (v. 18).

The Jewish title of "firstborn" refers to the one with the birthright (EX. Jacob over Esau although Esau was physically born first - Gen. 27).

The term inherently referred tot he one with the rights to property, authority, and rule.

Gen. 49:3 - "Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power."

Dt. 21:17 - "But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his."

Ex. 4:22 - "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn."

Num. 8:18 - "And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel."

The term is used by God of David, who is given a position of honor, privilege, and authority. (Ps. 89:27 - "And I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.")

This understanding of the term firstborn is the only valid interpretation in light of the context (Col. 1:16ff).

Christ as the firstborn has the authority over all and the preeminence over all (v. 18) because He created all! (v. 16ff).

If Christ were created, He could not have such authority over creation, for He Himself would be a mere finite creature. However, as Creator, He has the rights of the "firstborn" over all creation.

III. HE IS THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE (v. 16)

"For" - because - giving a reason why Christ is the preeminent "firstborn."

Jesus is Creator:

> John 1:3 - "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."
>
> Eph. 3:9 - "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."
>
> Heb. 1:2 - "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

Jesus created everything.

1) All beings and things "in heavens and in earth"
2) All that is material and immaterial
3) All laws, governing authorities and powers

"In Heaven" - Jesus created the angelic realm (the host of angels including Michael and Gabriel; the cherubim and seraphim, etc.)

"In earth" - everything from the Swiss Alps to the Islands of Hawaii; every kind of plant, tree, fruit, vegetable; every animal, fish, reptile and insect. And the crown of His creation - mankind - was made by and for Jesus Christ.
No wonder the elements obeyed His voice; and the demons trembled in His presence and respected Him. He is LORD of all, Creator of all!

It does not matter where it is (location); or what it is (essence); or how it is ("the powers that be") -- Jesus made it all.

The powers that be are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1) particularly of Jesus Christ!

When Jesus became man, He worked as a carpenter. A fitting trade for the one who built the universe, and yet what a humble trade. What humiliation for the Creator who spoke the world into existence to work much of his 33 years on earth using the simple tools of man and the elements of His own creation, to construct with.

"By ("dia") Him and for ("eis") him" - Christ is the beginner and benefactor of creation; He is its source and goal. He did it, and is to be glorified by it. He is Creation's author and finisher. He is the architect and owner!

You were created by Jesus and for Jesus.

He made you for Himself; to glorify Him, to live for Him.

"Were created" - perfect tense, meaning that everything that Jesus created in the past, still exists in the present for Him; for His glory and purpose.

IV. HE IS THE ETERNAL SUSTAINER OF CREATION (v. 17)

"He" is emphatic. He Himself is before all things.

"Before" - a word referring to time.

He exists prior to all things. Christ is pre-existent.

John 1:1 - "In the beginning was the Word."

John 8:58 - "Before Abraham was I am."

NOTE: The word "before" ("pro") used with the present tense verb ("is") expresses the idea of Christ's immutability of existence (Reinecker, p. 568).

He not only was (in the past) before all things but he remains in the present before all things. He is the eternal "I am"; not the "I was."

"Consist" ("sunistami") - lit. to stand together; to hold together; to cohere.

Jesus is the "principle of cohesion in the universe" (Lightfoot).

Jesus Christ Himself is the "unifying band which encompasses everything and holds it together" (Lohse).

"A guide took a group of people through an atomic laboratory and explained how matter was composed of rapidly moving electric particles. The tourists studied models of molecules and were amazed to learn that matter is made up primarily of space. During the question period, one visitor asked, "If this is the way matter works, what holds it all together?" For that, the guide had no answer." (Wiersbe, p. 50).

Who keeps the planets each in place? -- Jesus

Who keeps the orbit of the earth around the sun consistent? -- Jesus

Who keeps the seasons (of spring, summer, winter, and fall) regular? -- Jesus

Who keeps the Laws that govern life on earth (EX: gravity, etc.) in tact? -- Jesus

Who keeps nations from becoming totally unglued and civilizations from destroying each other? -- Jesus

Who, then, will interrupt the present order of all things in the Day of the LORD? (Rev. 5:12-17; 15-17) -- Jesus!

Who alone can keep your life and family from erupting and exploding and becoming unglued? -- Jesus!

V. HE IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH BODY (v. 18-19)

Christ as "Head" of the church body does that which the head of a physical body does.

The Head controls and directs the impulses and actions of the Body. (the body is submissive to the Head and responsive to the Head).

Without the Head, the body would be dead. Without Christ, there would be no church Body.

No man on earth is the Head of the church. Popery is a great abomination because it robs Christ of Headship. Perhaps the reason the Pope is the head of the RCC is because Jesus isn't! That system is in no way connected to the Head - Christ!

"The beginning" - lit. the beginner; the originator; the premiere initiator. Christ began the Church, He gave it its beginning.

"Firstborn from the dead" - Christ as the head is preeminent over those Christians who will come back alive again from the dead. he has full authority over death and the grave (Rev. 1:18 - "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.")

Paul is not saying that Jesus was the first person to be raised from the dead, for he was not (EX: Lazarus - Jn. 11). But He is the most important of all who have been raised from the dead (Wiersbe, p. 52).

Preeminence = first place

The phrase "the Father" (KJV) is italicized. The reference could just as easily be to the entire Godhead (2:9). The Triune Godhead was pleased to allow the Son to receive all of the honor and glory of the Church Body.

The reference to fullness is not of divine attributes for Jesus always had these, but of the fullness of the Church. The Trinity was pleased to allow the fullness of the Church to abide in Christ.

See the "fullness" in relation to the Church in Eph. 1:23; 4:13 - "Which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph. 4:13 - "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"

"Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11).

"The Father is pleased when His Son, Jesus Christ, is honored and given preeminence" (Wiersbe, p. 57) (cp. John 5:23-24).

The cults, therefore, do not please God at all!

VI. HE IS THE PEACE MAKER BETWEEN SINFUL MAN AND A HOLY GOD

(v. 20)

"Reconcile" - to restore a relationship. To bring back friendship where there is hostility and animosity.

Jesus dying as both God and man, could thereby reconcile both God and man.

II Cor. 5:19 - "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

"Things in earth, or things in heaven" = "Those upon earth (who are saved) and those in Heaven (who also have been redeemed - dead saints in glory)."

"Inanimate things" don't get reconciled; people do.

CONCLUSION:

Is Christ in first place in your life?

He is first (whether or not men regard Him as such); but the question is, Is He first in your life?

To answer that, answer this:

Is He first in your time?

Is He first in your thoughts?

Is He first on your lips? (witness)

Is He first with your talents?

Is He first in your recreation?

Is He first in your work?

ILLUS: Hymn - "Give of Your Best to the Master"

"THE MIRACLE OF RECONCILIATION"

Colossians 1:20-23
6/12/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***Reconciliation is one miracle you can have forever!**

I. The Miraculous <u>PEACE</u> of Reconciliation (v. 20)

II. The Miraculous <u>POWER</u> of Reconciliation (v. 21)

III. The Miraculous <u>PRICE</u> of Reconciliation (v. 21b - 22a)

IV. The Miraculous <u>PURPOSE</u> of Reconciliation (v. 22b)

V. The Miraculous <u>PROOF</u> of Reconciliation (v. 23)

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HRM Bible Study - 5-15-2021

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V. The Miraculous _____ of Reconciliation (v. 23)

"THE MIRACLE OF RECONCILIATION"

Colossians 1:20-23

6/12/2016

INTRODUCTION:

EX: the miracle of Paul's conversion. From an enemy of Christ to the beloved apostle of Christ.

***Reconciliation is one miracle you can have forever!**

I. The Miraculous PEACE of Reconciliation (v. 20)

The word "reconcile" means to bring two people (whose relationship has been severed) back into a friendship relationship with each other.

A. Peace Because of the Blood

"The blood of His cross" - the blood shed on the cross.
Christ's death was the only time in human history, that bloodshed brought peace to man.

How does Christ's blood reconcile? Man's sin separates him from God (Is. 59:2). Christ's blood cleanses away sin (I Jn. 1:9).

Therefore, that which came in between man and God has been adequately and completely removed, making peaceful relations between man and God.

B. Peace For All Believers

"All things" (ta panta) = all those
Those do not get reconciled, only people do.

"All things" = All those who are living on earth and those saints who have died throughout history (both O.T. and N.T.).
"By Him . . . unto Himself" - Jesus is both the reconciler and the reconcilee. It is by Him and to Him that we are reconciled.

No man reconciled himself to God. No priest or religion reconciles man to God. Only Jesus Christ can!

II. The Miraculous POWER of Reconciliation (v. 21)

"Were sometime" - formerly, before redemption, we all were aliens and enemies of God.

*ALIENS

"Alienated" - to be a stranger to God.

When we speak of an "alien" what usually comes to mind is some green, big-eyed creature from out of space that invades the earth.

An "alien" describes a foreigner, someone you do not know personally. All unbelievers are "aliens" to Christ; therefore, He will say at Judgment Day: ". . . I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt. 7:23).

This verse proves that no one is born with a relationship with God.

No one is automatically a Christian. No one is independently Godly. On the contrary, we are from childhood - aliens and enemies of God. We are hopelessly depraved - unable to please God, aimlessly lost - in our own world of spiritual darkness (SEE Rom. 3:10f for the plight of mankind - cp. Psalm 14:1-3).

*ENEMIES

"Enemies" - to be hostile, to be at war with.

To not be for Jesus is to be against Him.

We were all against Him, if not overtly, then covertly -- in our minds, that is, in our thoughts.

God's evaluation of mankind: Gen. 6:5 - "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

He again testifies that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. 8:21).

"The carnal mind (the mind of the unsaved) is enmity against God."

Our alienation and hostility toward God is caused "by wicked (evil) works."

"Men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds (works) were evil." (Jn. 3:19).
John 7:7 - "The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."

"Mind . . . works" - Both in thought and deed; both in attitude and action we displayed our animosity toward Jesus Christ.

Jesus died for us when we were "without strength . . . yet sinners . . . enemies" (Rom. 5:6, 8, 10).

Though we are Gentiles, yet we are no longer strangers!

(SEE: Eph. 2:12-20)

What a power God has to transform a former alien into His own child . . . to change former enemies into friends!

This is the miracle of miracles!

III. The Miraculous PRICE of Reconciliation (v. 21b - 22a)

V. 21b

"Yet now" - in contrast to our past.

The word "now" shows the present abiding reconciled relationship that we enjoy.

"He reconciled" - past, completed action. Reconciliation for the believer is an accomplished fact, not an uncertain fate.

V. 22a

"In the body of His flesh" - the Gnostic heretics at Colossae taught that Christ did not have a physical body (because according to their philosophy the physical flesh was evil).

To counter such false teaching, Paul affirms that it was by the physical death of the God-Man (Christ) that man becomes reconciled to God.

"Through death" - by means of death. Had Christ never died for sin, all of humanity would die in sin.

As paradoxical as it may sound to unbelieving ears, "Christ's death brings life!"
(II Pet. 3:18)
What a miracle!

The beloved text - II Cor. 5:17 ("new creature... old passed ... all ... new") is in a context of reconciliation (SEE II Cor. 5:18-21).

IV. The Miraculous PURPOSE of Reconciliation (v. 22b)

Christ's purpose in reconciling you was to present you before God as:

1) Holy (totally set apart from sin) -

2) Unblamable (without spot or blemish) - Eph. 1:4 - "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

3) Unreproveable (irreproachable; unaccused; free from guilt - though the "accuser of the brethren" (Rev. 12:1-12) spews out accusations, God does not accept them (SEE Zech. 3).

"In His sight" - lit. down in the eyes of

In the eyes of God, those who are reconciled are spotless!

In man's eyes, a Christian may seem flawed, defective, imperfect, blemished, marred, etc. (and we are) but in God's sight, we are pure and undefiled (Eph. 5:27 - "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish.").

It doesn't matter how we look in man's sight, but how we look in God's!

V. The Miraculous PROOF of Reconciliation (v. 23)

This verse does not teach that "continuance in the faith" is the means to reconciliation (for on the contrary, Christ's blood is! - v. 20, 22), but that it is the evidence or proof of reconciliation.

The miracle of reconciliation is seen in that those reconciled as children and friends of God remain that way!

1) They are "grounded" - firmly founded on Christ the foundation.

2) They are "settled" - solidly firm and steadfast - anchored to the Rock!

3) They are "not moved away" - not constantly shifting or moving from their hope (confidence) in the gospel.

"Paul used an architectural image in this verse -- a house, firmly set on the foundation. The town of Colossae was located in a region known for earthquakes, and the word translated moved away can mean "earthquake stricken." Paul was saying, "If you are truly saved, and built on the solid foundation, Jesus Christ, then you will continue in the faith and nothing will move you. You have heard the Gospel and trusted Jesus Christ, and He has saved you."." (Wiersbe, p. 63).

One who is truly reconciled cannot lose it! Therefore, his continuance in the faith is a token of his continuance in his reconciled relationship to God.

The disciples in Acts 2:42 "continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine."

Jesus said: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (Jn. 8:31).

Contrast with: the false disciples (Jn. 6:65-68); Demas (I Tim. 4:10); those who departed from church fellowship (I Jn. 2:19 - "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, hat they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.").

A true believer will continue, though he may even need exhortation to do so (Acts 13:43; 14:22).

CONCLUSION:

A Life Invested For the Sake of Others

Colossians 1:24-2:1
6/19/2016

INTRODUCTION:

*Let Paul's example of unselfish sacrifice for the sake of others challenge you to invest your life the same way!

How did Paul invest his life for others?

I. He <u>SUFFERED</u> as a Martyr
. . . that others would believe the <u>Gospel message</u> (v. 24, cp. v. 23)

II. He <u>SERVED</u> as a Steward
. . . that others would know God's <u>glorious mystery</u> (v. 25-28)

III. He <u>STRIVED</u> as a Wrestler
. . . that others would grow to <u>full maturity</u> (v. 28b-2:1)

A Life Invested For the Sake of Others

Colossians 1:24-2:1
6/19/2016

INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: the expression used by store clerks, bankers, car dealers, salesmen, etc. - "What can I do for you?"

When the world asks that question, what they are really saying is "What can I do for myself?" since helping the customer means money in their wallet.

Paul had the attitude of, "What can I do for you," but not for selfish reasons; rather for the spiritual well-being of those to whom he ministered.

NOTE: The emphasis in Paul's life was not what others could do for him, but what he could do for others! (even people like the Colossians whom he had never met personally - 2:1).

Note the repeated phrase "for you" (v. 24, 25, 2:1). Paul lived for others Christians (cp. this to his desire to depart for heaven, but his burden to remain for God's saints - Phil. 1:21-26).

*Let Paul's example of unselfish sacrifice for the sake of others challenge you to invest your life the same way!

How did Paul invest his life for others?

I. He <u>SUFFERED</u> as a Martyr
. . . that others would believe the <u>Gospel message</u> (v. 24, cp. v. 23)

"...Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ" - Paul is not saying that Christ's death was incomplete or that His atonement was insufficient, or that His death and suffering was not enough for redemption.

Paul is not saying that he had to add to Christ's sufferings for salvation purposes.

There is no more suffering to be done for one to become a Christian; however, there may be some suffering because you are a Christian.

No one suffers vicariously to pay for the sins of others (except Jesus - I Pet. 3:18).
What Paul is saying is that his afflictions are Christ's afflictions. Because Christ was with Paul - united to Him. Anything someone does against one of Christ's children, they are actually doing against Jesus Himself (EX: Mt. 25:34-46; Acts 9:4-5).

Whatever a Christian suffers, they also suffer it for Jesus Himself.

"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ" (II Cor. 1:5).

"The sufferings of Paul were the afflictions of Christ because He suffered in and with Paul" (Reinecker, p. 570).

Paul is simply saying that he is completing the suffering that Jesus told him he would suffer.

From the moment of Paul's conversion, he was told how much he would suffer for the sake of Christ (Acts 9:16).

Paul's suffering:

--Hunted as a criminal at Damascus (Acts 9:23-26)
--Pelted with stones at Lystra (Acts 14:19-20)
--Whippings and imprisonment at Philippi (Acts 16:23-24)
--Bonds and afflictions at Jerusalem (Acts 20:23)
--In prison at Rome (Acts 28)

As Paul writes this letter to the Colossians, he writes from a prison cell in Rome (cp. Col. 1:7 with Philem. 23).

Paul's testimony in the face of suffering: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24)

There was a time (prior to Paul's conversion) that he persecuted the Church (causing the Church to suffer); how, however, he is willing to suffer for the same Church which he once tried to destroy (Acts 9;21; Gal. 1:23).

To suffer for Christ's Body, His Church, is to suffer for Christ.

Paul said: I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. 6:17).

Such afflictions are the lot of most true believers -

Phil. 1:29 - "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

Mt. 5:11-12 - "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Acts 14:22 - "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

I Pet. 4:12-13 - "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

I Thes. 3:3-4 - "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know."

II. He <u>SERVED</u> as a Steward
. . . that others would know God's <u>glorious mystery</u> (v. 25-28)

V. 25

"Whereof" - points to the word "church" (v. 24).

It was on behalf of Christ's Church, that Paul became a servant of Jesus.

"Minister" = "diakonos" - a servant or household slave.

"Dispensation" ("oikonomian") = stewardship (lit. "house rule" - "oikos" - house; "nomos" = rule). The word indicated the responsibility, authority, and obligation given to a household slave (cp. Eph. 1:10). (cp. Reinecker, p. 570).

"Which is given to me" - Paul was not a self-appointed apostle. He did not make Himself a messenger for God. God gave him his stewardship.

"To fulfill the word" - to carry out and complete God's task of spreading the Gospel message, to all nations.

As a steward, Paul had to be faithful (I Cor. 4:2).

"He could not abandon his calling just for personal safety and comfort" (Wiersbe, p. 65).

Paul, as an apostle, was an official steward of the Gospel message. Every believer is also a steward of this message, and an ambassador for Christ (II Cor. 5:19-21).

V. 26

"Mystery" = that which is undiscoverable by human means (cp. Eph. 3:3).

"Hid" = concealed, veiled, kept secret.

"Manifest" = to cause to appear; to make clear.

NOTE: God's mystery is only manifested to "His saints." Unbelievers are blind to it (II Cor. 4:4).
V. 27

"To whom" - to the saints (v. 26).

"God would" = God desired, wished. It was and is God's will to make known His riches.

What is the "mystery"?

1.The unity (oneness) that believers have with Christ (v. 27b) (cp. Eph. 5:32; cp. Rom. 6:1ff).

2.The unity (oneness) that Jews and Gentiles have in the Body of Christ (via our union to Christ (Eph. 3:1-8).

"Christ in you" means:

You now share His presence (Mt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5)
You now share His purity (Rom. 6:3-4, 11)
You now share His resurrection (Rom. 6:5; 8:10-11)
You now share His life (Rom. 6:8)
You now share His fellowship (Rev. 3:20)
You now share His inheritance (Rom. 8:17)

God's mystery is:

1."Rich" -It's something with joys and life that never end (the word "riches" refers to God's plenteous blessings in Christ - cp. Eph. 1:3)

2."Glorious"-It's something to look forward to in the future. The "glory" refers to our future "hope of glory" (i.e. the Resurrection -
I Cor. 15:51ff - "Behold I show you a mystery")

3.For the "Gentiles" - lit. "the nations" - It's something for all nations

4."Certain"-It's something that God guarantees. "Christ in you, the hope (confidence) of glory"
V. 28

"Whom we preach" - the message Paul proclaimed (announced) was singular: "Christ!" (I Cor. 2:2)

"Warning" = "noutheteo" - to put into the mind; to confront one's thinking and to correct one's thoughts.

"Teaching" = indoctrinating

To teach in "all wisdom" is to teach about Christ, because it is in Christ that "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" reside (Col. 2:3).

Paul's purpose (his motive, his goal) = "That we might present (as an offering to God) every man perfect (complete; mature) in Christ"
Paul's whole life and ministry was wrapped up in this goal: mature believers.

Are you burdened that others grow in Christ? . . . That they become stable, secure, and solid?

III. He <u>STRIVED</u> as a Wrestler
. . . that others would grow to <u>full maturity</u> (v. 28b-2:1)

v. 29
"Whereunto" = unto which goal of seeing spiritually mature disciples... "I also labor"

The words "striving" (1:29) and "conflict" (2:1) are athletic terms. They refer tot he strenuous effort put forth by an athlete to win a contest (cp. Wiersbe, p. 68).

"Labor" = to toil to the point of sweating; to the point of exhaustion.

"Striving" = Paul's labor involved "striving" or intense struggling against the host of evil (cp. Eph. 6:12).

We derive our English word "agony" from the Gk. word "agonizomai" translated "striving."

Paul's struggle for the Colossians was no doubt in the matter of prayer.

Prayer is the most intense practice you will ever do.

ILLUS: Jacob's wrestling with God (Gen. 32:24-30).

So much of our prayer is so calm and comfortable, sweet cliches, etc. But little agonizing. Little fasting. Little time spent.

