

# A Practical Study of COLOSSIANS

## How Christians Grow

### “Christ is All and in All”

Key verse 3:11b — *“Christ is all and in all.”*

### Study Number Nine – Christ in the Word – Colossians 3:12-17

The KEY VERSE is verse 16.

In the book of Colossians we’re talking about “Stages of Spiritual Development.” And we now come to:

Stage #9: Christ in the Word.

Listen to what Ruth Paxson says now as we come to this particular study:

(Life on the Highest Plane: A Study of the Spiritual Nature and Needs of Man by Ruth Paxson)

My friend, have you been living in the valley, self-satisfied and self-complacent? As you have gone with me through these studies has your eye traveled up, up, up to the very summit of spiritual experience—Christ Jesus, crucified, risen, ascended, exalted, living in all the fullness of His

beauty, power, glory, and holiness in human life, conforming it to His image, and then using it to bring other lives into the same conformity? Have you aspired to reach the top—to live your life on that highest plane? The ascent is steep and difficult but it is possible and a thousand times repaying. But, if you attempt it, you will have to follow the explicit direction of the Guide not only for your own sake but for the sake of others. The divine Spirit will command you to renounce all known sin; He will even ask you to cast away some things which *He* sees are weighing you down and wearying you so that you cannot keep pace with your spiritual companions, which, if carried, will keep you from reaching the top. Perhaps He will require you to make that choice today. God grant that you may count all things but loss that you may win Christ. pp. 304-5

She's cutting it down to the bare essentials. We don't hear much about spiritual development and growth and being concerned on a daily basis that we are maturing more in Christlikeness. There are a lot of other things that have distracted us.

Listen to the NINE STAGES that we've been through:

Stage #1: Christ Changed My Life (1:1-8)

Stage #2: The Will, the Walk, and the Work of Christ

What is His will for my life? How can I walk worthy of Him? And what is the work He has for me to do?

Stage #3: Christ in First Place

Stage #4: Maturing in Christ

Stage #5: Living in Christ

Stage #6: Christ Living in Me

Stage #7: Christ, Not Legalism

It's a relationship not a performance.

Stage #8: Christ in My Mind

And now we come to:

Stage #9: Christ in the Word (3:12-17)

Before we get started let's talk a little bit about the importance of the Word and why we should be in it on a daily basis.

When Jesus was in the Upper Room with the disciples just before they went down to the Garden of Gethsemane he said:

John 15:7

If you abide in me [that is FELLOWSHIP] and My word abides in you, [that is FOOD] ask whatever you wish, and it

shall be done for you.

Psalm 119:9, 11

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?  
by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Thy word have I hid in my heart,  
that I might not sin against thee.

We're going to talk about the Word.

What is the Word's function in our lives as believers now that we know Christ as Savior?

1. GROWTH and
2. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT.

In these areas it's very important for us to listen to what Peter says and Jeremiah say.

Peter said:

1 Peter 2:2-3

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby: If so be ye tasted that the Lord is gracious.

And then Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 15:16

Your words came and I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty.

Sometimes we learn through a painful experiences that we must be in the Word on a daily basis. We must be the one who allows the Lord and the Spirit of God to use His Word.

There's no better way to start the day than checking in with the boss and getting full instructions from His Word as to what He has planned for us for that day.

When we talk about the Word, just know we're talking about our personal relationship to the Word of God. Do you have some kind of a daily Bible program that you read?

Christ in the Word—our key verse is verse 16.

**v. 12 Put on, therefore, as chosen ones of God, saints and beloved ones: a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience.**

“Put on, therefore, as chosen ones of God, saints and beloved ones: a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.”

Now what he does here is he tells us to put something on.

In our previous study, we were to PUT THINGS OFF and we had two lists of five things that we're supposed to put off or put to death. Then we had one all by itself. We ended up with 11 things that we get rid of when we become believers.

### Colossians 3:5

Put to death, therefore, your members which are upon the earth: fornication (immorality), impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

That was the first ugly list. And then down in verse 8 he said:

### Colossians 3:8

Put now away also all these: anger, wrath, wickedness, evil speaking, abusive language out of your mouth.

And then in verse 9 he put one all by itself:

### Colossians 9

Stop lying one to another...

**PRESENT NEGATIVE IMPERATIVE.**

We are told that we are to:

### Colossians 3:10

clothe ourselves with the new man...

That's part of what we're talking about here. We're going to see **EIGHT NEW GARMENTS** that we need to "put on."

**ELEVEN UGLY ONES** that we "put off" in our last study. Now **EIGHT NEW ONES** that we're going to be "putting on" in this passage.

