



Silverdale Baptist

VICTORY IN RELATIONSHIPS ~ VICTORY IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS
COLOSSIANS 3:12-15
05/6-7/2023

Big Idea

The key to victory in relationships is to put on Christ and let His love and peace rule your life.

Getting Started

*"A big thing done one time makes an impact,
small things done many times makes a change."*

Sam Rogers

How have you seen this truth played out in life?

**What are some of the small things in relationships that change them for better?
For worse?**

Learn

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ COLOSSIANS 3:12-15.

What is the main idea of this text?

How are we described in verse 12?

What is the first thing we are commanded to do as God's "chosen ones"?

How would you define the first 5 character qualities we are to put on?

- **A compassionate heart**
- **kindness**
- **humility**
- **meekness**
- **patience**

What are the two action steps Paul gives us in verse 13?

If there is a ranking of importance, what is the primary thing we are to put on according to verse 14?

How is love described in vs. 14?

Paul gives two more qualities in verse 15 we are to put on; what are they?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER RE-READ COLOSSIANS 3:12-15.

This list of Paul's is the key to harmony in relationships. These qualities are not just a list to be checked off before we leave the house each morning. It's not our mom reminding us, "I saw you pick up kindness, but don't forget humility." They are the definition of Jesus Christ. As we "put on" or walk close to Jesus, these are the qualities that the Holy Spirit manifests in our life. But, we still have the choice in every circumstance to choose Jesus or the flesh. Therefore we are compassionate, humble, kind, patient, and meek daily. And little by little, the world sees Jesus and wants to get to know Him.

Apply

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you from this passage?

Who is the person in your life right now that needs you to show them love, grace, and kindness?

Who do you need to forgive? Why are you waiting?

Recently I saw a tee shirt that said, "Every person you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about." The point is we should extend everyone grace and follow with kindness. We should forgive quickly.

Exciting news!

The best way to help each other live this way is to connect to the community in small groups. Learning to live in victory happens best in the community. So we have interest meetings coming up for people interested in, or even just curious about, being a small group leader or hosting a small group in their home coming up.

Wednesday, May 10, at our North Ooltewah campus. 6:30 – 7:30 pm
Wednesday, May 17, at our Bonny Oaks campus. 6:30 – 7:30 pm

We would love to see you there!

Pray

Father, sometimes when faced with difficult people or stressful circumstances, we choose how to respond without thinking about it. We are too quick to react. Please, Lord, teach us to respond in love and kindness instead of reacting in anger. Teach us to choose forgiveness instead of bitterness. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus, amen.

Dig Deeper

ALL DRESSED UP AND SOMEPLACE TO GO

Colossians 3:12–17

This section completes Paul’s exhortation to the Christian to live a holy life. It continues the illustration of *garments*: “Put off ... put on” (Col. 3:8–10). He exhorted his readers to put off the graveclothes of sin and the old life, and to put on the “grace clothes” of holiness and the new life in Christ.

The emphasis in this section is on *motives*. Why should we put off the old deeds and put on the qualities of the new life? Paul explained four motives that ought to encourage us to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4).

The Grace of Christ (Col. 3:12–14)

Grace is God’s favor to undeserving sinners. Paul reminded the Colossians of what God’s grace had done for them.

God chose them (v. 12a). The word *elect* means “chosen of God.” God’s words to Israel through Moses help us to understand the meaning of salvation by grace: “The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you ... hath the Lord brought you out [of Egypt] with a mighty hand” (Deut. 7:7–8).

This miracle of divine election did not depend on anything that we are or that we have done; for God chose us in Christ “before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). If God saved a sinner on the basis of merit or works, nobody would be saved. It is all done through God’s grace that it might all bring glory to God.

Of course, *election* is a “sacred secret” that belongs to God’s children. It is not a doctrine that we believers explain to the unsaved. “The Lord knows them that are His” (2 Tim. 2:19), so we must leave the working out of His eternal purposes with Him. Our task is to share the Good News of the Gospel with a lost world.

God set them apart (v. 12). That is the meaning of the word *holy*. Because we have trusted Christ, we have been set apart from the world unto the Lord. We are not our own; we belong completely to Him (1 Cor. 6:19–20). Just as the marriage ceremony sets apart a man and a woman for each other exclusively, so salvation sets the believer apart exclusively for Jesus Christ. Would it not be a horrible

thing, at the end of a wedding, to see the groom run off with the maid of honor? It is just as horrible to contemplate the Christian living for the world and the flesh.

God loves them (v. 12). When an unbeliever sins, he is a creature breaking the laws of the holy Creator and Judge. But when a Christian sins, he is a child of God breaking the loving heart of his Father. Love is the strongest motivating power in the world. As the believer grows in his love for God, he will grow in his desire to obey Him and walk in the newness of life that he has in Christ.

God has forgiven them (vv. 13–14). “Having forgiven you all trespasses” (Col. 2:13). God’s forgiveness is complete and final; it is not conditional or partial. How is the holy God able to forgive us guilty sinners? Because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. God has forgiven us “for Christ’s sake” (Eph. 4:32), and not for our own sake.

Chosen by God, set apart for God, loved by God, and forgiven by God. They all add up to GRACE! Now, because of these gracious blessings, the Christian has some solemn responsibilities before God. He must put on the beautiful graces of the Christian life. Paul named eight graces.

