

DON'T GO QUIET

Greeting / include those listening online.

Only a few weeks left in Colossians.

Incredible book ... looking at Jesus.

He is more than a great guy, wise teacher. → Lord of All.

Which means we pay close attention to what he says ... not just good advice ... life changing direction.

Even if you aren't a Christian yet, interested/exploring, trust its been helpful for you.

The past few weeks have been practicals on what it means to follow Jesus.

Last week we looked at what Christian's aren't.

[Take off old self / its practices]

This week we look at who we are. [Put on new self].

Colossians 3:9-10

9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

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This is more than “makeover.” → hair plugs. skinny jeans. whiter teeth.

God is changing us into someone new.

You may think, “Hold on! I look who I am ... I don't need to change.” →

your mom may agree, but ask someone else who really knows you. [might be shocked // just saying!]

We all know areas of our life we need to do better.

there are things about us that we would like to change.

But our vision of change is so small b/c we don't know what could be.

But God does!

Which is why he isn't making us a better version of ourselves.

He is doing a work of renewal → (changed into a new kind of person. Think ... New Creation.)

See, when we are born we get DNA that means we look/act like our parents.

We don't get a choice.

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- I got my parents DNA ... so that means ...
- **big nose, frankenstein eye sockets, freckly skin ...**
- but it also means I was fast and athletic **[emphasis on the WAS]**

Whether they want it or not, my kids got some or all of my DNA. [[yes, you should be praying for them]]

What happens when we are saved, we are RE-BORN // RENEWED // NEW CREATION ...

We have new spiritual DNA from a Heavenly Father.

This is a radically different thing.

[PAUSE]

We live in a day where we can nip and tuck our way to a different outward appearance.

[always wonder if it's confusing for kids // am I adopted?]

God doesn't save us and give us a little nip and tuck surgery.

He makes us a NEW CREATION.

Not a "Better Version" of ourselves ... something totally new.

And so we are changed ... not on the outward sense ...

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We are changed at the soul DNA level.

That is what is so radically different about the Gospel.

The change doesn't happen from the outside-in.

We don't behave our way into being a new creation.

We don't try to look a certain way, dress a certain way.

Which means the outward stuff stops being important.

It totally changes the way we see things.

Colossians 3:11

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Jesus gives us a new way of seeing.

Think about those categories.

Greek vs. Jew

Circumcised vs. Uncircumcised

Barbarian vs. Scythian

Slave vs. Free

These groupings were how people in Paul's day saw each other. → [Ethnic, Religious, Economic categories]

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Isn't comforting to know people haven't changed in 2000 years.

We may use different category names and groupings today, but we still love to separate people into categories.

And the same thing is felt now as it was then ...

You are either an insider or an outsider.

There are the "Have's" and the "Have Not's"

And depending on which group you are in, you either find solace or shame.

Now it says here that in the church ... in Jesus ... those identifiers are gone.

There aren't "Have's and Have Not's" in God's kingdom.

He places us all into one value category ...

Colossians 3:11b "Christ is All and In All."

Which means this ...

The single and dominating identity for every Christian is this:
In // Christ.

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In Christ we lay down every defining category except that one.

Now, that is harder than we think.

B/C it means letting go of privilege.

For some that means letting go of the privilege of power.

For others it's letting go of the privilege of outrage.

James 1:9-10

9 Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, 10 and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away.

If you are in the lowly brother category ... the natural way of thinking is outrage.

I'm in the Outsider, "Have-Not" group / Unfair

Jesus says, if you are lowly by culture's standards rejoice!!!

Confusing right ... but actually that lowliness gives you a leg up on understanding the Gospel.

The needy realize their need for Jesus.

Jesus himself, came as a lowly outsider.

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For those in the place of power ... we embrace that weakness.

It is harder for the rich to enter God's kingdom ... Jesus said that.

The rich have to confront that they won't live forever. All their possessions will rot and rust.

And the danger of power is that we see our need for Jesus.

OR, we believe that Jesus needs us.

See, "In Christ" ... the poor and powerful both move from their respective privilege that divides into their need for Christ that unites.

That is the power of the new self, of being a new creation.

This new way of seeing bring us together.

Which doesn't negate the possibility of friction ...

Actually, lots of potential for that ... but the new self is not just a new way of SEEING ... it's a new way of BEING.

Jesus gives us a new way of being.

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Colossians 3:12-15

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,

13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

14 And above all these **put on love**, which **binds everything together in perfect harmony**.

15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called **in one body**. And be thankful.

God brings us together by grace and keeps us together by grace.

There is no way we live In Christ this way w/o a total transformation.

If you look at that list and think ... “Check, check, check ... “

You need to run that by your spouse, a sibling, or a close friend, and they will help you “uncheck”.

God isn't saying you have to live this out perfectly all the time.

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But this is how God is renewing us more and more.

He is changing our very nature into what we long for but can't reach on our own.

When I think of a life of perfect harmony and peace ... it's somewhere up in the mountains far away from people ...

But God's idea of perfect harmony and peace is in His body, around His people.

That is crazy. B/C the more people you add to the mix the harder it is to keep harmony/peace.

Why? B/C we want things our way! We want to be in control!

STORY:

I was living in a neighborhood where some kids started a garage band.

They had passion but no ability.

They had noise but no harmony.

Which pretty much describes us before Jesus.

The music of our life wasn't pretty at all.