You might say, "well whenever I see a list I really get disciplined about it. And I really get to figuring out how I can implement all this."

That is a horrible mistake. Our righteousness is, according to Isaiah 64:6, "like filthy rags."

Nothing good can come from us from the standpoint of who we are apart from who Christ is. These garments we're talking about are the garments that the Spirit of God provides as we grow and mature in Christ.

Remember the story of Adam and Eve back in the garden? When they fell into sin they immediately took fig leaves and sewed them together to cover themselves because they were embarrassed about their nakedness.

Then the Lord came along and what did the Lord do?

Genesis 3:21

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD make coats of skins, and clothed them.

What the Lord did was slay an animal with the shedding of blood and provided clothes for them that was acceptable to Him.

And it's through the shedding of the blood of Christ that we are born again by the Spirit and we're dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before His throne.

And so the garments he's talking about are not something for us to make a list of and say "Boy I'm gonna really get on track with the Lord and this is what I'm going to do."

No. "Without Me you can do nothing" the Lord said. (ref. John 15:5)

So it's the Spirit of God and asking Him to produce this within us and we'll see that as the verses begin to unfold.

Now these garments, the eight that we're going to look at, are really a PICTURE OF JESUS CHRIST.

Paul describes this in 1 Corinthians 13. We're going to see several words from there. There's one verse—Romans 13:14—that describes the garments well.

Romans 13:14

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Now, he hasn't met these Christians in the Lycus Valley. He has met the pastor, Epaphras. He evidently was a person who came to know Christ through Paul's ministry and took the responsibility for ministry in the Lycus Valley. He's been very passionate, even in the cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis, the other two cities in the valley.

Now what Paul does here before he gives what we're supposed to "put on," he characterizes us in **THREE WAYS**. These three things are vital to understanding.

1. They are "chosen ones of God."

### Ephesians 1:4

Long ago, even before he made the world, God chose us to be his very own, through what Christ would do for us; he decided then to make us holy in his eyes, without a single fault—we who stand before him covered with his love.

### 1 Peter 2:9

You are not like that, for you have been chosen by God himself—you are priests of the King, you are holy and pure, you are God's very own—all this so that you may show to others how God called you out of the darkness into his

wonderful light.

So we're "chosen." It's nice to be chosen isn't it?

Remember when we were children? How you always ended up being the last one chosen? It was kind of a deal where they had to let you play because you showed up for the game. The Lord's not like that. It delights His heart to choose us. He loves us unconditionally and He wants us on His team.

2. They are called "saints."

That word describes Christians as "holy ones."

Colossians 1:1

...saints in Colosse...

Colossians 1:12

...qualified you for the share of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Colossians 1:26

the mystery of Christ which is hidden from the ages and from the generations; but now made known to His saints,

So they're "saints."

“chosen ones...saints” and then they are:

3. “beloved ones.”

This is the way Paul characterized Epaphras as a minister. He says he was a “beloved one” (Colossians 1:7).

We are highly and greatly loved. Ephesians describes us being “accepted in the beloved.” (ref. Ephesians 1:6)

We are very precious in His sight.

Now, those three titles lead us to the CLOTHING that He wants us to put on.

Remember in Ephesians 6:11 when he talked about the armor he said:

Ephesians 6:11

Put on God’s armor...

Now “put on” God’s clothes. We’re going to look at FIVE ARTICLES OF CLOTHING here.

The first garment is:

1. “a heart of compassion,”

Compassion means that you really feel deeply for someone or

something and you have a passion about it. It's something that has moved you to the depths of your being and you want to be a person who's concerned about being involved in helping them to get to where they are.

You become that just by the fact that you see so much suffering, hurt and pain. This is being moved to the depths of ones being for others and concerned to the point of being willing to be involved.

It's one thing to say you love someone and it's another thing to be involved in bringing healing in their lives. Jesus walked this way.

Listen to what He says:

### Matthew 9:36-38

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion [same word] on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

It's through the voice and through the heart of compassion that the Lord gives vision. That the Lord gives direction. He gives opportunity. And He opens your heart.

“Where there's no vision, the people perish.” (ref. Proverbs

29:18)

People are complacent, self-centered, and not concerned about others.

Isaiah would describe it well:

### Isaiah 6:8

Here am I Lord, send me.

“I’m available. I want to do what You want.”

It’s the “heart of compassion” that the Lord speaks of here by His Spirit to the apostle to the church in Colosse.