Paul, by example, taught Epaphras to pray with the same intensity (SEE: Col. 4:12).

Paul, however, did not put forth striving labor by his own strength (by the flesh), but in accordance with the effective energy of God that infused him daily.

2:1
Paul loved Christ so much that he loved even Christians whom he had never met before.

Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said that he agonized greatly over the Colossians, the believers at Laodicea, and everyone else in Christ whom he never met personally.

CONCLUSION: Paul was willing to spend and be spent for the sake of others.

Are you?

"The Sufficiency of Christ"

(Encouragement for the Heart)
Colossians 2:1-10
6/26/2016

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

***Your heart will be encouraged when you know all that you have IN CHRIST!**

I. **You are RICH in Him -**
Don't be FOOLED (v. 2-5)

II. **You are ROOTED in Him -**
Don't be MOVED (v. 6-8)

III. **You are COMPLETE in Him -**
Don't FEEL DEFICIENT (v. 9-10)

"The Sufficiency of Christ"

(Encouragement for the Heart)
Colossians 2:1-10
6/26/2016

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

Illus: See Paul's warning to the Ephesians against false teachers - Acts 20.

Paul had a great conflict (an intense struggle; an agonizing struggle) for the spiritual welfare of the Gentile believers, even those whom he never met before - like the Colossians.

Why such a conflict? What was the intention (the driving force) behind his ministry and prayer for believers?

ANSWER: In order that their hearts might be comforted (encouraged) (v. 2).

***Your heart will be encouraged when you know all that you have IN CHRIST!**

Note the constant references to "in Him" ["in whom" (v. 3); "in Christ" (v. 5); "in Him" (v. 6); "in Him" (v. 7); "in Him" (v. 9); "in Him" (v. 10)]

I. You are RICH in Him -
Don't be FOOLED (v. 2-5)

"Rich" with what? ANSWER: Rich in wisdom and spiritual knowledge; rich in spiritual understanding.

v. 2
"Knit together in love" - The believers' heart is encouraged when he (via his union with Christ) realizes the love of Christ for him.

This realization of the love of God (through his salvation) is the common bond that unites believers together also.

God has basically two goals (Note: the two prepositions - "eis") for His children to reach after they have experienced the love that knit us to Himself.

GOAL # 1 - That they would have a full confidence ("plarophoria") in God's salvation.

GOAL # 2 - That they would have a full knowledge ("epiginosko") of God's Son.

Note: These two goals are interrelated - You cannot have full confidence in God's salvation without a full or direct knowledge in who Jesus is and what He has done. The believer's confidence is based on his knowledge of Christ.

If Satan can be successful in confusing someone with regard to who Jesus Christ is, he then is also successful in crippling their joy, peace, security, and confidence that comes in Christ.

"Full assurance of understanding" = firm confidence or conviction because of the insight into the person and work of Jesus Christ.

To have total assurance is the key to an encouraged heart. Those who lack assurance of their salvation generally are downhearted, discouraged, or even depressed.

"The mystery of God" - is the uncovered, revealed truth about Jesus Christ!

As Paul said previously, God's rich and glorious mystery is simply defined as: Christ in you, the hope of glory" (1:27).

V. 3
"In whom" = in Christ (v. 2) are hid (stored away) all the treasures (stock-piled riches) of spiritual wisdom and knowledge.

Where is the spiritual wisdom and knowledge to be found?

Not in religion, but in Christ.
Not in Rome (RCC), but in Christ.
Not in man's philosophy or tradition (v. 8), but in Christ.

"Hid" - Why hid? Because no one who is outside of Christ has even the slightest key to spiritual wisdom and knowledge.

To be without Christ is to be without spiritual truth. He is the truth (Jn. 14:6).

"It is in Christ that all the treasures of divine wisdom and knowledge have been stored up - stored up in hiding formerly, but now displayed to those who have come to know Christ" (F.F. Bruce, cited by Reinecker, p. 571).
To have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is to hold the key to the only true source of spiritual understanding.

Such knowledge is not gained from any textbook, seminar, prophet, cult, or religion, but from a direct faith in Christ.

V. 4
"Beguile" = "para logizomai" - to deceive by using man's logic alongside God's truth.

"Beguile" - "The word was used in the papyri of a keeper of a state library who had shown a willingness to 'make a wrong use of' certain documents" (Reinecker, p. 572).

"Enticing words" - persuasive speech; to have the ability with words to "talk somebody into something."
"Enticing words" - "The word was used in the papyri in a court case of those who sought persuasive words to keep the things obtained by robbery" (Reinecker, p. 572).
Romans 16:17-18 - "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

V. 5
Paul, via his position as an apostle, is with the Colossians "in the spirit" - that is, with the Holy Spirit's authority. His loving warning via this Epistle comes from the Spirit.

Paul observed and rejoiced in two characteristics of the Colossians:

1. Their "order" - a military term. Despite the attacks by the heretics, the Colossians remained in a single line, in single file, in an orderly arrangement prepared for spiritual battle. They were not scattered by winds of false doctrine.

2. Their "steadfastness" - their firmness, their solidness. Their faith in Christ kept them solid. Faith is the victory that overcomes the weakening effects of the world and its influences and philosophies (cp. I Jn. 5:4).

It is not simply "faith" that gives stability in life; it is faith in Christ!

"Faith" does you no good if it is anchored in the wrong object.

II. You are ROOTED in Him -
Don't be MOVED (v. 6-8)

V. 6

How did the Colossians receive Christ? ANSWER: By faith in Him (v. 5 & 7).

Therefore, how are they to walk in Him? ANSWER: By faith in Him!

"We walk by faith, not by sight"

"The just shall live by faith" (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38).

One is not only saved by faith, but he lives the Christian life by faith. From start to finish, our Christian life is a life of faith!

V. 7

"Rooted" - to be deeply rooted in Christ. The idea is that of long roots that have been imbedded and intertwined permanently around Christ never to be removed.

"Rooted" - perfect, passive, participle -

"Perfect tense" = we were rooted in the past (at conversion) and thereby remain firmly settled and stable in the present.

"Passive tense" = it was God who rooted us, not we ourselves. Give Him the

glory!

A tree that has been firmly rooted will have three features:

1. Growth - "built up" = it is via our rootedness in Christ that we are continually edified and matured.

2. Stability - "stablished" - it is via our "rootedness" in Christ that we have any true strength at all. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

3. Abundant fruitfulness = "abounding with thanksgiving" = overflowing with praise and thanks to God for all He gave us in Christ.

Psalm 1:3 - "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

V. 8

"Beware" - be on the look out; keep your spiritual eyes open.

"Spoil you" - to carry off as booty, or as a captive. The word was used in the sense of "to kidnap"; and here is the figure of carrying someone away from the truth into the slavery of error (Reinecker, p. 473).

"Philosophy" - lit. to be fond of man's wisdom (Ex. Acts 17).

Look out for those who will lead you away by using their own ideas as the bait.

"Vain deceit" - empty or hollow trickery. Words without reality; promises without truth; messages without Christ at the core.

"Tradition" - that which is given over from one to another.

"Tradition" is a great danger to true Godliness. it unperceivably becomes a substitute for God's truth. Ex: Jesus' words - Mark 7:1-13 (*v. 7-9); cp. Mt. 15:2-6.

"The rudiments of the world" - the elementary ABC's of the world. The basics to life and success that the world offers.

III. You are <u>COMPLETE</u> in Him -
Don't <u>FEEL DEFICIENT</u> (v. 9-10)

V. 9
"In Him" - in Christ (v. 8)

"<u>Dwelleth</u>" - to reside; to be at home; all that you need has its home in Christ. He is the place where fullness dwells.

"All the fullness" - Christ is missing <u>nothing</u>. Everything that the Father has, Christ has, because of his oneness with the Father (Jn. 10:30) and his equality to the Father (Phil. 2:6).

"Godhead" = Godness; divine nature or essence.

"Bodily" - Christ, though He became man and even now appears as man in Heaven, houses his <u>complete deity</u> in physical form. While on earth, His body veiled from human view His divine nature, but it was within, though many did not recognize it.

V. 10
"Complete" = lit. <u>filled to completion</u>. Because of our <u>union</u> with Christ (which is Paul's point in the context - cp. 1:27; 2:12=13, etc.), we are lacking nothing in Christ. He is everything we will ever need.

Because Jesus lacks nothing, we lack nothing!

By being united to Christ (via the Holy Spirit's baptism - I Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:1ff; Col. 2:12-13), we share His way, His truth, His life.

“Complete in Him” – All He has is mine. Just as it is in a good marriage! What the groom has the bride has. She marries into the wealth and blessing of the groom.

Principality - rulership; Christ is at the <u>top</u> of everything!

Power - authority; Christ is <u>over</u> everything.

CONCLUSION:

Illustration: Cheese & crackers

"THE BELIEVER'S VICTORY - IN CHRIST"

(The Triumph of Christ)
Colossians 2:11-15
7/3/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***You are <u>not</u> <u>defeated</u> "<u>IN</u> Christ!"**

I. In Christ -
I have triumphed over <u>SIN'S CORRUPTION</u> (v. 11-12a)

II. In Christ -
I have triumphed over <u>DEATH'S GRIP</u> (v. 12b-13)

III. In Christ -
I have triumphed over the <u>LAW'S GUILT</u> (v. 13b-14)

CONCLUSION: Verse 15

"THE BELIEVER'S VICTORY - IN CHRIST"

(The Triumph of Christ)
Colossians 2:11-15
7/3/2016

INTRODUCTION:

Paul, having declared the sufficiency of Christ (v. 1-10), now shows our victory in Christ, our triumph in Christ (v. 11-15).

"Buried with Him" (v. 12)
"Risen with Him" (v. 12)
"Quickened. . . with Him" (v. 13)

Literally, God is saying that we have been co-buried, co-raised, and co-made alive.

The believer's union in Christ -

Christ and the believer have been married or merged.

ILLUS: Marriage unites a man and woman together in such a way that what one has now belongs to the other.

Her bills are my bills; my checkbook is her checkbook (and vice-versa). The same is true for talents, food, house, car, other property, etc. We wear the same last name, share the same burdens, joys, and victories, etc.

So it is with Christ and His bride. This mysterious union described in Eph. 5:30-32 reveals the incomprehensible truth that the believer and Christ hold all things in common.

Because of our salvation (justification), we are brought into such unity that Christ's spiritual assets are credited to our formerly bankrupt account.

God views Christ and the believer as being together; one; "joint heirs" (Rom. 8:16-17).

This union is called a mystery (Eph. 5:32) that is spiritual (I Cor. 12:13) and living (Jn. 15:4).
***You are not defeated "IN Christ!"**

I. In Christ -
I have triumphed over SIN'S CORRUPTION (v. 11-12a)

V. 11

O.T. circumcision was not merely for hygienic reasons, but was for a sign of submission to the Abrahamic Covenant (SEE: Gen. 17:1-14)

Circumcision (performed on male children 8 days after birth) was a mark of distinction that separated the Jew from the rest of the world.

The practice of circumcision was such a mark of distinction that the Gentiles were called "the uncircumcision" (Jud. 15:18; II Sam. 1:20; Rom. 2:26; Eph. 2:11), while Jews were named "the circumcision" (Acts 10:45; Gal. 2:12; Col. 4:11).

Circumcision did not save (did not cleanse the heart), but it was a "token" or a reminder of the everlasting Covenant (promise) God made with Abraham (Gen. 17:11).

O.T. circumcision was symbolic of that which Christ would actually accomplish.

Circumcision, which symbolized a removal of the sins of the flesh, actually finds fulfillment in Christ, who removed our sins at the cross.

"Made without hands" - i.e. Not of human origin, not physical surgery by man, but a spiritual circumcision of the heart (cp. Deut. 30:6 - "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and all thy soul, that thou mayest live.") (cp. Jer. 4:4 - "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.")

"The circumcision of Christ" = i.e. the spiritual circumcision accomplished by Christ.

Note the contrast between Jewish circumcision and the believer's spiritual circumcision in Christ: [by Warren Wiersbe]

JEWS	BELIEVERS
-External surgery	-Internal - the heart
-Part of the male body	-the whole "body of sins"
-Done by hands	-Done without hands
-No spiritual help in conquering sin	-Enables them to conquer sin

V. 12

To be "buried" with Christ implies that we are dead in Christ. Dead to what?

Dead to sin. Dead in relationship to sin's dominance over our lives (Rom. 6:1-11).

"In baptism" - lit. in (by) the baptism. The presence of the definite article points to a specific or peculiar baptism. NOTE: That baptism is not water, but Spirit!

The word "Baptism" simply means to immerse, and does not necessarily imply water baptism.
EX: Christ reference to His own death (Mk. 10:38-39).

Proofs of Spirit baptism:

1) Well-known fact that Jesus would baptize with Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11 - "I indeed baptize you with water...but there cometh..."); Acts 1:5).

2) Paul in I Cor. 12:13 - "By one Spirit are we all baptized. . ."

3) The phrase: "Buried with Him in baptism" points to a baptism that Jesus is involved in. Water baptism in no way unites Christ with believers. Spirit baptism, however, does. (cp. Gal. 3:27 - "baptized into Christ").

4) Language is stronger than analogy or symbol. Speaking of reality not ritual (picture of illustration). Showing a specific point when one "died to sin" (Romans 6:2), was "crucified with Christ" (v. 6), and "died with Christ" (v. 8). This didn't happen at our water baptism.

Paul is not giving the picture behind the reality [water baptism], but the reality itself [Spirit baptism].
The word "baptized" refers to a Spirit baptism in these verses:
I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:5; Rom. 6:3-4

II. In Christ -
I have triumphed over DEATH'S GRIP (v. 12b-13)

V. 12

"Wherein" = "in which" - Another reference to the believer's "baptism IN Christ."

"The operation of God" = the energizing power of God.

The same power that brought Christ back from the dead is the power that will bring us out of the graves (via our Holy Spirit-produced union in Him).

*Romans 8:11 - "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

"It was the power of God that changed us, not the power of water (water baptism)" (Wiersbe, p. 82)

V. 13

Paul emphatically says "you" were dead in:
1) Sins
2) Uncircumcision of your flesh

"Sins" = "paraptoma" - to overstep a boundary; to transgress or trespass into forbidden territory.

To be "dead in sins" = is to be spiritually dead, to be impotent or unresponsive, to have no ability to conquer your proneness toward trespassing in forbidden territory. No ability to be victorious over the principle of sin.

We were slaves to sin (Rom. 6), shackled and trapped by the power of sin
(SEE: Eph. 2:1ff).

"To be dead . . . in the uncircumcision of your flesh" = means to have no ability to do anything about removing the filth of our old nature.

Not only were we trapped in sin, but we were trapped to sin. We could not cleanse ourselves.

Jer. 13:23 - "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."

Jer. 2:22 - "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God."

The idea of being made alive in Christ is a reality repeated in the N.T. Compare:

Eph. 2:5 - "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)"

I Cor. 15:22 - "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"

Rom. 6:8 - "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."

Christ not only gives us life, He is our life (SEE: Col. 3:1-4 *v. 4)

(Cp. Jn. 14:6; 1:4; 11:25).

III. In Christ -
I have triumphed over the LAW'S GUILT (v. 13b-14)

V. 13
"Forgiven" - the word literally means to shower grace upon someone. To forgive out of grace.

God's forgiveness is not earned nor deserved; it is graciously given.

"All trespasses" - one of the clearest N.T. references to the efficacy and extensiveness of God's forgiveness. In Christ, each and every trespass is washed away. Past, present, and future sins, sins of commission and sins of omission; overt sins and covert sins; sins we knew about and sins we were ignorant of.

V. 14
"Blotting out" - to wipe out; to wash off and remove away.

"Blotting out" - "The word was used for wiping out a memory of an experience or for canceling a vote or annulling a law or canceling a charge of debt. It was also used for "the washing out" of the writing on a papyrus" (Rienecker, p. 574).

In Bible days, financial records (debts) were often kept on parchment (dried animal skins), and the writing could be washed off. God washed off the sin debt we owed. How? By paying for it Himself. Hymn - "Jesus paid it All"

Therefore, we are "delivered from the Law" (Rom. 7:16); "we are not under the Law" (that is, not under its condemnation) but under grace" (Rom. 6:14).

"Handwriting" - "It was used for a written acknowledgement of a debt. It is an 'I.O.U.' - a statement of indebtedness, personally signed by the debtor" (Rienecker, p. 574).

"The handwriting" = a reference to God's handwriting. His inscribed Law.

(Example: the handwriting on the wall in Babylon. All of us were "weighed and found wanting" in God's moral balance - Dan. 5:27; cp. Rom. 3:23)

"Ordinances" - Greek "dogma" - a decree or a legal obligation which was a binding law or edict, which was placed on a public place for all to see (Rienecker, p. 574).

"Against us" - the Law condemned us. It proved our guilt and worthiness to be punished eternally.

"Contrary to us" - God's Laws were directly in opposition to our old sin nature. The Law did not save us (Gal. 2:16); it only showed us to be transgressors and worthy of death and judgment (Rom. 3:20); and it actually aroused our pride and quickened our fleshly tendencies. It challenged our ego (our selfishness).

ILLUS: of a child who is told "don't touch" - suddenly wants to do nothing other than violate your command (Rom. 7:7-14).

"Took it out of the way" - lit. removed it out of the midst. The violated Law came in between us and a Holy God. Every time God looked toward us, He saw His holy Laws violated. When we came to grips with our sinfulness, we saw ourselves as being Lawbreakers. We could not escape the continual reminders of our transgression (EX: warnings on videos - "Do not duplicate").

But one day we saw that Christ died to remove the sign that said "Guilty!"

We realized that Christ pardoned our condemnation and set us free!

No condemnation - Jn. 5:24 - "Verily, verily, I saw unto you, He that heareth My word, and believed on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

In Roman days: "When someone was crucified, a list of his crimes was often nailed to the cross directly above his head. His death was payment for those crimes. The crimes that nailed Jesus to the cross were not His, but ours. Because He bore our penalty, God erased the certificate (summons) of debt against us" (MacArthur, "Our Sufficiency" - p. 175).

EX: Hymn - "It is well" - One stanza says: "My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought, my sin not in part but the whole, is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more, Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, Oh, my soul!"

Not only was our sin nailed to the cross, but the Law (which condemned us, having proven us lawbreakers, spiritual criminals and renegades) was also nailed to the cross.

Christ paid the demands of the Law - "There is therefore now no condemnation . . . in Christ" (Rom. 8)

CONCLUSION: Verse 15

Neither can save man:

1) Flesh circumcision (v. 11);

2) Water baptism (v. 12);

Nor

3) The Law (v. 14)

No rite, ordinance, ritual, or legalistic code can remove sin. But Christ can.

By a spiritual "cutting away" of sin, by Spirit baptism, and by the fact that Christ satisfied the demands of the Law on the cross.

Because I am "buried with Him" (v. 12) - I have triumphed over sin

Because I am "risen with Him" (v. 12) - I have triumphed over death

Because I am "quickened...with Him" (v. 13) - I have triumphed over hell

Christ's work at Calvary triumphed over Satan and his demonic cohorts.

V. 15

"Spoiled" - to strip off. Like the disarmament done to conquered enemies, in which their armor and weapons are stripped off.

"Principalities and powers" - The same "principalities and powers" that we "wrestle" against (Eph. 6:12). The demonic hosts of evil.

What did Christ strip away from Satan and his legions of demons? ANSWER: The fear of death and eternal guilt that they hold over our heads (Heb. 2:14-15 - "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage").

"Made a shew of them openly" = to display, to expose, to display as a victor displays his captives or trophies in a triumphal procession (Lightfoot).

EX: The 1991 NYC "Operation Desert Storm" Parade with General Norman Scharzkoff leading the procession

Whenever a Roman general won a great victory on foreign soil, took many captives and much loot, and gained new territory for Rome, he was honored by an official parade known as "The Roman Triumph."

Paul alluded to this practice in II Cor. 2:14. Jesus Christ won a complete victory on the cross (I Cor. 15:57) and returned Home to Glory in a great triumphal procession (Eph. 4:8ff). In this, He disgraced and defeated Satan (Wiersbe, p. 84).

"Triumphing over them (i.e. the "principalities and powers" of evil) in it (i.e. the cross).

All the attempts of Satan to keep Christ from bearing our sin on the cross failed (EX: through Peter - Mt. 16:22-ff; through the mocking crowd - Mt. 27:39-44).

"MAN-MADE RELIGION"

Colossians 2:16-23

8/7/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***Beware of man-made religion!**

Man-made religion is dangerous for three reasons:

I. It clings to a shadow, but misses the reality (v. 16-17)
(The Illusion of man-made religion)

II. It intrudes into a "spiritual" realm, but lets go of Christ (v. 18-19)
(The Intrusion of man-made religion)

III. It restricts the body, but cannot restrain the flesh (v. 20-23)
(The Delusion of man-made religion)

A. The world's religion "sounds" spiritual, but it is not (v. 20-22)

B. The world's religion "looks" spiritual, but it is not (v. 23)

CONCLUSION:

"MAN-MADE RELIGION"

Colossians 2:16-23

8/7/2016

INTRODUCTION:

Many ask the question today: "Why are there so many religions?"

