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The Christian Life – Part 2

Colossians 3:12-17

I. Colossians 3:12-17: The Picture of Victory

1. The big picture of this passage is overwhelming to consider. Having saved us, THE sovereign God of all the universe, [you know the One that knew each of us since before the foundations of the world], calls us into AND shows us how we may have a maturing relationship with Him.

II. Introduction: A Path to Follow – A War to Fight

1. If you have not heard last week's teaching, I encourage you to take time to do so as it is very much integrated with the what you will hear today. As noted last time, here in chapter 3 of Colossians, Paul is leading Colossae believers to grasp AND personally experience the life-giving power of the Gospel. The One that gave them salvation is the same One to bring them into the fulness of their relationship with their Messiah.
 - A. As these generations later, Paul is presenting the same treasure-trove of riches for us to mine. By the inspiration of God Himself, Paul tells us (1) how to come into relationship with Him, (2) how to live and mature in our relationship with Him, and (3) the reality of eternal life with or without Him.
 - B. However, while Paul reveals a clear path to our eternal victory starting with the here-and-now, make no mistake, evil and sin have different plans for believers. The war for our souls is real and our passivity, ignorance, or unwillingness to engage does not deter, but emboldens the enemy.

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III. Colossians 3:12a: Elect, Holy, & Beloved

There are three things of note in this first ½ of v12.

1. First, there is an amazing reason for rejoicing. **If you are saved, it is because God knows and elected or chose you.** Now, some with Calvinist leanings are saying “yes” and “of course” while those leaning more toward the Arminius view are thinking “hold on” or “no way”.

A. Look, I don’t know how God works out the tension between election and free will, but I know He does. **Because you are elect does NOT mean you don’t have free will.** While God IS sovereign, clearly He has given mankind responsibility. **Further, the Bible does NOT teach that God elected those for destruction, but that He did NOT wish any should perish (2 Peter 3:9).**

B. So, the fact that one who has been outside of Christ is now in Christ should NOT lead to division, but be cause for rejoicing and worshipping Jesus.

2. Second, we are called to **be holy** (1 Pe 1:15-16). **Holiness means to be set apart by God for His good purposes.** Holiness means we are to be noticeably different from the world by being like Him - meaning different in thought AND different in word and deed.

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3. Third, we are to **be loved**. **Scripture tells us that because He first loves us, we love Him (1 Jn 4:19).** It is through His love that we might live or “put-on” His holiness (1 Jn 4:9-11). **As we receive God’s love, we naturally respond with ever growing outward expressions of obedience (Jn 14:15).** There is an often used adage that one cannot give what he/she does not first have...**when we “be loved”, we have a never-ending well-spring of Jesus’ sacrificial love available to share with others.**

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IV. Colossians 3:12b-14: Put-On’s – List 1

1. If you were to have a choice of two friends, which would you choose...Person A or Person B

A. **Person A** largely reflects the things of the natural man that God tells us to crucify or put-off in Colossians 3:5-11, and

B. **Person B** largely reflects the things of God that Paul commands us to “put-on” here in verses 12-17 of Colossians 3.

While it seems an obvious choice, the testimony of mankind throughout the ages indicates that a large majority will NOT make the obvious choice of Person B.

C. Given this reality, its best to note what we can learn from our too-often foolish choice. **First, we should NOT underestimate the power of sin in our own hearts.** Second, we will need a power and wisdom far greater than our own or even the entirety of mankind’s to reject the “old lost-walking-dead me” in receiving and maturing in Christ as the “new victorious me”.

- i. The Colossians had received salvation from Jesus AND they had recognized that He offered and they needed much more. **However, their response had been to look toward the wisdom of man and that day’s Jesus-Plus-Something (the law) to bring them deeper in relationship with Jesus.** These things, along with too-numerous-to-count idolatrous religions (also true in that day), are very much in view 2,000 years later here in Aiken and across the globe.
- ii. I say this because today is our next last chance – and we are not promised another last chance. **I say this because we can overcomplicate things, be apathetic, fearful, and self-centered.** I say this because God uses Paul to show us that He is both for and made the way for us. **Having been saved by Jesus (alone), Paul shares with us the road of sanctification or “how” we can live the abundant life only Jesus offers.**
- iii. Specifically, Paul tells us (“eyes-up”) to seek and set our minds on the things above – meaning on the person of

Jesus Christ. This is done under the leadership of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:12-16) and in the power of His word, the Bible, made alive in our lives. That is...