Do you remember the story of the Good Samaritan? There were two guys that went down the road and they had the same problem. The priest and the Levite. Both were religious guys but they never made a sacrifice of themselves.

They passed by on the opposite side. Here was a guy splattered all over the road, needing first aid and help immediately or he would die. So these two guys pass by. Now this is Jesus’ story.

Who is the next guy? The next guy is a Samaritan. He’s a half-breed. He’s rejected by everybody else. They had their own religion in Samaria and the woman at the well was also a Samaritan.

But this Samaritan, it says in great big letters: “he had compassion.” (ref. Luke 10:33)

Now, if you want to know what compassion did, just read the rest of the story. He got off of the donkey, found out what the injuries were, poured on oil and wine, bandaged him up, put him on his own beast and took him to the Holiday Inn. There he took care of him that night. The next morning he promised that when he came back by he would pick up any indebtedness that this guy had from having to stay there in order to heal and get on the road again.

That’s compassion. And probably coming from the lips of the Lord Jesus it helps us understand there’s not a lot of that around. You find it in the hearts of some who’ve really learned to walk with Jesus and who really feel deeply about the needs of others and how the Lord can use them.

The second word is the word:

2. “kindness.”

Now this is a characteristic of agapé love in 1 Corinthians 13. It’s also in Ephesians 4:32.

Ephesians 4:32

be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God has forgiven you because you belong to

Christ.

Now a person who is KIND is a someone who has gone over the threshold of being a SERVANT.

The other part of letting Christ be “all and in all” first is “compassion” and loving. But the other is “kindness” enough to be a servant-leader. That’s the description here of the person who is kind.

Notice that’s also a part of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22:

### Galatians 5:22

but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, kindness,

The third word is the word:

3. “humility.”

This is the garment the false teachers were trying to wear and trying to fake it. That’s the Scribes and Pharisees trying to perform acts that were false or that were very selfish.

### Colossians 2:18

Let no one disqualify you, delighting in self-imposed humility...

You've seen enough of that. You can see right through it because it's so hypocritical and ugly.

The greatest illustration of humility is in Philippians 2:

### Philippians 2:5

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ:

And because of His thinking and acting, He was humble enough to empty Himself and take the form of the servant to be made in the likeness of men.

The fourth word is the word:

4. "meekness."

This is the willingness to suffer injury rather than to inflict it.

"Meekness" is not weakness.

"Meekness" is strength under control.

"Meekness" is the family dog. It can be very, very friendly but any threat to the family and it reveals real strength and tenacious protection.

### Numbers 12:3

Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.

What did the Lord Jesus say in the BEATITUDES in Matthew 5:5?

### Matthew 5:5

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

It's letting God do the choosing. It's not standing up for our rights and seeing to it that we get our rights. It's simply letting the Spirit of God take the responsibility.

Do you want an illustration of that? Probably the greatest biblical illustration of that is when Abraham and Lot were having some real problems and it impressed upon Abraham that Lot was going to have to leave. So what did Abraham do? Meek man that he was, he said "okay, you choose it and I will take what's left over." So immediately Lot, the selfish nephew immediately chose the well-watered plains of Jordan and left the rest to Abram.

But didn't the Lord come along and beautifully affirm to him at that very point? Because of the action that he took, the whole land is going to be his and his descendants are going to be like the sands of the earth and like the stars in the sky.

God delights in the meek person. And so garment number 4 is "meekness."

Garment number five is:

5. “patience.”

### Colossians 1:11

equipped with all power, according to His glorious strength, unto every kind of patience and steadfastness with joy.

“Patience” is a virtue that is only developed by suffering. You have to have something to be patient about before that quality becomes a virtue that’s developed within you.

Now there’s another problem. The word “patience” communicates to us someone sitting around on their duff waiting for something to happen, right? You have the patience. You’re under control. You’re long-tempered. You’re waiting for it to happen.

This word is *hupomenō*. It means to remain under the stress and to stay by the stuff. A better way to translate it is “perseverance.”

Perseverance means that we’re suffering in the struggle but we believe that we’re doing what is right and so we stay by the stuff.

We’re not praying “Lord, change my circumstances,” BUT “change me to meet my circumstances.”

You are a totally adequate God.

Now that same word occurs 49 times in the New Testament.

### James 1:2-4

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptation; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works perseverance....

The Hebrew Christians were going to flick it in and go back under Judaism because of the persecution:

### Hebrews 10:36

For you have need of perseverance, that after you've done the will of God, you might receive the promise.

It makes the word come alive. That word is also included in the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians chapter 5.

### Ephesians 4:23-24

you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new self, which is in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

### Romans 13:14

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ...

