

COLOSSIANS 3:5-11

PUT OFF... PUT ON...

MARK C KLINE – COD – 8/21/25



So far in the letter to the Colossians, Paul thanked God for the Colossians' faith and prayed for their growth. He exalted Christ as supreme in creation and redemption, and explained his own ministry of making Christ known. He warned against deceptive teachings and practices, and called believers to live out their new identity in Christ, focusing on heavenly realities.



Chapter 3 is a pivot point in the letter, where Paul shifts from doctrine to practice, in other words: How does this play out in real life? Last week, John covered Colossians 3:1-4:

“Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”



In verses 5-11, Paul becomes very specific about the lifestyles and habits he is aware of, thoughts, attitudes and actions that defile us and draw us away from God, sinful practices that Christ died for, and we must also consider ourselves to be dead to.



⁵ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

⁷ in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.



⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,

¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

¹¹ where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.



Starting in verse 5:

“Therefore” points to Colossians 3:1-4 which speaks of our identification with the risen, exalted and enthroned Lord Jesus Christ.

“put to death” - The Greek *nekrosate* means to make dead, exterminate, do away with, annihilate. This includes denying temptations, considering them **dead to us** and **us to them**, as a conscious effort to slay the sinful habits of our flesh.

“your members which are on the earth” – might be better understood as “the earthly traits that are in you.”



“Put to death” is stated as a **command**, so take comfort that this is something God considers can be done. But by who? Yourself? I don’t think so, because I fail miserably! This is something we must ask the Holy Spirit to do within us as we yield to Him.

Zechariah 4:6

Verse 5 lists six unseemly **appetites**. In verses 8 & 9, as we’ll see below, Paul lists six unseemly **passions**. Another way to distinguish the two lists is, v.5 describes sexual sins; verses 8 & 9 describe sins of the tongue.



1. “*fornication*” refers to sexual behavior of any kind outside the covenant of marriage. Specifically, Paul may have had in mind the vile practice of temple prostitution.

1 Timothy 4:3

2. “*uncleanness*” is any kind of moral or sexual impurity or defilement

Matthew 5:28

3. “*passion*” overpowering sexual or other desire that lures someone away from virtue.

James 1:15



4. *“evil desire”* is *a* twisted craving, especially for forbidden things—outside God’s will, sexual or otherwise.

Jeremiah 6:15

5. *“covetousness, which is idolatry”* is an insatiable selfish grasping for more—pleasure, power, possessions. Called “idolatry” because it puts selfish desire in God’s place.



Let's take verses 6 & 7 together:

⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷ in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

In other words, those who live a sinful lifestyle, often boasting in it, are inviting the wrath of God on themselves. Prior to saving faith in Christ, many in the Colossian church behaved like this, but redemption through the Spirit enables them (and us) to walk in a manner that *imitates* Christ!

Titus 3:3-5



Let's look at some of these inordinate passions, which are sins of the tongue.

“But now you yourselves are to put off [disrobe from] all these:”

1. *“anger”* is deep, settled hostility; a brooding resentment which is particularly destructive when harbored rather than expressed righteously.
2. *“wrath”* – sudden, explosive outbursts of rage; quick-tempered flare-ups.
3. *“malice”* – wickedness and ill-will toward others, plotting harm or rejoicing in another's misfortune.



4. *“blasphemy”* -- speech that slanders or injures another’s reputation, which could be against God or against people. Here, Paul may be considering slanderous speech toward others in the church.

5. *“filthy language out of your mouth”* -- Shameful, abusive, or obscene talk; Includes profanity, coarse jokes, or degrading words. Greeks valued witty banter (as do we), but Paul condemns the kind that dishonors God or others.

Ephesians 5:3-4



Verse 9 gives us the last in the list:

6. *“Do not lie to one another”* means to deceive in word or action. In the Old Testament, lying was tied to injustice and covenant-breaking. In the Christian community, truthfulness was essential because God is truth and the church is one body.

“since you have put off the old man with his deeds” “Since” indicates an already completed action in the past, because it occurred at the point of regeneration. As before, “put off” is in reference to removing filthy garments. “Old man” is your unregenerate self.



Verse 10:

“and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge”

2 Corinthians 5:17

“according to the image of Him who created him”

Romans 8:29



We end with verse 11:

“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.”

1 Corinthians 12:13

Galatians 3:28



This new man is part of a family which favors no race, nationality, class, culture, or ethnicity. It only favors Jesus, because in this new family, *“Christ is all and in all.”* The new man is patterned after Jesus Christ who breaks down every earthly barrier between peoples. Some of the stark contrasts are:

- Neither Jew nor Greek
- Circumcised nor uncircumcised
- Barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free



By the way, who are the “Scythians”??

Scythians were an ancient nomadic and warlike people who invaded the Fertile Crescent in the 7th century B.C. Noted for their savagery, they were the most hated and feared of all the so-called barbarians. It's a possibility that even some of these most wicked people were coming to Christ, or more probably Paul's desire for some to do so, for God would later reveal to John on the Island of Patmos:

Revelation 5:9



Indeed, we will worship around the throne with barbarians, Scythians, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites, Girgashites, Amalekites, Philistines, Assyrians, Babylonians, Nephilim, Anakim, Rephaim, and the list goes on! Who are you intimidated by? They need to hear the gospel too, and you just might be the one God wants to use!



In summary, Colossians 3:5–11 challenges us to take sin seriously, put off the old nature, embrace our new identity in Christ, and live in unity with others. It's about sanctification—becoming more like Jesus Christ in thought, word, and deed.

Here are some Applications to consider:



1. Proactively resist and cut off sinful habits (sexual immorality, greed, impurity) rather than excusing them.
2. Take sin seriously, remembering that it brings God's judgment, which should keep us humble and vigilant.
3. The former ways of living belong to your *past*, not your present life in Christ.



4. Sin is not only about actions but also words and inner attitudes. Followers of Christ are called to truthfulness, kindness, and purity of speech.
5. Sanctification is a process. We grow as we learn Christ more deeply and align our lives with His character.
6. Christ overcomes all cultural, social, and ethnic boundaries. The church should reflect unity across backgrounds.



**THANKS FOR LISTENING,
AND,
KEEP COMING BACK!!**