When we follow His lead...when we give Him elbow room in our lives...when we be purposefully about His business...WE will have the wisdom, power, and discernment to reject the things of natural man and receive the things of God. That is, we will be a work-in-progress with God shaping and molding us into Person B...all for His pleasure and glory.

I say all this so we may apply the KISS method (Keep IT Simple Saint) to all that Paul is showing us today. With that, let's dig deeper into his "be-attitudes". As we do so, please note that this list is decidedly NOT a "to-do", but it is to be picture of who the person is (meaning the nature of their character and the outward qualities and behaviors reflecting their nature).

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2. **Being Merciful** carries with it the idea of caring for others regarding their needs and sorrows...it is compassion found in withholding punishment that one rightly deserves. We are NOT to transactionally give mercy based on what seems right to us, but we are to "be merciful" as a beautiful expression of Jesus' love. Jesus offered us a great example when, being crucified, He said "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do". (Lk 23:34)

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3. **Being Kind** is not simply doing some kind things now-and-again, but instead carries with it the idea of genuinely wanting to contribute to the happiness of others without regard for what you may get in return. Outward expressions are generally some mixture of respect, gentleness, love, service, and other Godly characteristics.

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4. **Being Humble** carries with it the idea of being lowly, especially in light of who God is. In recognizing ones dependence on God, a willingness to sacrificially serve Him, and sacrificially serve others, humility is the antithesis of pride.

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5. **Being Meek** carries with it the ideas of being courteous, considerate, gentle, mild, and unassuming. It is an outward expression of humility that many ironically equate with being weak when the reality is meekness is actually “strength under control”. Why? Because meekness is a reflection of righteousness, self-control, strength, and love that comes with the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

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6. **Being Longsuffering** carries with it the ideas of being patient and steadfast in the midst of hardship and adversity. One who is longsuffering cares more about the needs of others than their own comfortability or minimizing of life difficulties. It is often the outworking of love, forgiveness, and kindness.

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7. **Being Forgiving** IS NOT A FEELING, but it is releasing someone from a debt they rightfully owe. Forgiveness is an expression of sacrificial love for it keeps no record of wrongs while forgiving as many times as necessary (Mt 18:21-22). Forgiveness is forged in love for, in love, we come to recognize that we are all broken and in need of forgiveness. Forgiveness is often the open door to restoring relationships. Ephesians 4:32 says we forgive, because Christ forgave us. Forgiving others strengthens our relationship with God as our forgiveness reflects our trust, faith, and obedience in Him. Lastly, a lack of forgiveness is unrighteous and often times leads to anger, bitterness, and deepening fractures in relationships.

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8. **Being Loving** is choosing the best for others without regard to the cost to ourselves (1 Cor 13). It is this sacrificial love that builds up both the saint and the body of Christ. The greatest expression of love is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind AND to love your neighbor as yourself (Mt 22:37-40). Another supernatural expression of this love is found in God’s design for marriage.

What’s more, it is through God’s love that we find meaning, purpose, value, hope, and the fervent desire to please and glorify Jesus.

- A. There are two alternate views relating the end of v14, or "...put on love, which is the bond of perfection". Some say this refers to love as the glue that bonds us together while others say love is the glue which bonds together all the the "be-attitudes" to this point. It seems to me that the clear answer is not one or the other, but "YES"!

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Before moving on to our final section, turn with me to Romans 13 where we can see how Paul summed up these same sentiments he is laying out in greater detail for the Colossian church. **Romans 13:8-10** offers a list of commandments that are "put-offs" with the closing command to "put-on" love – which as we read in Colossians 3:14 is "the bond of perfection".

Then, beginning in v11, Paul exhorts the Romans to have a sense of urgency in "casting off the works of darkness and putting on the armor of light". Paul then goes on to v14 in presenting the same summary he is leading the Colossians toward..."put-off the fleshly heart of the old man/woman" AND "put-on the Lord Jesus Christ"!

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V. **Colossians 3:15-17: Put-On's – List 2**

In these verses, we have a second list of "put-on's" complementing and extending the first. More specifically, this 2nd list shines a bright light on the inner workings of the body of Christ through the 8 "be-attitudes" in view.

