

Monday 3/21**Col. 3:12-15 (13-15)**

12 ¹Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones, ²holy and beloved, inward parts of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering;

13 Bearing one another and forgiving ¹one another, if anyone should have a complaint against anyone; even as the ²Lord forgave you, so also should you forgive.

14 And over all these things put on ¹love, which is the uniting bond of ²perfectness.

15 And let the ¹peace of Christ ²arbitrate in your hearts, to ³which ⁴also you were called in one Body; and be ⁵thankful.

Related Verses**1 John 4:16**

16 And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.

Col. 2:2

2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,

1 Cor. 13:4, 13

4 Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up;

13 Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

John 14:27

27 Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Rom. 12:10

10 Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another.

2 Cor. 5:14-15

14 For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;

15 And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

Portions from the footnotes**Col. 3:12¹ Put**

Put on here is in the sense of putting on a garment.

Col. 3:12² holy

To be holy means to be not common or worldly but separated unto God. See note 2¹ in ch. 1.

Col. 3:13¹ one

Lit., yourselves.

Col. 3:13² Lord

The forgiving Lord is our life and lives within us; forgiving is a virtue of His life. When we take Him as our life and person and live by Him, our forgiving of others will be spontaneous — it will become a virtue of our Christian life.

Col. 3:14¹ love

God is love (1 John 4:16). Love is the very essence of God's being, the very substance of the divine life. Hence, to put on love is to clothe ourselves with the element of God's life. Such a love is the uniting bond in the combination of perfectness, completeness, and mature virtues. We need to put on not only the new man (v. 10) but also the virtues of the new man (v. 12), and to put on love over all the virtues (v. 14).

Col. 3:14² perfectness

Or, completeness.

Col. 3:15¹ peace

The peace of Christ is Christ Himself. By this peace Christ has made the two peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles, one new man, and this peace has become a part of the gospel (Eph. 2:14-18). We should let this peace arbitrate in our hearts for the Body life.

Col. 3:15² arbitrate

Or, umpire, preside, be enthroned as a ruler and decider of everything. The arbitrating peace of Christ in our hearts dissolves the complaint mentioned in v. 13.

Col. 3:15³ which

Which refers to the peace of Christ. We were called to this peace in the one Body of Christ. For the proper Body life we need the peace of Christ to arbitrate, to adjust, and to decide all things in our heart in our relationship with the members of His Body.

Col. 3:15⁴ also

That we were called to the peace of Christ should also be a motive for our letting this peace arbitrate in our hearts.

Col. 3:15⁵ thankful

We not only should let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our hearts, but we also should be thankful to the Lord. In the Body life our heart should always be in a peaceful condition toward the members and should be thankful to the Lord.

Portions from the Life-study messages

When the peace of Christ is enthroned in our hearts to be the unique umpire within us, we shall have peace with God vertically and with the saints horizontally. We praise the Lord that we are enjoying peace, and in this peace the church life as the new man is preserved! As the peace of Christ arbitrates in our hearts, the renewing of the new man takes place continually. If we stay under the ruling of the enthroned peace of Christ, we shall not offend others or damage them. Rather, by the Lord's grace and with His peace, we shall minister life to others. The oneness in a local church and among the churches is not maintained by human endeavoring. It is maintained only by the arbitrating peace of Christ. The management and maintenance of the Lord's recovery are not our responsibility. All the churches and the recovery as a whole are under the arbitrating peace of Christ. In us Christ is the supplying grace and the arbitrating peace.

May we be encouraged to set our mind on the things above so that the heavenly transmission may bring the divine substance into our being for the renewing of the new man. Then Christ in the particular aspect of peace will arbitrate in our hearts, and the Lord will have a way to build up the new man and prepare the bride for His coming. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 567-568)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 18 – Sections: Identifying The Central And Peripheral Matters In The Bible; The Bible Having Central As Well As Peripheral Matters; The Central Matter In The Bible—God In The Son Coming To Be Life To Man

Tuesday 3/22

Col. 3:15-16

15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.

