

In past weeks, we have been looking at what Paul warns us to avoid and put off... those things associated with corrupt world systems and our old sinful nature. Then last week we looked at what we are, as new creations in Christ, to put on... those things associated with our new and redeemed nature.

This week we will be looking at ways God has provided to help keep us on those paths; of putting off the old and putting on the new.

1. Col 3:15ff. *“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 richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”*
 - a. After these words, Paul goes on to give instruction in regards to specific relationships; between husbands and wives, father and child, and slave and master (employer and employee).
 - b. We see an identical pattern in chapters 5 and 6 of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. Here we also find a parallel passage to our text in Colossians
2. Eph 5:18ff. *“be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”*
 - a. “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts”
 - i. Same thought in Phil 4:6 *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*
 - ii. The “peace of Christ” acts as both a guard over your heart and thoughts as well as a ruler, or judge (arbiter)
 1. A peace; a confidence...
 - a. Regarding truth and reality
 - b. Regarding our place, purpose, and provision; confidence in God’s love and care for us
 - c. Regarding our destiny
 2. It makes it easy to follow and to trust; to yield our spirits to His.
 - iii. Conversely, lack of peace... anxiety and worry... are breeding grounds for doubt... for disillusion... for desertion...; leading to sin of all kinds

1. It derails our salvation
 - a. Remember the parable of the sower?
 - i. Luke 8:14 *“The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.”*
 2. It inhibits our sanctification
 - a. James 1:5 *“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”*
- iv. This confidence... this peace... leads to the next “promoter” of our sanctification; That of a thankful heart
1. Col 3:15 “and be thankful”; Eph 5:20 *“always giving thanks for all things”*
 - a. As we meditate upon His provision and care for us, it increases our trust, love and thankfulness toward our Lord. In recognizing His great love for us we, in turn, are able to able to increase in our love for Him and for our neighbor.
 - i. 1 John 4:16ff. *“We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. 17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. 19 We love, because He first loved us.”*
 2. Thankfulness is an antidote and preventative to selfishness and fear
- b. The next “promoter” of Christian growth... of sanctification... is to be continually under the influence of God’s Spirit. Expressed two ways...
- i. Eph 5:18 *“be filled with the Spirit”*
 - ii. Col 3:16 *“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you”*

1. Composed of two parts or steps
 - a. Having the word of God indwelling your heart and mind
 - i. “dwell” means to “be at home”. It is comfortable there. It is not in conflict or uncomfortable
 - ii. Ps 119:11ff. *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee... I will meditate on Your precepts And regard Your ways. 16 I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.”*
 - b. Yielding to that word... that truth... acting under the control of God’s Spirit.
 - i. It is hard to yield to something or someone that you do not know. The knowledge of God’s will and being is displayed in His word. And the understanding and trust in that knowledge make it possible to joyfully yield.

1. Joyfully, not grudgingly. Story of Jonah

- a. Jonah 3:1ff *“Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you.” 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the LORD... When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it. But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry.”*

- c. Next; Participation in mutual edification

- i. Col 3:16 *“with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”*
- ii. Eph 5:19 *“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”*

1. There is a sense of joy. Doesn’t this depict a joyous scene?

- a. Acts 2:44ff. *“And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as*

anyone might have need. 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people.”

2. There is a sense of family; of mutuality and belonging

a. 2 Cor 11:29 *“Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?”*

b. 1 Cor 12:18ff. *“But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. 19 If they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now there are many members, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary”*

3. There is a sense of worship

a. While we are worshipping God together, we are also teaching, and encouraging and admonishing each other through the process.

d. Which brings us to our next promoter of sanctification; worship

i. Col 3:16 *“singing with thankfulness (grace) in your hearts to God”*

ii. Eph 5:19 *“singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord”*

1. Our worship of God keeps His character and glory in front of us.

a. 2 Cor 3:18 *“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory”*

e. Bringing it together

i. Letting the peace of God determine your understanding, attitude and actions

ii. Maintaining a heart of thanksgiving; aware of His mercies and ongoing grace

iii. Filling our hearts with His word so that we can live uprightly ... yielding to His Spirit

iv. Taking joy in our mutual edification; teaching... encouraging... and exhorting

v. Keeping God’s face and presence before us as we bow our knee before Him

vi. Paul joins all these things together in his last admonitions

1. Col 3:17 *“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”*

a. “In the name of” is “in keeping with His character and will”

i. Eph 5:21 calls it “in the fear (reverence) of Christ”

3. These are the things which underlie Paul’s ability to say and affirm in Phil 1:21; *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”* Let that be the expression of our hearts as well.

Let us pray