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1. **Be Peaceful** is unsurprisingly the first on this list. It's unsurprising because in Ephesians 4:3 we read that peace is the bond of unity of the Spirit. Just as Paul said love was the bond (or glue) in our first list, God's peace is the glue in this list.

Note: While we don't have time to go there today, as with Romans 13:8-14, Ephesians 4:1-6, 17-24 also echoes Colossians 3. If you still have doubts, it seems that our "putting-off" the old man/woman and "putting-on" Christ are central to living a victorious life and worthy of our attention.

The peace Paul is talking of here is not peace as the world has peace. God's peace is not the absence of conflict in the experiential sense for His peace is realized even in the midst of the hardest, scariest, most taxing of times – even in the midst of great spiritual attacks.

In the last 6 verses of **John 14**, we are offered important applications of God's peace...specifically, Jesus gives His peace for the child of God, for others to see Him in us, AND that through His peace, the body of Christ will have supernatural unity of mind and purpose.

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2. **Be Unified.** God calls us to be one body, knit together with one mind (the mind of Christ) for His purposes in the power of Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 4:1-6)

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3. **Be Thankful.** Being thankful is noted twice in these final verses. The first time is a categorical statement regarding the ongoing condition of being thankful in all things. The second is a reminder that the ultimate object of our thanks...the reason we can have thanks is because of God Himself, so let us be thankful to Him. In a very real way, this thanks is one of the answers to the “how” we live a victorious life...that is, God uses our thankful hearts to shape and mold us along with edifying the body of Christ in transforming the world.

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4. **Be Abiding, Discipling, Worshipful, and Grace-filled.** I decided to tackle these all together, but not for the reason of offering brief definitions of these commonly used Christian terms as I have done with the others. I do so because:
 - A. First, they exemplify a believers maturing faith and the unity we, TOGETHER, share with one another and our Lord, Jesus.
 - B. Second, in v16, where these “be-attitudes” are all packed together, is another “aha moment” for when we are wrestling with the assorted “how” questions of living out a life of victory in Christ.

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- i. John 1:1 serves as an important foundation for our “aha moment”...here the Apostle John says:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. ² He was in the beginning with God. - John 1:1–2

- ii. Having been saved, Jesus calls and shows believers how to deepen our relationship with Him. *Specifically, in the power of the Spirit of God...*

We are to seek and have our minds on the things above. *We are to put-off the depraved, old-me and put-on Jesus Christ.* Simple and yet, which of us has enjoyed a straight line to glory in doing these things? *None...right?! We all have our struggles. So, here in the first part of v16, Paul offers us the next “how” answer...*

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...”

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Being reminded that Jesus is the Word...get in and stay in the Word. *Read it, study it, pray it, sing it, disciple it, be disciplined in it...*be relentless in doing these things not as though in a classroom, but as in nurturing and tending to your personal relationship with Jesus that you/we may LIVE IT!

That’s it. *Don’t make it complicated, because it’s not.* But, it does demand a choice of where you will invest your time and treasure – in Him or not. *Too busy, not your thing, intimidated, apathetic, reading difficulties, etc...it’s on you.*

- 5. We close today with one final set of “be-attitudes” found in v17. Since we have already touched on thankfulness, our focus on:

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- A. **Be Like Jesus**. The number one complaint against Christians today is hypocrisy. *We say we are Christians, but by our words and deeds we deny the very one we claim to follow.*

The world is right to call us out. *Too often those looking for Jesus in the church find more of the world.* Brothers and sisters, we have been given a great honor, privilege, responsibility, and duty...we are to Christ's representatives in this dying world.

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- B. **Being Glorifying of Christ**. This means that we don't simply do and say what Christ would. *It means we do these things with a heart intent on bringing Him glory by directing our praise, honor, love, thanks, worship, and obedience to Him who alone is worthy! Amen? Amen!*

[Prayer – Lord Jesus, prepare our hearts that through the power of HS, we will (1) seek & keep our minds on the things above, (2) purpose to put-off the things of this world, and (3) put-on Christ through the life-giving power of His word.

Father, help us to purpose in building the pattern of our lives that we may look more like Person B]

Colossians 3:12-17

The Christian Life – Part 2

I. Colossians: 3:12-17: The Picture of Victory

II. Introduction: A Path to Follow – A War to Fight

- The war for our souls is real and our passivity, ignorance, or unwillingness to engage does not deter, but emboldens the enemy.