16 Let the ¹word of Christ ²dwell in you ³richly ⁴in all wisdom, ⁵teaching and admonishing ⁶one another with ⁷psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, ⁵singing with ⁸grace in your hearts to God.

Related Verses

Eph. 2:14, 17

14 For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity,

17 And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near,

John 15:7

7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

Col. 3:10-11

10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

Col. 2:7

7 Having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being established in the faith even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Portions from the footnotes

Col. 3:16¹ word

The word spoken by Christ. In His New Testament economy God speaks in the Son, and the Son speaks not only by Himself in the Gospels but also through His members, the apostles and prophets, in Acts, in the Epistles, and in Revelation. All these speakings can be considered His word.

In this passage the infilling of spiritual life that overflows in praising and singing is related to the word,

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whereas in the parallel passage, Eph. 5:18-20, the infilling of spiritual life is related to the Spirit. This indicates that the word is the Spirit (John 6:63b). A normal Christian life should be one that is filled with the word, that the Spirit may bubble over with praise and lauding melodies from within the believers.

This book is focused on Christ as our Head and life. The way for Him to exercise His Headship and minister His riches to us is through His word. Hence, the emphasis is on the word of Christ. Ephesians is concerned with the church as the Body of Christ. The way for us to live a normal church life is to be filled in our spirit unto all the fullness of God. Hence, the Spirit is emphasized. In Ephesians both the Holy Spirit and our spirit are emphasized again and again; the word is even considered to be the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). However, in this book each of the two spirits is mentioned only once (1:8; 2:5). In Ephesians the word is for washing away our natural life (Eph. 5:26) and fighting against the enemy (Eph. 6:17), whereas in this book the word is for revealing Christ (1:25-27) in His preeminence, centrality, and universality.

Col. 3:16² dwell

Lit., to be in a house, to indwell, to inhabit. The word of the Lord must have adequate room within us that it may operate and minister the riches of Christ into our inner being.

Col. 3:16³ richly

The riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8) are in His word. Such a rich word must inhabit us richly.

Col. 3:16⁴ in

The phrase in all wisdom may also be placed so as to modify teaching and admonishing.

Col. 3:16⁵ teaching

Teaching and admonishing and singing modify the verb dwell. This indicates that the way to let the Lord's word dwell in us richly is by teaching, admonishing, and singing.

Col. 3:16⁶ one

Lit., yourselves.

Col. 3:16⁷ psalms

We should teach and admonish not only with words but also with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Portions from the Life-study messages

It is significant that only in the book of Colossians, a book that deals with culture and its isms and practices, does Paul speak of the inward arbitration of the peace of Christ. This arbitrator calms down all the opinions which have their source in our culture.

When the peace of Christ calms our opinions, the word of Christ, which is to dwell in us richly, replaces them. Instead of our opinions, we then have the word of Christ. The New Testament reveals clearly that the word of Christ is the Spirit. Furthermore, Christ today is the life-giving Spirit. Our Christian life is altogether a matter of Christ as the living Spirit. We do not need isms, philosophies, practices, or observances. We need the experience of Christ as the life-giving Spirit.

[Paul] emphasizes, on the one hand, the peace of Christ and, on the other hand, the word of Christ. Some of us may think that as long as our spirit is living, everything is all right. Perhaps you have not realized the need for [these two experiences]...If we let the peace of Christ work in us and the word of Christ dwell in us, we shall be proper Christians. Instead of our preferences, we shall have Christ's arbitration. Instead of our opinion, concept, thought, and estimation, we shall have the Christ's word. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 277, 246-247)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 18 – Sections: Four Peripheral Matters In The Bible; The First Category—Consolation in Sufferings

Wednesday 3/23

Col. 3:16-17

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with ⁸grace in your hearts to God.

17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, do all things in the ¹name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Related Verses**Rom. 10:17**

17 So faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

1 Thes. 1:8

8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded out; not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but in every place, your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need of saying anything.

John 6:63

63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

Eph. 6:17-18

17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Eph. 5:26

26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

John 15:7

7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

Portions from the footnotes**Col. 3:16⁸ grace**

See notes 14⁶ and 17¹ in John 1.

