

“Equipping believers for growth and service by encountering God through his word.”

THE BIBLE FOR TODAY
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OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS

Greetings (1:1-2)

The Themes (1:3-2:5)

A. Thanksgiving

B. Prayer and Meditation

C. Paul's Ministry and Reason for Writing

Appeal for Christian Maturity (2:6-4:6)

A. Continue in Christ

B. Let No One Exclude You

C. Live in Accordance with Life of Christ

Final Greetings (4:7-18)

APPEAL FOR CHRISTIAN MATURITY

- Believers are dead to sin; alive in Christ
- Paul teaches that we are called to live ethically and theologically connected in this world
- False teachers imply “sensual indulgences” can be caged; but they still exist and can escape/ explode out in any moment
- In Christ, we are transformed; the nature of the believer is changed at the root
- Continuing the old way of life continues the division and deterioration of humanity; the new life enhances and changes life for the right now

^{3:1}Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

- “set”—seek, search for something with desire to possess it
- “mind”—determined to keep focused and live it; “those who have ears let them hear”
- “above”—not a location; eternal contrasted with the transitory; “on earth as it is in heaven”
- “hidden”—a mystery of this new relationship, but has quality of God at work in us now—not just in the future

Colossians 3:5-11

- Similar list in Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Peter; early teaching of the church
- Not one list of the bad over the other; both to be avoided—taken off
- Cut these off, they infect your whole body (Mt. 5:29-30; 18:8-9); cut them off without pity; harboring them leads to death
- “sexual immorality”— any intercourse outside of marriage
- “impurity”— contamination of character by immoral behavior
- “lust”— uncontrolled sexual passion/ urges that lead to sin

- “evil desires”— harboring, entertaining a temptation that allows it to grow; pursued to satisfaction
- “greed”—unchecked hunger for physical pleasure; to have more, take from another

Internal/ hidden from view:

- “anger”— smoldering, seething hatred
- “rage”— caged desires released
- “malice”— evil intent to cause hurt

External/ verbal:

- “slander”— dishonors the image of God in another person
- “filthy language”— foul or abusive words
- “lying”—not telling the truth/ self focus in what we say

Take off old/ put on new:

- “rid yourself” “take off”
- Practice of baptism of old clothes replaced with white robes (symbolizing new life)
- “renewed image of Christ”– we lost this in garden, God is re-creating us in Christ; destroying the old nature; “renewal is continuous via an outside source”
- As we more fully know Christ, we will make more mature moral decisions
- Called to move away from past life with help of the community; not just *intend* to do it, but do it

RENEWED HUMANITY

3:11 Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

- Obliteration of what divides us; result of being new in Christ; Racial, religious, social, cultural, economic divisions overcome
- “The creation of a new humanity (the church as the body of Christ) is one of the wonderful truths of the gospel.” Patzia
- An individual and corporate witness that we are new people in Christ; seeing the image of God in all people; treating them as God’s creation

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST: HOLY PEOPLE

- “*compassion*”— “bowels of mercy;” authentic from the heart; deep sensitivity of needs and sorrows of others; action taken
- “*kindness*”— gracious and empathetic; genuinely concerned with wellbeing of others
- “*humility*”—spirit of modesty and disregard of status; our attitude toward others
- “*gentleness*”—consideration, submission when we approach others; comes out of humility
- “*patience*”—may have right to retaliate but choose to exercise patience; our reaction
- “*forgiveness*”—we know forgiveness; forgive others

LOVE: outer garment, cf., 1 Cor. 13

3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

- Inner peace— ruling in us; personal peace allows us to be at peace with others
 - Peace to deal with disagreements at the deepest level, not just absence of outward hostility
 - “Peace of Christ”— an umpire, arbitrator of how we should respond
- “You are at peace in Christ—through him—now live out that peace with others—personally and corporately.” Patzia

Be thankful, for what God did, does, and is doing daily in your life.

THE BIBLE FOR TODAY

- To seek Christ and study his word with determined focus.
- We cannot do this of human nature but only as we allow the Holy Spirit to be at work in us.
- Pray without ceasing for the power of Christ to be in our hearts; to root out the old nature, not merely cage it.
- The body of Christ: a place were there is a new humanity living together; a place of peace not constant conflict.
- Be thankful in life for all we have and have been given.