The Bible teaches that there is a true religion (Ja. 1:27) and false religions (II Cor. 11:13-15).

Wherever there is the real, Satan (to confuse and distort) will always seek to introduce the unreal.

Today, the pure waters of Bible Christianity are muddied by "tradition" Christianity.

Today, some who profess Christ possess a living faith; but others - a "dead faith." Some trust the grace of God for salvation, others the works of man.

Some believe in the finished and sufficient work of Christ at Calvary; and others propose that Christ did not pay it all.

Such conflicts are not new. Paul and the Colossian church faced the same problems.

V. 16

"Therefore" - Paul draws a conclusion based on what was previously said.

Paul, after declaring born-again believers to be rich in Christ (2:1-5), rooted in Christ (v. 6-7), and complete in Christ (v. 8-10); and having complete and total victory over sin (v. 11), death (v. 12-13), and guilty (v. 14-15) -- he now warns not to fall prey to the dangers of man-made religion (Col. 2:16-23).

Paul's theme in chapter 2 is one of warning about those religious hucksters who would tempt people to doubt the adequacy or sufficiency of Christ.

(Note: the admonitions to beware of such false teachers - 2:4, 8, 18)

***Beware of man-made religion!**

Man-made religion is dangerous for three reasons:

I. It clings to a shadow, but misses the reality (v. 16-17) (The Illusion of man-made religion)

V. 16

"Let no man" - regardless of fame, reputation, notoriety; regardless of religious rank or "ecclesiastical" influence, regardless of education or degree; regardless of charisma, charm, or persuasiveness. Don't be intimidated! Don't doubt the sufficiency of Christ!

"Judge" = to criticize, to belittle, to condemn.

The false teaching involved:

1. Abstaining from certain foods
2. Observing certain days

"Meat or drink" - Note: The erroneous doctrine to be perpetrated in the last days - I Tim. 4:1-5. God has lifted the ban on certain meats (as being clean and unclean - Lev. 11) (Acts 10:14-15 - v. 15 - "And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.")

Sin is not a matter of what goes into your belly, but what comes out of your heart (cp. the Pharisees' tradition and Christ's response - Mark 7:1-9, 13-23).

The Roman Catholic Church is an example of the heresy that spread through Colossae.

This religion , which imposes dietary restrictions (EX: no meat on Friday and no meat during "Lent") is committing the very wrong that Paul is addressing.

1. "Holy Day" - Refers to the yearly holy day or feast and festivity times of Passover, Pentecost, etc. (cp. Lev. 23:2ff).
2. "New Moon"- Refers to the monthly "holy days"
3. "Sabbath" - Refers to the weekly "holy days"

Colossians 2:16-17 is also diametrically opposed to the fundamental teachings of Seventh Day Adventism (which holds the adherents of that cult under a legalistic code of ethics, which does not apply to the N.T. Christian).

The two distinctives of Seventh Day Adventism are:

1) Dietary laws
2) Sabbath worship

According to their works religion, those refusing to adhere will not be saved.

V. 17

"Shadow" = that which has appearance but is not actual. A reflection but not the realization. A representation but not the reality. A symbol but not the substance. A type but not the tangible fulfillment.

"Things to come" = refers to: prophecies of Christ's first coming; prophecies of the future day of rest (the Kingdom of God - Heb. 4:9-10).

O.T. Israel offered "burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the Sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts" (I Chron. 23:31). And such an observance was out of love and obedience to God.

However, when Christ died, His sacrifice fulfilled the O.T. symbols and types; therefore, such sacrifices today (EX: the Mass) detract from the complete work of Christ at Calvary (cp. Heb. 9 & 10).

SEE: Heb. 9:12, 14. The one sacrifice of Christ is all we need for eternal life and godly lives. SEE: Heb. 9:22-28; 10:4, 10, 12, 14.

"But (in contrast to the "shadow") . . . the body (the reality; the physical, literal fulfillment) is of Christ" -

To have Christ is to have reality. To trust anything other than Christ Himself is to cling on to a mere shadow and to have the semblance of "the way, the truth, and life" not the One who is "the way, the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6).

II. It intrudes into a "spiritual" realm, but lets go of Christ (v. 18-19) (The Intrusion of man-made religion)

V. 18

"Beguile" - to cheat out of a prize, to rob from reward. Literally, the word refers to making a decision (judgment) about someone and thereby fooling them into thinking that they are losers, when really they are not. "The verb was used of an umpire's decision against a racer" (Vine, p. 112).

"Voluntary humility" - a self imposed appearance of humility (EX: The Pharisees who disfigured their faces to appear to be fasting - Mt. 6:16; cp. Is. 58:5)

Beware of those who look religious.

"Worshipping of angels" - refers to worship of any Heavenly messenger (no saint, no prophet, no angelic spirit being is to be worshipped)

Angels are never to be worshipped (Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9 - "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." . . . "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.")

"Intruding" - to enter into something you should not be.

"Horoscopes, yoga, transcendental meditation, and other aspects of eastern mystical, New Age teaching must be avoided by the child of God.

"He hath not seen" - He says he saw something (either by vision or by dream) that he really did not.

Oral Roberts did not see an 800 foot Jesus. Joseph Smith did not see some prophet named Moroni, nor did he receive the Book of Mormon on the "golden tablets of Nephi."

Roman Catholics are not being visited by visual encounters with the Virgin Mary.

Charismatic are not recipients of visions and dreams from God.

Jehovah's Witnesses are not being told when the end of the world will come.

All of these supposed visions and visits are lies of the devil, designed to divert people's attention from Christ and His only Word, the Bible.

How does God describe such false religious hucksters?

1. Vain (empty allusions)
2. Proud ("puffed up" = blown up in the head)
3. Fleshly (carnal/physical) minds devoid of spirituality

V. 19

Those who intrude into the 'spirit world" do so to their own calamity, because they are holding onto something other than the "Head" - Jesus Christ.

The picture is of someone who, being distracted, turns away from holding reality, and reaches for a mirage (a vain, empty, hollow, worthless counterfeit).

To release one's grip on the all-powerful, all-sufficient Christ, is to slip away from the One who alone (as Head) gives direction and sustenance.

"Joints & Bands" = ligaments and sinews. The picture is of body parts being connected by ligaments and sinews to the head, from which flows the "nourishment" (the spiritual supply and provision which comes from Christ).

"Increaseth" = to grow as a body grows.

"With the increase of God" = with the growth that God alone gives (as opposed to man-made religious "secrets" to growth).

III. It restricts the body, but cannot restrain the flesh (v. 20-23) (The Delusion of man-made religion)

A. The world's religion "sounds" spiritual, but it is not (v. 20-22)

V. 20

"Dead with Christ" - to be alive to what Christ is alive to, and separated from what He is separated from.

"The rudiments of the world" = the basic philosophies and elementary principles that the world views as essential to spirituality.

The believer is in the world, but not of the world (Jn. 17:14-16).
Why . . . "are ye subject to ordinances"? = Why are you letting yourselves be controlled by man's dogmas and decrees? Why are you submitting to the world's ascetic teachings?

V. 21

What "ordinances" is Paul speaking about? Such superstitious or legalistic taboos as:

"You should not touch"
"You should not taste"
"You should not handle"

True spirituality is not a matter of a list of man-made DO's and DON'Ts.

V. 22

No material thing is to be viewed as a god or idol, but the things God has given us are to be used.

"Meats for the belly and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them" (I Cor. 6:13).

We are to use the things of this world, but not abuse it (I Cor. 7:31).

"The commandments and doctrines of men" - a continuation of the thoughts of verse 20. The point is, that some of the Colossians were subjecting themselves to man's dogmas.

B. The world's religion "looks" spiritual, but it is not (v. 23)

"A shew of wisdom" = to have the appearance of spiritual wisdom.

"Is will-worship" = a system of worship that stems from the will of man. Self-made worship; man-made worship.

To the world's eyes, that which looks religious must be:

1) "Humility" - Pretentious holiness dressed in religious garb and actions

2) "Neglecting of the body" - human taboos and hard treatment of the physical body.

--Asceticism -- Monkery -- Nunnery -- are not the secret to moral purity and God-honoring spirituality.

"Not in any honor" - not having any value in restraining the satisfying (filling up; indulgence) of the flesh.

Since all sin stems from the "heart" or the spiritual aspect of man, the battle must be fought there. To afflict one's body (to deal with externals) is to miss the core of our problem.

CONCLUSION:

You are one with Jesus Christ!

(How should you therefore live?)

Colossians 3:1-5

8-21-2016

INTRODUCTION:

***If you are saved, remember this: You are one with Jesus Christ!**
(inseparably united to Him)

I. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>PRIORITIES</u> IN THE PRESENT (v. 1-3a)

II. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>OUTLOOK</u> FOR THE FUTURE (v. 3b-4)

III. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>MORALITY</u> IN THIS WORLD (v. 5)

You are one with Jesus Christ!

(How should you therefore live?)

Colossians 3:1-5

8-21-2016

INTRODUCTION:

"If ye then be risen with Christ" -

Paul, writing to Christians at Colosse, speaks of them as being already resurrected with Christ.

"Risen with Christ" = co-raised; jointly resurrected.

How is it possible that believers are already risen?

Answer: Our future resurrection is so guaranteed; so sure to happen, that God speaks of it in the past tense.

How is the believer's resurrection so certain?

Answer: Because of our oneness with Jesus Christ. Because of our union with Him.

Christ and the believer have been married (Rom. 7:1ff) or merged.

ILLUS: Marriage united a man and woman together in such a way that what one has now belongs to the other.

Her bills are my bills; my checkbook is her checkbook (and vice-versa). The same is true for the house, car, food, property, talents, etc. We wear the same last name, share the same burdens, joys, and victories, etc.

**So it is with Christ and His bride. This mysterious union described in Ephesians 5:30-32 reveals the incomprehensible truth that the believer and Christ hold all things common.

God views Christ and the believer as being together; one; "joint heirs" (Rom. 8:16-17).

This union is called a mystery (Eph. 5:32) that is spiritual
(I Cor. 12:13), and living (John 15:4).

Note the emphasis on oneness with Christ in verses 1-4 -
"Risen with Christ" (v. 1)
"Dead (with Christ)" (v. 3; 2:20)
"Hid with Christ" (v. 3)
"Appear with Him" (v. 4)

We benefit in Christ's death and resurrection.

SEE previous context:

--Col. 2:6 (we received Him by faith, so we are to walk daily with Him by faith)

--Col. 2:9 - Christ lacks nothing (all power and blessing are His)

--Col. 2:10 - Therefore, those who belong to Christ lack nothing

We are complete in Him because of our union with Him (v. 12) (SEE: Ephes. 2:4-7)

2:12 - "Co-burial" (baptism = Spirit baptism [Rom. 6:4-5; I Cor. 12:13])

2:12 - "Co-resurrection"

2:13 - "Co-quickened"

***If you are saved, remember this: You are one with Jesus Christ!**
(inseparably united to Him)

I. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>PRIORITIES</u> IN THE PRESENT (v. 1-3a)

V. 1

Your oneness with the risen Christ is the greatest incentive to live a different lifestyle (cp. Rom. 7:6; I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:6).

"Seek" - to live <u>zealously</u> for something. (present tense - <u>to keep seeking</u>, every day).

"Above" = the Heavenly, the spiritual, the eternal

"To seek those things which are above" means to <u>center</u> your life on your ascended (Eph. 4:10), glorified (Jn. 17:5; Phil. 2:9) Christ! (SEE: Walvoord, <u>Bible Knowledge Commentary</u>, Vol. II, p. 680)

"Things <u>above</u>" - our # 1 priority affection is to be toward God! (SEE: mark 12:29-30)

"Where Christ sitteth" - the fact that Christ is sitting (at the right hand of the Father) proves two things:

1)He is alive
2)His work is complete (cp. Heb. 1:3, 10:10-12)

The "right hand" is a position of power and authority (what the Father does, He does by the power of His "right hand" - Ex. 15:6, 23; Ps. 89:13, 118:16; Is. 48:13); and this is where Jesus is seated (Ps. 110:1; Mk. 16:19; Lk. 22:69; Acts 7:55; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2; I Pet. 3:22).

The point is: If you are one with Jesus and if you share His life (v. 4), then you should live for Him and seek to please Him.

We need to look at our values in light of our oneness with Christ.

What is important to us and what should be important are not always the same.

"We seek those things which are above when in heart and spirit we are truly sojourners in this world and are not bound to it" (Calvin, cited by Vaughan, p. 90).

V. 2

The first word ("seek") suggested striving; the second word ("set affections") suggests concentrating (Walvoord, p. 680).

"Set your affection" - lit. Focus your thoughts; put your mind.

What you spend your time thinking about reveals where your priorities are.

"The sure safeguard against seeking things below, is not to set the mind upon them" (Eadie, Colossians, p. 91).

To set our thoughts on things above does not mean that we are to withdraw ourselves from all of the activities of this world and do nothing but contemplate eternity and heaven . . . But as Barclay explains, "There will be this difference-- from now on the Christian will see everything in the light and against the background of eternity. He will no longer live as if this world was all that mattered; he will see this world against the background of the larger world of eternity" (Vaughan, citing Barclay, p. 91).

--What people talk about reveals what they think about (where their affection is).

--Where people go reveals what they think about.

--What people do reveals what they think about.

What are some things that are upon the earth? (SEE: v. 5)

We are so united to Christ, that where we go, He goes; what we do, we in a spiritual sense bring Christ into the practice (I Cor. 6:15-17); when it is a sinful practice, we grieve the Spirit of God (Eph. 4:30).

"Not on things on the earth" -

SEE: Matthew 6:19-21, 33

Our # 1 goal in life is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and the temporal necessities will be added to us (Mt. 6:33).

SEE: I Tim. 6:6-12, 17-18.

Eternal vs. Temporal -

II Cor. 4:18 - "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

When we keep in mind our oneness with Christ, we will have this attitude: "What is important to Jesus is important to me. What is on His heart is on mine. Where His focus is, there do I want mine to be."

When your affection is on things above, you will have time for God.

You will have time to read His Word; you will have time to do His work; You will have time to seek His face in prayer; you will have time to assemble with His people, etc.

(The reason why "Easter" is the only time many go to church is because during the other 51 Sundays of the year - they are busy seeking the things that are on the earth.")

V. 3

"For ye are dead" - cp. 2:20 - "dead with Christ."

How is the believer "dead"?

He is dead to that which Christ is dead to. He is dead in relationship to the O.T. Law, dead in relationship to sin; dead in relationship to the world system (2:20).

The believer has already died and been raised to live a new life

II Cor. 5:14 - "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."

Gal. 2:20 - "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I , but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Cp. Rom. 6:3-11.

A story is told about two sisters who enjoyed attending dances and wild parties. Then they were converted and found new life in Christ. They received an invitation to a party and sent their RSVP in these words: "We regret that we cannot attending because we recently died." (Wiersbe, p. 133)

II. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE (v. 3b-4)

V. 3

"Hidden" implies both concealment and safety, both invisibility and security.

The believer is not yet visibly glorified, but he is secure and safe in Christ" (Walvoord, p. 680).

V. 4

The word "hid" (v. 3) is used in contrast to the word "appear" (v. 4).

Our profound oneness with Christ is hidden from our eyes; but one day this reality will be clearly revealed, openly displayed (manifested - Greek phaneroo).

In the mean time, we must accept this reality by faith!

"According to the Apostle Paul, we have already been glorified! (Rom. 8:30). This glory simply has not yet been revealed." (Wiersbe, p. 134).

"Christ . . . is our life" -

Our Savior does not merely give us life, He is our life. He is our eternal life. To have Him is to have life (I Jn. 5:12). To be united with Him is to be fused to the source and essence to life. He is "the life" (Jn. 14:6).

It is said of Jesus: "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4); Jesus Himself said, "I am the resurrection and the life . . ." (Jn. 11:25). "I am the way , the truth, and the life." (Jn. 14:6)

I Jn. 5:20 - "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

This appearance is describing the Rapture (at which time the resurrection of God's saints also occurs - I Cor. 15:51-54; I Thes. 4:16-18, Rev. 20:4-6.

What is our outlook?

Via our union with Christ, we look forward to a certain Resurrection. Cp. Job's testimony (Job 14:14-15; 19:23-27; (cp. Jn. 5:25).

III. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: MORALITY IN THIS WORLD (v. 5)

V. 5

"Therefore" leads us back to verses 1 - 4.

In other words, the reason given for mortifying selfish lust is because of our union or oneness with Christ.

Note the believer's union:

V. 1 - "risen with Christ"

V. 3 - "Hid with Christ"

V. 4 - "Christ ... is our life"

V. 4 - "Then shall ye also appear with Him..."

The negative prohibitions of verses five and following grow out of the positive doctrines of verses one through four.

"Mortify" = put to death; the Aorist imperative points to a decisive act. A decision to once and for all execute or do away with certain sins that at one time were very much "alive" in our lives.

"Your members" = your parts; the members of the body which are used to carry out the desires of the mind.

According to the Jewish Rabbis, the number of commandments and restraints of man's "evil impulse" found in the Law equalled the number of body parts that man had - 248 (cp. Reinecker, p. 578).

NOTE: God is not calling for physical dismemberment (or the cutting off of body parts that might otherwise lead to sin - cp. Mt. 5:29-30), but He is calling for the believer not to surrender his body parts to fulfill the sins mentioned in verse 5.

The accusatives of this verse are accusatives of general reference. Meaning that we are to mortify our earthly members in reference to fornication, uncleanness, etc.

The believer is to "mortify" (put to death) the following sins in his life:

1) **Fornication** - sexual perversion

"Fornication" = a broad term which includes every type of sexual perversion or illicit sexual behavior. The word fornication specifically applies to:

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The reason we are to be pure is because our Father is pure. "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:15-16).

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"Inordinate affection" - not speaking about a good affection, but an affection outside of God's order and design; a restless and driving passion.

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Hence, the word refers to an extreme impure passion. An out-of-control immoral passion. A wrong passion that is so strong that it causes anguish and lethal obsession.

EX: How people get so obsessed with something or someone that it leads to bizarre or dangerous behavior. A "fatal attraction."

4) **Evil concupiscence** - bad lust

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But what about "evil desires"? -

--Selfish desires - II Tim. 4:3; Jd. 16
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5) **Covetousness** - an unsatisfied desire to have more

"Covetousness" - a violation of the 10th commandment (Ex. 20:17 - "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.").

"Covetousness" ("pleonexia") = lit. a desire to have more and more ("pleon" = "more"; "echo" = "to have").

It refers to an insatiable selfishness. It refers to greed or an unsatisfied desire.

--An unsatisfied desire for material possessions = Lk. 12:15; II Pet. 2:3

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God calls covetousness "idolatry"! Idolatry = idol worship or idol service.

The Hebrew word for "idol" means that which is empty, hollow, void, nothing.

How is covetousness idolatry? ANSWER: Covetousness is obsession, and obsession refers to a giving of one's heart and mind to one object.

Wherever your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Where is our heart to be fixed? On God.

That which obsessively motivates us is to us a god. Whatever you live for is your god.

The sins mentioned can all be summarized as selfish lust.

Not one of the sins mentioned is for the benefit of anyone else - They are self-centered pursuits for illicit pleasure.

Selfishness is the root cause of all sins. Whenever one puts his own will ahead of God's will, he has selfishly sinned.

Every time a believer sins, he does not merely sin against himself; he sins against his Lord who lives in his heart (1:27).

This is why a Christian feels so miserable when he/she is in sin. Because there is an inner awareness that your Lord is offended, and the Spirit is grieved (Eph. 4:30).

No Christian does anything in life alone; Jesus is always there with you -

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No believer sins in a vacuum; you are not an island unto yourself. When you sin, you indirectly drag your Savior into the sin.

This does not mean that Christ sins with you; but that He is intimately present during the act of defilement (SEE: I Cor. 6:15-20).

When you commit "fornication," you are taking the body that belongs to Christ and placing Christ's property in a domain that is abhorrent to Christ.

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The most powerful reason for being pure and free from indulging in selfish lust is because "I am one with Jesus." I dare not drag Him into the muck and mire of the Devil's playground.

CONCLUSION:

"GOOD REASONS TO KILL SIN"
(The Termination of Selfish Lust)
Colossians 3:5-7

11/24/91

INTRODUCTION:

The believer is to "mortify" (put to death) the following sins in his life:

1) **Fornication** - sexual perversion

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4) **Evil concupiscence** - bad lust

5) **Covetousness** - an unsatisfied desire to have more

***Decide to put an end to <u>selfish lust</u>! (v. 5)**

Three reasons:

I. Because of My Present <u>UNION WITH CHRIST</u> - "Therefore" (v. 5)

II. Because of the Future <u>WRATH OF GOD</u> (v. 6)

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V. 5

"Mortify" = put to <u>death</u>; the Aorist imperative points to a <u>decisive</u> act. A <u>decision</u> to once and for all execute or do away with certain sins that at one time were very much "alive" in our lives.