Col. 3:17¹ name

The name denotes the person. The Lord's person is the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17a). To do things in the name of the Lord is to act in the Spirit. This is to live Christ.

Portions from the Life-study messages

Immediately after speaking about the peace of Christ arbitrating in us, Paul goes on to tell us to let the word of Christ dwell in us. Why does Paul mention the peace of Christ before the word of Christ? The answer to this question is related to the basic principle revealed in the Bible that God's speaking requires oneness. Whenever God's people are divided, His word becomes rare. God does not speak where there is division.

Division causes God's speaking to diminish, even to cease altogether.

At Babel mankind was confused, confounded, divided, and scattered. There the corporate man created by God was divided. But by His death on the cross Christ cancelled the confusion and division of Babel. He has made peace both vertically and horizontally. Thus, on the day of Pentecost, Christ could come down upon the believers as the uniting Spirit and bring forth the church in a practical way. At Pentecost those who spoke many different languages became one.

Although Christ nullified division to produce oneness, today's Christianity has destroyed the oneness and produced division.... Because there is no oneness, there is no center, no oracle, for God's speaking....When the peace of Christ arbitrates in us and keeps us in a situation full of oneness and harmony, we become the place of God's speaking, His oracle. Deep in my spirit I realize that the meetings are an oracle, a place where God can come in to speak.

[Verse 16] indicates that the word of Christ should be able to make its home in us....We all must confess that many times the Lord's word has come to us, but we did not give it adequate room within us. Instead, we limited the word of God and restricted it. Sometimes we do receive God's word, but we do not give it the freedom to make its home in us. Let me ask you, in your experience is the word of Christ first, or are you first? I do not believe that anyone can say that first place is always given to God's word. Sometimes we may give preeminence to the word of Christ and allow it to be first. However, much more often we ourselves are first. In a secret way we keep the first place for the self. Outwardly we may act as if the first place is reserved for the word of God. But secretly the first place is for us.

Suppose you are reading Matthew 19:16-22, where the Lord Jesus tells the young man to sell all that he has, give to the poor, and follow Him. As you read this portion of Scripture, the Lord may tell you to give away certain things. That would be a test of what is first—the self or the word of God. Many of us have learned from experience how difficult it is for us to give first place to the word of God. For this, we need

the Lord's grace. We need to turn to the Lord and say, "Lord, I cannot do this, but, Lord, You can. Lord, I trust in You for this."

We need the arbitrating peace of Christ to preserve us in oneness that the Lord may speak to us. Then we need to give first place to the word of God. If we do this, we shall experience the functions of the word of God: enlightening, nourishing, quenching our thirst, strengthening, washing, building, perfecting, and edifying. What benefit we receive from the word of God! (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 569, 571-572, 576-577)

Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 18 – Sections: The Second Category—Building Up Morality; The Third Category—Guidance for Human Living; The Fourth Category—Religious Zeal

Thursday 3/24**Col. 3:18-4:1 (23-24; 1)**

18 ¹Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter against them.

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not vex your children, that they may not be disheartened.

22 Slaves, obey in all things those who are your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart fearing the Lord.

23 Whatever you do, work from the soul as to the Lord and not to men,

24 Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the ¹inheritance as recompense. You ²serve the Lord Christ.

25 For he who does unrighteously will receive what he unrighteously did, and there is no respect of persons.

1 Masters, grant to your slaves that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

Related Verses**2 Cor. 5:17**

17 So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

Phil. 3:9

9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,

Rom. 8:17

17 And if children, heirs also; on the one hand, heirs of God; on the other, joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him.

Acts 26:18

18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

1 Pet. 1:4

4 Unto an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, kept in the heavens for you,

Portions from the footnotes**Col. 3:18¹ Wives**

The section from this verse through 4:1 is a sister passage to Eph. 5:22 — 6:9, regarding the believers' ethical relationships. In Ephesians the emphasis is on the need of having spirit-filled ethical relationships for the expression of the Body of Christ in the normal church life. In Colossians the emphasis is on our holding Christ as our Head and taking Him as our life by having His rich word dwell in us, that the highest ethical relationships, issuing not from our natural life but from Christ as our life, may be realized for His expression.

