

Sermon outline notes: Colossians 3:12-17 New Life - New Lifestyle

Introduction

Paul reminds the Colossian Christians of who they are— they are ‘God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved’ and they are therefore to clothe themselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Paul is making the same point as in the previous verses that they have been made alive in Christ, they are new people, they have a new life now.

- 1) Note that Paul does not direct those new gentile Christians to the Old Testament Law. He does not direct them to the Law at all! Here we do not have the language of commandment— it’s not now you are a Christian here is a list of what you should do, rules you should keep. It’s the language of clothing yourself— or to change the metaphor; live out that new nature you have in Christ. All these virtues are descriptions of the character of Christ and that’s the character you have now.
- 2) All of the virtues mentioned are bound up together in love. All of them belong together and are aspects of love: ‘strategies of love’, ways in which the love of God in Christ works its way out in our lives.
- 3) **The peace of Christ rule**..... (literally arbitrate, referee, umpire). Where there is tension between Christians the peace of Christ blows the whistle and says, ‘what’s going on here, how is this a demonstration of love, gentleness, humility etc’?
- 4) **Let the word of Christ dwell**.....I think Paul here is not talking about Holy Scripture. I think by that phrase ‘word of Christ’ he is talking about all that he has said about who Christ is and who we therefore are! You have been raised with him, you share his nature, you have been given fullness in him—know the truth, the truth of who you are.
- 5) Have you noticed how many ‘one another’ words there are in Paul’s letters? This is what the church is all about— ‘one anotherness’. We have a responsibility to teach and admonish one another, and as we realise more and more deeply what God has done for us in Christ we sing to God with gratitude.

- 6) **Be thankful** - perhaps one of the most underrated virtues of all— to be able to walk through life thankful to God for who he is, for what he has done, for his creation. Give thanks in everything.

Points to Ponder

Was anything said which surprised you or was significantly different from your discussions in your House Groups last week?

Study Questions : Colossians 3: 18– 4: 1

- 1) If you had to sum up these verses in a couple of principles, how would you do it? What are Paul’s major points here?
- 2) How do you understand the word ‘submit’? What is the difference between the word ‘submit’ in verse 18 and the word ‘obey’ in verses 20 and 22? Why does Paul use these different words for different relationships?
- 3) I have noticed in Church Life that we emphasise wives submitting to husbands but we do not say much about submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21). Yet this submitting to one another is a characteristic of being filled with the Spirit. In practical everyday terms what does it mean in Church Life to submit to one another?

NOTES