That's really what you have looked at in those first five garments that we've considered.

Rick Rigsby in his book says:

(Lessons from a Third Grade Dropout: how the timeless wisdom of one man can impact an entire generation by Rick Rigsby, Ph.D.)

Speaker and author James Ryle makes sense of how feeling secure can produce a correlation of kindness and humility: "Humility is the God-given self-assurance that eliminates the need to prove the worth of who you are and the rightness of what you do."

p. 26

Listen to what Thomas Brooks says at:

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Brooks: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon)

One of the ancients used to say, that humility is the first, second, and third grace of a Christian.

p. 17

In other words, it's all about humility. Once that is revealed and made clear to us, we're ready.

Gary Thomas says that when we don't feel well physically we botch up spiritually. He says there's a relationship in taking care of our body so that people who depend upon us know we're still going to be here. But to be an effective servant for Jesus Christ, we have to take care of ourselves.

(The Glorious Pursuit: Embracing the Virtues of Christ by Gary L. Thomas)

Humility is the disposition that makes us available to be blessed by God. The Psalms seem obsessed with God's eagerness to reach out to the humble: God saves the humble, guides the humble, sustains the humble, and even crowns the humble. Notice that everything flows *from* God *to* the humble servant.

Pride seeks to reverse this. Pride is self-reliance and self-dependence. Arrogance seeks to *obligate* God instead of *receive* from Him.

p. 50

The more HOLY the more HUMBLE is the way Charles Haddon Spurgeon would kind of summarize all of it for us.

David Roper has this cute story in *Our Daily Bread*:

## **THE HORSE AND HER BOY**

When I was about 5 years old, my father decided that I needed a horse of my own to care for. So he bought an old bay

mare and brought her home to me. I named her Dixie.

Dixie was a formidable beast for me at my age and small stature. No saddle was small enough, no stirrups short enough for my legs, so I rode bareback most of the time.

Dixie was plump, which meant that my feet stuck straight out, making it difficult to stay astride. But whenever I fell off, Dixie would simply stop, look at me, and wait while I tried to climb on her back again. This leads me to Dixie's most admirable trait: She was wonderfully patient.

I, on the other hand, was less than patient with Dixie. Yet she bore my childish tantrums with stoic patience, never once retaliating. I wish I could be more like Dixie, having patience that overlooks a multitude of offenses. I have to ask myself, "How do I react when others aggravate me?" Do I respond with humility, meekness, and patience? (Col. 3:12). Or with intolerance and indignation?

To overlook an offense. To forgive 70 times 7. To bear with human frailty and failure. To show mercy and kindness to those who exasperate us. To gain such control over our souls—this is the work of God.

*(Our Daily Bread, Wednesday, December 14, 2011)*

That's putting on the garment of "humility." Thank you David for reminding us of that.

We aren't done with the garments yet.

**v. 13 Bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone should have a complaint against**

**anyone, even as also the Lord forgave you, in the same manner also you forgive.**

“Bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone should have a complaint against anyone, even as also the Lord forgave you, in the same manner also you forgive.”

In verse 12 we put it on, but in verse 13 we play the game. He’s going to talk about some things here that are very important in the whole issue of maturing and growing up in Christ.

We can just call these two more articles of clothing.

Garment #6: “Bearing with one another.”

This is saying, “please be patient, God isn’t finished with me yet.

This garment is really the outgrowth of previous ones. When these other garments are a part of our lives, we will have the ability to “bear with one another.” This is the ability to accept others, even when we disagree with them.

Billy Graham describes the horrible pain of losing Ruth, his wife of 63 years, and how difficult it was to remain here. He tells the story of Ruth’s departure and he goes into detail. Here’s a delightful moment of humor:

(Nearing Home: Life, Faith, and Finishing Well by Billy

Graham)

Ruth, when she was riding with me on one of our journeys, we had to go over a large construction zone. And when we got to the end of the construction zone, it said “End of Construction. Thank you for your patience.” She looked up and with a smile turned to Billy and said “I want that inscribed on my tombstone.” And so he says that has been inscribed on her tombstone at the Billy Graham library in Asheville, North Carolina.

pp. 94-95 (paraphrased)

Please be patient. God isn't finished with me yet.

End of Construction. Thank you for your patience.

And then the forgiveness that's described here would be article #7.

Garment #7: “forgiving one another,”

It's forgiving without holding a grudge afterwards.

This garment is discussed further:

“if anyone should have a complaint against anyone, even as also the Lord forgave you in like manner also forgive.”