"Your members" = your parts; the members of the body which are used to carry out the desires of the mind.

According to the Jewish Rabbis, the number of commandments and restraints of man's "evil impulse" found in the Law equalled the number of body parts that man had - 248 (cp. Reinecker, p. 578).

NOTE: God is not calling for physical dismemberment (or the cutting off of body parts that might otherwise lead to sin - cp. Mt. 5:29-30), but He is calling for the believer not to surrender his body parts to fulfill the sins mentioned in verse 5.

The accusatives of this verse are accusatives of general reference. Meaning that we are to mortify our earthly members <u>in reference</u> to fornication, uncleanness, etc.

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"Therefore" leads us back to verses 1 - 4.

In other words, the reason given for mortifying selfish lust is because of our union or oneness with Christ.

Note the believer's union:

V. 1 - "risen with Christ"

V. 3 - "Hid with Christ"

V. 4 - "Christ ... is our life"

V. 4 - "Then shall ye also appear with Him..."

The negative prohibitions of verses five and following grow out of the positive doctrines of verses one through four.

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II. Because of the Future WRATH OF GOD (v. 6)

"For which things sake" = Because of which things (mentioned in v. 5), the wrath of God is coming!

God's wrath is coming because of fornication, uncleanness, restless passion, evil desires, and covetousness.

The future is not pretty for people who thought that illicit sex, impurity, passion, lust, and greed were "not so bad" -

> I Cor. 6:9-10 - "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
>
> SEE: Gal. 5:19-21

"Wrath" = the deep-seated anger of God

The word refers to a righteous anger against sin that has been "stewing" and "growing" and kept "under cover" but will one day erupt.

God's patience does not mean that He is asleep, uninterested, or unaware of what is going on. He is "angry with the wicked every day."

One day His anger will be evident globally - In the Day of the Lord.

"Cometh" - lit. "is coming." Showing the expectant and soon approach of the Day of God's wrath (which, for the earth dwellers, is merely a foretaste of eternal doom and suffering).

"Children of disobedience" - are children characterized by disobedience; children

not of God, but of the Devil (Jn. 8:44).

Such sins are characteristic of an unbeliever.

God is not teaching that believers do not fall prey to such sins (v. 5) (if the believer were immune, the admonition would not be need to mortify such sins - v. 5). But what God is saying is that those people whose lives prove their unbelief, by such actions and attitudes, will experience the hot wrath of judgment.

III. Because of My Past OLD LIFE (v. 7)

"In the which" - in the above mentioned sins (v. 5),

"Ye" (plural) - referring to all former unbelievers

"Also" - showing how we were once like the world

"Walked" (past tense) - conducted your lives; took part in

"Sometime" - lit. then; some former time in the past

"Lived" (past tense) - imperfect tense, describing a habitual pattern of living.

Such actions and attitudes are unbecoming (unfit, unsuitable) for a Christian.

Those things should be the old me, not the new me.

When salvation comes - the old goes and the new comes (II Cor. 5:17).

Cp. Col. 3:9-10 - "ye have (already, past tense) put off the old . . . and have put on the new. . ."

SEE: Eph. 2:1-5 - about our walk in "times past"

I Pet. 1:14-16 - "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

CONCLUSION:

"FROM RAGS TO RIGHTEOUSNESS"
Colossians 3:8-11

12/1/91

INTRODUCTION:

***You can go from rags to righteousness!**

I. GOD'S COMMAND: You Must Strip the OLD RAGS Off Of You! (v. 8-9a)

A. The rags of bad attitudes

1. Anger
2. Wrath
3. Malice

B. The rags of bad speech

1. Destructive words
2. Filthy words
3. Lying words

II. GOD'S REASON: Because God Has Put a NEW RIGHTEOUSNESS Onto You! (v. 9b-11)

A. The old man has been put off at salvation (v. 9b)

B. The new man has been put on at salvation (v. 10)

This new man is being renewed daily.

1. The renewal is continual ("is renewed")

2. The renewal is spiritual ("is renewed (by God)")

3. The renewal is intellectual ("in knowledge")

4. The renewal is incredible ("after the image...")

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INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: The fictitious story of "Cinderella" - who went from shabby, tattered, old rags to a beautiful sparkling gown.

The 1991 Atlanta Braves & Minnesota Twins are said to have been two "Cinderella" clubs, who went from the bottom to the top in one year!

In Christ, we too have gone from nothing to everything; from the prospect of hell to Heaven, from sin to a Savior, from confusion to truth, from filthy rags (Is. 64:6) to

righteousness (II Cor. 5:21).

Because of this transformation, it is unfitting for the righteous to be clothed in unrighteousness, for God's children to dress in the devil's rags.

ILLUS: Paragraph 3 (John Phillips, Moody Monthly, Nov. 1983, p. 64).

***You can go from rags to righteousness!**

I. GOD'S COMMAND: You Must Strip the OLD RAGS Off Of You! (v. 8-9a)

V. 8

"But now" (in contrast to our past life, God expects us to be different than we used to be. For the believer, everything becomes new (II Cor. 5:17), including our attitudes and actions toward others.

"Ye also" - in addition to the mortifying of sensual sins (internal selfish lusts - v. 5), the believer is to remove from himself sinister sins (external evil treatment of others - v. 8-9).

"Put off" - lit. take off and put away from yourself ("atto" and "tithami"; middle imperative). The analogy is of stripping off from oneself filthy clothing.

"All these" - Don't tolerate any!

NOTE: The putting "off" (v. 8) is joined with the putting "on" (v. 12).

This same expression is found in Ephesians 4:22-24 - "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Before anyone can "put on" Godly virtues, they must "put off" ungodly attitudes and actions.

No one, in their right mind, puts on clean clothing over filthy garments.

If such a feat were attempted, the results would be these:

1) The clothes don't fit (because of the bulky undergarments)

2) Even if one managed to cover himself while retaining the old clothing, the stench of the old, though well-masked from view, sends forth an odor.

SEE: Ephes. 4:22-32 -

Put Off	Put On
Lying (v. 25)	Truth (v. 25)
Stealing (v. 28)	Laboring & giving (v. 28)
Corrupt speech (v. 29)	That which edifies (v. 29)
Bitterness etc. (v. 31)	Kindness etc. (v. 32)

Whereas God commands us to mortify (put to death) internal sins (v. 5) (sins that rage within oneself), now He commands us to put off (remove from oneself) external sins (sins directed toward others).

Paul, having discussed bad desires (v. 5), now moves to bad attitudes (v. 8a) and bad words (v. 8b-9).

A. The rags of bad attitudes

1. Anger

"Anger" (Gk. "orga") - deep-seated anger, an unrighteous smoldering, stewing over a long period of time. A settled or abiding anger that gradually builds (grows).

This type of person bottles up (someone who "clams up" and internalizes the feelings of animosity).

--No forgiveness--

This individual lacks the virtue of mercy. He holds grudges.

2. Wrath

"Wrath" (Gk. "thumos") - a hot, explosive outburst of anger; a sudden hot temper that rises up inside of someone.

*This type of anger blows up (someone who is "hot-headed" and ventilates feelings of animosity).

--No Spirit-control--

This individual lacks the virtue of patience. He is "short-fused"; "flies off the handle" etc.

Two warnings about anger:

1) Don't go to bed angry (Eph. 4:26)
2) Don't give Satan a foothold (Eph. 4:27)

3. Malice

"Malice" - someone who is vicious; a person of "badness."

Paul is describing someone who desires the injury or hurt of others.

He is sad when they prosper and glad when they fall.

"Such cancerous behavior is illustrated in Haman, who nursed in his evil heart a hatred for Mordecai the Jew. His malignity almost exterminated the Jewish race" (John Phillips, Moody Monthly, Nov. 83, p. 64).

B. The rags of bad speech

1. Destructive words

"Blasphemy" = (from: "blapto" - to injure; and "pheme" - speech) (Vines, p. 131).

The word refers to injurious speech; abusive words; to rail on someone or speak evil of them (Eph. 4:31); to "gag" on someone and thereby defame their character; to slander someone and thereby harm their reputation.

--Such speech stems from pride (I Tim. 6:4).

--Such speech will be prevalent in last days (II Tim. 3:2)

--Such speech even happens to good people (like Paul - Rom. 3:8; I Pet. 4:4).

--Such speech should not be countered with the same (I Cor. 4:13)

I Peter 3:9-10 - "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile."

We are commanded "to speak evil of no man" (Note: This injunction is in a context describing politicians! (v. 1)

2. Filthy words

"Filthy communication" - shameful words, obscene language, dirty speech.

Any speech that would make you blush if you said it in front of Christ is not for you to say at all.

Applications:

1) Curse words (four-letter words; gutter language)
2) Crude jokes ("foolish jesting" is sin - Eph. 5:4)
3) Verbal pornography

3. Lying words

"Lie not" (present imperative - "do not ever lie") - honesty is to be a pattern of our lives.

--Lying is totally contrary to the nature of God (Jn. 14:6; Tit. 1:2), but is Satanic - Jn. 8:44).

--Lying is never justified

--There are no "white lies"

(A half-truth is a whole lie!)

--The penalty for liars is serious (Rev. 21:8).

"Lying has become a way of life for millions. Children lie to their parents without conscience. Men in business tell bare-faced lies to avoid their creditors, to acquire something they want, or to make a sale. People make promises they have no intention of fulfilling" (Phillips, p. 64).

"Bishop Warren A. Chandler was preaching about the lies of

Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), and asked the congregation, "If God still struck people dead for lying, where would I be?" The congregation snickered a bit, but the smiles disappeared when the Bishop shouted, "I'd be right here -- preaching to an empty church!" (Wiersbe, p. 107).

The old man's garments are spotted with the leprosy of sin. We should fling them off with the same feeling of horror as if we had realized we had put on a leper's coat" (Phillips, p. 64).

II. GOD'S REASON: Because God Has Put a NEW RIGHTEOUSNESS Onto You! (v. 9b-11)

A. The old man has been put off at salvation (v. 9b)

"Seeing that ye have put off. . ." - Since you have, Because you have (aorist participle giving the cause or reason).

"ye have (past aorist tense) put off" - Interesting observation: On the one hand, God tells us to put off (v. 8); now on the other hand, He says we have already put off (v. 9).

The day you were saved was the day you put off the old man.

In Christ (in a spiritual sense, before the eyes of God), we are clean; but in daily life we are to (in a literal sense) make our life match our position in Christ.

ILLUS: of the prince who acts like a pagan pauper; the king who behaves like a clown. His behavior does not match his position. When he forgets

his title and position, he acts foolishly and shamefully.

Whoever you identify yourself with, you will behave like.

"The old man" = the old nature; the old you.

"With his deeds" = the old man's practices; the old way of thinking, talking, and doing things.

B. The new man has been put on at salvation (v. 10)

"Have put on the new" - When a believer is clothed with Christ's righteousness, he is a new man!

"New man" = "neos" - new in time.

"Renewed" = "kainos" - new in quality

"Which is renewed - the new man is continually being made new again.

This new man is being renewed daily.

1. The renewal is continual ("is renewed" - present tense)

   It began at salvation and is continuing to the present.

   Salvation occurs instantaneously, but transformation is an ever-growing feature of the Christian's life (Rom. 12:2) (called "progressive sanctification").

2. The renewal is spiritual ("is renewed (by God)")

The renewal is accomplished by God (passive voice).

How? The Spirit of God takes the Word of God and makes us new again.

3. The renewal is intellectual ("in knowledge")

The renewal is of the mind (Rom. 12:2).

The word "knowledge" refers to a direct and personal knowledge of spiritual truth (not a knowledge about something, but a knowledge of someone).

As a man thinks, he does. You are what you think.

Man's greatest need is not academic knowledge but Scriptural knowledge!

God commands us in a similar context to be "renewed in the Spirit of your mind" (Eph. 4:23).

4. The renewal is incredible! ("after the image...")

It is a restoration of what Adam lost when he sinned!

"The image" - God created man in His own image (Gen. 1:26-27). That image was a spiritual, moral, and personal likeness to God.

When man sinned, he died spiritually; he was depraved morally; and was defective personally (i.e. man's intellect, emotion, and will became defective).

However, in Christ, through the renewal that God performs via His Word, you can reverse that marred image and become progressively Godly (like your God).

"We were formed in God's image, and deformed from God's image by sin. But through Jesus Christ,w e can be transformed into God's image" (Wiersbe, p. 108).

"the image of him that created him" - Who created us? Christ (Col. 1:16). Then whose image are we made into via God's renewal? Christ's!

God's plan is that we be "conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29).

5. The renewal is impartial ("where there is neither...")

*God's moral standards (v. 8-9) apply to everyone, and God will renew everyone (who is saved) after His own image, regardless of:

1) Nationality (race)
2) Religious heritage
3) Culture types
4) Social status

1) Nationality - "Greek nor Jew" (there is no distinctiveness in terms of spiritual potential).

A saved Gentile can mature just as fast and grow just as much as a saved Jew.

2) Religious heritage - "Circumcision nor uncircumcision"

One's spirituality in Christ is not dependent on external surgery, but internal surgery ("circumcision of the heart" - 2:11).

3) Culture types - Everyone from the Greek intellectuals with their "refined" culture, all the way to the Barbarians, yea, even the lowest - the Scythians - can be renewed and spiritually reformed and refined.

4) Social Status - "bond nor free"

Whether slave or free man, whether blue-collar or white-collar, whether low income or no income or high income, whether company president or company janitor . . . In Christ, your spiritual potential is equal.

Why? Because Christ is the believer's all (ie. everything), and He is in all (who believer) (Rom. 10:12-13).

Ministries that are based on race, color, or social standing are not Biblical (Wiersbe, p. 110).

CONCLUSION:

“The Christian’s Spiritual Clothing"

(Colossians 3:12-14)

9/18/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***As Christians, we must be conscientious about putting on spiritual virtue!**

I. <u>WHY</u> should we put on Christian virtue? (v. 12a)

II. <u>WHAT</u> Spiritual Virtues Must We “Put On”? (v. 12b-14)

A. Our <u>Internal</u> Virtue (v. 12b)

1. "Bowels of mercies" (inner compassion)
2. "Kindness"
3. "Humbleness of mind"
4. "Meekness" (gentleness)
5. "Long-suffering" (patience)

B. Our <u>External</u> Virtue (v. 13)

1. Forbearing one another
2. Forgiving one another

C. Our <u>Supreme</u> Virtue (v. 14)

“The Christian’s Spiritual Clothing"

(Colossians 3:12-14)

9/18/2016

EX: The advice our "Careers" (P.I.C. - Program for Industrial Careers) class teacher gave us. When seeking a job, to impress the interviewer, dress your best, because "first impressions are lasting impressions."

Are you dressed for success? Such a question is frequently asked in magazines such as the men's "G.Q." (Gentleman's Quarterly) or the glamour magazines (Cosmopolitan, Mademoiselle).

Wearing the most fashionable suits, skirts, and jeans is an obsession to many.

While the world places a heavy emphasis on the external appearance, God still looks at the heart (I Sam. 16:7). God still measures the beauty of a woman not by the apparel she wears, but by the meek and quiet spirit she possesses (I Pet. 3:3-4).

***As Christians, we must be conscientious about putting on spiritual virtue!**

I. WHY should we put on Christian virtue? (v. 12a)

"Put on" - clothe yourself (aor, middle, imperative)

"Therefore" - because of this; because the old man has been put off, and the new man has been put on (v. 9-10) (at salvation), the way we dress ourselves spiritually ought to match the way God views us positionally.

Because Christ is in us (v. 11), His wardrobe should be upon us.

NOTE: The exhortation to "put on," of necessity follows the command to "put off" (v. 8).

Before one can clothe himself or herself with the divinely pressed, fresh-smelling, good looking virtues in verses 12 and following, he must first of all back up to verse 8 and strip off the old, stinking, stained, dirty, leprous, grave clothes of anger, wrath, etc.
"Put on . . . as the . . ." - Just as one's clothing will usually reflect the fashions and styles of a society in which he lives, our spiritual clothing should reflect our position and standing before God (in Whom we live! cp. 3:4).

Whom should we dress up like? (what model should determine our style of spiritual dress as Christians?)

The words "elect, holy, & beloved" are 3 descriptions of a child of God.

"Elect" - emphasizes how we were chosen by God to salvation.

"Holy" -emphasizes how we were sanctified by God through salvation.

"Beloved" - shows how we are loved by God throughout salvation

Dress up for Someone who has chosen you!

"As the elect of God" - The word "elect" means to select or choose.

Out of the billions of people that inhabit this globe, to think that God has selected you to be the Bride of His Son! (Eph. 5).

God took the initiative and chose you (Jn. 6:37, 39, 44, 65). You then responded to His invitation by believing, and thereby became the "elect of God." God's selection of us demands our best wardrobe, our best dress.

Dress up for Someone who has sanctified you!

"Holy" = to be set apart (sanctified; made a saint) (Eph. 4:24 - "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness").

How a Christian "looks" spiritually ought to reflect his God-given purity. You are a saint! Dress like one!

Dress up for Someone who loves you!

"Beloved" - a perfect, passive participle. It is God who has loved us in ages past, and in the moments present. His love for us demands our best dress for Him (I Jn. 4)

ILLUS: how young couples who are "in love" dress to please each other).

II. WHAT Spiritual Virtues Must We "Put On"? (v. 12b-14)

Characteristics of these virtues (v. 12-14):

--They all stem from inside a person

--They all relate to others

--They all display a velvet-like softness

A. Our Internal Virtue (v. 12b)

1. "Bowels of mercies" (inner compassion)

   "Bowels of mercies" = inner compassion; a heart-felt, emotional yearning for the well-being of someone else.

   It describes one who has pity because of the ills and difficulties of others.

   "Compassion" - describes the sympathy one feels for the loss, pain, frustration, problems of others.

   EXAMPLES of compassion:
   --David for Absalom (II Sam. 18:33 - "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!").

   --Jeremiah for Israel (Jer. 9:1 - "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!").

   --Jesus for Jerusalem (Mt. 23:37 - "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!").

   --Paul for Christians (Acts 20:19 - "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews")

2. "Kindness"

"Kindness" = kindness is "the friendly and helpful spirit which seeks to meet the needs of others through kind deeds" (Reinecker, p. 580).

"Kindness" - an attribute that was characteristic of Christ's ministry. He went about "doing good."

Kindness is compassion put into action.

It is genuine "goodness".

"He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Lk. 6:36).

3. "Humbleness of mind"

Humility was not popular int he pagan world of Paul's day. The Greeks & Romans admired pride and domination (cp. Wiersbe, p. 114).

"Humbleness of mind" = lowliness in one's thoughts about himself.

NOTE: true humility cannot be measured by how one looks (externally) but by how one thinks in his mind.

Phil. 2:3 - "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."

Rom. 12:3 - "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

4. "Meekness" (gentleness)

"Meekness" - "Not weakness, but strength (power) under control."

"This word was used to describe a soothing wind, a healing medicine, and a colt that had been broken. In each instance, there is power: a wind can become a storm; too much medicine can kill; a horse can break loose. But this power is under control." (Wiersbe, p. 114)
(a fruit of the Spirit - Ga. 5:22)

The word describes someone who is gentle in dealing with others.

Firmness does not necessitate harshness. One can be firm yet gentle.

This word is often connected with "humbleness" (EX: Eph. 4:2; Zeph. 3:12).

Before one can express a gentleness in dealing with others, he must first of all have an inner humility.

Those who are proud are the harshest, meanest, loudest, most vicious people you will ever meet!

Those who deserve "gentleness" the least, need it the most!

Ex: those who err (Gal. 6:1)
Ex: those who oppose themselves with sin (II Tim. 2:24-25)

This feature is what made Moses the greatest human leader to ever live (Num. 12:3).

And this feature is what makes Christ such a wonderful Savior (Mt. 11:28-30 - "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light").

NOTE: Before God's Word can ever penetrate your heart, you must have this virtue! (Ja. 1:21).

5. "Long-suffering" (patience)

"Long-suffering" = patience; lit. the ability to put up with much heat without blowing your top! (if you want to be "cool" - be patient! For patience means to stay cool under the irritable heat of other's sin and foolishness).

God's long-suffering toward us (II Pet. 3:9) should motivate us to be likewise toward others.

Your patience is tested every day.

Those who test our patience (examples):

--Children
--Old people
--Those who are spiritually immature (or slow in growing)
--Our spouse

B. Our External Virtue (v. 13)

1. Forbearing one another

The participles of verse 13 ("forbearing" & "forgiving") describe the manner or means by which we exhibit the virtues of v. 12.

How do I express my compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience in a practical way?

ANSWER: By forbearing and forgiving others.

"Forbearing" - to bear with; to endure; to have an ability to put up with someone. When you can bear up the burdened (Gal. 6:1-2) and endure the troublesome, and put up with the problem makers, you have been dressed for success in your life.

"Forbearing" - Everyone of us is guilty of some weakness that needs mending, some unattractive character train that needs to be straightened out, some failure that needs to be over-looked, some bad habit that needs to be corrected.