Now, these dudes in the garage got decent over time.

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Their timing got better and they hit the right notes more often than not.

But that doesn't come close to the radical change these verses are talking about here.

The body of Christ we are brought into isn't a 3 piece band playing Nirvana covers.

It's more like an orchestra playing a symphony.

In an orchestra there are many instruments playing many different parts that add to a harmonious whole.

Imagine if everyone decided they were going to break out into a solo. [Sit Down Kenny-G]

It wouldn't work. The music coming out would sound horrible!

But that is exactly what our "old self" wants to do.

Live for yourself ... break out into a solo. Live life on your own terms and timing.

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**But the new way of being isn't Guitar Hero.
It's in God's symphony that he is conducting.**

**Now, this is a difficult prospect, b/c it seems to devalue
our uniqueness as individuals.**

But that isn't the case.

God is for our individual(ness), but he is against
individual(ism).

EXPLAIN

**Individual(ness) values our uniqueness as it fits within
the greater whole.**

**The violinist has a unique piece to play, and it can sound
beautiful on its own ... but when it joins with the rest
of the orchestra ... OMG! It adds to the beauty of the
whole.**

Individual(ism), on the other hand, values uniqueness with
no regard to the greater whole.

Think a saxophonist deciding to do an impromptu solo
during Mozart. **[sit down Kenny G]**

It may have been an impressive individual effort, but it
ruined the music.

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The way of Jesus is a life where we are valued for our God-given uniqueness, AND we submit to play our part that adds to His greater symphony.

We are both God's chosen ones, holy and beloved.

AND,

we are called in ONE body.

So everytime we forgive ...

When we are compassionate to others ...

When we speak and act in kindness ...

When we are patient with each other ...

We are putting down the Guitar Hero solo, and picking up our piece in God's symphony.

And when that happens we experience perfect harmony and peace.

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EXAMPLE:

Counseling // someone told their spouse they were too harsh verbally with the kids ...

Could have resulted in arguing / conflict ...

Instead ... listened / humbled himself instead of defending himself.

Sought forgiveness ... sought repentance ... put on kindness and compassion, and jumped into the symphony.

I remember listening and thinking to myself, “No way that happens without God working in his heart.”

God gives us a radically different way of being...

and that leads to a radically different way of living...

Jesus gives us a new way of living.

Colossians 2:16-17

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

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17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

What this is saying is that our lives are to be filled by things that build up our worship.

When I say worship I don't mean a way of singing, but a way of living. ["Do Everything In the name of the Lord Jesus" // It's living for the Audience of One.]

Worship is surrendering all I am in response to the revelation of all God is.

But this isn't easy.

Surrendering our will, freedom, autonomy is never easy.

Why?

B/C of sin → Sin blocks worship.

Sin says don't surrender all. You could never be happy that way.

Surrender as little as possible ... God will be happy with the crumbs.

Think of it this way ...

Worship is a pathway that keeps our vision and hearts heavenward while we are firmly fixed in this life.

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Sin and society attempt to detour us off this pathway by offering up distractions, off-ramps, dead-end paths.

So what can we do to avoid those snares and stay walking in the path worship?

“Let the word of Jesus dwell richly within you...”
[Bible/Gospel]

Wisdom keeps us on the path of worship, and Wisdom is the Gospel.

Let it teach & guide you.

Let it admonish & correct you.

The Bible says this about itself: **its lamp to feet and a light to my path.**

Wisdom is like walking with a flashlight on a dark night.

We need the wisdom of God's word to dwell in us richly to guide our worship.

The wisdom of the Gospel shines a light on where we should and shouldn't go to avoid sin's trip-ups and detours.

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Wisdom is key, BUT there is another side to this coin of worship.

And that is thankfulness.

While wisdom keeps us on the path of worship ...

Thankfulness is the posture of worship.

Jesus warned a church in Revelation that they had all their doctrine right.

“Their wisdom high beams were on!”

They didn't misstep ...

But he had a big problem with them.

Their love for Jesus had grown cold.

Worship without thankfulness is like a movie without music.

You get the information, but nothing is stirring your soul.

Thankfulness is an appetite in our soul. We can feed it or starve by our habits.

The songs we sing, the Bible we read ... privately and together ... these are habits that build thankfulness.

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We practice those things because they cause us to behold Him.

And when we behold him, our thankfulness rises, and our worship is built.

And full of wisdom and thankfulness, the music of God's symphony becomes the song in our soul.

This new way of living, being and seeing ... isn't do better, try harder.

It is a message of surrender to God's grace.

Putting on the new self is just that ... it is the daily habit of surrender ...

NOT A CHRISTIAN:

Jesus is calling you to surrender it all.

He is calling you into something greater ...

When we break out of the smallness of the prison of ourselves and walk in the fullness of a God who is infinite [without measure] we experience a "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

If Jesus has made himself real to you today, respond by admitting your sin and trust him as your Savior.

Join us in God's symphony of grace.

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CHRISTIANS:

How is Jesus calling you to surrender today?

- We have CG's starting in September ...
- Practical way of giving up the Guitar Hero solo ...
- Build your worship and help build others.

COMMUNION:

- This is a meal of thanksgiving.
- We are celebrating the death that brought us into life.
- Jesus' broken body, blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins.
- By him we have a seat in God's symphony of grace.
- Come and eat with thanksgiving and as you eat may God fill us with thankfulness.