The way the Lord forgave us is totally and completely in Colossians 2:13. Our forgiveness is to be the same kind of

forgiveness.

Here's the Lord. He's just been pinned to the Cross and they've just dropped the Cross in the hole. What are the first things that He says? It's a prayer:

“Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing”—it's in the PRESENT TENSE. (ref. Luke 23:34)

He's letting it all go.

Interesting thing about forgiveness is that every place you see it, when people get ready to die, they always address the subject of forgiveness.

Many times estranged family members come to the bedside to be reconciled in those final hours. You see the same thing in the life of Peter and in the life of Paul.

Peter was really upset over the fact that up in Antioch Paul torched him for eating with the legalistic brethren. That was embarrassing to Peter because it happened before several hundred people that were eating there in that fellowship.

Peter, as he writes his last epistle, said “Oh by the way, read Paul's books. They're really good but they're hard to understand.”

That's a pretty good way of saying, “Forgive me for the mess I made of that deal and that I've carried that grudge all these

years.”

How about Paul? Remember Paul, when it got time to go on the second missionary journey, Barnabas’ nephew had left on the first journey after they’d just gotten started and went back to Jerusalem.

They came back from the first journey, reported to Antioch, went to Jerusalem for the Jerusalem counsel and then went back to Antioch. And one morning Paul’s in the shower singing “On the road again” and Barnabas says “Let’s go again to see everybody and let’s take John Mark.”

Paul got so ticked. He said “No way. Over my dead body. He’s not going.” The strife was so strong that Barnabas took John Mark and went off to Cypress. He did go to Jerusalem and get Silas. They went off on the second journey and he was with him for the rest of it.

Paul is in prison in Rome and he’s writing to Timothy. It’s his last letter. He’s already lost the first hearing and he’s going to die soon by being beheaded there in the city of Rome. What is one of the things he does?

When he writes the letter to Timothy, in the last chapter, he says, “Oh by the way, bring John Mark for he is profitable to me to the ministry.”

He provided a way for forgiveness and a way for restoration.

If Jesus hung on the Cross and dealt with forgiveness and if Paul dealt with forgiveness, and Peter dealt with forgiveness, then we—it behooves us—to keep short account of things that have to be taken care of.

“Be sure that when it comes time to die, that’s all you have to do is to die.”

(source unknown)

What does it mean to forgive? The Greek word is so graphic. It means “let the pot drop.”

Here’s this huge pot with all these offences and all these faces inside. And to forgive means you let the pot drop. You let it go.

“Great peace have they which love Thy law and nothing shall offend them.” (Psalm 119:165)

This is Sarah Young, she’s quoting Corrie Ten Boom:

(Take My Heart, O God: Riches from the Greatest Christian Women Writers of All Times by Sarah Young)

*Those who were able to forgive their enemies were able to return to the outside world and rebuild their lives, no matter what the physical scars. Those who nursed their bitterness remained invalids. It was as simple and as horrible [to us] as that.*

—CORRIE TEN BOOM

p. 9/2

Max Lucado in his book *A Love Worth Giving* says:

(A Love Worth Giving: Living in the Overflow of God's Love by Max Lucado)

Such love isn't easy. Not for you. Not for me. Not even for Jesus. Want proof? Listen to his frustration: "You people have no faith. How long must I stay with you? How long must I put up with you?" (Mark 9:19).

Even the Son of God was handed plates of "croak-ra" and "gasp-aragus." To know Jesus asked such a question reassures us. But to hear how he answered it will change us. *How long must I put up with you?*

"Long enough to be called crazy by my brothers and a liar by my neighbors. Long enough to be run out of my town and my Temple. Long enough to be laughed at, cursed, slapped, hit, blindfolded, and mocked. Long enough to feel warm spit and sharp whips and see my own blood puddle at my feet."

*How long?* "Until the rooster sings and the sweat stings and the mallet rings and a hillside of demons smirk at a dying God."

*How long?* "Long enough for every sin to so soak my sinless soul that heaven will turn in horror until my swollen lips pronounce the final transaction: 'It is finished.'"

*How long?* "Until it kills me."

Jesus bore all things, believed all things, hoped all things, and endured all things. Every single one.

p. 114

Oswald Chambers put it all in perspective:

(A Continual Feast by Jan Karon)

Watch the kind of people God brings around you, and you will be humiliated to find that this is His way of revealing to you the kind of person you have been to Him. Now, He says, exhibit to that one exactly what I have shown to you.

[Oswald Chambers]

(source unknown)

It's a challenge. For what he's saying here, these should be garments that we wear.

One more Gary Thomas:

(Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas)

When I truly understand how much sin affects so much of what I do, when I drink deeply of God's grace and mercy, when I look on the holy and perfect Son of God and see what true glory and character excellence really is, what ledge can I stand on to judge? There is none.

p. 159

And so we come to the garments and what we are to put on. But there's one more here in verse 14.

**v. 14 And upon all these put on love, which is the bond of completeness.**

“And upon all put on love, which is the bond of completeness.”

This is a great picture of putting all these other things on and then putting the coat on. This is the coat with the belt that ties everything together. This is the picture that he wants for us to have here.

This final garment is the garment of “love.”

It’s not “love”—human love. It’s *agapé* love. It’s the same love in 1 Corinthians 13. It’s the same love that’s the first manifestation of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22.

It’s the garment that holds everything together, goes over all the rest and shows the ones that people see. Love produced by the Spirit of God. Love is the oil which keeps all the pieces of machinery running smoothly.

Jesus said in the Upper Room:

**John 13:34, 35**

A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.

Now let’s continue along this line.

Let's talk about the little word "all" now as we look at the remaining verses in the passage.

"And upon all these put on love,"—verse 14.

Verse 16—"in all wisdom"

Verse 17—"And all whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

So put it on, wear it. From a great devotional book *Voices from the Past* comes these words:

(Voices from the Past: Puritan Devotional Readings edited by Richard Rushing)

Every day we may see some new thing in Christ. His love has neither brim nor bottom. [Oh I love that.] How blessed are we to enjoy this invaluable treasure, the love of Christ; or rather allow ourselves to be mastered and subdued in his love, so that Christ is our all, and all other things are nothing.

p. 264

Thank you, thank you for reminding us of that.

Now when we get to verse 15, there's an interesting Greek word here.

**v. 15 And let the peace of Christ be ruling in your hearts, into which also you were called in one body, and keep on being thankful.**

“And let the peace of Christ be ruling in your hearts, into which also you were called into one body; and keep on being thankful.”

Why does he move from LOVE to PEACE?

Through the Spirit is love, joy, peace—of course peace is a critical issue.

How is peace important in our lives?

Peace, number one, comes when you are on track with the Lord. When you're not on track and you're walking in the flesh rather than the spirit, peace leaves.

The peace of God, if we translate this Greek word properly, acts as an UMPIRE.

The “peace of Christ” RULES. Maybe it's in the King James version or one other, but literally the Greek word is an umpire calling the balls and strikes. He is keeping the game in order:

“let the peace of Christ be ruling in your hearts, into which also you were called into one body;”

It's important to never make a decision unless you are at

peace about it. This can be a lot longer process but if you have restraint or apprehension, restrain from making that decision until there is peace.

### Isaiah 26:3

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee...

When we don't have peace a lot of times it's because we have our mind on the circumstance and we're doing things we shouldn't be doing ahead of time. The flesh loves excitement. It's always ready to jump up and run somewhere. The Holy Spirit does not.

The Holy Spirit is the great restrainer.

“Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart. Wait I say on the Lord.” (ref. Psalm 27:14)

We love to let the flesh get into the act and to accomplish the will of God independent. Therefore the peace goes.

The picture here—John 16:33—at the end before they get to the Garden of Gethsemane:

### John 16:33

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world you're going to have tribulation: but

be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

It is the peace of God that acts upon our hearts when we are knowing that we have made the right decision in the will of God.

### Isaiah 32:17

The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance.

“in which you are called into one body;”

“and keep on being thankful.”

The secret to joyful Christian experience is to allow thanksgiving to overflow abundantly.

Listen to Gary Thomas:

### (Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas)

End of story, ...but not quite. Driving home, I felt pretty satisfied with myself. I had faced temptation, and I had won. I even began to think of ways I could work my victory into a sermon illustration. And then, as I was driving along, the Lord's voice swiftly cut through my thoughts. I almost had to pull over.

God tore away the veil of my heart and showed me the

evil within it. I had avoided one sin only to fall into another—self-righteous pride. As I recounted the experience to a fellow seminarian, I remarked that instead of going from strength to strength (Psalm 84:7), I was living from sin to sin.

This was a frustrating recognition. If I faced a temptation, I could give in and sin, or I could resist, become proud, and still end up sinning. How could I win?

p. 66

He is so honest and so transparent in what he has to say.

Joni Eareckson Tada in 1967, when she became a quadriplegic and was confined to a wheelchair, she said it took her two years:

(A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God's Sovereignty by Joni Eareckson Tada)

Just two years later, on another Christmas, I found the very peace and contentment that had eluded me. I also found joy, simply because I had embraced His will for my life.