1. Put on ... tender mercies (Col. 3:12). The Greek uses the term *bowels of compassion* because the Greek people located the deeper emotions in the intestinal area, while we locate them in the heart. As believers, we need to display tender feelings of compassion toward one another (see Phil. 2:1ff). This is not something that we turn on and off, like the TV set. It is a constant attitude of heart that makes us easy to live with.

2. Put on ... kindness (Col. 3:12). We have been saved because of God’s kindness toward us through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:7; Titus 3:4). We, in turn, ought to show kindness toward others. “Be ye kind one to another” (Eph. 4:32) is God’s command.

One of the most beautiful pictures of kindness in the Bible is King David’s treatment of the crippled prince, Mephibosheth (see 2 Samuel 9). David’s desire was to show “the kindness of God” to King Saul’s family because of his own love for Saul’s son, Jonathan. The young man chosen was Mephibosheth, Jonathan’s son, a poor cripple. If David had acted according to justice, he would have condemned Mephibosheth, for the man belonged to a condemned family. But David acted on the basis of love and grace.

David sought Mephibosheth and assured him not to be afraid. He invited Mephibosheth to live in the palace as a member of his family, and to eat at the king’s bountiful table. This is the kindness of God! You and I have experienced an even greater kindness, for as Christians, we are God’s children and shall live with Him in heaven forever!

3. Put on ... humbleness of mind (Col. 3:12). The pagan world of Paul’s day did not admire humility. Instead, they admired pride and domination. Jesus Christ is the greatest example of humbleness of mind (Phil. 2:1ff). Humility is not thinking poorly of oneself. Rather, it is having the proper estimate of oneself in the will of God (Rom. 12:3). The person with humbleness of mind thinks of others first and not of himself.

4. Put on ... meekness (Col. 3:12). Meekness is not weakness; it is 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. The meek person does not have to fly off the handle because he has everything under control.

5. Put on ... long-suffering (Col. 3:12). This word is literally “long-temper.” The short-tempered person speaks and acts impulsively and lacks self-control. When a person is long-suffering, he can put up with provoking people or circumstances without retaliating. It is good to be able to get angry, for this is a sign of holy character. But it is wrong to get angry quickly at the wrong things and for the wrong reasons.

6. Put on ... forbearance (Col. 3:13). This word literally means “to hold up” or “to hold back.” God is forbearing toward sinners in that He holds back His judgment (Rom. 2:4; 3:25). Meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance go together.

7. Put on ... forgiveness (Col. 3:13). This is the logical result of all that Paul has written so far in this section. It is not enough that the Christian must endure grief and provocation, and refuse to retaliate; he must also forgive the troublemaker. If he does not, then feelings of malice will develop in the heart; and these can lead to greater sins.

It is Christlike to forgive (Eph. 4:32), and forgiveness opens the heart to the fullness of the love of God. The very instant we have a complaint against another person, we should forgive him in our hearts. (“Family forgiveness” is another matter. We should go to the offender and seek to help him in love. See Matt. 18:15–35.)

8. Put on ... love (Col. 3:14). This is the most important of the Christian virtues, and it acts like a “girdle” that ties all the other virtues together. All of the spiritual qualities Paul has named are aspects of true Christian love, as a reading of 1 Corinthians 13 will reveal. Love is the first of the fruit of the Spirit and the other virtues follow—joy (Col. 3:16), peace (Col. 3:15), long-suffering, gentleness, kindness, and meekness (Col. 3:12).

When love rules in our lives, it unites all these spiritual virtues so that there is beauty and harmony, indicating spiritual maturity. This harmony and maturity keep the life balanced and growing. The gnostic system could never do this.

The Peace of Christ (Col. 3:15)

In this verse Paul turned from character to conduct. How can a Christian know when he is doing God’s will? One answer is: the peace of Christ in the heart and in the church. When the believer loses his inner peace, he knows that he has in some way disobeyed God.

The word translated “rule” is an athletic term. It means “to preside at the games and distribute the prizes.” Paul used a variation of this word in his Letter to the Colossians: “Let no one declare you unworthy of a prize” (literal translation, Col. 2:18). In the Greek games, there were judges (we would call them *umpires*) who rejected the contestants who were not qualified, and who disqualified those who broke the rules.

The peace of God is the “Umpire” in our believing hearts and our churches. When we obey the will of God, we have His peace within; but when we step out of His will (even unintentionally), we lose His peace.

We must beware, however, of a false peace in the heart. Jonah deliberately disobeyed God, yet he was able to go to sleep in the hold of a ship *in a storm!* “I had peace about it!” is not sufficient evidence that we are in the will of God. We must pray, surrender to His will, and seek His guidance in the Scriptures. The peace of heart *alone* is not always the peace of God.

Something else is involved: if we have peace in our hearts, we will be at peace with others in the church. We are called to one body, and our relationship in that body must be one of harmony and peace. If we are out of the will of God, we are certain to bring discord and disharmony to the church. Jonah thought he was at peace, when actually his sins created a storm!

When a Christian loses the peace of God, he begins to go off in directions that are out of the will of God. He turns to the things of the world and the flesh to compensate for his lack of peace within. He tries to escape, but he cannot escape *himself!* It is only when he confesses his sin, claims God’s forgiveness, and does God’s will that he experiences God’s peace within.

When there is peace in the heart, there will be praise on the lips: “And be ye thankful” (Col. 3:15). The Christian out of God’s will is never found giving sincere praise to God. When David covered up his sins, he lost his peace and his praise (Ps. 32; 51). When he confessed his sins, then his song returned.¹

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 137–139.