For each point in this passage, see the appropriate note in Ephesians.

Col. 3:24¹ inheritance

This point is not made as clear in Eph. 6:8 as it is here. The inheritance here is what the believers will inherit (Rom. 8:17; Acts 26:18; 1 Pet. 1:4). The inheritance as recompense indicates that the Lord uses the inheritance that He will give to His believers as an

incentive for them to be faithful in their service to Him. The unfaithful ones will surely miss this recompense (Matt. 24:45-51; 25:20-29).

Col. 3:24² serve

Lit., serve as a slave.

Portions from the Life-study messages

We have seen that as the new man we are one with Christ and that our living should be in union with Christ....As we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in us, we should simultaneously allow the word of Christ to dwell in us and to have free course to work in us. [Then] we shall have a proper daily living, as described in 3:18-4:1. We shall be proper husbands, wives, parents, children, slaves, and masters.

God desires that Christ be expressed through human life. We see this in 3:18-4:1, a sister passage to Ephesians 5:22-6:9, regarding the believers' ethical relationships. In Ephesians the emphasis is on the need of spirit-filled ethical relationships for the expression of the Body in the normal church life. In Colossians the emphasis is that we should hold Christ as our Head and take Him as our life by having His rich word dwelling in us, that the highest ethical relationships, issuing not from our natural life but from Christ as our life, may be realized for His expression.

If we live in union with Christ, Christ will be expressed through our humanity ...Many of those in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Catholicism have a low estimate of human life. They do not care for marriage or for the proper family life. They prefer to remain unmarried, and they aspire to live a type of angelic life. But the angelic life cannot express Christ. On the contrary, Christ needs to be expressed in those who are husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, and slaves. In order to express Christ, we need to have a proper and normal human life.

The living of the saints in union with Christ should result in the expression of Christ in human life. If we see this, we shall praise the Lord for our human living. Furthermore, we shall have a fresh appreciation for married life. I can testify that I am thankful for my wife, children, and grandchildren. I am grateful for all the lessons the Lord has taught me through them. The more

I advance in years, the more I appreciate the lessons I have learned through the course of my human life. In the relationship between wife and husband and between children and parents we need to live out Christ and express Him.... The principle is the same in the relationship between masters and servants [vv. 22-25]. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 248, 250-252)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 18 – Sections: Examples Of Reading The Bible

Friday 3/25**Col. 4:2-6 (2, 5-6)**

2 ¹Persevere in ²prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,

3 Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a ¹door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),

4 That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward those who are without, ¹redeeming the time.

6 Let your speech be always with ¹grace, seasoned with ²salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

Related Verses**Acts 1:14**

14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Eph. 5:15-16

15 Look therefore carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Eph. 6:18

18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Eph. 4:29

29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Portions from the footnotes**Col. 4:2¹ Persevere**

I.e., continue persistently, steadfastly, and earnestly.

Col. 4:2² prayer

Prayer preserves the grace that we received in chs. 1 — 3.

Col. 4:2³ watching

In prayer we need to be watchful and alert, not negligent. Such watchfulness should be accompanied by thanksgiving. A lack of thanksgiving is an indication of prayerlessness. The prayer life is kept by watching with thanksgiving.

Col. 4:3¹ door

This implies that we need to keep ourselves open to the word of God.

Col. 4:5¹ redeeming

See note 16¹ in Eph. 5.

Col. 4:6¹ grace

See note 29³ in Eph. 4. Every word proceeding out of our mouth must be with Christ and must be the uttering of Christ, who is grace.

Col. 4:6² salt

Salt makes food agreeable and pleasant to the taste. Speech seasoned with salt keeps us at peace with one another (Mark 9:50).

