



BATTLEGROUND
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Leader Guide
Sunday, December 30, 2018

Sing a New Song

Sermon Text: Psalm 33

Study Texts: Colossians 3:16-17

Sermon Recap:

Psalm 33 is a hymn of praise. It opens with a declaration that a genuine knowledge of the LORD prompts His people to worship Him. The Psalmist gives three separate reasons for us to praise and worship God. One, God's Word is upright, true, and powerful. Two, God's will will prevail, for He is the Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign King over all. And three, God sees everything at all times, for He is sitting enthroned high above the earth observing all the deeds of mankind. With these attributes in mind, the Psalm closes with a call for God's people to praise the LORD through song. As believers, our hearts should overflow with praise because of Who the LORD is and what He has done for us.

Sermon Connection:

Colossians 3:16-17 is a passage that urges believers to act as a result of their salvation. It teaches that the joy and thanksgiving brought about by salvation will influence the way in which we live, specifically when we are in the midst of our fellow believers. It calls upon believers to praise and give thanks to the LORD, teach and admonish one another in Christ, and live the entirety of our lives for the glory of God. It echos the worshipful aspect of Psalm 33 by urging believers to praise God in all that they do.

Lesson Plan

Lesson Goal:

To see that the putting on of Christ will drastically influence our desire to worship God and shape the way that we live with fellow believers

Lesson Points:

Point 1: The Putting on of Christ Should Influence How We Teach, Admonish, and Sing with One Another. (v. 16)

Point 2: The Putting on of Christ Should Influence Everything We Do with One Another.
(v. 17)

The Context:

Colossians 3 highlights what it looks like for believers to *put on* the “new self” in Christ Jesus. This passage falls in the midst of Paul’s warnings and encouragements for the people of Colossae. By giving a list of vices and virtues, Paul’s goal is to teach his readers what it looks like to live as a follower of Christ. In verses 5-11 of chapter 3, Paul teaches his readers that following Jesus means abstaining from the sins within the world. In verses 12-17, Paul shifts his teaching and begins to teach his readers that Christians should seek to put on godly character and act in a godly manner toward one another in all that they do.

Opening Question:

How are salvation and worship connected? What should our worship look like?

Salvation will always lead us to worship. As believers, we worship the LORD with the entirety of our being because we recognize all that He has done for us. We recognize that we were sinners deserving eternal damnation, but through the gospel, we are now children of God! The realization of this truth produces worship that will manifest itself in the way that we sing with one another, teach one another, and live with one another. In short, this worship will be a refocusing of our entire life to the glory of God.

Transition Statement:

Worship is the natural response of anyone that has been given new life in Christ. It is the overflow of joy and gratefulness in the LORD. But when we think of worshipping the LORD, we most often think of singing. And while this is one of the most natural ways to worship, it is not the only means of worship. One commentator says, “Worship cannot be confined to teaching, admonishing, and singing; it must be correlated with the yielding of one’s entire being to God.”¹ When we let God’s Word influence our heart and life, we will live a life that both brings glory to God and seeks to worship Him in our actions toward our fellow believers in Christ.

Point 1: The Putting on of Christ Should Influence How We Teach, Admonish, and Sing with One Another. (v. 16)

What does “*the word of Christ*” refer to in verse 16? And, as believers, what does it mean to let this word dwell in us richly? See also Psalm 119:11.

The word of Christ can either refer to the teachings of Jesus Himself, or, most likely, it can refer to the teaching of the gospel (and, therefore, the entirety of scripture). Either way, it is clear that Christ, His teachings, and His mission should be the focus of this passage. Paul says specifically that we are to meditate on them and to let them “dwell richly” within us.

¹ David E. Garland, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Ephesians-Philemon*, ed. Tremper Longman III, 2006 ed., vol. 12, 13 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006).

When we, as Christians, let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, it means that we let the deep truth of the gospel drive, shape, and influence all that we do. It influences both our individual lives and the life of the Church. This requires believers to read and meditate on their Bible regularly.

How can we regularly teach our fellow brothers and sisters the word of Christ?

Teaching is not to be left solely to pastors or staff members. This passage is speaking to the entire group of believers within the Church at Colossae. We would do this passage an injustice by passing all teaching responsibility to the leaders or pastors within our congregation. Teaching needs to happen by both pastors and lay members. It needs to be done both formally and informally...formally, by those with a teaching gift within a class-like setting (sermons, Growth Group lessons, etc.), and informally, by all Christ-followers through discipling relationships, friendships, etc. Both formal and informal teaching can be used to remind one another of the gospel on a regular basis. But this is not to be done haphazardly; it is to be done in all wisdom.

Why are we commanded to admonish one another? Why do many people find it difficult to admonish one another? See also 2 Tim. 3:16.