I. Colossians 3:12a: Elect, Holy, & Beloved

- There is an often used adage that one cannot give what he does not first have.

Additional Scripture References: 2 Pe 3:9; 1 Pe 1:15-16; 1 Jn 4:9-11; Jn 14:15

II. Colossians 3:12b-14: Put-On's – List 1

- One mustn't underestimate the power of sin.
- Being these things is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Additional Scripture References: 1 Co 2:12-16; Lk 23:34; Mt 18:21-22; Eph 4:32; 1 Co 13; Mt 22:37-40; Ro 13:8-14

III. Colossians 3:15-17: Put-On's – List 2

- Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

Additional Scripture References: Eph 4:3; Ro 13:8-14; Eph 4:1-6, 17-24; Jn 14, 1:1-2

5-Day Devotional Colossians 3:12-17 The Christian Life – Part 2

Day 1: Chosen, Holy, and Beloved Reading: Co 3:12-14; 1 Pe 1:15-16; 1 Jn 4:19

Devotional: Before the foundations of the world, God knew you and chose you. This truth should fill your heart with wonder, not division. You are elect—not because of your merit, but because of His grace. You are called holy—set apart for His purposes, to live noticeably different from the world. You are beloved—lavished with a love that transforms you from the inside out.

Because He first loved us, we can love Him and others. We cannot give what we don't first receive. Today, pause and receive God's love deeply. Let it sink into the broken, weary places of your soul. From that overflowing well, you'll naturally respond with obedience and love toward others. Your holiness isn't about perfection; it's about reflecting Him in thought, word, and deed.

Reflection: How does knowing you are chosen, holy, and beloved change the way you see yourself today?

Day 2: The Character of Christ Reading: Co 3:12-14; Ro 13:8-10; Mt 22:37-40

Devotional: Paul presents us with a beautiful portrait of Christ-like character: mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, forgiveness, and love. These aren't items on a checklist to accomplish transactionally. They describe who we are becoming in Christ—the nature of our character as the Holy Spirit transforms us.

Consider the difference between doing kind things occasionally and being a kind person. The latter flows from an identity rooted in Christ. Meekness isn't weakness; it's strength under control. Longsuffering isn't passive tolerance; it's patient endurance that cares more about others than personal comfort. Forgiveness isn't a feeling; it's releasing debts and choosing reconciliation over bitterness.

Love binds all these virtues together in perfect unity. When we love as Christ loved—sacrificially, unconditionally, purposefully—we fulfill the greatest commandments and become living testimonies of His transforming power.

Reflection: Which Christ-like characteristic challenges you most? Ask God to cultivate it in your heart today.

Day 3: Peace and Unity in the Body Reading: Co 3:15; Jn 14:25-27; Eph 4:1-6

Devotional: The peace Christ offers differs radically from worldly peace. The world defines peace as the absence of conflict, but God's peace reigns even amid life's fiercest storms. His peace isn't circumstantial; it's relational—rooted in our secure identity as His beloved children.

This supernatural peace serves as the glue binding believers together in unity. When conflicts arise in the church, God's peace enables us to prioritize reconciliation over being right, to value others above ourselves, and to maintain the bond of the Spirit. We're called to let Christ's peace rule in our hearts, acting as an umpire that guides our decisions and interactions.

True unity doesn't mean uniformity or the absence of differences. It means being one body with one mind—the mind of Christ—pursuing His purposes together in the power of the Holy Spirit. This unity becomes a powerful witness to a fractured world desperately seeking genuine community.

Reflection: Where do you need God's peace to rule as an umpire in your relationships today?

Day 4: Abiding in the Word Reading: Co 3:16; Jn 1:1-14; 15:1-11

Devotional: Here's the practical "how" we've been searching for: let the Word of Christ dwell richly within you. Jesus IS the Word made flesh. To know Scripture is to know Him; to abide in Scripture is to abide in Him.

This isn't about academic study or classroom learning, though those have value. It's about nurturing your personal relationship with Jesus through His Word. Read it. Study it. Pray it. Sing it. Teach it. Be disciplined in it. Let Scripture saturate your thoughts, shape your perspective, and transform your character.

When we're wrestling with how to live victoriously, how to put off the old self, how to reflect Christ—the answer consistently points back to His Word. Don't overcomplicate it. Don't let busyness, intimidation, or apathy keep you from this life-giving fountain. Be relentless in pursuing Him through Scripture, and watch how He meets you there with wisdom, power, and discernment for every situation you face.