2. Forgiving one another

"One another" - note the reciprocal nature of the forbearance and forgiveness. it's a two-way street; it's not merely others doing it to you, but you to them.

Before you get bitter because of someone not doing something for you, ask yourself, "What am I doing for them?!"

"If any man" - "forgiveness" is to be the dress for every child of God!

"Quarrel" - to find fault with someone; to have a cause for complaint; to have a reason to blame someone for doing something you felt he/she should not have done or for not doing something you felt he/she should have done.

Our pattern for forgiveness is not man, but the Lord! (Eph. 4:32 - "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you").

"God's ultimate purpose for allowing irritations and offense to occur in our lives is to give us opportunity to become more like His Son Jesus Christ."

How did Christ forgive us?

a. Christ graciously forgave us

The word "forgave" means to bestow grace upon someone. It not merely describes the negative aspect of removing our guilt and condemnation, but it depicts the positive aspect of replacing our death sentence with the gift of eternal life.

When our forgiveness is not accompanied by giving and doing good and being kind to the one we forgave, we are not forgiving the way Christ forgave us.

b. Christ impartially forgave us (He indiscriminately forgave us. Note the phrase: "against any" v. 13)

Christ forgives all who come to Him, regardless of rank, race, or riches (Ja. 2:5) (I Jn. 2:2; I Tim. 2:4, 6; Is. 53:6).

When we forgive only particular people, we are not forgiving the way Christ forgave us.

c. Christ totally forgave us.

All our sin, despite its enormity, ugliness, shame, etc., has been forgiven us.

When we forgive some sins that someone commits, but not any and every sin, then we are not forgiving the way Christ forgave us.

"And if he trespass again thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him" (Lk. 17:4).

d. Christ eternally forgave us.

Our sin is forever cleared from the record once and for all time. it will no longer be held against us; it will never be brought up again.

If it were to be brought up, we would be condemned for it (Explain the difference between the Judgment Seat of Christ [I Cor. 3; II Cor. 5:10] and the Great White Throne Judgment - Rev. 20:10-15).

If your forgiveness is only momentary and temporary, you have not forgiven the way Christ has forgiven you.

When we do not forgive, we will not be forgiven (Mt. 6:14-15).

C. Our <u>Supreme</u> Virtue (v. 14)

"Above all" = lit. upon (epi) all; on top of all; over all the other clothing, put on as an outer robe or as an overcoat, the prime virtue of agape love (I Cor. 13).

The phrase "above all" shows the <u>supremacy</u> of love (it is the highest of relational virtues).

(I Cor. 13; I Pet. 4:8 - "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.")

"Put on <u>charity</u>" - lit. <u>the</u> charity; pointing to a particular or <u>specific</u> love (the love of God).

No Christian is dressed for success without the garment of love.

Love makes all the other virtues easy to put on. Without love, forbearance is torture! Without love, forgiveness is impossible!

Love fulfills the Law (Rom. 13:8-10).

"The bond of perfectness" - love is the outer-garment that holds all the virtues underneath in place.

Or in other words: Love is the bond that cements every other virtue into your life, thus making you perfect (complete or mature).

Love is the thread that sews (knits) every other desirable train to your personality.

CONCLUSION:

"When God Controls Your Heart"

Colossians 3:15-17

9/25/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***Your heart must be under the control of your Lord Jesus Christ!**

3 Influences that must control your heart:

I. The <u>PEACE</u> of Christ (v. 15)

II. The <u>WORD</u> of Christ (v. 16)

III. The <u>NAME</u> of Christ (v. 17)

"When God Controls Your Heart"

Colossians 3:15-17
9/25/2016

INTRODUCTION:

Examples of people out of control of their lives:

No control of their: emotions - tempers - thoughts - words - actions

*Reason for the above: Their heart is out of control.

That which is in your heart will either defile you (Mt. 12:35; 15:18) or honor you.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life (Prov. 4:23) (i.e. out of your heart flows what you think, feel, and do in life).

***Your heart must be under the control of your Lord Jesus Christ!**

3 Influences that must control your heart:

I. The PEACE of Christ (v. 15)

"Let the peace . . . rule" - present tense imperative (all the imperatives in vv 15-17 are present), calling for continual action.

(Not a one-time, occasional, or sporadic command; but a pattern of life.)

"Rule" = lit. to act as a referee, umpire, or arbitrator. It is the peace of God (Christ) that is to settle the differences that you have with others. It is the peace of God that is to call the decisions and control your emotions ("heart") toward others.

How we relate and respond to others is a reflection of what controls our hearts.

--If hatred rules in your heart, your response toward others will be viciousness or violence
--If envy or jealousy rules . . . defaming or stealing

--If lust . . . sexual impurity

--If pride . . . boasting

--If anger . . . evil words and actions

Whatever is in your heart determines the choices and decisions you make.

If the umpire who lives in you is peace, the "calls" (decisions) you make will be blessed.

Whenever you lose your inner peace (you don't "have peace" about something), you can know it is not God's will for you.

"In your hearts" - your "heart" is that part of you that provokes your will into action.

The heart, being the core of your being, is that part of you that takes in information (from the mind) and embraces it (or accepts it) and then responds to it.

If God's peace (the calmness and security that grips your soul because of salvation) is "calling the shots" in your heart, the result which will flow out of your life will be the mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, and love described in vv. 12-14.

Why is this exhortation given? Because too often some person arises with the church who is . . .

--cantankerous and divisive
--critical and judgmental
--murmuring and grumbling
--gossiping and spreading rumors

(Preacher's Outline, Vol. 9, p. 413)

When Christ's peace rules your heart, nothing will offend you (Ps. 119:165 - "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.") nor will anything alarm (upset) you (Is. 26:3 - "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.").

"To the which" = into which peace God called you. When God called you unto Christ (for salvation), He also called you unto peace!

One of the most noticeable differences (changes) that Christ makes in the life of a saved sinner, is that He produces peace. He actually imparts His peace - John 14:27 - "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Peace not only with God (Rom. 5:1), whereby He is no longer our enemy, but also peace with others (See Eph. 2:13-18).

God commands us to "seek peace and ensue (pursue) it" (I Pet. 3:11).

*SEE James 3:14-18

Is. 32:17 - "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

Peace is God's secret to unity of the brethren.

The "one body" describes the oneness of believers regardless of the nationality, culture types, or social status in life (v. 11)

Too many times this poem is a sad reality:

"To dwell above with saints we love,
Oh, that will be glory!
But to dwell below with saints we know,
Well, that's another story."

"And be ye thankful" - we should continually be thankful for the peace of God, and the unity it brings.

Be thankful for the "body" (the local church).

II. The WORD of Christ (v. 16)

"The Word of Christ" - the inscripturated Word ("logos") which was written by Christ and about Christ!

"The Word of Christ" - most often this phrase occurs in Scripture as "the Word of God" (cp. I Thes. 1:8, 2:13, 4:15); however, to support the emphasis of the book of Colossians (which is Christ!), and to identify Christ as God (divine), Paul says "The Word of Christ."

"Dwell in you" - ["en" (in") + "oikeo" (house)]

God is commanding us to let Christ's Word continually live in us; to take up its residence; to be at home in our lives.

"Richly" = abundantly, totally, extensively. Christ's Word is to occupy every room of our lives; it is to fill every closet of our lives; it is to plaster every wall of our lives; and permeate every space of our lives.

No area of our being is to be void (empty) of Christ's Word.

--Intellect - It is to fill our minds
--Emotion - It is to control our emotions
--Will - It is to influence our choices

The believer is not to be satisfied with just a "meager visit" by the Word of Christ, but he is to "lay up" God's Word in his heart (Dt. 11:18), he is to "hide" God's Word in his heart (Ps. 119:11); & Christ's Word is to "abide" in his heart (Jn. 15:7).

"In all wisdom" - wisdom is the word - put into action; into daily life; into life's situations, circumstances, and problems.

No area of our life (whether our relationships, our responsibilities, our recreations) can afford to be missing the wisdom that comes from the Word!

But how can the Word inhabit our lives to a greater extent? How can it stay in our hearts and minds and not slip through the cracks of our depraved nature?

The 3 participles of verse 16 give the answer:

1. Teaching
2. Admonishing
3. Singing

The NIV translates verse 16 most accurately: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in your richly as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."

The A.V. tends to place all of the emphasis on music as the key to instilling God's Word in your life. However, a closer look at the Greek text substantiates the fact that there are 3 keys to filling one's life with the Word. (Col. 1:28 also reveals Paul's use of the participles).

"Teaching" - to instill God's principles into the life of a person (to indoctrinate).

The early Church depended on the public teaching even to a greater extent than we do today. Reason: Not everyone had a Bible. Very few did.

The pastor's job is to <u>teach</u> (Eph. 4:11 - "pastors-teachers"; II Tim. 4:2 - "preach the Word...with doctrine"; I Tim. 4:16 - "Take heed...unto the doctrine").

By so doing he is <u>feeding</u> God's sheep (I Pet. 5:2; Jn. 21:16).

"Admonishing" - lit. to <u>put in the mind</u>; to confront the thinking of someone; to exhort and remind.

Whereas "teaching" involves giving principles, "admonition: involves giving application (encouraging obedience to those principles)

Balanced preaching will include both teaching and admonition; both instruction and exhortation; both meat and motivation; both explanation and application.

"One another" - reveals how every Christian (whether pastor or layman) needs to be challenged.

"Singing" - Singing is both the means to evidence of the Spirit's fullness (Eph. 5:18-19).

Music has a way of permanently cementing a principle or truth into our hearts.

"Psalms" - the psalms set to music
"Hymns" - praises to God
"Spiritual songs" - two ideas:
1) Songs that the <u>Holy Spirit</u> would approve of
2) Songs that involve a <u>heavenly</u> (spiritual) <u>message</u> (not humanistic lyrics)

"With grace" = with gracefulness, thankfulness (songs of appreciate; hymns that praise and bless God; lyrics that extol and give credit where credit is due).

"In your hearts" - a song is an expression of your heart. The type of music you listen to or sing reveals what is in your heart.

"To the Lord" - our songs are to be aimed at God, sung to Him.

In contrast, the world's songs ("love songs") usually involve a man singing to a woman or a woman to a man.

The more God-centered a song is, the better it is!

God is the One who has put a new song in our hearts (Ps. 40:3).

III. The NAME of Christ (v. 17)

"Whatsoever ye do" - no matter what you might do, practice, attempt, etc. Nothing excluded.

"In word or deed" - whether a spoken word or an acted work

All that man does can basically summed up by 3 words:

1) Think (internal)
2) Say (external)
3) Do (external)

What you say and do are a result of what you think. Therefore, before one can speak right or do right, he must think right (only as God's peace and Word (v. 15-16) control your thoughts, can you speak and do right).

"Do all in the name" - the phrase "in the name" basically means to say or do something on behalf of Christ. (Ex: prayer - "in the name of" means to ask for those things which Christ would want you to ask for; to request on behalf of Him, His will, His glory).

A name often refers to authority. A man's name signed to a check authorizes the withdrawal of money from the bank. The president's name signed to a bill makes it into a law (Wiersbe, p. 120).

In the same way, to do something in the name of Jesus means to do it with His authority and backing (EX: the performance of prophesying, casting out devils, and doing wonderful works in His name - Mt. 7:22).

If Jesus would not authorize or put His "stamp of approval" on something we say or do, then we should not say or do it!

Simply stated, we must say or do nothing that dishonors Christ. Whenever we speak, our words should be those that would not embarrass us if Christ was listening; whenever we do something, our actions should be those that would not cause us to stop, if Christ saw us.

*For indeed, our omniscient Lord does hear and see all that we say and do.

To speak "in the name of Jesus" - means that our every word should be for the glory of Jesus.

To do a deed "in the name of Jesus" means that our every action should be for His glory (Col. 3:23; I Cor. 10:31).

Follow in His steps, ask yourself, "What would Jesus do?" (I Pet. 2:21).

"Giving thanks" - if you can thank God for it, then it is most likely okay for you to say it or do it.

Ask yourself, can I thank God for what I am about to say? Can I thank God for what I am about to do? (EX: Eating - I Tim. 4:4).

CONCLUSION:

“God’s Formula for a Blessed Christian Family”

Colossians 3:18-21
10/30/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***Follow God's secret (formula, prescription) to have the most "perfect" family possible in this life!**

4 Key Formulas for a fulfilled, united, and successful family:
(Note: All four must be present)

I. The Wife's SUBMISSION (v. 18)

II. The Husband's LOVE (v. 19)

III. The Child's OBEDIENCE (v. 20)

IV. The Father's ENCOURAGEMENT (v. 21)

“God’s Formula for a Blessed Christian Family”

Colossians 3:18-21
10/02/2016

INTRODUCTION:

We all have imaginations of what the perfect family should be.

Any society is only as strong as the families that make it up.

As the family goes, so goes the country.

To the degree a home is as God designed it to be, is the degree to which a family is blessed.

When families are not governed by God's principles, the society languishes and travails in pain, sorrow, and frustration.

Henry Ford and the Model T (No one knows more about the design than the designer; God knows all about marriage because He created marriage. And He knows how to fix broken marriages) In 1 Peter 3, God informs us as to HOW TO WIN THE HEART OF YOUR SPOUSE.

ILLUS: The great effort put into winning the heart of a boyfriend or girlfriend
(there are words of kindness; tokens of affection (flowers, notes); Expressions of grace (gifts); quality & quantity of time spent together; An eager willingness to overlook trivial differences; A desire to grant forgiveness when needed)

Sad to say, this effort diminishes or dies off after marriage.

If what I say today seems "out of date," offensive, contrary, and unbelievable-- it is because you have let the world brainwash you with its anti-family, anti-Bible, anti-God philosophies.

NOTE: The following injunctions are impossible to fulfill unless you are born again and have "put off" the old attitudes about living and have "put on" the new (3:8-13).

It is possible only after your life is ruled by Christ's peace (v. 15), indwelt by Christ's Word (v. 16), and submitted to Christ's authority (v. 17),

To be brief - the Spirit's fullness is the prerequisite (cp. Eph. 5:18ff).

In 4 brief sentences God unfolds the secret to a fulfilled, contented home.

The basic, foundational principles to family unity, happiness, and prosperity are found in Colossians 3:18-21.

***Follow God's secret (formula, prescription) to have the most "perfect" family possible in this life!**

4 Key Formulas for a fulfilled, united, and successful family:
(Note: All four must be present)

I. The Wife's SUBMISSION (v. 18)

All of life is structured around a "chain of responsibility" (cp. Mt. 8:10).

Three basic divinely established institutions to provide structure (order) and safety (protection) to society:

1) The Home (I Cor. 7:2ff; Eph. 5:22-6:4)

2) The Government (Rom. 13:2)

3) The Church (Heb. 13:7, 17, 24)

These institutions involve submission and authority.

"Submit" - hupotasso - to place yourself under someone's authority.

This word is a military term, which means to rank yourself under. To take your place under the headship and leadership of your husband (I Cor. 11:3).

Submission does not refer to the wife as being inferior in essence, but simply as have a different role or function. (EX: the Father is the Head of Christ [I Cor. 11:3], but in essence is not superior but equal [Phil. 2:6; Jn. 10:30]).

Submission is misunderstood today.
God ordained that Husbands lovingly serve their wives (by providing for them, protecting them, directing them). And wives are to let them. This is the essence of submission. Allow your husband to serve you in the role God gave him.

"Submit yourselves" - middle voice imperative. Meaning: Submission should be voluntary. Something the woman chooses to do herself. God never commands the husband to make his wife submit; forced submission is not submission.

To answer the question: How do I submit to my husband? - ask yourself this question, "How should the church submit to Christ?" (Eph. 5:22-24).

"As it is fit in the Lord" - "fit" = lit. to arrive up to; to come up to a higher level (the level Eve knew before the Fall); to reach a proper standard.

Submission is not degrading in the eyes of the Lord.

For a person who is "in the Lord," God has a higher dimension of living. Anything less than total and absolute submission is not fitting or proper for a Christian.

Submission should be a joy.

The only way for a believing wife to win an unsaved husband to Christ is by living a holy life and by obeying him (I Peter 3:1-6).

A rebellious wife is a witch! Reason: "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (I Sam. 15:23).

II. The Husband's LOVE (v. 19)

The word "love" is the Koine Greek word "agapao." This is a special love.

The love that husbands are to have toward their wives is:

1. A spiritual love - By this I mean it does not come naturally.

   It is a capacity that comes only from God. This love has its source only in God (I Jn. 4:7 - "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.")

   No unsaved man has the capacity (ability) to have such a love.

2. Unconditional love - The kind of love God expects the husband to have is not dependent upon the worthiness of the wife. This love, as ultimately exemplified by God, is a love that gives even when the recipient of that love is an unworthy, evil wretch (Rom. 5:8).

   There are "no strings attached" to agape love. It's not, "I will love her if she . . . retains her youthful figure, cooks like Betty Crocker, cleans like the world's greatest custodian; hugs and kisses like she did on your honeymoon, etc. etc."

   NOTE: Your motive for loving your wife is obedience and love for God! Not the attitude changes it may bring in your spouse, nor for any other immediate reward you may be hoping for. if your motive is what you can get, then you will tend to love as long as you are getting the desired results. Your love will be fickle, on & off, conditioned by selfish motives.

3. Volitional love (a willing love) - a choice; a decision; an act of the will.

   This kind of love is possible even toward an enemy (Mt. 5:44), because it is not based upon a feeling that you conjure up about a person, but rather it is based upon a knowledge that a person (whoever it is) is made in the "image of God" and therefore is worthy of the respect, honor, dignity, and benevolence you show.

   "Love" - not a mere emotional feeling, but does not exclude feeling either. It means to feel for someone (to empathize) and thereby be motivated to respond to meet their needs.

4. Continual love - the present tense imperative emphasizes the constant year by year, day by day, minute by minute nature of the love. For someone to say, "I don't love her anymore" is to say "I do not obey God anymore."

5. Gracious love - it's a love that gives (Jn. 3:16; hence it is often translated "charity" - I Cor. 13); and forgives (I Pet. 4:8).

Basically, to answer the question "How should I love my wife?" -ask yourself another question: "How does Christ love His Church?" (Eph. 5:25-30).

You love your wife by:
Providing for her (financially, etc.)
Talking to her (communicating)
Listening to her
Protecting her (spiritually & physically)

"Be not bitter against them" - Do not allow yourself to become bitter.

Evidently the reason why God added this phrase, is because He knows that this is a tendency in marriages.

The word "bitter" is the opposite of being sweet (cp. Ja. 3:11-14). Often used of bitter water (Rev. 8:11). To have a prolonged bad, irritable, sharp aftertaste remain in your mouth. Metaphorically, it then refers to being repulsed by something. To have an aversion to something.

To be "bitter" in a relationship is to be resentful and unforgiving. Therefore, whenever you think of her a "bad taste" comes to your consciousness. Such bitterness results in evil speaking (Rom. 3:14); hatred (Eph. 4:31); and many destroyed relationships (Heb. 12:15).

How do I know when I am not bitter? Answer: When you can pray for the well-being and blessing of your spouse.

III. The Child's <u>OBEDIENCE</u> (v. 20)

If a modern (contemporary) Bible was written, Colossians 3:20 would say: "Parents, obey your children, for this will keep them happy and bring peace to the home."

The Value of Children

1. Children are a gift from God.

Jacob said regarding his children: "The children which God hath graciously given thy servant" (Gen. 33:5)

He . . . "maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord" (Ps. 113:9)

Ruth 4:13 - "…Lord gave her (Ruth) conception, and she bare a son."

2. God uniquely forms and gifts each child.

a. Psalm 139:13-18 -

b. Jer. 1:5 - "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (cp. II Cor. 4:7)

3. God loves children and desires that they come to know Christ at an early age (Mt. 19:13-15)

Abortion De-values the Life of Children

The following biblical principles must be applied to the issue of abortion:

1. Children are a gift from God (Ps. 127:3)

2. Conception is an act of God (Ruth 4:13)

3. The unborn child is a distinct human life from conception

   a. The baby in the womb is alive (Ps. 51:5)
   b. The baby in the womb is a person (Ps. 139:13; Jer. 1:5)
   c. The baby in the womb is known by God (Ps. 139:13-15)
   d. The baby in the womb is developed by God (Ps. 94:9, 139:13-16)

4. To kill a baby while in the womb is murder! (Exod. 21:22-23)

a. Even in the cases of rape and incest, the unborn child should not be condemned to death because of the sin of the father (Ezek. 18:4, 20; cp. Deut. 24:16)

b. Taking life is the prerogative of God (Dt.32:39)

c. God hates hands that shed innocent blood (Prov. 6:17, 24:11-12)

d. Child sacrifice defiles a country (Lev.18:21)

e. God requires blood when blood is shed (Num. 35:33)

The Nature of Children

The Bible teaches that. . .

1. Mankind was originally created in the image and likeness of God.
Gen. 1:26a - "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"

2. Adam sinned against God and thereby died spiritually and adopted a sin nature.
". . . in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17).
"And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

3. Adam's descendants were reproduced in his likeness and image.

Gen. 5:3 - "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth."

Rom. 5:12 - "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

4. Each child is born with this sinful human nature.

Ps. 51:5 - "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."
Ps. 58:3 - "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."
Job 14:4 - "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."
Is. 48:8 - ". . . I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and was called a transgressor from the womb."

5. Because of inherited sinful human nature, each parent can expect the following traits in his/her children:

a. Each child is prone toward sin.

b. Each child is basically self-centered.

c. Each child must be trained and restrained.

1) Children cannot be left to themselves
(Prov. 29:15 - "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame")

2) Children must have their sinful tendencies controlled
(I Sam. 3:13 - "For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not")

The most cruel form of "child abuse" is to ignore your child's needs for self-control and to do nothing to help him/her learn how to restrain the sinful tendencies that seek to enslave him/her.

3) Children are most moldable when they are young
(Prov. 22:6 - "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it")

Our children are like arrows (Ps. 127:4) -- they must be pointed and launched in the right direction.

Our children are like wet cement - they take the impression of whatever you do to them.

Our children are like unhardened clay - pliable to the way you shape them.

Our children are like a tender twig - that we want to bend toward a certain direction. The twig "is to be bent with caution, not broken in the efforts of a rude and hasty zeal"
(Eadie, p. 262).

Due to a child's sin nature, good parents serve as God's tool to protect children from the direction their nature and immaturity would naturally lead them.

Who put the parents in charge?
God did.
God ordained parental authority as His means to serve, provide for, protect and direct children.

Parents have the responsibility to serve their children by providing for them, keeping them safe from harm, and providing guidance and leadership in their lives.

Authorities are in a sense God's "tools" He uses authorities as His "tools" to accomplish His will. The authority functions in a sense like a mediator.

It is sometimes necessary for authorities to utilize force to restrain rebellion and to protect those you are responsible for. For example, Government will use handcuffs and prison when necessary; A good church will use church discipline when necessary; and a good parent will use proper methods of child training including physical chastisement to restrain rebellion and to teach.

When it comes to a parents responsibility for their children, neither government, school, church or any nosey individual has authority over your children. God did not give children to the government, He gave them to you as parents. You as a parent are ultimately responsible. Now you can delegate responsibility, but you are the immediate authority in that child's life.

Without authority you have NO:

1. **Order** (no structure; no chain of command)
2. **Direction** (each does what is right in his/her own eyes; Note: children cannot govern themselves)
3. **Protection** (each is out for their own protection)

Children desperately need leadership (they will get it from someone; their peers, gangs, cults)

Children need leadership in areas of:

- Education (where and what)
- Friends
- Recreation and entertainment
- Diet and Rest

Don't "pass the buck" to the Christian school or church. It's your job to train your children.

Our nation is being systematically overrun with rebellion. Rebellion & disobedience from children is a mark of the "last days"

2 Timothy 3:2 "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy…"

When God judges a nation, rebellion & disobedience from children are a sign:

Romans 1:30 "…Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents"

The prophet Isaiah said to Israel (who were about to be judged by God)
"the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable….. children are their oppressors, and women rule over them." (Isaiah 3:5,12)

God's principles are for God's people. What is a Christian parent to expect from their children? How are Christian children to respond to their parents?
Colossians 3:20 has the answer.

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

Such obedience is to be:

1. **<u>Cheerful</u> -**

   "Obey" = hupokouo" - lit. to <u>listen</u> with a <u>submissive</u> heart. Hence, to <u>hear</u> what your parents say and <u>do</u> it. This word translated Obedience is to do what you are told whether you want to or not.

   (Attitude is just as important as action)

2. **<u>Continual</u>** (present imperative)

   Young men, as long as you are under their roof, you are obligated to obey them; young ladies, as long as you are under your parents' authority (until you get married), you are obligated to obey them.

   In I Cor. 7:37-38 and Num. 30:3-f – an unmarried woman is under the authority of her father until he gives her away in marriage.

3. **Respectful** - "your parents"

Respect their God-given position over you. Even if you are bigger than . . . smarter than . . . or stronger than. . . you are to obey them because they are your parents.

It may be that they have a character, career, or conduct that is not worthy of respect. However, you should still respect them for their position's sake. They are "your parents"

4. **Total** - "in all things" (KJV)

Obedience is not to be partial, but total (God does not qualify the obedience). However, the only exception is if your parents ask you to sin (to directly violate a Scriptural principle - cp. Acts 4:19-20, 5:29).

NOTE: God did not say "obey for this is popular" (II Tim. 3:2) or "for this is easy" (indeed it is often difficult) or "for they are worthy" (many are not).

Rather, He said, ***"for this is well pleasing."***

The reason for obedience is simple. It pleases God. It is right! (Eph. 6:1)

God commends the obedient, and condemns the disobedient. To be under the displeasure of God is a dreadful predicament.

A good life and a long life is promised to children who obey their parents (Eph. 6:2).

Parents: Do you want your children to please God? (and thereby be under His blessing?). Then expect nothing less than complete obedience from them. Your motive in expecting obedience should not be your own peace but their well-being.

Respect for parents is so serious that God told Moses: "He who strikes (physically disrespects) his father or his mother shall surely be put to death"; and "He who curses (verbal disrespect) his father or his mother shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 21:15, 17; cp. Lev. 20:9).

See: Ephesians 6:1-3 – God's Simple Commands for Children

Obey

See: Ephesians 6
CHRISTIAN CHILDREN MUST RESPECT THEIR PARENTS
- GOD'S WAY (v. 1-3)

To respect is to obey and honor and to obey and honor is to respect.

GOD REQUIRES RESPECTFUL ACTION (A child's duty is obedience) (v. 1)

"Obey" = implies a readiness to hear; a humble listening so as to do what you're told.

God told Saul: *"To obey is better than sacrifice"* (I Sam. 15:22).

Delayed obedience is disobedience.

Incomplete obedience is disobedience.
(Example: Doing something half way or in the wrong way - not according to the parents instructions)
Children should not be permitted to question why they should obey.

However, children may question what the command was (providing, he/she did not clearly hear or understand the request).

Also, children may ask permission to appeal the command.
That is, they may ask if they may say something in regards to the command given. If a child believes that the request of the parents is unreasonable he/she may with a humble spirit ask the parent who gave the request if he/she would reconsider. If the answer is no, the child should accept the decision as God's will for him/her.

"your parents"

A child is to respect based on the position of the parents, more than because of parent's personal character. EX: We submit to a police officer because of his position. We submit to our elders because of their position. We submit to our teacher because of his position.

The phrase ***"in the Lord"*** teaches three things:

It shows that the children being addressed are Christians.

It shows that the obedience is for the Lord's sake, to please the Lord.

If shows that the obedience is to model the same pattern as you would obey

the Lord.

Children are to obey their parents just as all believers are to obey the Lord. Why? Because parents are the authority, just as the Lord is your authority.

The only time you can disobey your parents is if they ask you to do something sinful (Our Lord would never ask this of His children).

"for this is right"

The reason to obey parents is brief and simple: "For this is right" (correct, just, righteous).

If a contemporary, modern, liberal Bible was written by man, Eph. 6:1 would say, "Parents, obey your children, for this will keep them happy and bring peace to the home" (Wiersbe, p. 150).

One problem - This is <u>not</u> right! Contrary to God's order in nature (even baby animals are taught to obey their parents).

<u>Honor</u>

GOD REQUIRES A <u>RESPECTFUL ATTITUDE</u> (The child's <u>disposition</u> is honor) (v. Ephesians 6:2-3)

"Honor" = to view as very <u>valuable, or precious</u>.

Today, far too many children treat their parents like garbage. No respect for those who brought them into this world, fed, clothed, and schooled them.

How do children show <u>honor</u>?

1) By obeying them without complaint
(Having the right attitude will produce right action)

2) By providing for parents (when they cannot)
(Mt. 15:3-6) (NOTE: Money is no substitute for love)
Note: The Bible teaches we ought to respect the aged:
(Lev.19:32; Job.12:12)

Never refer to your parents as “my old man” or “my old lady”
Children ought to address their elders with respect:
“Yes Sir” or “No Mam” “Mr. _____“ or “Mrs._____“

Even if they are not believers, they are your parents, and you owe them love and

respect.

God's Promises to children who honor their parents:

a. Such an attitude results in a <u>top quality</u> life - *"well with thee . . ."* (v. 3a)

Paul is quoting one of the 10 commandments (Ex. 20:12). This is the only one of the 10 that deals with the family. Why only one! Because if this command was kept, a child would learn the most important lesson of his life -respect for authority.
From this would flow respect for others, for leaders, and most of all for God!

"Well with thee" - they will stay out of things that shorten life and that take the real fun out of life!

2. Such an attitude results in a <u>long quantity</u> of life - *"live long . . ."* (v. 3b)

"This does not mean that everyone who died young dishonored his parents. Paul is stating a principle: When children obey their parents in the Lord, they will escape a good deal of sin and danger and thus avoid the things that could threaten or shorten their lives" (Wiersbe, p. 152).

God can mightily use young people who will respect your parents!

As a <u>boy</u>:
<u>Samuel</u> walked with God, <u>Josiah</u> became king and started a spiritual revival, <u>David</u> fought Goliath, <u>Daniel</u> stood up for God and would not eat the king's meat or drink wine.

Obedience is <u>good for you</u>!

It will not only provide a better and longer life, but it will also:

1) Teach you <u>patience</u> (to learn to trust and wait on God)

2) Equip you with <u>self-control</u>

3) Get you ready for a <u>career</u> that will demand respect for authority

4) Get you ready for <u>life</u>, which will not always be "fair" or "just"

5) You will reap in your children what you sowed as a child

IV. The Father's <u>ENCOURAGEMENT</u> (v. 21)

"Fathers" – Why does God address the father and not the mother? Do fathers tend to provoke their children to anger more than mothers do? Perhaps. Why didn't God say "Parents provoke not your children to anger…" After all He addressed the "Parents" in the prior verse (v.20).

Perhaps the primary reason for which God addresses the "fathers" shows the important leadership role a father has in the life of his child.

In Ephesians 6:4 Paul again admonishes the "father" by saying: "And, ye *fathers*, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."
Here, Paul expands upon the teaching/training role that a father has regarding his children.

1) Teaching children spiritual truth is primarily the father's responsibility."

Abraham was responsible to instruct his children and his household ("For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Gen. 18:19)

Joshua claimed this responsibility ("but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Josh. 24:15)

God held Eli responsible for failing to instruct and correct his sons ("For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." - I Sam. 3:13).

Solomon said in Proverbs 1:8 "My son, hear the instruction of thy father…"

In the N.T. the apostle Paul assumes that fathers know that it is their role to encourage and bear witness to the truth to their children: "As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children" (1 Thessalonians 2:11)

The writer of Hebrews said: If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the *(earthly)* father chasteneth not? (Hebrews 12:7)

"The Father to the children shall make known Thy truth." (Is. 38:19)

"I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.
For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" (Psalm 78:3-5)

When did God command the fathers to teach their children?

See: Deuteronomy 6:4-6

***God wants fathers to begin a legacy that you hand down to the next generation.**

How can you begin a new legacy (that upholds and preserves God's moral and spiritual principles for others to follow)?

1. Dad, Be All That You Should Be (v. 4-6)
(Let God light the torch in your own life!)

"Hear" - Heb. *shema* - This word begins the well-known "Shema" which encompassed v. 4-9 and set these verses apart as Judaism's basic confession of faith (their doctrinal statement in brief).

a. Let the Lord be the only God of your life (v. 4)

"Yahweh our Elohim is <u>one</u> Yahweh" - In a day of idolatry and polytheism, this sentence proclaims the exclusiveness and uniqueness of God.

Yahweh is the <u>one</u> and <u>only</u> Yahweh (monotheism).

b. Love the Lord with whole-hearted devotion (v. 5)

It's not enough to merely know God

theologically; we must love Him relationally.

According to Jesus, this is the first and greatest command in Scripture (Mk. 12:30).

"Thou shalt love" - The imperitival force shows that our love for God is not automatic emotion but a deliberate decision (volitional, act of the will, a choice). No half-hearted devotion will do.

HOW should we love God?
"Heart . . . soul . . . mind. . . strength" = Love Him with your whole being; with everything you have.
When we love God totally (with our whole being), He is:

a. The center of my affections *"heart"*
b. The center of my life *"soul"*
[c. The center of my thoughts] *"mind"* Mark 12:28
d. The center of my activity *"strength"*

c. Hide the Word of the Lord in your heart by memorizing it (v. 6)

"These words" - the command to love God, as well as the rest of Deuteronomy.

The only way to keep God's Word *"in our heart"* is to memorize it.

"In thine heart" - not in one of thine ears and out of the other -- but permanently stored away!

Deut. 6:5 - Half-hearted devotion is unacceptable. Verse 6 - Love must come from the inner self

It is only after personally appropriating truth, after internalizing it ourselves , that we can teach our children.

2. Dad, Pass On To Your Children What God Gave You (v. 7) (Pass on the torch to the succeeding generation! Deut. 29:29b)

Teaching is to be:

1) **<u>Repetitious</u>** - *"Diligently"* = from a Hebrew word which describes the activity of sharpening a metal object by repeated strokes of a sanding block. (Don't grow weary about repeating lessons. Remember how often God must teach us (many times the same lesson) over and over)

2) **<u>Specific</u> content** - *"Them"* = the "words" of verse 6. The word, law, or commands of God.

3) **<u>Informal</u>** - weave teaching into your normal everyday routine.

a. Simultaneous with other activity *(<u>when</u>- "sitting, walking, lying down")*

b. Different locations - *"house road, bed"* (God teaches us not only at church [formally] but also during work, home, etc.)

4) **<u>Continual</u>** -

a. At different times (day & night activities)

b. All the time (from morning to morning)

While a continual, informal teaching of our children is the real key to their spiritual knowledge and growth, a specific time set apart each day is also vitally important.

A **"Family Time"; "Family Devotions"; or "Family Altar"** should be:

1) <u>short</u>
2) <u>serious</u>
3) <u>interesting</u>

2) The fact that God addresses the "Fathers" shows headship and ultimate responsibility of the dad. The father sets the direction and a Godly wife supports the direction.

Such involvement of fathers in the life of children will be scarce in the last days. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Malachi 4:5-6)

See: **Ephesians 6:4 – "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."**

"Bring them up" - (Ektrepho) to feed; to provide nourishment (cp. Eph.5:29)

a. "Raise them in the nurture of the Lord"

"Nurture" (Paideia) = This word comes from the word: "Pais" which means child; and refers to the systematic training of children. Paideia specifically means to train a child by discipline; to correct; to chasten (I Cor. 11:32; II Cor. 6:9; I Tim. 1:20; Heb. 12:6f, 10; Rev. 3:19; Lk. 23:16, 22) (See the section of Notes dealing with "How to Discipline your child")

"When children are young, it is natural for parents to exercise maximum control. But, as a child grows older, the external controls should gradually be withdrawn. This withdrawal is possible only as he is progressively taught and demonstrates the willingness to control himself. It is important for a child to be trained before the parents lose their ability to control him." (Fugate, p.169)

When a child develops internal controls the parental external controls become less and less needed. A well trained child will understand the Parent's standards for acceptable behavior and the reasons behind those standards.

b. "Raise them in the admonition of the Lord" (v. 4c)

"Admonition" (Nouthesia) = lit. "to put into the mind; to

correct the thinking" (not merely factual information, but right attitudes and principles of behavior)

Parental admonition will involve:

1. Teaching your children Bible Principles.
2. Encouraging your child's positive character and behavior.
2. Verbally confronting your child's disobedience.
3. Lovingly rebuking such disobedience or sin.
4. Instructing the Child as to:
    - What is right
    - What is not right
    - How to make it right
    - How to keep it right

"Bring them up in the nurture and admonition **of <u>the Lord</u>**"

The phrase "of the Lord" has 3 obvious ideas:

1) Bring them up the same way God brings up His children.
2) Bring them up in the principles of the Lord; In His Word.
3) Bring them up by means of the power of His Holy Spirit to His glory and honor.

Colossians 3:21

"Provoke" - to <u>push</u> your children; or harshly <u>irritate</u> them; to <u>stir</u> them up in a bad sense

"Discouraged" (from "a thumeo") which literally means to <u>be without heat</u>.

The word describes a child who has lost heart, his spirit has been broken, his youthful zeal, zest, spunk is gone. Rather than obeying cheerfully, because of harsh or improper discipline the child goes about his task in a listless, moody, sullen frame of mind" (Lightfoot).

<u>Ways</u> Fathers (Parents) <u>provoke</u> their children to anger:

1. <u>Unbiblical</u> discipline

"Spare the rod, spoil the child" (Ben Franklin)

Biblical (proper) discipline is needed. Proverbs has much to say about it.

There is a right way to discipline.

Proverbs 29:15 - The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

a. **Harsh discipline** (unloving attitude; with anger/wrath)
"A child frequently irritated by over-severity or injustice, to which, nevertheless it must submit, acquires a spirit of sullen resignation, leading to despair." (Abbott, cited by Reinecker, p. 582).

One young girl said: “my father would use a cannon to kill a mosquito”

b. **Unbalanced discipline** (need both - rod and reproof - nurture and admonition)

c. **Abusive discipline (**uncontrolled or wrong mode and instrument)
A parent should never punch, pull the hair, ears etc. or kick a child.

d. **Inconsistent discipline** (Be consistent. A very important part of parenting is not to just do it when you feel like it.)

It’s confusing to children to be reprimanded on one occasion and completely overlooked for the same infraction on another occasion.

ILLUS: If the traffic laws or laws of nature changed every day, you'd be very frustrated and confused. So are our kids when we are inconsistent!!

*Never let someone else (with differing standards) raise your kids. Beware of permissive grandparents!

2. **Neglect** (making them feel unwanted, a bother, not worthy of your time; so they turn to drugs, alcohol, immorality, bad friends (gangs))

Example: David’s neglect of his son, Absalom

(Harry Chapin’s song in the 70’s – “Cats in the Cradle”)

3. **Favoritism** (Ex: Isaac favored Esau over Jacob; Rebekah preferred Jacob over Esau)
Treat all of your children equally.

4. **Discouragement** - "You never do anything right!" - A failure to commend and praise positive character.

Praise your child for his/her character (not his intelligence, or beauty, etc.). Praise your children for doing right (EX: "A" on a test, being honest, taking initiative to do something without being told, for doing an exceptional job). This will encourage them to continue to do right.

It takes seven praises to offset one criticism.

5. **Pressure to achieve** (nothing they do pleases you)

Our goal should be that God's will be done in our child's life. Not our will.
Too often a parent will pressure a child to succeed with a motive of stroking the parent's own ego.

6. **Unfaithful to promises** - You build up their hopes (by promising something), then dash them (through neglect, etc.)
God always keeps His word; We should keep ours.

7. **Hypocrisy** – (Play acting; pretending to be something you are not; You say one thing, but do another; "Your walk talks and your talk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks"

Children need to have fathers who are doers of God's will (not merely teachers of it).
We cannot be bad examples!

Paul wrote to Timothy:
Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

"Despise" - To think down upon; to under-rate; to think slightly of.

Some might think: "what does he know about God, spiritual matters, about fathering, etc. He's but a young man, inexperienced, etc.

“Youth” - not necessarily someone who is a teenager or pre-adolescent.

“In the ancient world a person between 30 and 40 years old could be considered young (Kelly). One Rabbi said that a person at 30 was fit for authority and at 40 he was fit for discernment (M, Aboth V, 21) (cited by Reinecker, p. 627).
Paul writes to Timothy, who is the pastor at Ephesus. He is not a boy, but a young man in charge of the spiritual leadership of this important area of Asia Minor. So Timothy must be somewhere between 25 and 35 years old (just about where most Dads are with young, impressionable children).

Being young is no excuse for a bad testimony, language (“word”), lifestyle (“conversation”), relationships (“love”), attitude (“spirit”), convictions (“faith”), morals (“purity”).

“Be thou an example” (present, middle, imperative - ginou from ginomai) - Become thou. Regardless of your past, start setting a good example. Perhaps you have been a failure in your past; this word points to a new beginning.

The present tense implies a continual (lifelong) example.

The middle voice implies choice and determination (an act of the will) that you will decide to be exemplary.

“Example” - tupos from which we translate “type.”

Tupos primarily denoted "a blow" (from a root tup--, seen also in tupto, "to strike"), hence,
(a) an impression, the mark of a "blow," <John 20:25>;
(b) the "impress" of a seal, the stamp made by a die, a figure, image, <Acts 7:43>;
(c) a "form" or mold, <Rom. 6:17> (see RV);
(d) the sense or substance of a letter, <Acts 23:25>;
(e) "an ensample," pattern, <Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5>, "pattern"; in an ethical sense, <1 Cor. 10:6; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thes. 1:7; 2 Thes. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12>,
(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)
(Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Men, we need to be . . .

