

Colossians 3:1-17

Legacy Standard Bible 2022

Fifth century or earlier manuscript variants: [inserted] [~replaced] [–omitted]

Learning objectives

- Participants will show more compassion.
- Participants will overcome moral weakness.
- Participants will worship joyfully.

Working Outline of Colossians 3:1-17

- I. Co-workers and I greet you. 1.1-2
- II. My co-workers and I write to strengthen you. 1.3–4.6
 - A. We thank and pray to God for you. 1.3-12
 - B. Because Christ ranks above all others. 1.13–3.17
 1. God brings us into Christ’s kingdom. 1.13 – 2.5
 2. Discern true and false Christians. 2.6 – 3.17
 - a. You learned to be true Christians. 2.6-7
 - b. You remain true Christians. 2.8-23
 - c. **You behave as true Christians. 3.1-16**
 - (1) **3.1-4 In light of Jesus’ return**
 - (2) **3.5-11 Leading a new life**
 - (3) **3.12-14 Forgiving one another**
 - (4) **3.15-16 In peace by the Word**
 - d. **3.17 Worship as Christians**
 - C. 3.18 – 4.6 Therefore You must behave as Christians
 - III. Co-workers and I share with you. 4.7-18

1 Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, [then] keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

If: First-class condition, ‘if’ plus indicative verb, assumed likely to be true.

Raised: Aorist (timeless), Passive (external cause), Indicative (reality).

Seeking: Present imperative (keep on...).

Seated: Present, Middle voice.

Mystics: Seek to experience in your mind the spiritual realities of another realm of existence.

Ascetics: Sensitize your mind and spirit by denying bodily comfort and desires.

Enthusiasts: Fast, pray, expect and wait until manifestations happen.

Charlatans: Preach loudly, play emotive music, coach helpers, invite enthusiasts to act out.

Right hand

Jesus cited Matthew 22:44 = Psalm 110:1 (LXX 109:1): ‘The LORD (Yahweh) says to my lord (*adoni*):

“Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”

Right hand: ‘imagery of power ... prestige’ BDAG.

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Query: How does this truth affect our faith? Our prayers? Our perseverance?

Query: What is something hard for us that we could ask Jesus to do, right now?

2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Set: Present active imperative, 'think about'.

Query: Why the present tense?

Query: What are some of those things above? Things on earth? (Keep reading...)

Query: What might such thinking lead us towards?

3 For you died and your life has been hidden with Christ in God.

Died: Aorist tense (timeless).

Life: What precisely is Paul talking about?

Hidden: Perfect tense (enduring result), passive.

Query: Hidden from whom? (Think widely.)

Query: Hidden where?

Query: Until when?

In God: 'in God's presence'

4 [And] When Christ, who is [y]our life, is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

With Christ:

1. buried (2:12),
2. raised (2:12),
3. made alive (2:13),
4. died (2:20),
5. raised up (3:1),
6. hidden (3:3),
7. will appear with (3:4)

1 Cor 15:22, **'As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.'**

Query: Everybody? What about having Christian faith?

5 Therefore, consider the members of [–your] earthly body as dead to sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry.

Query: How do Christian men gain victory over immoral, unnatural and perverted behaviour?

Query: What is 'greed' in this context?

Query: Why is such greed called 'idolatry'?

(a) Idol worship included temple prostitutes.

(b) Immorality makes our body a temple of an evil spirit, grieving the Holy Spirit of Christ.

Vice list A: The sins Paul lists here are typical sins that Gentile converts to Judaism would have committed before their conversion.

Jesus: **'If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out.'** Mark 9:43

Pagans: Postadolescent castration, which did not remove sexual desires.

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6 On account of these [–things], the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

Query: Why does the Bible make God seem so angry over carnal pleasures?

Disobedience: Violation of conscience, of family values, of social morés, of human laws, of church standards, of revealed Scripture.

Torah: ‘Multiply and fill the earth... A man will be joined to his wife... You must not...’

8 But now you also, lay them all aside: wrath, anger, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.

Lay aside: Aorist imperative (just do not).

Vice list B

- Wrath = wreak vengeance
- Anger = spiteful emotions
- Malice = plan to harm
- Slander = cause harm
- Obscene = scurrilous

9 Do not lie to one another, since you put off the old man with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new man who is being renewed to a full knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—

Lie: Present tense negative imperative (= stop!).

Put off/on: Aorist participles = how to stop!

Renewed: Present passive participle.

Image: ‘**Let Us make man in Our image, ... and let them rule.**’

Truth: Christians tame themselves by asserting Christ’s authority over their passions.

11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, [–and] freeman, but Christ is all and in all.

Query: How many social, cultural or legal changes must one make, before he can be baptized or join your church?

Query: Who are so uncouth or crude that Christ cannot change their moral behavior.

12 So, as the elect of God, holy [–and] beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and graciously forgiving each other, who-ever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord graciously forgave you, so also should you.

Describe:

- Compassion
- Kindness
- humility
- Gentleness
- Patience
- Gracious
- Forgiving

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Query: What and how much has the Lord graciously forgiven us?

Critique these common opinions:

- Forgive difference and immaturity constantly?
- Forgive offenses when asked to do so?
- Forgive thefts upon restoration?
- Forgive immorality upon proof of change?
- Do not forgive apostasy?

14 Above all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body, and be thankful.

Love, unity, peace, thanks: How do these actions work together.

Query: How is 'put on' an appropriate trope? (We must choose to show love, even before we feel love.)

Query: What American cultural value makes unity hard to achieve? (Individualism, maschismo)

"the body" in Colossians

1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. 18 And He is the head of the **body, the church...**

1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, ... on behalf of His **body, which is the church...**

2:19 Holding fast to the head, from whom the entire **body ... grows with a growth that is from God.**

3:15 you were called in one **body, and be thankful.**

16 Let the word of Christ [~the Lord] [~God] dwell in you richly, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grate-fulness in your hearts to God.

Of Christ: His words? About him? Word=Christ?

Methods: One main verb=dwell, rest participles:

(a) teaching = content, explanation: understanding.

(b) admonishing = application: motivation.

(c) singing (no 'with') = vocal response: joy.

Heart: preposition 'en' = in? with? from?

17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of [–the Lord] Jesus [Christ], giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Query: What does it mean 'in the Name of'?

(a) exercising authority delegated by the Lord?

(b) obeying instructions given by divine authority?

(c) making the Lord known to others?

(d) Conducting ourselves as Christians?

Query: How could we express thanks to God outside of church and home?