

# LIVING IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

## THE READING OF GOD'S WORD – COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

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.

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.

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.

Prayer

Warm up

Good morning my name is Eric Mattie I serve as one of the Elders here at LEFC. Pastor

The title of today's message is Living in the Life of Christ

Where we are in Chapter 3...

The apostle Paul is encouraging the Colossian believers that maturing in their spiritual lives does NOT consist of secret mystical revelation or self-punishing disciplines. Rather it is through understanding and living on the basis of the believer's union with Christ's death, resurrection and future appearing.

Now remember In Chapter 3 Paul is showing the Colossians how their identification in Christ leads to a new way of life.

For Paul, He is saying that our life is bound up in Christ who has done an inside work on giving us new life. Remember I went through the short list on how people summarize their life based on something external to them. But that is not how Paul see this at all.

So Paul summarizes that our life is now

- A union in Christ Resurrection v 1,2

- A union in Christ's Death v 3 and
- union in Christ appearing v 4

Last week I went through the front part of chapter 3 explaining both our union in Christ death and our union in Christ's appearing.

I highlighted not so much what Christ's death accomplished in satisfying the wrath of God and provide peace and forgiveness and eternal life. Those are all fruit of the Gospel and main components we rejoice as a Body that we are offered that grace.

Rather the aspect I focused on is what Christ death effected in our spiritual reality. It broke the ties that bind us to our old sinful self, the world and the devil.

- We are born again into a nature that has broken ties to sin,
- born again into sin that is canceled
- and born again with new ability to say no to sin.

And from that I challenged all of us to put to death sin in our own lives

So that's the review and I want to pick it up where I promised I would take this week and that is to look at the very first aspect about our union with Christ resurrection

New realize Paul's call to put sin to death is done so for a reason. And that reason is that is that we may have life and have it abundantly.

That abundant life is enjoyed by believers union in Christ resurrected life.

Let me give the main point of today's message then we will dive in.

Paul is saying in a nutshell in Chapter 3...

*Your Life in Christ is a Union in His Resurrection.*

*Therefore we are to be Living in the Life of Christ*

So here we have the main declarative idea

And then

And then main point of action

However each needs a little more explaining

## ***Your Life in Christ is a Union in His Resurrection***

### ***EXPLANATION AND BIBLICAL BASIS***

***“If then you have been raised with Christ,...” Colossians 3:1***

And again this points right back to chapter 2:12 where the apostle is declaring to them the reality that...

***“... you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.” Col 2:12***

Paul talks about the same powerful work of God in Romans:

***“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.***

***For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” Romans 6:4, 5***

- Paul is emphasizing that just as we are united in his death we are united in his resurrection.

In Galatians, Paul explains further that,

***I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20***

- That phrase “Christ who lives in me...” was again one of those phrases that escaped my early Christian walk.
- I mean the confusing phrases of having Christ in my heart and The Spirit filling me and now Christ living in me... how does that work? I mean does Jesus walk with a limp to now or am I like a muppet that some else controls me from the back?

## **THE ESSENCE OF CHRIST BEING OUR LIFE**

- Many will say that our life should look like the very verses I preached on last week. That it is a life centered around putting sin to death.
  - And I do concur that killing sin is an essential part of taking up our cross, denying our self and follow Jesus. It is a daily lifestyle of repentance.
  - I mean I have a website dedicated to that aspect called [killsin.com](http://killsin.com)

But while it is an essential part of the Christian’s daily walk, it is not the essence of Christ being our life.

We understand that just as there is a death that has happened, we also know a new creation has come into being.

In fact look at 2 Corinthians 4:16:

***“Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.”***

Colossian pinpoints by saying:

***“Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.*** ***Colossians 3:9, 10***

Two things we need to notice here:

1<sup>st</sup>: Just as I said that Conversion means Death. That conversion is not just a decision to become a Christian but to be a Christian means that death has happened in relationship to sins pull and binding of our lives

Well Conversion also means a new life

In conversion our old self with its impulses drives and passions were laid aside. And a new self was created- as it says here our new self was created by God. Its not just an improvement of our old self. It is a new birth. We are called new creations in the Bible

So conversion means new self.

2<sup>nd</sup> Notice that the new self in being renewed... in knowledge. In knowledge of what? In knowledge after the image of the creator.

- Let me put it like this: as new creations in Christ we will reflect more of the image of God who creates us and sustains us. Yet it is done through a day after day renewing of knowledge.
- This knowledge is, of course, knowledge of God,. Not just biblically reasonable theological knowledge. Though that is a start. But also a deeper and personal intimacy and understanding of who He is in terms of Christ and what that understanding means for living rightly.

Now growing in this knowledge doesn't happen automatically. Earlier in Colossians Paul prayed:

- ***And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom***

***and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; Colossian 1:9,10***

So putting on the new man is not something we first do. But rather it is someone we first know. and someone who we grow to know better.

