

Renewal - Part 2

Colossians 3

1. God renews our MINDS.

- *Colossians 3:1-4*

2. God renews our WORDS.

- *Colossians 3:5-10*

3. God renews our ACTIONS.

- *Colossians 3:11-16, 17*

love.learn.live.

westvalleychurch.com



West Valley Church
5/4/25
Casey Wilkerson

Renewal – part 2

God Renews our Minds, Words, and Actions

Colossians 3

Last week we began a new series on Renewal. It's good news for us that no matter how bad we've been, or what mistakes we have made, God loves us and offers forgiveness to us and gives a fresh start. At the end of last week, Pastor Mike said: "Most of all, God renews our broken relationship with Him. From there, everything else can be renewed." So today we will look at some, not all, of the "everything else" that God renews. We'll read from the words of Paul in his letter to the Colossians, chapter 3. I'm going to break it up into a few sections, and from the first section, we'll see that...

1. God renews our MINDS.

Here is what Paul wrote starting in chapter 3:

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 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.
(Colossians 3:1-4)

If that is all we read, you might think Paul is saying that we should withdraw ourselves from work and activities of this world, so we can focus on heaven, prayer, Scripture, and our relationship with God. Sometimes this is nice and can help us to grow in our faith. One of the ways I feel closest to God is when I'm outside in nature. It could be for an hour bike ride or multiple days camping. You remove yourself from your work and stress and ordinary stuff, and when you return, you have had rest and you've been renewed. As good as that can be for us, Paul's not talking about removing ourselves from everything and everyone around us so we can go pray or join a monastery. But as we grow in our relationship with God, He renews our mind, which means He's going to change the way we see the earthy things.

Jesus was more focused on serving than ruling, forgiving than avenging, giving than receiving. If we're going to focus on Jesus and allow him, to renew our minds, we will too.

Earthly problems that we face in life when we have our mind focused on Jesus, aren't as bad. We still deal with stress and pain and loss, but there is comfort knowing the same God who conquered the grave, loves you and wants to help you with what you are going through. God can renew our minds, so we can trust Him more and worry less.

When God renews our minds, it changes the way we see people – others and ourselves. Too many times we look in the mirror and see our past, our mistakes, our brokenness. When

God renews our mind, He helps us to see ourselves as the loved children He sent his son, Jesus, to die for. When God renews our mind, He helps us to see everyone as the loved children He sent his son Jesus to die for.

We all need Jesus. The first line of our church mission statement is, introduce people to Jesus. He is the one who offers renewal, and if our lives have been changed because of Jesus, we will see people the way Jesus sees them. The experience of forgiveness and love that we have had, we are going to want share that with everyone else. That's why we created cards for you to easily hand out and invite someone to Easter. If we are excited about Easter and what that means for our faith, why wouldn't we want to invite others to share that experience? If God has given us a fresh start, why wouldn't we want to help others experience a fresh start too? If you ever missed an opportunity to talk with or pray for someone, because "you weren't thinking about it," that is what Paul is talking about, set your mind on things above.

This week is the most important week for our soccer teams. Halfway through practice, the coach is going to share a devotion. They always do a devotion halfway, but this week the coach will give kids an opportunity to ask God for forgiveness, and commit to following Jesus as their Savior. 810 kids will hear about salvation this week, this is why we do soccer. We aren't saving them, or fixing them, or renewing them. Jesus is doing that. We are giving the introduction. We are telling them about God's love and how to start a relationship with Him. How they can leave their past and have a fresh start. How they can have their minds on things above.

When we allow God to renew our minds, it's going to change us. One change is how...

2. God renews our WORDS

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 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. (Colossians 3:5-10)

I laughed as I read one of my commentaries this week on this passage. It was the William Barclay's commentary which said, "There could never have been a time in history when so much filthy language is used as today and the tragedy is that many people have become so habituated to unclean talked that they are unaware they are even using it." It was written in 1975.

I wasn't alive in the 70s so I don't know for sure if that's accurate. Is language worse now? As a kid, I knew what all the bad words were. I rode the school bus. I also knew that it was not nice to call someone "stupid". Alyssa and I didn't like our kids saying it either, so we were shocked when Judah ran in as a 6-year-old saying, "Jordan said stupid." 4-year-old Jordan walked in to correct him with the truth, "No, I said, YOU'RE stupid."

Our words matter because it reflects what we are thinking. Paul is saying to get rid of the talk that is who you used to be. Remember, you are made new in Christ, talk like it. Our words reflect how we feel about others, and how we feel about ourselves.

About two months ago I got to perform a wedding in Idaho. Weddings are always fun, but this one was special in a new way for me. I had met Suzi and her family when I first became a children's pastor. She was in preschool. Now she's married. So that might give you an idea how old I am. In a wedding the couple shares vows, written words of our love and commitment to our spouse. That's what we do in church too. We sing songs of praise to God; we thank Him and worship Him. We listen to Him and talk to Him. With the same mouth we tell God we love Him, with the same mouth we tell our spouse or our children or others, we love them, when we slander or use filthy language, or lie. Renewing our words is a daily choice. Just like renewing your vows is a daily choice you make.

You might not use anger or malice towards God, but do you to others? Maybe not out loud, but typed online? Because each person that annoys you, or you don't like, or doesn't like you, is a son or daughter of God, just like you.

As God renews our minds, we see people the way God sees them. We don't say those things because we don't think those things. Paul isn't just talking about renewing our mind and words though. We don't just talk about loving others, we show it.

3. God renews our ACTIONS.

Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. 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 were 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.
(Colossians 3:11-16)

According to Roman law different classes of people were to wear different kinds of clothing to designate their status within society. In this context, to change one's clothing would signal a change in one's social status. If you ever watch the Chosen, you can tell who the Roman guards are, you can tell who the Pharisees are, who the unclean are, and who the disciples are, because of what they wear.

I don't like spending money on clothes. Most of my clothes are older than my children. And lots of shirts I have were free. I cared about clothes growing up, probably because I wasn't the one buying them, but as I got older, I started caring less about what I wore.

Growing up, you could tell in middle school who the cool kids were, by what clothes they wore. Basketball jerseys and baggy jeans. That was the cool thing, and mom did not like me

wearing baggy pants. They had to be baggy and had to sag, and Mom wanted my butt to be covered for some reason. Then after I graduated college, all the cool kids in school were in skinny jeans but still sagging them. Now the cool thing is sweatpants, gym shorts and pajamas. So I guess I'm just not cool when it comes to wearing clothes. Thankfully, Paul is saying get rid of all that. Don't worry about all that, here's what you need to look like, here's what you need to wear. Jesus died for all, gives new life for all, so we can all be His. The clothing you need is to be looking like Jesus.

On Easter we were challenged to remove the grave clothes. If we have been forgiven and saved by God, and you've chosen to follow Him, you have been given new life. If we have new life, we should not be walking around in grave clothes that stink and remind us of the life we left. When you look in the mirror, and you see who you used to be, or anything less than God sees you, you see yourself in grave clothes. So if we remove our grave clothes, and put on Jesus, what does that look like? Paul says wear this: 3:12-14 wear this.

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. (Colossians 3:12b-14)

In verses 10 and 12. The same Greek verb is translated, put on and clothe yourselves. We remove the grave clothes so when we look in the mirror, we don't see who we used to be. We see who God sees. God renews our mind, so we don't just see others the way God sees them, we see ourselves the way God sees us. God renews are actions so we can live as followers of Jesus.

We put on kindness, compassion, patience, and forgiveness because this is who Jesus was. It's how Jesus lived, and as followers of Jesus, we want to reflect Jesus. He was love, and he showed his love when he died for us, and we are able to be renewed in his image so that we can reflect him and show His love.

These are not easy. Following Jesus isn't easy. The changes Jesus wants to renew in our lives can be tough. If it's up to you, the renewal Jesus offers will be even harder. Jesus is the one who helps us. Renewal of our mind, our words, and our actions, begin with Jesus. As Pastor Mike said last week, "God renews our broken relationship with Him. From there, everything else can be renewed".

God works in us and renews us, so we can be like Him. Too often, the world hears a "Christian", and they don't hear Christ. Too often, the world sees a Christian, and they don't see Christ. They don't see **compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.**

It's not easy, but it's who Jesus was and challenges us to be. And it's who Jesus will help us to be. Verse 17 is Paul's challenge for us today:

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. (Colossians 3:17)

When God renews our minds, our words and actions get renewed too. We see ourselves the way God sees us. What did you do this week? In word or deed, can you say you did it in the name of Jesus?

PRAYER

Benediction

On Easter Sunday, Pastor Mike challenged others to remove the grave clothes. People could take a piece of cloth as a reminder of the stinky grave clothes you have left behind. If you didn't get one, or need another, you can take one on your way out as a reminder of the old self you are leaving behind, and the new self God is renewing in you. Use it as a bookmark or keep it in your pocket as a reminder and challenge, of what you are putting on. You belong to God, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. From the beginning and end of our passage today, hear Paul's words to you as you leave:

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 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. (Colossians 3:2, 17)