Portions from the Life-study messages

In 4:2 Paul charges us to persevere in prayer. This means that we should not merely continue in prayer, but we should strive to continue. Almost everything in our environment is contrary to prayer. In order to pray, we must go against the tide, the current, of our environment. If we fail to pray, we shall be swept downstream. Only prayer can enable us to go against the current. Therefore, we need to persevere in prayer, to pray persistently.

Day by day we need to exercise ourselves to pray. We should even set aside certain times each day for prayer. Do not excuse yourself by saying that you do not have the burden to pray. Pray even when you seem to have no burden, or when apparently you have nothing to say to the Lord....Often when you pray in this way,...you will find yourself refreshed in the Lord and able to pray genuinely. When we open to the Lord and admit that we do not know what to say to Him, we breathe in fresh spiritual air, and we are preserved in the Lord's grace.

To redeem the time [v. 5] is to seize every favorable opportunity to minister life. This is to be wise in our walk. In this evil age, every day is an evil day, full of pernicious things which destroy, spoil, and waste our time. Therefore, we must walk wisely that we may redeem the time, seizing every available opportunity. To walk in wisdom is to grasp each opportunity to redeem our time. This redeeming of the time is related to the way we speak to others....The best way to redeem our time is to pray perseveringly, to be watchful, and to walk in wisdom.

In 4:2-6 Paul covers five important matters: praying, watching, walking in wisdom, redeeming the time, and speech that is with grace and seasoned with salt....In order to live such a life, we need to be filled with Christ and saturated with Him. We need to be one with Christ and allow His peace to arbitrate in us and His word to fill us. Then we shall express Him by praying, by watching, and by walking in wisdom. If we are such persons, we shall be those who redeem the time and seize every available opportunity to minister life. Furthermore, our words will not be a cause of trouble. On the contrary, through the thorough dealing of the Lord, whatever proceeds out of our mouth will be a word of grace seasoned with salt. Such a word will make things agreeable and pleasant to the taste. May we all learn these things and practice them. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 253-254, 255-256)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 18 – Sections: Reading The Peripherals Of The Bible But Missing The Center; Practicing To Move From Peripheral Matters To Central Matters In Our Bible Reading

Saturday 3/26

Col. 4:7-18 (7, 12, 16-18)

7 ¹All the things concerning me, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow slave in the Lord, will make known to you,

8 Whom I have sent to you for this very thing, that you might know the things concerning us and that he might comfort your hearts;

9 With Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you all the things here.

10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, as well as

Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, (concerning whom you received commandments, If he comes to you, receive him),

11 And Jesus, who is called Justus; these alone of the circumcision are my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, ones who have become a consolation to me.

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may ¹stand ²mature and fully assured in all the ³will of God.

13 For I testify of him that he labors much for you and for those in Laodicea and for those in Hierapolis.

14 Luke, the beloved physician, greets you, as well as Demas.

15 Greet the brothers in Laodicea, as well as Nymphas and the ¹church, which is in his house.

16 And when this letter is read among you, cause that it be read in the church of the Laodiceans also, and that you also read the one from Laodicea.

17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it.

18 The greeting in my own hand-Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

Related Verses**1 Thes. 5:27**

27 I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

Rev. 1:11

11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Rev. 3:22

22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Portions from the footnotes**Col. 4:7¹ All**

In vv. 7-17 the apostle's fellowship shows us that the new man as practiced at the apostle's time was an issue of the apostle's work, which encouraged the believers to seek after Christ, the very constituent of the new man, as their enjoyment. By means of the traffic among the churches, we experience in a practical way the living of the new man. Such a living has Christ as its reality.

Col. 4:12¹ stand

In the Greek, stand here is in the passive voice. Hence, it implies being placed, being presented, and corresponds with present in 1:28.

Col. 4:12² mature

Or, complete.

Col. 4:12³ will

See note 91 in ch. 1.

Col. 4:15¹ church

The church in the house of Nymphas was the local church in Laodicea, which met in Nymphas's house. Such meetings in the saints' homes afford every attending believer the opportunity to function, and they also strengthen the mutual fellowship among the saints.

Portions from the Life-study messages

Because Christ is the unique constituent of the new man, there should be no differences among the believers who are part of this new man. Furthermore, there should be no differences among the churches....This is proved by Paul's word [in verse 16] regarding the reading of letters.... What Paul wrote to the Colossians was also for the Laodiceans, and what he wrote to the Laodiceans was for the Colossians. What fellowship, oneness, harmony, and intimate contact this implies!

After his fellowship, the apostle Paul greets the saints by his own hand and asks them to remember his bonds (v. 18). He concludes this epistle with the words, "Grace be with you." This indicates that the saints need grace in order to realize and participate in the all-inclusiveness of Christ as their portion for the practical life of the new man. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 259, 262)

Outline

III. A living in union with Christ (3:12-4:6)

A. The arbitrating peace of Christ (3:12-15)

B. The indwelling word of Christ (3:16-17)

C. The expression of Christ in ethical relationships (3:18-4:1)

D. Praying with perseverance and walking in wisdom (4:2-6)

IV. Conclusion (4:7-18)

A. The apostle's fellowship (vv. 7-17)

B. The apostle's greeting (v. 18)

Crucial points

In Colossians 3:12-4:6 we see that the living of the saints must be in union with Christ. In 3:12-15 Paul speaks of the necessity of being ruled by the peace of Christ. The peace of Christ is Christ Himself. By this peace Christ has made the two peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles, one new man. We should let this peace arbitrate in our hearts for the Body life and be thankful to the Lord.

In verses 16 through 17 Paul goes on to tell us to let the word of Christ dwell in us. We need the arbitrating peace of Christ to preserve us in oneness that the Lord may speak to us. Then we need to give first place to the word of God. If we do this, we shall experience the functions of the word of God: enlightening, nourishing, quenching our thirst, strengthening, washing, building, perfecting, and edifying.

In 3:18-4:1 we see that God desires that Christ be expressed in the believers' ethical relationships. In order to express Christ, we need to have a proper and normal human life. We should hold Christ as our Head and take Him as our life by having His rich word dwelling in us, that the highest ethical relationships, issuing not from our natural life but from Christ as our life, may be realized for His expression.

In 4:2-6 Paul covers five important matters: praying, watching, walking in wisdom, redeeming the time, and speech that is with grace and seasoned with salt. In order to live such a life, we need to be filled with Christ and saturated with Him. We need to be one with Christ and allow His peace to arbitrate in us and His word to fill us. Then we shall express Him by praying, by watching, and by walking in wisdom. If we are such persons, we shall be those who redeem the time and seize every available opportunity to minister life. Furthermore, whatever proceeds out of our mouth will be a word of grace seasoned with salt.

Paul's conclusion to this epistle is composed of his fellowship (vv. 7-17) and his greeting (v. 18). His fellowship shows us that the new man as practiced at the apostle's time was an issue of the apostle's work, which encouraged the believers to seek after Christ, the very constituent of the new man, as their enjoyment. There should be no differences among the believers who are part of the new man, and there should be no differences among the churches. By means of the traffic among the churches, we experience in a practical way the living of the new man. Such a living has Christ as its reality.

After his fellowship, the apostle greets the saints by his own hand and asks them to remember his bonds (v. 18). He concludes this epistle with the words, "Grace be with you." This indicates that the saints need grace in order to realize and participate in the all-inclusiveness of Christ as their portion for the practical life of the new man.

Lord's Day 3/27**Psa.2:1-2, 4, 6, 12**

1 Why are the nations in an uproar, And why do the peoples contemplate a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth take their stand, And the rulers sit in counsel together, Against Jehovah and against His Anointed:

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; The Lord has them in derision.

6 But I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.

12 Kiss the Son Lest He be angry and you perish from the way; For His anger may suddenly be kindled. Blessed are all those who take refuge in Him.

Psa. 46:10

10 Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted on earth.

Matt. 28:19-20

19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age.

Acts 28:31

31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

Rev. 22:21

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

Further Reading:

Life-study of Colossians: Msgs 29, 64, 30, 31

Hymns: 358, 799, 403, 775