

Colossians 3:12–17 – Living Out Our New Identity in Christ

Overview

This is a Bible study teaching focused on Colossians 3:12–17, exploring what it means to live as God’s chosen people in response to the gospel. The session included a prayer, a contextual reading of Colossians, and a practical discussion about Christian living, with special attention to motivation, identity, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Core Scripture:

Colossians 3:12–17

Key Themes

• Gospel Foundation Before Application

- Colossians is a brief but theologically rich letter, moving quickly from doctrine to practical application.
- The “do this/don’t do that” commands are always rooted in what God has already accomplished for us through Christ.
- True Christian living flows from grace, not just conviction or willpower, but by the power of the Holy Spirit.

• Motivation: Response to Grace, Not Rule-Keeping

- The study highlights the danger of reducing faith to self-imposed religion or legalism.
- Our motivation for holy living is God’s mercy, our secure future, and our new identity in Christ—not fear or obligation.
- The way we live should reflect our assurance of eternal life and inheritance.

• Identity: “If Then You Are Raised with Christ...”

- The “if” in Colossians 3 is pivotal: everything that follows is for those who are truly in Christ.
- Our primary identity is not our ethnicity, background, or social status, but being in Christ.
- This identity brings unity and levels all distinctions—Christ is all and in all.

- **Putting Off the Old, Putting On the New**

- The old self is marked by self-centeredness, immediate gratification, anger, deceit, and destructive desires.
- The new self is characterized by mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness, and above all, love.
- These virtues are possible because of what Christ has done and through the Spirit's power.

- **Letting Peace and the Word Rule**

- Let the peace of Christ, established by God's work, govern your heart and relationships.
- Let the word of Christ dwell richly, expressed through teaching, admonishing, and a variety of worship (psalms, hymns, spiritual songs).
- Worship is broad and inclusive—heart attitude matters more than musical style.

- **Whatever You Do: Do All in the Name of Jesus**

- Every aspect of life is to be lived as an act of gratitude and service to Christ.
- Thankfulness is a recurring theme, both in worship and daily living.

Practical Applications

- **Christian Living Is Empowered, Not Just Inspired**

- We are called to live differently because we have been given everything in Christ.
- The Holy Spirit provides the ability to live out these virtues, not just the desire.
- Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh (see Galatians 5).

- **Worship and Community**

- Encourage one another with a variety of songs—psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
- The heart of worship is grace, not judgment over style or format.
- Use music and teaching to build up, admonish, and remind each other of gospel truths.

- **Forgiveness and Unity**

- Forgive as Christ forgave you; bear with one another.
- Love is the bond of perfection—unity in the body is rooted in shared identity and grace.

- **Perspective on Suffering and Loss**

- The hope of resurrection and eternal life transforms our response to mourning and hardship.
- God's comfort is real and present in loss, surpassing any worldly consolation.

Encouragements & Closing Prayer

- Let your life reflect the reality of your future with Christ—live generously, mercifully, and with hope.
- Don't strive in your own strength, but depend on the Holy Spirit for transformation and victory over sin.
- Let gratitude, peace, and love define your relationships and worship.

Closing Prayer Highlights:

- Gratitude for God's Word and the ability to gather.
- Request for lives changed by truth, not just effort.
- Prayer for the fruit of the Spirit to be evident: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control.
- Desire for unity, forgiveness, and Christ's glory in all things.

Next week: The study will continue with practical instructions for various life roles (wives, husbands, children, etc.) as outlined in the remainder of Colossians 3.