Reflection: What practical step will you take today to let God's Word dwell more richly in you?

Day 5: Living for His Glory

Reading: Co 3:17; Mt 5:13-16; 1 Co 10:31

Devotional: Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. This verse encompasses the entirety of the Christian life—every moment, every interaction, every decision becomes an opportunity to represent Christ and bring Him glory.

The world's greatest complaint against Christians is hypocrisy—we claim to follow Jesus but live like everyone else. This should grieve us deeply. We've been given an incredible honor: we are Christ's ambassadors, His representatives to a dying world. People should see Jesus when they see us.

Being like Jesus means more than mimicking His actions. It means doing and saying what He would with hearts intent on glorifying Him. It means directing all praise, honor, worship, and obedience to the One who alone is worthy. Today is your next last chance—you're not promised another. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, purpose to seek Him, put off worldly patterns, and put on Christ through His life-giving Word.

Reflection: *How will you intentionally bring glory to Christ in your words and actions today?*

Small Group Study Guide

Colossians 3:12-17

The Christian Life – Part 2

Opening Prayer: Ask God to open hearts and minds to understand how to live out our identity in Christ.

Opening Question: If you could choose one character quality that you'd like to grow in this year, what would it be and why?

Sermon Recap (5 minutes): Paul teaches the Colossian believers—and us—how to mature in our relationship with Christ by:

1. Understanding our identity (elect, holy, and beloved)
2. Seeking and keeping our minds on the things above
3. Under the power and leadership of the Holy Spirit, in the bonds of love and peace, we are to “put-off” the old self AND “put-on” Jesus (Christ-like character)
4. Staying in the Word
5. Living in unity as the body of Christ

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. Our Identity in Christ - We are elect (chosen), holy (set apart), and beloved (deeply loved by God)
2. The "Put-On" Life - We're called to BE, not just DO—reflecting Christ's character in our daily lives
3. The Power Source - Victory comes through abiding in God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit
4. Unity in the Body - Our Christian life is lived in community, bound together by love and peace

Discussion Questions: Did the Holy Spirit prompt any questions with you? Start with those.

I. UNDERSTANDING OUR IDENTITY (Colossians 3:12a)

1. How does knowing you are "elect, holy, and beloved" change the way you view yourself? How should it affect your daily decisions?
2. The sermon mentions tension between God's election and human free will. How do you personally reconcile these concepts? Why should this lead to worship rather than division?
3. What does it mean practically to be "set apart" (holy) in your workplace, family, or community? Share a specific example.

II. THE "BE-ATTITUDES" (Colossians 3:12b-14)

1. Review the list: merciful, kind, humble, meek, longsuffering, forgiving, and loving. Which of these qualities do you find most challenging to live out? Why?
2. The sermon contrasts "Person A" (reflecting the natural man) with "Person B" (reflecting Christ). In what areas of your life are you still choosing "Person A" behaviors? What needs to change?
3. Forgiveness Deep Dive: The sermon states forgiveness "is NOT A FEELING, but it is releasing someone from a debt they rightfully owe."
 - Is there someone you need to forgive?
 - What's holding you back?
 - How does understanding Christ's forgiveness of you motivate forgiveness of others?
4. Love is called "the bond of perfection" (v. 14). How does love serve as the glue that holds all the other character qualities together?

III. LIFE IN THE BODY (Colossians 3:15-17)

1. God's Peace:** How is God's peace different from the world's peace? Share a time when you experienced God's peace in the midst of difficulty.
2. Unity in the Church:** What threatens unity in the body of Christ today? How can we actively pursue unity while maintaining biblical truth?
3. Abiding in the Word (v. 16):** The sermon emphasizes that getting in and staying in God's Word is essential for spiritual growth.
 - What obstacles keep you from consistently spending time in Scripture?
 - What practical steps can you take this week to prioritize God's Word?

- How can this group help hold you accountable?
4. Thankfulness: Paul mentions being thankful twice in these verses. How does cultivating thankfulness change our perspective on life's challenges?

