

:00 (1) If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above --- where Christ is --- seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

(5) Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you once walked, when you were living in them.... But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

(9) 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. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free: but Christ is all and in all.

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

Think on these things:

- 1) What analogy is used in vs. 9, 12 to describe our lives changing from the bad ways which lead to God's wrath to the holy ways that mark us as children of salvation? Is it really that simple? Explain (also skim Romans 7:15-25).

The analogy seems to be that of taking clothing off and putting on new ones. Put off, put on! Is it this simple? No. It's simple to grasp, but hard to do. Paul's discourse in Romans is that we want to do right things, but regularly find ourselves doing wrong things. Even when we try hard not to do wrong things, we succumb and do them anyway. These mind-game losses bring a lot of self-condemnation. Paul cried out (v.25) that deliverance from this cycle is only found in Jesus!

- 2) What truth are we given in v.10 about the "new man"? See 2 Corinthians 4:16 and Ephesians 4:20-24.

V.10 says that the new man is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Instead of the things of man (which we've grown up with), a "new man" is being renewed in God's knowledge. 2 Cor. says that while our bodies decline, our inner (new) man is being renewed (strengthened) day-by-day. Ephesians says the new self, being created in the likeness of God, is the work of the Spirit on our minds, bringing us to righteousness and holiness.

- 3) Notice the contrast. The “old man” who provokes the wrath of God is described as behaving immorally, driven by lusts and passions and impure thoughts, focused on getting what others have, while internally consumed by anger and harboring hostility towards others, destroying them publicly with hateful speech filled with vulgarities and obscenities. It is an undisciplined and unchecked, out-of-control lifestyle.

Conversely, the “new man” who is holy and beloved by God shows compassion and kindness to others, gently deferring to their needs, and in patience showing tolerance and being willing to forgive. Their grounded lives are motivated and marked by love, peace (calmness), gratitude, and obedience to God’s Word.

Paul’s big idea here is to contrast two lifestyles: the life we come from, and the life we are to embrace. As you look at these traits, which one more closely describes you at this time? What do you need to put off so you can put on something better?!

Personal answers will vary, but this is a good discussion question.

- 4) What is the “contingency” requirement to experience God’s forgiveness (v.13, Matthew 6:9-15)? Here in v.13 and Ephesians 4:1-3 we are counseled to bear with --- put up with --- one another. We can be so different from one another, and yet our focus and efforts need to promote a local church unity and a united front for all Christianity.

As we “receive” forgiveness from God, we are to “extend” forgiveness to others. Colossians gives this as a command; Matthew gives this as a warning. It’s easy to identify differences between ourselves and others in church, and, if we focus on the differences, it may be hard to be unified and linked together in the body. We have to choose to pursue peace and harmony in relationships, focusing on things we have in common. Where we can’t agree, we may have to tolerate (fore bear with one another) -- providing it’s not a matter of eternal life and death!

- 5) What “binds everything together in perfect harmony” (v.14)? Notice a parallel in Galatians 5:22-23. It is “above all things” (v.14), that is, the most important piece of the puzzle, the motivation underlying why we now do what we do.

LOVE is above all things --- the most important! It is the fruit of the Spirit, from which all other qualities emanate.

- 6) One overall theme is touched on in verses 15, 16, and 17. Can you identify it?

Thanksgiving to God (giving thanks).

- 7) When God’s Word richly dwells within our hearts and minds, we ought to be able to do what (v.16)? Reviewing Ephesians 5:18-21, being filled with the Holy Spirit often leads to what kind of expressiveness? Examples can be found in Mark 14:26 and Acts 16:25

With God’s Word? **We can teach and admonish one another in wisdom, plus lift up praise to God in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.**

Holy Spirit? **Filled by the Spirit, we engage believers in our praise to God in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs as we make melody in our hearts. Further, we are filled with thanksgiving for everything God brings into our lives, and we become willing to submit to one another...!**

V.17 can serve as a life motto: **Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the Name of Jesus.**

People and situations I want to pray for this week: