

# Colossians Ch3v12-17 - Become who you truly are in Christ!

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 12 November 2023

Preacher: Sam Ross

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you, Johnny, and good afternoon, everybody.

If you could open your Bibles, please, to Colossians chapter 3, and starting at verse 12. If you're using the Red Church Bible, that's on page 1184, Colossians chapter 3.

And before we start, let's just pray and commit this time to God. Father, we believe that your word is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword.

Let it cut through into our hearts right now, and let it expose the sin in our lives.

That sin which takes away our joy in you, and prevents us from becoming who we truly are in Christ.

[ 1 : 29 ] It's in his name that we ask this. Amen. Well, let's read from verse 12. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Bear with each other, and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body, you are called to peace, and be thankful.

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

[ 3 : 03 ] And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Does that sound impossible to you? Do you feel that there's just no chance you could be that person, even just for five minutes of your day, let alone 24-7?

I do. Maybe you think, well, I could be that person, only problem is this. All the pressures that I experience in my life, the exhaustion of work and family, the health problems that I face, I just, I can't live this life.

Well, I want to encourage you. Number one, it's normal Christian experience to feel this way. And number two, you actually can become, in increasing measure, that person that you truly are in Christ.

How can we? And what will it look like? Well, we're going to find out in our passage today. In fact, in Colossians chapter 3, the Apostle Paul is writing to ordinary Christians, like you and me.

[ 4 : 42 ] Christians who've been given new life in Christ. And he wants to remind them something really important about their old life.

Look back at verse 3, in chapter 3. He says, for you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. So, that life that you used to live, before you trusted in Christ, it's gone.

It's dead. You've been given a new life. Christ's life is now your life. That's your unchanging status. You can't lose that. That's your new self. And that's brilliant. I mean, we can all get behind that. But here's your big problem.

[ 5 : 49 ] And mine also. We keep falling back into the sinful practices of our old life before Christ. We don't live like we've been made new.

We continue to sin and fail. In and of ourselves, we don't have the power to live the new life that Christ commands us to live.

How do we account for this paradox? We've been made new, but we don't live like we're new. Well, look down at verse 9. This is really important.

Paul says, Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge, in the image of its creator.

So, on the one hand, we have an unchanging status in Christ. We are safe and secure in him. On the other hand, we're not yet made perfect.

[ 7 : 08 ] We have entered into this gradual process of being made like Christ. And that accounts for why we continue to struggle with sin.

We are still becoming who we truly are. Thank God that the sin that we continue to struggle with does not change our status of being united with Christ.

Yet, in this passage today, God commands us to become our true souls, to become more and more like Christ.

And it's a command, my brothers and sisters, that we must strive to obey. And also a command, we lack the power to obey.

So before we learn what the new life looks like, and Paul has three different marks of the new self of Christ, which we're going to look at in a moment, Paul must first tell us where to find the power to become who we truly are.

[ 8 : 17 ] so he starts by telling us four staggering identifiers for anyone who has new life in christ first one is in verse 12 have a look down there it says we are god's chosen people you are chosen by god he chose us before we ever chose him and if that sounds strange to you look back one chapter to colossians 2 verse 13 colossians 2 verse 13 when you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh god made you alive with christ a dead person can't do anything for themselves let alone place their faith in someone clearly god chose us he chose us to be made alive with him before we were ever able to choose him that's a mystery i don't quite understand that yet but it's what god's word says and it should stagger us and humble us to think that when we didn't deserve his mercy or his grace god chose us to receive it wow what a deep security that brings not about me holding on to god he chose me here's a second identifier we are set apart for him in verse 12 not only are we chosen god chose us to be holy or set apart for him his treasured possession and that gives us amazing purpose doesn't it we're not living for ourselves we are living for the king who has rescued us and that in turn leads to our third reality we are dearly loved by him now if we've been chosen by him and set apart for him how much more proof do we need to know that we are so dearly loved by him precious sons and daughters of the king of the universe there is one more identifier though and it's actually found in our passage in verse 15 we are members of the body of christ you have a new family and this is the church all over the world and right here in our local church we are united together in christ you're part of the family your identity is inextricably linked with the brothers and sisters sitting around you right now we are united together in christ both now and into eternity how amazing is that so that's who you are you are chosen set apart loved in the family and when you think about it isn't that what everyone in this world longs for to be chosen loved treasured to be part of a family forever we have it all here in christ don't we

these four identifiers here they are the rock solid foundation for your life in christ your new life in him so do you feel them do you know them because only once you know who you truly are can you start to live out your true identity and paul also very importantly now tells us the power source for becoming who we truly are and that power source is simply christ in us i mean if you remember back to verse four there we read it at the start when christ who is your life appears then you also will appear with him the power source is his life in us now think about it christ is the only person who can really live the life that we've read about in our passage today because we participate in christ's life his spirit is alive inside of us and so that means we have all we need to live this new life christ is empowering us to become like him and i have to warn you if you don't understand that you're going to be crushed under the weight of the commands coming up in this passage because you might wrongly think that you must garner some inner strength from somewhere inside of you to live this new life in christ or you might think oh well it's half my strength half god's no we can only become who we truly are in christ in the power of christ working through our efforts so with that firmly in mind let's now look at three marks of that new self which paul describes we are to put on our new clothes of love submit to the rule of christ and do everything in the name of jesus firstly put on the clothes of

love look in verse 12 it says therefore as god's chosen people holy and dearly loved clothe yourselves with compassion kindness humility gentleness and patience clothe yourselves in compassionate hearts now i don't know about you but does that not strike you as impossible i mean how do you put on a compassionate heart if you were to ask me to put on a smile even when i'm really not feeling like it i can put on a smile i can fake it right how on earth am i supposed to put on a feeling a compassionate heart to be touched by my brother or sister's pain where i just simply am not feeling it well the only answer is it's a miracle of christ it's got to be his power in us changing us giving us new hearts and what is the result of that new heart of compassion well i think acts of kindness naturally flow out of that kindness towards our brothers and sisters in the body he goes on in verse 12 clothe yourselves in humility now i think this is another big heart issue do we look down on other members of the body and think in some ways we are better than others or do you elevate your brothers and sisters above you in serving their needs first treating them better than they even deserve at times that's humility and then what flows out of that humble heart that god gives us it's the next thing on paul's list isn't it gentleness gentleness towards all not a judgmental or harsh demeanor but gentleness towards our brothers and sisters next paul tells us to put on the garments of patience to be long suffering with one another and there's a reason why we need to do this just nobody in this room has been made perfect yet we are a beautiful but a messy church so paul calls you to something radical in verse 13 read it with me bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone forgive as the lord forgave you to bear with our brothers and sisters in their sin and their mess is to help them on their journey to becoming their true selves in christ we pass over all the different wrongs that might be done to us we don't bring every one of those up we know that we do need to confront our brothers and sisters at times with their sin and yet we also pass over and knowing that there will be times when we will hurt each other either unintentionally or not and we must forgive as christ has forgiven us and then in 14 let's read it and over all these virtues put on love which binds them all together in perfect unity basically become a loving person in the church filled with not just any love christ's love because christ is your life you can love like he does in increasing measure as you depend on him so i want to encourage you if you are in christ today you have all these clothes of love in your spiritual wardrobes in the power of the spirit of christ keep putting them on moment by moment and become who you truly are in christ second mark of the new self in christ is that we submit to the rule of christ now we read back in verse one of this chapter that christ is seated at the right hand of god in the place of authority and we as a church family we're to submit to his loving rule over us specifically here christ's peace and his word

look at what paul says in verse 15 let the peace of christ rule in your hearts since as members of one body you were called to peace we're called to submit to christ's peace what a wonderful thing to submit to but sometimes the last thing our selfish hearts wants to submit to how often in the church do we disagree over petty things that don't really matter we grumble and complain about so and so doing this or that and sometimes it's not even a primary issue maybe it's the length of the sermon what that kid did which songs were chosen what way the chairs were set out all such grumbling and complaining is not in submission to the peace of christ christ's so if we do see something in the church that's not in a line with god's word let's go with the clothes of love on us and address it but always with the intention to promote peace in the church not division let's not come in all guns blazing but instead clothe ourselves in compassion kindness patience gentleness speaking the truth in love of course we're going to disagree that's part of life together as a family but we can do so peaceably in the power of christ one other thing we're supposed to submit to in verse 16 we're supposed to submit to the word of christ let's read there let the message of christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms hymns and songs from the spirit you know it's not my word or your word actually that's the authority it's christ's word isn't it it's we are to let it dwell richly among us don't you love that language to dwell richly and what does that look like well no matter what you feel your main gifting might be in the church body here we are all instructed to teach each other to do what the word says and we are all instructed to admonish or warn one another when someone is not doing what the word says this should actually be a normal part of our lives together as a family believers now if you're the one teaching or admonishing you better come clothed in love and humility and gentleness before you even think about approaching your brother or sister and likewise on the flip side when you're the one being taught if someone comes to you sharing god's word with you admonishing you you also need to be clothed with humility and love willing to listen being thankful for your brother or sister