--a mold worth duplicating.
--a pattern worth copying
--a model worth imitating

Example . . .

1) Example plays an important part in the formation of character; and its influence is felt more than that of precept.

"Children possess an imitative disposition. They look up to their parents as the pattern or model of their character, and conclude what they do is right and worthy of their imitation." (Rev. S. Phillips, 1858, The Christian Home, cited in Teaching and Learning America's Christian History, the Principle Approach, by Rosalie J. Slater).

2) Example may be good or bad (it is never neutral).

3) Example is teaching by action
Thus, the child is a living commentary upon his/her home and his/her parents. The child is the moral reproduction of the parent (whatever you sow will be reaped).

4) Example instructs a child before he/she can learn to speak and understand words (Phillips)

(Children from birth are like "walking camcorders" recording everything they see visually and audibly in your life and home)

* Dad, your family needs you to be an example worth following!

1. Be an example worth copying in your LANGUAGE
(Can your children copy how you TALK?)

We sin with our tongue when we:

--gossip
--lie
--use foul language (curse words, vulgarity)
--speak idle talk (vanity)
--sing the devil's song (beware of the music you hear and sing)
--tear others down

"In word" - in speech; refers here to what you say and how you say it.
The content of your words and the manner in which you say them.

Inflection, tone, pitch, etc., communicate more than the actual words you say!

How did you talk to your wife and children on the way to church this morning?

Do your words hurt or help? Build up or tear down? Edify or mortify?

If walls had ears (and could gossip), what would the walls of your home say you said?

Eph. 4:29 - Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

2. Be an example worth copying in your LIFESTYLE
(Can your children copy how you ACT?)

"Conversation" - An old English word which meant behavior, conduct, manner of living, or lifestyle.

What behavioral traits do your children see in you?

Do they see . . .

--laziness
--materialism
--gluttony
--self-centeredness

"Your walk talks and your talk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks."

What you do speaks so loudly that (if your kids see inconsistency in you), they will not hear what you say!

Is your home a haven or rest or a war zone? (a scene of fighting, arguing, clamoring – each selfishly out for their own interests)

God would never ask us to be something that He is not.

We should never be hypocrites and command something of our children that we don't do. If you do, your children may comply (they will listen to you) until they become teenagers.

Don't set double standards.

If you impress upon your sons the need for diligence, truthfulness, respect for the "golden rule" but are a quitter (jobs, serving Christ, etc.), boast of shady business conquest, or boast of your own getting even with others – don't be shocked at the children you produce!

3. Be an example worth copying in your RELATIONSHIPS
(Can your children copy how you LOVE?)

What is your relationship to your family?

Love is measured by the time and attention you give to them; by the unselfish sacrifice you make for their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being

4. Be an example worth copying in your ATTITUDE
(Can your children copy your ZEAL FOR GOD?)

"In Spirit" - (T.R. & KJV) - to be an example "in Spirit") means to have a zest (zeal) for spiritual things; to have an enthusiastic attitude about God and the things of God.

This person is not dull, drab, or depressed, but is excited about Christ and the new and abundant life He gives.

Mom and Dad set the mood for the home. A child's display of emotions is often a reflection of the frustration he/she feels over the mood of his parents.

"Let your light so shine before your children..."

Note: In setting the example, this does not mean that you never admit the Wrong you commit. You must. Parents need to be real and transparent in front of their children. They need to see that you make mistakes, seek forgiveness when needed, admit fault.

5. Be an example worth copying in your CONVICTIONS
(Can your children copy what you BELIEVE?)

A conviction is a belief you would be willing to die for.

Do you have “Sunday morning only” convictions?
Sooner or later, fathers, your children will need to understand what motivates our speech, conduct, and love. What drives our outward actions? What fuels our behavior? It must be faith.

Does your faith drive you to action? Does it influence your behavior?

If it produces no works, then it is surely dead and useless (you really don’t believe).

--when was the last time your son or daughter saw you on your knees?

--when was the last time your children witnessed you reading God’s Word? (you don’t do it to be seen by them, but if you do walk with God within your house, they will see it).

ILLUS: A child said, "Dad, what is God like?" The reply: "I don't know - go ask your mother."

No dad knows all the answers, but he should know the elementary doctrines of the Christian faith - for we are responsible to God to teach our children!

A family without a father is like a teach without a coach; like a plane without a pilot; like a ship without a navigator.

6. Be an example worth copying in your HOLINESS
(Can your children copy your MORALITY?)

"Purity" - Holiness or sanctity. The word refers to purity of act and thought (Lock).

The word covers not only chastity in matters of sex, but also the innocent and integrity of heart (cp. II Cor. 6:6) (Kelly) (cited by Reinecker, p. 627)

You can't say "Son, keep yourself pure . . . remain a virgin, etc." when you are slouched down on your couch watching porn and sleaze on your TV set!

Your moral purity (or lack thereof) (to a degree) will be reaped in your children.

Are you the kind of person you would want your son to become?

Would you want your daughter to marry someone like you, Dad?

When you die, will you leave behind memories that point to God?

Will you leave your children a faith and example that will guide them when your voice speaks no more?

SEE POEM "To Any Daddy"

CONCLUSION:

You cannot withdraw blessings from your home until you deposit into it.

The Law of sowing and reaping applies (Galatians 6:7).

Whatever you invest into your relationship will determine what you get out of it.

MY RESOLUTION

I do solemnly resolve before God
to take full responsibility
for myself, my wife and my children.

I will love them, protect them, and serve them.

I will teach them the statutes of God
as the spiritual leader of my home.

I will be faithful to my wife, to love and honor her,
and be willing to lay down my life for her as Christ did for me.

I will teach my children to love God with all of their heart,
all of their mind, and all of their strength.

I will train them to honor authority and live responsibly.

I will set an example of faithfulness in my walk
with the Lord and in my service for Him.

I will work diligently to provide for the needs of my family.

I will walk in integrity as a man answerable to God.

I will seek to honor God, obey His Word, and do His will.

I recognize that I must rely exclusively upon
the grace and power of God to fulfill this resolution.
I submit to His strength and wisdom.

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

"A WORKING RELATIONSHIP"
Colossians 3:22-4:1

1/5/92

INTRODUCTION:

***Follow God's plan for employee/employer relationships!**

I. The Master (God) Commands the Servants (v. 22-25)

A. Be a submissive worker (v. 22a)

B. Be a sincere worker (v. 22b)

C. Be a spiritual worker (v. 23)

D. Be a serious worker (v. 24-25)

3 motivations to serious (conscientious) workmanship:

1. The Reward (v. 24a)
2. The Lord (v. 24b)
3. The Judgment (v. 25)

II. The Master (God) Commands the Masters (4:1)

A. Be a just boss (v. 1a)

B. Be a fair boss (v. 1b)

C. Beware boss! (v. 1c)

CONCLUSION:

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"A WORKING RELATIONSHIP"
Colossians 3:22-4:1

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INTRODUCTION:

From NY to LA, from Wall Street to Main Street, work dominates the landscape of modern life.

It is said that the average man spends 40-60 % of his waking hours on the job.

However, many people are afraid to work. Just thinking about it can ruin their whole day. A bumper sticker read: "The worst day of fishing is better than the best day of work"

Do you work hard or hardly work?

Someone said: "Salt from the sweat of work preserves the soul."

In the N.T. times, a man was either "bond (a servant) or free" (Gal. 3:28).

In the days of the Romans, approximately 60 % of the people were servants to someone.

The N.T. does not condemn the servant/master relationship (EX: the book of Philemon; I Cor. 7:21ff), but it does regulate it.

The O.T. Law concerning servitude (SEE: Exodus 21:1-11; Leviticus 25:39-55)

How did one become a servant?

1. By poverty - an impoverished man would often sell himself to an owner whom he would serve (Lev. 25:39-40)

2. By theft - The Law required a thief to pay 2 - 5 times the amount he stole. If he could not repay it, he then would be sold as a slave and thereby repay the debt (Exod. 22:1-4)

3. By debt - If someone owed someone money, but did not have the cash, he could sell one of his servants to pay the debt (Lev. 25:39; Amos 2:6; 8:6).

   The average price for a servant was about thirty shekels (Exod. 21:32)

4. By birth - the slave's children also automatically became the servants of the master (Exod. 21:4; Gen. 14:14; 17:12; Eccl. 2:7)

5. By war - prisoners of war (Num. 31:26; Lev. 25:44, 45)

God protected the slaves from injustice; harsh and inhumane treatment (Lev. 24:17, 22; Exod. 21:20, 26, 27).

For example, the penalty for stealing or making merchandise of a human being was death (Deut. 24:7; Ex. 21:16).

A slave who belonged to a Hebrew had to be circumcised (Gen. 17:12) and enjoyed the privileges of security, freedom to worship, partaking in religious festivals, and rest on the

Sabbath (Ex. 12:44, 20:11; Dt. 5:14, 12:12, 16:11).

A male Hebrew slave could be free from duty:

1) If a relative redeemed him

2) Upon the seventh year of service (the Year of Jubilee)

However, if a servant didn't want to be free because of his love for his master, he could voluntarily become a bondslave for life (Exod. 21:6; Deut. 15:17). The boring of the ear was a token of devoted servitude.

For information about slavery in Bible lands, see: Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 998-999

Though the context here in Colos. 3 concerns 1st century slaves and their masters, the principles apply to today's employee and employer; workman and supervisor; laborer and management.

Just as the Lord succinctly gave the secrets to a successful home in 3:18-21, He now gives the secrets to successful labor/manager relations.

This passage also points out in "no uncertain terms that the answer to the basic problems of the workplace is spiritual, not economic" (NOTE: Every verse makes a reference to God or an act of God).

Several truths about work:

1. Work was established by God before the fall of Adam, but it was complicated

after (Gen. 2:15; 3:17-19)

2. Work is God's appointed way for man to make a living and provide for his needs (Prov. 6:6-11, 10:4, 13:4, 11; I Th. 4:11; II Th. 3:6-12)

3. Work is basically a service we perform for others. Every worker is a servant.

Life is about serving others and meeting needs.

Through our jobs, we not only earn a livelihood and provide for ourselves and our families; but we also serve humanity through providing some needed product or service.

Secret to starting a successful business: find out a need and meet it.

***Follow God's plan for employee/employer relationships!**

I. The Master (God) Commands the Servants (v. 22-25)

A. Be a submissive worker (v. 22a)

"Your masters according to the flesh" = i.e. your physical or human master. Your earthly master, in contrast to your spiritual and heavenly master Jesus Christ (Mt. 6:24; 23:8-10)

To obey means to listen carefully to what you are told and to do exactly what you are told. Follow the instructions of your employer.

"In all things" - every job and expectation of our boss is to be cheerfully fulfilled.

The only exception to "obeying in all things" is if your employer's will conflicts with God's (EX: If your boss asked you to lie, cheat, steal, produce an evil object, neglect church due to overtime, etc., you must obey a Higher Authority).

"If a Christian servant had a believing master, that servant was not to take advantage of his master because they were brothers in the Lord" (Wiersbe, p. 131).

B. Be a sincere worker (v. 22b)

"Eyeservice" = to serve so as to satisfy the eyes of your employer.

Who is an "eyeservant?"

1. He is a hypocritical worker

   He works only when the boss is around; when the boss is looking

2. He is a deceitful worker

   His work is extremely pleasing. Not true quality on the non-visible details of the job.

   What's on top looks best; what's underneath is haphazardly done.

3. He is a slothful worker

   He is lazy (a form of selfishness); does not work diligently or with energy, except when the boss is present.

A "man pleaser" is characterized by two features:

1) He wears a mask on his face (perhaps even unconsciously).

   In an attempt to cover up for his poor workmanship, in an attempt to please his boss, he wears a false smile, says flattering works, and does special favors so as to be the employer's "pet."

2) He puts a limit on his work.

   He will perspire only so much; he will exert only so much energy;

he will move only so many muscles; he will work only so hard as to "get by," so as to please his boss (forgetting that he should work so as to please God).

An eternal condemnation is upon those who "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (Jn. 12:43).

Work as a "God pleaser" not a man pleaser!

No boss pleaser is a God pleaser, but every God pleaser is a boss pleaser.

The best, most honest, most diligent, most conscientious worker anyone could hire should be a genuine born-again Christian! Why? Because he has a higher authority to please (God) and a higher standard to reach! (God's standard of quality)

"In singleness of heart" = to have an undivided purpose or motive. To be sincere (not hypocritical) in your heart, working with the single motive of pleasing God.

"Fearing God" = to shudder (tremble - Eph. 6:6) at the thought of displeasing Him; to work with the knowledge that you are being watched by God and will be judged by Him.

A fear of God is the key to a successful life (Phil. 2:12; Acts 10:35; I Pet. 1:17; Ps. 25:12)

Why should a worker fear God?

1) He is your always present overseer (to watch your job)

2) He is your supply of needed wisdom (to do the job) Prov. 1:7; 9:10

3) He is your job security (to keep the job)

4) He is your pay roll (to reward your job)

C. Be a spiritual worker (v. 23)

"Whatsoever ye do" - any and every task or responsibility that you are given [Everything from sweeping floors to constructing skyscrapers; from digging ditches to building bridges; from washing dishes to managing restaurants; from manufacturing desks to sitting at them as a secretary, etc.]

Everyone -- whether printer or plumber, teacher or electrician, computer programmer or copier repairman, milkman or mailman . . . Do your job heartily!

"Do it" = work energetically, diligently

"Heartily" - lit. out of the soul. Don't just go through the motions mechanically; but do your job from the depths of your soul!

The reference to the "soul" supports the fact that God does not intend for there to be a distinction between the secular and spiritual for the Christian. Everything we do is spiritual! Why? Because everything is to be done from the soul unto God!

"As to the Lord" = work as if God was your boss; for indeed He is. NOTE: The reference to the LORD (kurios) is in contrast to your master (v. 22 - kurios). By serving your master, you are serving the Master. By serving a boss, you are serving the Boss!

When a worker understands that he ultimately works to please God, he will not only do what he is instructed to do and expected to do, but he will go the extra mile and do more!

EX: Joseph's faithfulness to Potiphor (Gen. 39:1ff).

D. Be a serious worker (v. 24-25)

3 motivations to serious (conscientious) workmanship:

1. The Reward (v. 24a)

"Knowing" = refers to a knowledge you have had in the past (beginning with salvation) and still do have in the present

"Of the Lord" = from the Lord

"Ye shall receive" - future tense; you will positively receive it!

"Inheritance" = this promise of a future inheritance was all the more special to a servant, "inasmuch as slaves could not be inheritors of an earthly possession" (Abbott, cited by Reinecker, p. 583).

Who gains the inheritance? - "All those who are sanctified" (made holy by God)

Acts 20:32 - "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

2. The Lord (v. 24b)

"Ye serve the Lord Christ" - by serving others, you actually serve Christ.

All work is a service of some kind.

Why should a Christian workman do his best? Because of who He represents -- Christ. Our testimony is at stake!

3. The Judgment (v. 25)

"Doeth wrong" - to act unrighteously (on the job)

Whereas this verse emphasizes the negative recompense, Eph. 6:8 emphasizes the positive recompense ("Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free")

Many workers do wrong on the job by:

--being lazy, slothful
--being careless
--being selfish
--being irresponsible
--being unproductive
--being dishonest
--cheating -- lying -- stealing

"Shall receive" - will carry off; will bear for one's self

God knows our works. One day their value will be revealed and rewarded (SEE: I Cor. 3:10-15; II Cor. 5:10).

A story is told of a man who was given a sum of money to build a house. The man, for selfish purposes, bought the cheapest materials and did an inferior job in building the house. After he completed the job, he was told that what he had built was now his own, as a gift from the man who employed him. He was rewarded according to what he deserved.

"There is no respect of persons" - there is no partiality; lit. no "receiving of the face" of a person; no favoritism; no biased judgment. When God judges, He will not reward based on external appearance nor play favorites (like man often does).

While one's "image" may mean a lot today, in Judgment day, God will see through the veneer and will judge irrespective to race,

wealth, social rank, or popularity, "success" etc. God will not be duped, bought off, buttered up, etc.

Your lowly job or humble profession now will not mean little reward in heaven.

Some of the most highly rewarded people in Heaven will be those who had the lowest of jobs while on earth, but were the most faithful, honest, hard-working etc.

Mt. 25:23 - "His lord sid unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

II. The Master (God) Commands the Masters (4:1)

4:1 balances out 3:22-24. Everyone is under authority!

Servants are to obey their authority (3:22). Now, masters are to give to their servants and thus obey their authority in heaven.

"Give" = to give in return for their service; to provide renumeration.

"Just and equal" = right and fair

The employer or manager is to give just and fair treatment in . . .

--work assignments
--expectations and demands
--promotions
--wages

Though we live in a sinful, greedy world of injustice and unfairness, a Godly

employer will give his employee:

A. Be a <u>just</u> boss (v. 1a)

Give an <u>honest</u> pay ("just"). Give what he is entitled to.

To withhold due pay from someone is sin!

Dt. 24:14-15 - "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall he sun go down upon it; for he is poor and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee."

Jer. 22:13 - "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his changers by wrong; that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work."

Cp. Lev. 19:13; Prov. 3:27-28; Mal. 3:5

B. Be a <u>fair</u> boss (v. 1b)

Give a <u>worthy</u> pay ("equal")

The word "equal" refers to a fair pay, a pay that <u>equals</u> the task and their faithfulness to it.

Give your employee what he/she deserves!

What is reasonable, appropriate, merited; according to qualification, quality, and quantity of work.

Jesus said: "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (Lk. 10:7; cp. Mt. 10:10)

I Tim. 5:17-18 - "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double

honor, especially thy who labor in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward."
Cp. I Cor. 9:14 - "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

C. Beware boss! (v. 1c)

What should motivate an employer to be "just and equal"?

Answer: His knowledge that he (as a master) also has a Master in Heaven!

Whatever you as a boss give your employees, your heavenly boss will bless you accordingly. The measure of your generosity will be measured to you again.

"You reap what you sow!" (Gal. 6:7)

When you take care of your employees, they will in return work hard and well and take care of you.

What is a major reason why some companies go bankrupt or out of business? Financial mismanagement (they often were not just and equal in renumerating their employees)

CONCLUSION:

"A LIFE THAT IMPACTS OTHERS"

Colossians 4:2-6
11/27/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***You can make a powerful, positive, and permanent <u>impact</u> on this world!**

3 Keys to influencing others for Heaven:

I. YOUR <u>PRAYERS</u> (v. 2-4)

Essential elements of prayer:

A. A spirit of <u>persistence</u> in prayer (v. 2a)

B. A spirit of <u>alertness</u> in prayer (v. 2b)

C. A spirit of <u>thankfulness</u> in prayer (v. 2c)

D. A spirit of <u>partnership</u> in prayer (v. 3-4)

1. Pray for <u>open doors</u> (v. 3)
   (Intercede for <u>opportunities</u> to witness)
2. Pray for <u>open eyes</u> (v. 4)
   (Intercede for <u>effective</u> witness)

II. YOUR <u>WALK</u> (v. 5)

A. Wise living is concerned about:
<u>Your Personal Testimony (Reputation)</u> (v. 5a)

B. Wise living is concerned about:
<u>Taking Advantage of Golden Opportunities</u> (v. 5b)

III. YOUR <u>TALK</u> (v. 6)

A. Always with <u>grace</u>

B. Seasoned with <u>salt</u>

"A LIFE THAT IMPACTS OTHERS"

Colossians 4:2-6
HRM – 6-11-2022

INTRODUCTION:

***You can make a powerful, positive, and permanent <u>impact</u> on this world!**

3 Keys to influencing others for Heaven:

I. YOUR _____ (v. 2-4)

Essential elements of prayer:

A. A spirit of _____ in prayer (v. 2a)

B. A spirit of _____ in prayer (v. 2b)

C. A spirit of _____ in prayer (v. 2c)

D. A spirit of _____ in prayer (v. 3-4)

1. Pray for <u>open</u>_____ (v. 3)
   (Intercede for <u>opportunities</u> to witness)
2. Pray for <u>open</u>_____ (v. 4)
   (Intercede for <u>effective</u> witness)

II. YOUR _____ (v. 5)

A. Wise living is concerned about:
<u>Your Personal Testimony (Reputation)</u> (v. 5a)

B. Wise living is concerned about:
<u>Taking Advantage of Golden Opportunities</u> (v. 5b)

III. YOUR _____ (v. 6)

A. Always with <u>grace</u>

B. Seasoned with <u>salt</u>

"A LIFE THAT IMPACTS OTHERS"

Colossians 4:2-6
11/27/2016

INTRODUCTION:

What did Moses, the Apostle Paul, John Wesley, Martin Luther, Charles Hadden Spurgeon, D.L. Moody, Jonathon Edwards, and David Livingston all have in common?

Answer: They all made a tremendous impact on the world

(SEE: TAN, Ill. #7668 - John Wesley)

As we look around, we see tremendous need, enormous problems, multitudes in spiritual blindness, scores of people living wasted lives of misery and lostness -- no purpose, no direction, etc. . . . When we see this, we cry out, "Oh, what can I do to change things? Even to make a dent in the world's crises."