IV. REPRESENTING CHRIST (Colossians 3:17)

1. The sermon notes that hypocrisy is the number one complaint against Christians. In what ways might your words or actions misrepresent Christ? How can you better align your life with your faith?
2. What does it mean to do everything "in the name of the Lord Jesus" and to "give thanks to God the Father through Him"? How does this apply to mundane, everyday activities?

Person Reflection (Silent or Written)

- Take 3-5 minutes to quietly reflect on these questions:
- Which "be-attitude" is God calling me to focus on this week?
- What specific "old self" behavior do I need to "put off"?
- What "new self" behavior do I need to "put on"?
- How will I invest more time in God's Word this week?

Practical Application: Choose ONE of the following action steps for this week:

1. Word Immersion
 - Read Colossians 3:12-17 every day this week
 - Memorize one verse from this passage
 - Journal about how God is speaking to you through it
2. Character Focus
 - Select one "be-attitude" (merciful, kind, humble, meek, longsuffering, forgiving, loving)
 - Pray each morning for God to develop this quality in you
 - Look for three specific opportunities to practice it each day
 - Share your experiences with an accountability partner
3. Forgiveness Action
 - Identify someone you need to forgive
 - Pray for them daily
 - Take a concrete step toward reconciliation if appropriate (write a letter, have a conversation, release bitterness)

4. Gratitude Practice

- Keep a daily gratitude journal, listing 3-5 things you're thankful for
- At the end of each day, thank God specifically for how you saw Him at work

Group Prayer Time Prompts:

- Thank God for our identity as elect, holy, and beloved
- Confess areas where we've been living as "Person A" instead of "Person B"
- Ask for the Holy Spirit's power to put off the old self and put on Christ
- Pray for specific character qualities group members want to develop
- Pray for unity in your church and the global body of Christ
- Ask God to help each person abide in His Word this week

Closing Thought

"The Christian life is not about trying harder to be better people. It's about abiding in Christ so deeply that His character naturally flows through us. This week, don't focus on behavior modification—focus on relationship transformation."

Questions for Further Reflection

- How does the gospel (what Christ has done) empower the imperatives (what we're called to do)?
- In what ways am I relying on "Jesus-plus-something" rather than Christ alone for my spiritual growth?

Discussion Questions

Colossians 3:12-17

The Christian Life – Part 2

1. How does understanding yourself as elect, holy, and beloved by God change the way you view your identity and daily choices?
2. In what specific areas of your life do you find it most difficult to put off the old self and put on Christ, and what might be hindering your transformation?
3. Paul emphasizes that these qualities are about being rather than doing. How does this distinction challenge our tendency to approach the Christian life as a checklist of tasks?
4. Which of the be-attitudes (merciful, kind, humble, meek, longsuffering, forgiving, loving) do you find most challenging to embody consistently, and why?
5. How can we practically distinguish between worldly peace and the supernatural peace of God that remains even in the midst of conflict and hardship?
6. What does it look like in your daily life to abide in the Word of God beyond just reading it as information or completing a study?
7. The sermon mentions that hypocrisy is the number one complaint against Christians today. In what ways might your words and actions be denying the Christ you claim to follow?
8. How does receiving and experiencing God's love for you enable you to genuinely love others sacrificially without expecting anything in return?
9. Paul connects unity in the body of Christ with having the mind of Christ and God's peace. What practical steps can your church community take to pursue this supernatural unity?
10. If someone were to observe your life closely for a week, would they see Jesus reflected in your character, or would they see more of the world?

Dinner Conversation Starters

Colossians 3:12-17

The Christian Life – Part 2

1. God's Sovereignty and Our Role

The sermon discusses both God's sovereignty and our responsibility. How do you see our family's role in living out our faith actively rather than being passive or indifferent?

2. Reflecting Christ's Character

The sermon emphasizes qualities like kindness, humility, and patience. Can we think of recent examples where we've seen these qualities in each other?

3. Embracing Forgiveness

Forgiveness is described as releasing someone from a debt they owe. How can we practice forgiveness within our family, and why is it sometimes difficult to forgive?

4. Experiencing True Peace

The sermon mentions peace that transcends worldly conflict. What are ways we can create a peaceful and unified atmosphere at home, even amidst any chaos or challenges we face?

5. Cultivating Thankfulness

Being thankful is highlighted as essential. What are some unique traditions or practices we can start as a family to regularly celebrate and express gratitude?