who cared enough to bring god's word his healing word to you yet i think it's clear and you probably noticed this that the context which paul is mainly thinking of in this passage is teaching and admonishing one another through our singing now that's an interesting one isn't it because oftentimes we're not mindful of this main purpose of singing in our gathering our purpose when we sing is not simply vertical singing praise to god although that is a primary purpose for sure what a joy to sing praise to him but we're also singing horizontally to each other some sunday mornings i walk in here and i'm struggling to believe the promises i'm disappointed i'm weary on those days you my brothers and sisters are teaching and admonishing me by singing the word over me whether you're young or old you're singing when i just look around and see you singing that encourages me that the promises are true to keep going in the faith so sing out and teach and admonish your brothers and sisters around you and let the word of christ dwell richly among us become who you truly are in christ and submit to that peace of christ and the word of christ lastly and briefly as part of our new life in christ we do everything in the name of jesus read verse 17 with me and whatever you do whether in word or deed do it all in the name of the lord jesus giving thanks thanks to god the father through him in becoming who we truly are in christ our old motivations our old motivations often selfish are replaced with new ones we don't live to satisfy our own selfish desires anymore no matter what we accumulate it's never enough anyway and we don't live to please people anymore either because we can never measure up to their standards no matter how hard or how long we tried instead we do everything in the name of jesus whether that's doing jobs around the house sitting around the dinner table with your family setting down chairs at church going to work on a monday morning scrolling through your phone in the evening no exceptions every action every word do it do it in the name of jesus i think that means three things a representing him when people see you they should see something different about how you speak and act do they see kindness compassion the humility of jesus you're representing him when you're doing it all in his name secondly i think this could imply that we are also empowered by him if we're doing it in jesus name that means we are depending in everything we do

[ 28 : 27 ] on christ's power to enable us to do it not on our own strength and thirdly i think to do everything in the name of jesus means to simply do it for him we make it our aim to please him and i think that changes the way we do the things that we do right if you're doing those mundane jobs around the house do it for christ to serve him and your family if you're watching tv think carefully about what you consume is it pleasing to christ is it good for your heart if you're going to work on a monday morning don't do a half job on it give it your very best do it for christ do it for christ aim to please him and let your boss see your good deeds if you're setting up chairs and you think do you know what nobody ever thanks me for doing this job do it for christ do it for christ do it for christ do it for christ do it for christ do it for christ do everything in the name of the lord jesus giving thanks to god the father through him yes giving thanks in everything paul fits in one more beautiful item of clothing into this passage the garment of thankfulness what a difference it makes to put on the clothes of thankfulness in place of mumbling and complaining so become who you truly are in christ and do everything in the name of jesus giving thanks to god the father through him to finish i'm not sure what challenges you the most from this passage today but for me there are some days i'm tired disappointed feeling weak and i actually just give up on those days living the new life in christ i don't know if you can relate i just pull on those old clothes of selfishness harshness and speech being a big old grump really do you have days like that well this is what got me this week the amazing news of this passage is that at every moment in your life you actually have the power to live your new life in christ because you are always in christ you can always become more like christ isn't that just transformative it's not some special strength you must drum up from inside yourself it's christ's power already dwelling inside of you his spirit so it's possible to put on your new clothes of love even when you're tired disappointed and suffering you can you can submit to that new authority of christ's peace and his word

and you actually are able to leave your old motivations behind and do everything for jesus it's all by christ's power in us so let me encourage you go become who you truly are in christ work hard at it with christ's power working through you go and live it let's pray oh father we confess we don't have the resources to live this beautiful new life in and of ourselves thank you thank you for giving us new life in christ thank you that christ is in us so fill up our weakness with your strength and save us from depending on ourselves give us new grace each day to live the new life you have won for us it's for his sake we ask amen we're going to sing a song which brings together some of these themes

we've been talking about it it's called there is one gospel and in the third verse there's something that really struck me from this it says now on my savior i fix my eyes my life is his and his hope is mine for he has promised i too will rise i stand in the gospel of jesus christ are you standing in that gospel today are you fixing your eyes on your savior using this song i encourage you to do that to place your hope and your trust in him again let's all stand and sing if you're able thank you do do do Thank you.