Admonish means to correct improper thinking or living. It is done to bring your fellow brothers and sisters into a correct theological understanding and a correct means of living. Obviously, most people do not enjoy confronting others to tell them they are wrong or living in error. As sinful humans, however, we can easily fall away from proper biblical understanding or living. But as believers, we must not be content for our brothers and sisters to be living in error. We must seek to lovingly point them to a correct, biblical way of thinking and living.

What is the purpose of “*singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*” to one another? And how is this tied to “*letting the word of Christ dwell in you richly*”?

Allowing the Word of Christ, to dwell in us richly will produce a deeper desire for God. Praising the Lord through song will be a natural response to the gospel. John Piper says that worship is the natural overflow of the believer’s heart. But as sinful, fallen humans, we can easily forget the truth of the gospel. We can let things within our life (job, family, trials, struggles, etc.) distract us from the magnificent truth of the gospel. When believers come together and sing, 1) we are proclaiming to God His goodness and glory and 2) we are proclaiming our gratitude for Him to Him. Additionally, we are reminding our fellow brothers and sisters of the truth of the gospel through our singing. These psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs can be a powerful tool to teach one another, edify one another, point one another to the gospel, and give thanks to the Father.

One crucial piece to faithful worship is our heart. What does it mean to “give thanks in our hearts” when we are worshipping the Father?

When it comes to our worship, specifically through song, we must examine our heart. Since worship is an overflow of the heart, it is impossible to genuinely worship if our heart does not believe the truth of the gospel. This verse teaches us that God is not being worshipped if we are reluctant to praise Him with our heart. He wants our heart to truly overflow with an acknowledgment of Who He is. Simply singing along with the words of a worship song while allowing our mind to wander is not worship.

How can we ensure that our worship, both in word and song, remains true and Christ-centered?

We, as Christians, must remember that we are all a part of the Body of Christ. We are all called to contribute to the mission of God and His Church. There is no observing within the people of God. We are all called to teach and admonish one another toward Christlikeness. We must take it upon ourselves to seek the growth of our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, collectively reminding one another of the gospel.

Transition Statement:

It is important that Paul commands believers to do specific things with one another (teach, admonish, sing), but Paul doesn't want us to think in such a closed-minded manner. In verse 17, he calls on Christians to take their devotion to the LORD and to one another even further.

Point 2: The Putting on of Christ Should Influence Everything We Do with One Another.
(v. 17)

While Christians should seek to individually live for the glory of God, Colossians 3 speaks to how we, as a group of believers, should live for the glory of God collectively. How are these two things different? How are they the same?

When we live for the glory of God individually, we are obviously thinking about our individual lives, the things we do, say, think, etc. And biblically speaking, it is crucial to live our lives for the glory of God. But in the context of this passage, we need to remind ourselves that we are also called to live for the glory of God as a group (in our specific case, our Growth Group). Everything we do as a Growth Group needs to be done in light of the LORD. When we meet together, eat together, do things together, we need to be thinking about how our Growth Group can best exist to do everything in the name of the LORD.

What does it look like for our Growth Group to do everything in the name of the Lord?

When we do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, we are seeking to bring honor and glory to Him in all that we do--but that isn't always easy to accomplish. As a Growth Group, you need to *intentionally* look at everything that you do together. Everything from your meals, to your fellowship, and to your teaching need to be done for the glory of God. This requires you to humbly critique yourself with the Word of God and be willing to change any aspect of your group that is failing to bring glory to Him. This passage is also a helpful reminder that

Growth Group is not simply a time to be with friends, it is a time to disciple one another and bring honor to the Father.

What does it mean to *“give thanks to God the Father through Him”*?

As we seek to obey the commands within scripture, we can sometimes find ourselves obeying out of mere obligation. But we, as believers, must remind ourselves regularly that we obey out of thanksgiving to the Father. Interestingly enough, this closing phrase in verse 17 points us directly to the gospel. It reminds us that through the cross, Jesus reconciled us to the Father. And it is through Jesus alone that we can have communion with the Father (John 14:6). Christ is both the source of our obedient heart and the primary means in which we can give thanks to the Father.

The Big Picture

As Christians, we have recognized the significance of who God is and what He has done for us. We know that we were dead in our sins and separated from the Father. But through the love and life of Christ, we have been reconciled to God. This naturally produces a response of worship within us. Our heart overflows with gratitude toward God, for we, like the psalmist in Psalm 33 are overwhelmed with the love and grace of God. Additionally, this gratitude should birth a desire within us to will push our fellow brothers and sisters toward godliness. This is to be done by teaching, admonishing, singing, and ultimately, by doing everything as a group of believers in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Christ.

Application Questions

- Has our Growth Group taken the job teaching and admonishing one another seriously? How and how not?
- Is it evident within our Growth Group that our hearts are overflowing with praise for the Father? Why or why not?
- How have I failed to view my time of worship through song as a time to both praise God and edify others?
- Where does our Growth Group fail to act in the name of the Lord?
- Am I teaching my family that a love for the Lord will result in an overflowing heart of praise and gratitude? If not, how am I failing to do it?