Within many of us there is a desire to do great things! To make a change! To leave our mark! To make an impression! To have a positive effect!

It was said of Paul and Silas that they "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6)

***You can make a powerful, positive, and permanent impact on this world!**

Verses 2 - 6 emphasize the needs of the unsaved and our appropriate response to their needs. We need to think about others! Each of the following phrases refers to the unsaved:

"A door of utterance" (v. 3)

"Them that are without" (v. 5)

"To answer every man" (v. 6)

3 Keys to influencing others for Heaven:

I. YOUR PRAYERS (v. 2-4)

"Prayer moves the Hand that moves the world!"

Essential elements of prayer:

A. A spirit of persistence in prayer (v. 2a)

"Continue in prayer" = to persist in prayer; to tenaciously adhere to prayer, to be consistently devoted to prayer.

Implications:

1) Prayer can slip away if we are not careful (Many things can interfere with it)

2) A good prayer life requires commitment to it

3) Prayer should be a continual preoccupation of each day

--Pray to start your day (when you wake up)

--Pray throughout your day
(Don't waste precious minutes in useless daydreaming and wandering or vain thoughts -- develop a pattern of continually talking to God)

--Pray to end your day (before going to bed)

B. A spirit of alertness in prayer (v. 2b)

"Watch" - to stay awake to our need to pray, and to stay awake when we pray.

EX: the disciples fell asleep while praying at the Mount of Transfiguration (Lk. 9:28-36); the disciples fell asleep while praying at the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt. 26:37-46). NOTE: They slept prior to the most important, crucial times of Christ's ministry.

The word "watch" not only has the idea of staying awake, but also of concentration. Fight against distraction, wandering thoughts, useless daydreaming. Discipline your mind to pray!

C. A spirit of thankfulness in prayer (v. 2c)

Thankfulness should always be part of our prayers.

Phil. 4:6 - "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

D. A spirit of partnership in prayer (v. 3-4)

"For us" - that is, for me (Paul) and my fellowservants (Aristarchus, Marcus, Justus, Epaphras, etc.) (cp. 4:10-12)

Not even the great Apostle Paul was beyond the need of prayer [One reason why it is so foolish to pray to "saints" is because even they needed prayer; they were mere mortals, men subject to "like passions as we are" (Ja. 5:17).

Note: Paul believed in God's sovereignty and still requested prayer. If God knows and even has determined the outcome of all things, does prayer really change things? Paul believed so. God's sovereign plan is accomplished in concert with man's freedom to make choices and to request things from God.

1. Pray for open doors (v. 3)
(Intercede for opportunities to witness)

Even Paul faced closed doors, times of seemingly little fruitfulness.

"A door of utterance" = lit. "a door for the Word (logos)"

An open "door" -

Acts 14:27 - "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles"

II Cor. 2:12 - "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,"

Rev. 3:8 - "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

"That God would open" - Only God can open true doors of opportunity

"Thy mystery of Christ" - "Mystery" - that which formerly was

concealed but now is revealed (cp. "Manifest" - v. 4).

SEE: Colos. 1:24-27 - The mystery that Paul preached was that "Christ could be in you!" (Col. 1:27) and "You can have confidence of Glory (Heaven)!" (cp. I Cor. 15:51)

This mystery refers to Jew & Gentile in one body; united rather than their union with Christ (Eph. 3:3 - "How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words..." v. 6 - "That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body . . .")

"For which" - it was for preaching such truth that Paul was imprisoned.

NOTE: Also, in God's sovereignty, He allowed paul to be imprisoned, sent to Rome, etc., so that he could reach the Romans with the Gospel mystery.

ILLUS: John Bunyan, who was imprisoned for his preaching. He was told that he would be released if he promised to stop preaching. "If I am out of prison today," he replied, "I will preach the Gospel again tomorrow, by the help of God" (cited by Wiersbe, p. 139).

NOTE: the unselfishness of Paul's request. He does not ask that people pray for him to be unbound (unchained, freed from prison), but that God would even in the prison cell open doors for the Gospel.

NOTE: "Paul did not ask for the prison doors to be opened, but that doors of ministry might be opened" (Wiersbe, p. 138).

2. Pray for open eyes (v. 4)
(Intercede for effective witness)

"Manifest" - Paul requests prayer that he might make the message of the mystery clear, understandable, clearly visible to spiritual eyes.

"As I ought to speak" - as it is necessary for me to speak. It is not only necessary that we speak the Gospel, but that we make it clear, manifest. Since God is the only one who can open blind eyes, Paul requests prayer.

II. YOUR WALK (v. 5)

Cp. Eph. 5:15-16 - "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

"To walk in wisdom" - means to live wisely, to conduct our life in such a manner that our lives do not offend or become a stumbling block to any unsaved (by our inconsistency, poor testimony, etc.)

"Wisdom" is truth put into action (in life; into "shoe leather" etc.)

Hence, God is commanding us to have a walk that is not mere religious talk, but genuine Godliness.

James 3:17 - "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

I Jn. 3:18 - "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

To walk in wisdom would certainly include:

1) Walking in "newness of life" (Ro. 6:4)

2) Walking in "the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16)

3) Walking "worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1)

4) Walking "in love" (Eph. 5:2)

5) Walking circumspectly (carefully) (Eph. 5:15)

6) Walking in the light (I Jn. 1:7)

7) Walking like Jesus walked (I Jn. 2:6)

A. Wise living is concerned about:
Your Personal Testimony (Reputation) (v. 5a)

"Them that are without" - those who are on the outside; those who are excluded from the fellowship of Christ, those shut out from Christianity.

"Without" - refers to the unsaved

Mark 4:11 - "And He said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."

I Cor. 5:12 - "For what have I to do to judge them that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?"

I Th. 4:12 - "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."

I Tim. 3:7 - "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without: lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

What awful predicament it is to be "without" - How terrible it is to be:

Without Christ
Without forgiveness
Without the Holy Spirit
Without Heaven
Without peace, joy
Without spiritual understanding
Without hope
Without direction
Without personal holiness
Without genuine relationships in a loving assembly

One reason why many are "without" is because as they look at some Christians who are "within" they see nothing attractive or desirable.

If we bear the name "Christian" we must rightly represent Christ (ILLUS: TAN #4999 - Alexander's namesake)

ILLUS: a preacher was followed - Dr. Will H. Houghton (SEE: Wiersbe, p.

141)

B. Wise living is concerned about:
Taking Advantage of Golden Opportunities (v. 5b)

NOTE how a life of wisdom is linked with time.

It is only as we realize the brevity of life and the importance of every moment that we live truly wise lives.

Ps. 90:12 - "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

The phrase "redeeming the time" in the context of verse 5 means:

*Make the most of every opportunity to show your unsaved friends, neighbors, and relatives the light that is in you (Mt. 5:16 - "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven")

"Redeeming the time" - this participial phrase describes the walk of the believer toward the unbelievers.

"Redeem" = to buy out; used of the market place (EX: To take advantage of a tremendous sale). **This word points to the value of time.

"The time" - 3 Greek Words for time in the N.T. -

1) "Aeon" - a long span of time; an age

2) "Kronos" - a chronological period of time

*3) "Kairos" - a brief season of time; a moment; or brief opportunity

**This word points to the brevity (shortness) of time.

Love them; help them; tell them! You may never see them again!

Neglected opportunities often never return.

III. YOUR TALK (v. 6)

"Your speech" = lit. your word (logos); your message (same as "utterance" - v. 3)

A. Always with grace

"Alway" = no matter who you are speaking to or no matter what your are saying, at all times our speech should be gracious.

"That ye may know" - ("Oida" - an intuitive knowledge) - when put on the spot, you will not have the right words nor say them in the right way if you are not accustomed to doing so all of the time ("alway") (at home, at work, etc.)

The way you speak to your wife will affect the manner in which you share the Gospel with the lost!

"With grace" - words that give; speech that edifies because of its content and tone (how you say something is every bit as important as what you say)

Eph. 4:29 - "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

B. Seasoned with salt

"Seasoned (flavored) with salt" -

Salt has 3 key features:

1) It has a distinct savor (Mt. 5:13)
2) It has a preserving effect (Mk. 9:49-50)
3) It creates a thirst

Correspondingly, our speech to the unsaved:

1) Must be distinct from the way the world speaks (speak like a Christian should; curse words, immoral slang, obscene or corrupt words, etc. are unbecoming). Our speech should be distinctly wholesome and holy!

2) Must preserve. Your speech will either help or hurt; tear down or build up.

3) Should create a spiritual thirst

"We are to flavor and turn the conversation to tasteful and enjoyable subjects and away from corruptible and tasteless subjects" (Preacher's Outline Bible)

"Answer" - to respond to a question. In context, the question is no doubt directed toward someone who has a distinctive walk, a walk of "wisdom" (v. 5).

EX: "What is it that makes you different?"

I Peter 3:15 - "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

"Every man" - each individual one [referring to those "that are without" (v. 5) - the unsaved]

Not everyone should be answered in the same manner. The content of our message must never change, but the manner in which we deliver it, the choice of words, our tone of voice, etc. must suit the person we are dealing with. [EX: How Jesus spoke differently to the woman at the well (Jn. 4) than He did to the Pharisees (mt. 23)]

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11)

"A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" (Prov. 15:23)

CONCLUSION:

"FELLOW LABORERS"
Colossians 4:7-18

1/19/92

INTRODUCTION:

***God wants you to be a <u>fellow laborer</u> in His work!**

Whom does God use in His ministry?

I. <u>FAITHFUL SERVANTS</u> like Tychicus (v. 7-8)

II. <u>TRANSFORMED CRIMINALS</u> like Onesimus (v. 9)

III. <u>FORMER FAILURES</u> like John Mark (v. 10)

IV. <u>LOYAL COMPANIONS</u> like Aristarchus and Justus (v. 10-11)

V. <u>PRAYER WARRIORS</u> like Epaphras (v. 12-13)

VI. <u>SKILLED PROFESSIONALS</u> like Dr. Luke (v. 14)

VII. <u>HOSPITABLE LAYMEN</u> like Nymphas (v. 15-16)

VIII. DIVINELY-CALLED MINISTERS like Archippus (v. 17)

CONCLUSION: V. 18

"FELLOW LABORERS"
Colossians 4:7-18

1/19/92

INTRODUCTION:

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." (I Cor. 3:9)

In the list of concluding greetings from eight of Paul's fellow-workers, a careful reading reveals the theme of: team ministry, working together in the mission of evangelizing the lost world.

NOTE: 3 key references to such unity - "fellow servant" (v. 7); "fellow prisoner" (v. 10); "fellow workers" (v. 11).

It's interesting to observe the differences in personalities, gifts, backgrounds of Paul's fellow laborers. The Spirit of God, however, blends those differences together, through a common cause, to form a united force to fulfill a single goal.

***God wants you to be a fellow laborer in His work!**

Whom does God use in His ministry?

I. FAITHFUL SERVANTS like Tychicus (v. 7-8)

V. 7

"All my state" - All things about me; details about Paul's condition and ministry, etc., would be passed on by Tychicus. They did not enjoy the luxury of telephone or U.P.S., so both this letter and other personal details about how Paul

was doing would be personally delivered by Tychicus, as he would travel by boat some 1200 miles from Rome to Colossae. He would deliver not only this letter but also the epistle to he Ephesians (SEE: Eph. 6:21-22), Philippians, & Philemon.

Paul gives 3 features about Tychicus and his personal character. Tychicus was a:

1) Beloved Brother -

"Beloved" = One who is loved with the love of God

"Brother" = V. 9, 15; Not physical but spiritual brother. A fellow believer, in the same family of God. The only basis upon which we can have fellowship, be fellow-servants, be fellow-laborers, or have fellow-anything - is because we are int he same family -- the family of God. (cp. II Cor. 6:14-18). We are brothers. Our cohesiveness is our brotherhood. Remembering that we are brothers will temper and determine how we treat each other.

2) "Faithful minister" -

"Faithful" = dependable, reliable, and trustworthy; one whose faith makes him faithful

"Minister" (diakonos) refers to one who serves others, who waits upon others

"The greatest ability is dependability"

3) "Fellow servant" (sun + doulos) = lit. joint slave; a slave together with me; partners in serving Jesus Christ.

V. 8

"Comfort" = to encourage

Tychicus' goal in travelling over 1200 miles is to be a blessing. What unselfishness!

II. TRANSFORMED CRIMINALS like Onesimus (v. 9)

"With Onesimus" - Tychicus would have a one-way travelling partner. One way because Onesimus was going back home. Home to Colossae. Who is this man?

He was a runaway slave who had stolen from his master Philemon (a believer in Christ). As he fled to Rome, he crossed the path of the Apostle Paul and was led to Christ by Paul (Philemon 10 - "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.")

Now Onesimus was a new man! (II Cor. 5:17) A spiritually profitable man! (Philemon 11)

Onesimus, who formerly was a rebellious thief, a prodigal, a drifter, etc., is now called "a faithful and beloved brother." What a transformation Jesus makes!

His faithfulness was evident to Paul by how Onesimus helped Paul and proved profitable (SEE: Philemon 10-16).

"Who is one of you" - Onesimus was from Colossae. As a matter of fact, he was a servant of Philemon, whose house evidently was the place where the Colossians met for worship (with Archippus as pastor - 4:17, Phile. 2). Perhaps on several occasions Onesimus heard the Gospel, but it did not click until he hit rock bottom and met Paul.

III. FORMER FAILURES like John Mark (v. 10)

"Marcus" was also the divinely guided writer who penned the Gospel which bears his name: The Gospel According to Mark

"Marcus" = John Mark (Acts 12:12), the cousin of Barnabas. Mark was "restored to Paul's favor after his lapse (desertion) on the first missionary journey" (Ryrie note)

(Acts 12:25, 13:13, 15:30-39; II Tim. 4:11 - "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.")

"Receive him" - Perhaps the word had gotten out that Mark had formerly been a failure on Paul's first journey (Acts 13:13, 15:38). Such a testimony may have caused the Colossians to hold Mark in suspect. Therefore, Paul reassures them to accept him (welcome him) if he should travel to Colossae.

When a believer fails and sins, even if he deserts the ministry or fellow believers, he is to be welcomed back with open arms once he has repented. We must not hold a person's failure and sin against him. Rather, we should be as Christ is to us.

John Mark is an encouragement to everyone who has failed in his first attempts to serve God (EX: Jonah)

IV. LOYAL COMPANIONS like Aristarchus and Justus (v. 10-11)

"Aristarchus my fellow prisoner" = my companion who is a captive with me.

Aristarchus was a believer from Thessalonica who faithfully accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:29, 20:4, 27:2). For the same reason that Paul was imprisoned, so was Aristarchus. Perhaps he was even chained up with Paul.

A man who was willing to suffer with God's people for God's sake, Aristarchus was a bit like Moses, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." (Heb. 11:25)

"How encouraging it is to have a Christian at your side when everything seems to be against you" (Wiersbe, p. 144).

V. 11

"Jesus, which is called Justus" = Perhaps to show respect for the name of "Jesus," his Christian brothers referred to him as Justus rather than using the name of our Lord.

Respect for the name of Jesus is vital! To take His name in vain is sin!

Aristarchus, Marcus, and Justus were "of the circumcision" (saved Jews). Among the Jews, these are the only ones who hung tight to Paul and helped him in team ministry.

It wasn't easy for these men to be faithful to Paul, for he had many enemies and faced much satanically-inspired opposition.

"My fellow-workers" - joint workers, co-laborers

"Unto the kingdom of God" - Paul's goal was to see souls added to God's future kingdom. Paul's labor & message was not to advance his own cause, nor some man-centered, materialistic, or humanistic cause -- But God's cause, the cause of Christ!

Acts 28:31 - "Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

"A comfort to me" - an encouragement.

Even Paul needed comforting. Who encourages the encourager? Who comforts the comforter? ANSWER: The one who works with him

V. PRAYER WARRIORS like Epaphras (v. 12-13)

Since Epaphras was from Colossae, and the man who pioneered and started the

Church of Colossae (Col. 1:7), he had a special burden for those people. A burden and love for people comes as your serve those people. Such a burden and love will always provoke you to prayer!

"Always" - not sporadic, infrequent intercession (Eph. 6:18 - "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints"; I Chron. 16:11- "Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually")

He did not merely pray when a crisis came.

"Laboring fervently" - agonizing, struggling.

Epaphras did not pray in a cold-hearted manner. He threw his whole soul and heart into it - straining every sinew and muscle, as Jacob did when wrestling with the Angel of the LORD.

The prayers of many are nothing more than an empty, hollow, vain group of cliches strung together and addressed to God.

"As a shadow has no power because there is no substance in it, even so that supplication, in which a man's proper self is not thoroughly present in agonizing earnestness and vehement desire, is utterly ineffectual, for it lacks that which would give it force (Ja. 5:16). 'Fervent prayer,' says an old divine, 'like a cannon planted at the gates of Heaven, makes them fly open.' The common fault with the most of us is our readiness to yield to distractions. Our thoughts go roving hither and thither . . . How great an evil this is! It injures us, and what is worse, it insults our God. What should we think of a petitioner, if, while having an audience with a prince, he should be playing with a feature or catching a fly?"

(Spurgeon, Morning & Evening, p. 31)

Two goals in Epaphras' fervent intercession:

1) A mature growth - "Perfect" = to mature, to reach the goal, to measure up to God's goal for you, as a mature soldier of Jesus Christ; fully equipped, having every piece of armor on, having grown in wisdom and spiritual understanding.

Key request: Pray for the growth of others (Cp. Col. 1:9-11). Be

specific!

2) A full assurance - "Complete" = lit. a "full-carrying" (pleros = full; phero = to carry).

The idea is a full assurance (heb. 6:11) or a total confidence in the total will of God. To carry in your heart, mind, and soul a full confidence in the promises of God. (EX: Hymn "Blessed Assurance Jesus is Mine")

The Colossians needed to be convinced of the absolute, total sufficiency of Christ! (Cp. Col. 2:6-10).

"I bear him record" - Paul could solemnly testify or witness that such fervent prayer was indeed the true practice of Epaphras.

"Praying that costs nothing, accomplishes nothing" (John H. Jowett)

VI. SKILLED PROFESSIONALS like Dr. Luke (v. 14)

"Luke, the beloved physician" - a companion of Paul - cp. Acts 16:10-17, 27:1 - 28:16 -- Note: "we" "us"

Luke, the writer of the third Gospel, was formerly a medical doctor, who gave his lie to a superior practice - that of seeing the spiritually sick healed, the mortally wounded made whole, the sin-infected cured, the terminally depraved - saved!

"And Demas" - Why no elaboration? Why doesn't Paul call him "beloved," "faithful," etc.?

Perhaps the Holy Spirit (knowing that Demas would forsake Paul and would fall in love again with worldliness) restrained Paul from commending him (II Tim. 4:10 - "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica. . .")

VII. HOSPITABLE LAYMEN like Nymphas (v. 15-16)

"The church which is in his house" - "his" = "her" in NASV, NIV

Nymphas opened his home for church meetings. His home was God's home.

Hospitality:

> Rom. 12:13 - "Distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality."
>
> Titus 1:8 - "But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate"
>
> Heb. 13:2 - "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."
>
> I Pet. 4:9 - "Use hospitality one to another without grudging."

Because this letter to the Colossians was not a mere personal letter and not restricted to a particular people at a particular time,b ut rather was God's eternal word to apply to everyone, God intended for it to be spread around.

"The epistle from Laodicea" = the circular letter of Ephesians (SEE: Ryrie's Introduction to Ephesians). Laodicea was a short distance from Ephesus.

VIII. DIVINELY-CALLED MINISTERS like Archippus (v. 17)

"Archippus" - the Pastor at Colossae (cp. Philemon 2)

"Take heed" - keep an eye on; see to it

"The ministry" - the service; ministry is serving others.

The table is the pulpit and the food is the Bible.

Feeding God's sheep is the service of the pastor (I Pet. 5:2; Jn. 21:16)

"Which thou hast received" - No true man of God is a self-appointed preacher. A ministry comes from God. God calls men to specific ministries.

--The O.T. priests were called of God - Heb. 5:4 - "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

--The N.T. pastor is called of God - Eph. 4:11 - "And he gave some apostles; and some prophets, and some, prophets, and some, evangelists, and some pastors and teachers."

"Fulfill it" - to continually ("The ministry is a lifetime job" - Robertson) carry out your ministry to its fullest extent (without quitting; without half-hearted devotion; without lazy preparation; without compromise; without omitting any of the pastor's priorities).

II Tim. 4:5 - "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

CONCLUSION: V. 18

Paul, who had Timothy (cp. 1:1), as his amaneunsis, write this letter as he dictated it, concludes by signing it with his own hand.

"The chain clanked afresh as Paul took the pen to sign the salutation" (Robertson's Word Pictures).

"Remember my bonds" - Heb. 13:3 - "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body."

"Grace be with you" - lit. The grace be with you; pointing to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ - the only source of grace.

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