And what is His will?

That you and I be in the best position, the best place, the timeliest circumstance in which God can be glorified the most.

p. 52

For her it was a wheelchair.

Her other book *A Place of Healing* is a classic because she thanks God for the wheelchair and the trip that she's had in

that experience.

Now comes the KEY VERSE:

**v. 16 Let the word of Christ be at home (dwell) in you abundantly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing each other with psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.**

“Let the word of Christ be at home (or dwell) in you abundantly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing each other with psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord, to God.”

We have to be in the Word every day.

“Let the word of Christ be at home in you abundantly;”

It’s our food. It’s our nourishment.

We will learn “in all wisdom”—because He provides the wisdom—“teaching and admonishing each other with”—**WHAT?**

Have you ever gotten so excited about the Word you start singing a song?

“psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.”

If you're getting a message from the Lord and you can't contain it start singing.

It's "Christ in the Word." When we are in the Word and we're at home in the Word, then we're also going to be:

HEEDING the word,

HANDLING it and

HIDING it, and

HOLDING it forth to others.

Let it dwell within you.

The key to that is also entering into a discipline of memory. Scripture memory lets us have verses that we can share with people. And because we memorized the references, we can come right at them with the Gospel of Christ that's changed us.

Start with John 3:16 and there are just scores of other verses.

In the Garden of Gethsemane when Christ is praying, listen to John 17:17 and His prayer:

John 17:17

Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.

In other words, there is a sanctifying cleansing influence in the Word.

The last things Paul said to young Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:15

study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Understand it and apply it to your heart.

One more word from Ruth Paxson:

(Life on the Highest Plane: A Study of the Spiritual Nature and Needs of Man by Ruth Paxson)

Coldness of heart, callousness of conscience, weakness of will, feebleness of testimony, joylessness in worship, fruitlessness in service, powerlessness in prayer all are traceable to just one thing—ignorance of and indifference to God’s Word. ... (F. E. March, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 49).  
p. 387

What a statement! She waited until the end of the book on that one.

Remember the story of Todd Beamer who was on the plane

that crashed in the Pennsylvania field on 9/11? His wife Lisa wrote the book *Let's Roll!* She really magnifies the discipline of Todd in memorizing Scripture. She tells the story that she did not have the courage to go to the airport to get his vehicle but some friends did that for her. When they got to the airport, in the console in the suburban, they found his memory verses. On the top of the memory verses were Romans 11:33-36:

(Let's Roll! Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage by Lisa Beamer with Ken Abraham)

*Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*

*How unsearchable his judgments,  
and his paths beyond tracing out!*

*“Who has known the mind of the Lord?*

*Or who has been his counselor?”*

*“Who has ever given to God,  
that God should repay him?”*

*For from him and through him and to him are all things.*

*To him be the glory forever! Amen.*

p. 274

Now here's the rest of the story:

(Let's Roll! Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage by Lisa Beamer with Ken Abraham)

It was the exact passage of Scripture that had helped me

through my questions following my dad's death; the same passage I'd been reminded of at Wheaton College; and the very passage that had been my memory verses for the Bible study I was preparing in Rome, [They had just gotten back from Rome and a ministry that they had there] the week before Todd died. Seeing that card reminded me that God is always speaking to us and giving us just the words we need for the events he knows lie ahead.

p. 274

Once again a tribute to the awesome providence of God in using the Word.

And our last verse:

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

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

So two areas:

1. “word”—this has to do with your CONVERSATION and
2. “deed”—has to do with your ACTION.

“do all of it in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to

God the Father through Him.”

Ephesians 5:20

Always give thanks for everything to our God and Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The fundamental principle—“Christ is all and in all.”

“do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

How do we do that?

We’re in HARMONY with His will,

we’re SUBJECTIVE to His authority, and

we’re DEPENDENT upon His power.

Then whatever you do, do willingly and submissively to the glory of God.

Corrie Ten Boom says:

(Take My Heart, O God: Riches from the Greatest Christian Women Writers of All Times by Sarah Young)

*Obedience is easy when you know you are being guided by a God who never makes mistakes.*

—CORRIE TEN BOOM

There's a hymn by Frances Ridley Havergal, "Take My Life and Let It Be." The words of that hymn spell out everything that's involved. But there was one verse that we would like to add to it:

*Take my mind and let it think  
Thoughts that please and honor You.  
Let the mind of Christ my Savior  
Show itself in all my ways,  
Show itself in all my ways.*

(written by Don Anderson)

We have 14 lessons at the end of the study to study and meditate upon.