Look at Romans where Paul uses the same clothing imagery

***But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. Romans 13:14***

The application point of putting on Christ is the same as we said last time Be what you Are..

**Be** on the outside

**What You**

**Are** on the inside

**Be** putting on the character of Christ

**What you**

**Are** in your union with Christ

So that is the explanation of the declarative statement

Let's devote the rest of time to main point of action

Living in the Life of Christ entails 3 mind sets that are reflected in these verses start back at verse 11. These three mindset are things we are to set our heart and mind on because they are about things above not on earthly things. They are the new orientation for the believer

Realize the Gospels aim is to raise men and women above the lower interests altogether and make them partakers of a higher kind of life.

So lets dive into it what that mean

## **Living in the Life of Christ entails:**

### **I. ADOPTION BY THE HEAVENLY FATHER (v. 11,12)**

#### **A. Good Father**

Whatever your father issues or parental dysfunction you may have experienced in your life time, the adoption of your new life in Christ by God the Father is greater, is better, and healthier.

In the Westminster Confession of Faith it says this about adoption... listen to these wonderful truths.

“God guarantees the adoption of all those who are justified in and for the sake of his only son, Jesus Christ. Those adopted enjoy the liberties and privileges of God’s children, have his name put on them, receive the Spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, and are enabled to cry, Abba, Father. They are pitied, protected, provided for, and disciplined by him as a father. They are never cast off, however, and are sealed until the day of redemption and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation”

## **B. Chosen Children, Holy and Beloved**

Paul highlights that the Colossian believers are to consider themselves...

***“as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, Col 3:12***

- These Colossian believers are being addressed with exalted titles. God’s Chosen (or elect) holy and beloved.
- These titles were used of Israel as God’s own possession and people.

***“For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7 It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but it is because the Lord loves you...”***

### ***Deuteronomy 7:6-8***

- The Lord set His love upon Israel for no other reason than that he loved them
- In singling them out this way(in choosing them), God called them to be a holy nation
- So it is with us today God sets his love on you for no other reason than that he chose to love you. He calls you holy

## **C. new Humanity in Christ**

So it is in this community of believer. We are adopted into a new family. Our new family is also a new humanity.

You see Right after Paul appeals to “Put on the new self” in vs 10 he says:

***“Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all”. Colossians 3:11***

- As new creations in Christ it is not just sinful habits and attitudes that are done away.
- Since Christ is our life and we have union within his resurrected life, **we live in the Life of Christ in a corporate re-creation of humanity in the Creators image.**
- It is the body of Christ that we are now a part of.
- It is a new humanity living in the Life of Christ where barriers that divide human beings from one another is done away with as well.
- Greek and Jew were divided by ethnicity, religion and culture. The canyon between them was immense.
- And Paul says: Where people have died with Christ and been created as a new self in the image of God, this canyon will not stop love and fellowship. The reference to barbarians and Scythians is a reference to the way the cultured Romans and Greeks viewed anyone whose speech or manners or habits were foreign and unrefined.
- If you have died with Christ and been created as a new self in the image of God, these kinds of differences will not stop love and fellowship. The reference to slave and free is a reference to the deepest divisions of class. Here are the seeds of the end of slavery.
- Living in the Life of Christ
  - There is no racial barrier.. like that between the Gentile and Jew
  - There is no religious barrier as the reference to circumcision and uncircumcision indicates.
  - There is no cultural barrier which divided the Greek and barbarians or even the Scythian.
  - There is no social barrier as there was between the slave and those who were free.
- Within the community of Christ these barriers were irrelevant. Where these differences exist, **the gospel ignores them all.**

Paul says: "Christ is all and in all."

- The Christ who lives in each of his people is the Christ that binds us together as one.

### **PREACH:**

This truth is to be lived out today as we are adopted Children of the most High God. New Creations in Christ. A new united humanity being renewed under the image of the Creator... who with other believers we may have no other earthly affiliation of interest, hobbies, political standings, social opinions, or like personalities.

We are united Because Christ is all: He is all that matters in our union with one another. He is also "in all" who believe, regardless of class, background or color.

- We best remember that lest we ignore the most shy in our midst on Sunday morning and miss the chance to build them up or to be built up.
- We best remember that lest we let lesser issues of arguments, and debates we have today dethrone Christ as what truly hold us together.

That's first one Living in the Life of Christ entails an adoption by the heavenly Father  
Let's look at the second mindset

*Living in the Life of Christ entails:*

## **2. ABIDING IN THE SON**

### **A. Chosen Holy and Beloved, like Christ**

The description for the Colossians being chosen, holy and beloved are not only important because they were used of Israel as God's own people and possession.

But these descriptions were also designated of Christ. This highlights the point of their identification with Christ. That they have a union with Christ

### **B. Abiding:What it means.**

Christ gives us a word picture about this union when he spoke about the vine and the branches.

***Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me John 15:4***



- What does “abide” mean? Similar ideas to help this meaning are words like continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain.
- Here in John and ultimately in our discussion of our Life in Christ, we are to dwell or remain in our union with Christ.
- By our Grace empowered union with Christ we are to put forward the initiative efforts as new creations in Christ to remain and obey his Word.
- We are to remember the gospel and the union we enjoy in it.
  - It is not only to adopt the mindset of things above- heavenly things kingdom things. Eternal things
  - But also to adapt our life to the Life of Christ here below living on earth.

### **c. Abiding: Reflected in this passage**

This abiding in the Son is reflected here in our main passage when Paul instructs the Colossians:

***“let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in one body. And Be thankful. 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.” Colossians 3:16***

There are 2 important words that give us insight in how we are to abide in the Son and as a result Live our life in Christ

#### **1. The first word is rule. “Let the peace of Christ rule.” v15**

- The peace of Christ mentioned here is not peace with God we experience in being reconciled and saved by God
- Neither is it an inner peace of a contented satisfied heart

Within the Colossian community, differences were threatening to break the unity of this body of Christ. Paul is saying to let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

- That word rule means to umpire like: to render verdicts in contested situations.

Paul is saying let peace be the decisive factor and the preference over competing concerns within this new life and fellowship

***So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.***

***Romans 14:19***

*PREACH:*

*Without abiding in the Son Jesus, living in harmony and peace with a community of “in process believers” in Christ who have not yet been perfected , is impossible.*

Paul understands this and tells the believers--- and ultimately us-

***“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.***

### ***Colossian 3:13***

- As the Lord bears with us, do we bear with each other.
- As we have been graciously dealt with, do we deal graciously with others?

By abiding in the Son- that is remaining and dwelling and, at times submitting to the assumed Lordship of God the Son, believers should relate to one another that facilitates and demonstrates the peace that Christ has secured for them.

Are we abiding in the Son to allow that change of motivation come from Him and to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts. Genuinely??

## **2. The second word is richly: let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly. v16**

Make no mistake on this one: Paul is again appealing to the message that proclaims Christ AS **THE** message that should be central and supreme in their activities and worship

It is not a superficial or passing reference. But it should be a deep and penetrating contemplation that enables the message to have transforming work in the life of the Colossians

The Bible is relevant It speaks to which we are to live and view and enjoy this life we have here on earth in Christ.

So When we see the words...

“Put on then...Compassionate hearts, kindness...” etc etc

‘Bearing with one another... forgiving one another... let love bind these virtues etc etc

All these commands of action... all these commands to putting on attitudes, It is about obedience from the genuine right spirit. And a love that it should be properly motivated in

a new community of God created Christ followers... and all this is only fruit that comes out of our true union with Jesus and abiding in Him!

Let this Scripture this life giving word permeate and fuel you life in Christ.

Recommendation: Dwell PHONE App

- hearing the word of God
- With emotive voices and great background
- They have reading plans, including the one that we are doing as a church
- They have playlists that are topical of God's steadfast love, the Gospel, dealing with loneliness or anger fixing our eyes on Jesus
- The passages, full books of the bible every genre and specific stories
- I'm on the 90 day trial for 99cents it's been very encouraging I'm think of getting the lifetime subscription because this group has done this well.

So that all is the second mindset Living in the Life of Christ entails abiding in the Son

Let's look at the last one

Third mindset:

Living in the Life of Christ entails:

### **3. AWARENESS OF THE SPIRIT**

***Put on then..***

***compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.***

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

***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.***

***Colossians 3:12, 14, 17***

Living in the Life of Christ entails an awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit

#### **A The Spirits work to manifest Fruit**

- These verses call all believers to put on attitudes that are most recognized as characteristic of Jesus Christ. They are all fruit of the Spirit

Now just as every call, command, precept and instruction that is given to believers have with them the gracious empower to fulfill and obey Scripture,

when we are instructed to manifest what only the Spirit of the living God, the Third Person of the Trinity can do,

- we are to be keenly aware that our Living in the Life of Christ is simultaneously us living with in the power of the Holy Spirit
- and we are in a cooperative God sustained synergistic relationship that allows that fruit... perhaps needed in that moment... to allow our new self to react.

When we are weak he will be strong. We just need to be keenly aware of the Spirit prompting and His work at that moment.

### **B. The Spirit's work to magnify Christ**

- In verse 17 It is also driven home strongly that everything in our life including word and deed is to be governed in this new life of Christ that is empowered by Holy Spirit.
- The totality of our existence must now be lived out with Lord Jesus on our minds.

This causes us to ask ourselves "can I do what I'm going to do in the name of Jesus Christ. "Can I say what I want say in the name of Jesus Christ". Am I putting on the new self and thereby exalting Christ is everything.

Jesus said that the work of the Holy Spirit was to glorify Jesus. Are keenly aware when Spirit want to magnify Christ is everything do and say?

Living in the Life of Christ is all about acting and speaking in humbly ways that show honor to Him. As it is motivated by Him so that others would be drawn to Him

Let's pray