Family Conversation Guide for Children & Early Teens

Colossians 3:12-17

The Christian Life – Part 2

AGES 5-7: SIMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE APPLICATION POINTS

Application Points

1. Kindness in Action: Encourage showing kindness by sharing toys or helping a friend in need.
2. Learning Forgiveness: Practice saying "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you" during playtime disputes.
3. Thankfulness Rituals: Make a daily habit of saying what you are thankful for during dinner.

Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a time when someone was kind to you today? How did it make you feel?
2. How can we show forgiveness to our friends when they make mistakes?
3. What is something special that happened today that makes you feel thankful?

AGES 8-12: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION POINTS

Application Points

1. Standing Firm in Friendships: Discuss standing up for what is right when friends are not acting kindly.
2. Digital Kindness: Talk about the importance of saying kind things when using digital devices or in online games.
3. Recognizing and Sharing Gratitude: Encourage writing notes or drawing pictures to express gratitude to teachers and friends.

Discussion Questions

1. When a friend at school isn't being nice to someone else, what can you do to help the situation?

2. How can you ensure you're being kind to others when chatting online or playing games on the computer?
3. What are some ways we can express our thankfulness to people we care about?

AGES 11-15: DEEPENING THE CONNECTION APPLICATION POINTS

Application Points

1. Navigating Peer Pressure: Discuss the importance of staying true to values without giving in to peer pressure.
2. Practicing Digital Discernment: Talk about the importance of thinking before posting or responding online.
3. Deepening Forgiveness: Explore scenarios where deeper forgiveness is needed, such as misunderstandings with friends.

Discussion Questions

1. How can you handle situations where friends want you to do something you're not comfortable with?
2. What are some guiding questions you can ask yourself before posting something online?
3. Can you share a time when forgiving someone was challenging, but it made you feel better afterward?

Tips for Parents

- Be patient and listen: Give your child time to think and respond.
- Relate to everyday life: Use real-life examples and stories familiar to your child to make abstract concepts more tangible.
- Encourage questions: Let your son or daughter know it's okay to ask questions, even if things don't make sense right away.
- Share personal insights: Tell a personal story about a time you experienced these themes, adapting as needed for age appropriateness.

Family Conversation Guide for Gen Z

Colossians 3:12-17

The Christian Life – Part 2

I. Application Point: Living Out Kindness and Mercy in Group Settings

1. Application: In social groups, emulate Colossians 3:12 by being compassionate and kind, especially when witnessing or experiencing exclusion or bullying.
2. Scenario: When observing a peer being left out, take the initiative to include them in conversations or activities, reflecting Christ's love and mercy.
3. Discussion Question: How can you show kindness in a group setting at school or extracurricular activities, even when others might not?

II. Application Point: Practicing Forgiveness in Relationships

1. Application: Reflect on Ephesians 4:32 and practice forgiving friends or family members when conflicts arise, aiming for peace and unity.
2. Scenario: If a friend betrays your trust, consider how you can address the issue directly yet graciously, seeking restoration even if it's challenging.
3. Discussion Question: What steps can you take to rebuild trust in a relationship after a disagreement or misunderstanding?

III. Choosing Love and Humility in Digital Spaces

1. Application: Apply 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 by responding with love and humility when engaging in online discussions or debates.
2. Scenario: When encountering heated conversations or negative comments online, choose to disengage from negativity and respond, if necessary, with love and grace.
3. Discussion Question: How do you determine when to engage in online discussions and how can you ensure your words represent Christ's love and humility?

IV. Promoting Peace and Unity

1. Application: As encouraged in Romans 12:18, strive for peace with everyone by being a unifying presence in diverse group situations.
2. Scenario: During group projects or team activities, mediate conflicts and encourage collaboration to enhance group dynamics and productivity.
3. Discussion Question: In what ways can you serve as a peacemaker among your friends or peers, helping to resolve conflicts?

V. Expressing Thankfulness Publicly and Privately

1. Application: Follow 1 Thessalonians 5:18 by expressing gratitude in all circumstances, both in personal prayers and in public forums such as social media.
2. Scenario: Use your platforms to share positive stories and gratitude lists, encouraging others to also reflect on the good in their lives.
3. Discussion Question: How can expressing gratitude impact both your outlook on life and those who are influenced by your presence online and in person?

By integrating these biblical principles into the contexts Gen Z faces daily, they can embody their faith in practical, impactful ways across group settings, relationships, and digital interactions.