

5. How Then Shall We Live? Putting On the New Man

Colossians 3:10-17

Last time we looked at putting off the old man. What we need to get rid of in our lives. And we know we can't do any of this without the Holy Spirit within us to do these things for us. Now we look at putting on the new man. The things, again with the Holy Spirit's help, we need to nurture.

[10] And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.

The new man is said to be ***“renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created Him.”*** Man was originally *“made in the image of God.”* But we lost that after the fall. And when we receive the new birth, we gain it again, it's ***“renewed”*** in us. An equivalent passage in Ephesians says:

Ephesians 4:24

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

So the *“image of God”* involves three things: knowledge (spiritual), righteousness and holiness, all of which were lost at the fall, and are regained on receiving the new birth.

[11] Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

In the world there are divisions. To the Jew, the big division was that of Jew and Gentile (Greek). Circumcised and uncircumcised. But there are other divisions. Each nation is a division in itself, Barbarian, Scythian etc. There are social divisions, like the one between slave and free. These are all outward divisions. But in reality, only one division matters. The division between those who've received this new birth, and those who haven't. Only if we have received the new birth can we begin to mortify the old man and put on the new man. And here we've got a list of things to nurture:

[12] Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. [13] Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

God's chosen people, those who've been ***“risen with Christ,”*** are ***“holy and beloved.”*** We're holy, separate from the world. Still in the world, but not of it. These are the things we should be nurturing: ***“bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.”*** What have they all got in common? They're all fruit of the Spirit. At this point we need to look at a similar passage in Galatians:

Galatians 5:19-21

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

So there's a list of things to mortify. Then a list of the fruit of the Spirit:

Galatians 5:22-25

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

That's not an exhaustive list, there are others. The natural man can't do any of these things. Only the Spirit of God living within us can do them. These are what we should nurture. These are our witness. We're in this world for one purpose: to grow fruit.

John 15:5

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Notice in this list of fruit: love, peace, faith. The unregenerate man can't produce these things. They're fruit of the Holy Spirit. So any love and peace they seem to have is false.

Back to Colossians 3:

[14] And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Charity, or love is "***the bond of perfectness.***" It's the greatest of the spiritual fruit.

1 Corinthians 13:13

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Romans 13:10

love is the fulfilling of the law.

[15] And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

The peace of God should rule in our hearts, not our lusts and desires. That's what we're called to. And thankfulness. Thankfulness keeps us humble, because it makes us realise that we don't deserve anything at all in this world. In fact all we deserve is God's wrath.

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

Remember, we're to "**set out affection on things above.**" To do this, we must let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. We should teach and admonish one another from it. And we're to do it "**in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.**" We should use God's word frequently. And we should be a joyful, singing people.

[17] And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

So what is it to be a good witness to the world around us? How should we be different from everybody else? It's not in outward appearance, in putting on an external show. But it's the "*inner self,*" "*a gentle and quiet spirit,*" "*simplicity and godly sincerity.*" Here's a summary of how to live. Let's evangelise the world. But let's make sure we do it as holy, godly, Christ-like people. Only then can our witness be truly effectual.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.