LESSON #1: We begin to make real progress toward Christlikeness when we focus our attention upon the consistent daily reading of the Word of God.

LESSON #2: Ezra 7:10: "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel ... (KJV).

LESSON #3: In order for us to obey God's Word we must know it—which means we must read it often, and then begin to implement it in our lives.

LESSON #4: Jeremiah 15:16: "When your words came, I ate

them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty" (NIV).

LESSON #5: Psalm 1:2 tells us of the blessed man, whose "delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night" (NIV).

LESSON #6: Joshua 1:8: "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (NIV).

LESSON #7: One of the things the Word does is to show us what to wear: "a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience" (verse 12).

LESSON #8: The ability of God to forgive is seen in the way Jesus Christ handles Peter after the denial, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, and also with the woman caught in the act of adultery (John 8).

LESSON #9: It is the garment of love that holds everything else together. This is the garment that goes over all of the rest. This is the garment that shows. This is the one that people see.

LESSON #10: It is the peace of Christ that acts as an umpire in our hearts. The absence of peace—there is something resisting or wrong.

LESSON #11: In verse 15 we are to “let the peace of Christ” rule. In verse 16 we are to “Let the word of Christ be at home” in us.

LESSON #12: The key to growth is to be submissive to His Spirit and obedient to His Word.

LESSON #13: “And all whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God the Father through him” (verse 17).

LESSON #14: Everything we do and say, we do and say as though we are in His presence and He is hearing and seeing.

Listen to Joni Eareckson Tada in *A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering and Pain*:

(A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God’s Sovereignty by Joni Eareckson Tada)

Jack Reimer, a syndicated columnist, wrote a story about the great violinist Yitzhak Perlman. Perlman had polio as a child and walks with crutches and braces on both legs. Instead of arranging to be seated on stage at the beginning of his performance, he chooses to walk across the stage methodically and slowly until he reaches his chair. Then he sits down, puts his crutches on the floor, undoes the clasps on his legs, bends down, picks up the violin, nods to the conductor, and proceeds to play. As Reimer describes it, there is a certain majesty in this ritual.

During a 1995 concert, a string on Perlman's violin suddenly snapped, and everyone in the audience could hear it. The great virtuoso stopped and gazed at the broken string as those in attendance that night wondered what he would do. Perlman closed his eyes, and after a moment of reflection, signaled the conductor to begin again.

Though anyone who knows music understands that it's impossible to play a symphonic work with just three strings, Perlman was undaunted. Apparently you could see this superb artist actually recomposing the piece in his head as he went along, inventing new fingering positions to coax never-before-heard sounds from his three-string violin.

The sophisticated New York audience watched and listened in awe, knowing they were witnessing a truly groundbreaking performance. When the piece was over, they exploded into appreciative applause. Mr. Perlman smiled, wiped the sweat from his brow, and said in a soft, reverent tone, "You know, sometimes it is the artist's task to find out how much music you can still make with what you have left." pp. 102-103

What a legacy, what a tribute—people who are focused on the Word and focused on the Christ of the Word.

Father, we thank You for the chance we've had to study Your Word. We pray Your Holy Spirit will take these fragmented thoughts and use them to the benefit of each of us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

# A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

## HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

### “What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 3:11b — *“Christ is all and in all.”*

## STUDY NUMBER NINE – CHRIST IN THE WORD – COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

### KEY VERSE 3:16

v.12 Put on, therefore, as chosen ones of God, saints and beloved ones: a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience.

v.13 Bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone should have a complaint against anyone, even as also the Lord forgave you, in the same manner also you forgive.

v.14 And upon all these put on love, which is the bond of completeness.

v.15 And let the peace of Christ be ruling in your hearts, into which also you were called in one body; and keep on being thankful.

v.16 Let the word of Christ be at home (dwell) in you abundantly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing each other with psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.

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

### NOTES

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Read Colossians 3:12-17 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. What are we asked to put on in verse 12?

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3. Explain what is involved in “bearing with one another and forgiving one another” in verse 13.

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4. What are we supposed to put on over all of the other things mentioned in verse 12, according to verse 14?

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5. What are we commanded to do in verse 15?

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6. What is the command in verse 16 and how can we implement it?

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7. How would you characterize a Christian's words and works in light of the command in verse 17?

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8. Define the meaning of “doing all things in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: We begin to make real progress toward Christlikeness when we focus our attention upon the consistent daily reading of the Word of God.

LESSON #2: Ezra 7:10: “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel . . .” (KJV).

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