

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Prison Letters
Colossians 3:5-17

Last time...a pivot point in this Epistle

From

- Christ's preeminence
- all the riches we have in Christ
- the warnings of the Holy Spirit about worldly deception

to a very direct exhortation to

- keep our focus and perspective in a world gone mad
- have the mind of Christ

This time...with the mind of Christ, in this letter written to

- a church
- the Church
- the Body of Christ
- believers
- those who want to follow Jesus Christ

instruction in how to live like Christ in this world

Walking with Jesus is to:

1. mortify
2. put off
3. put on
4. let

v5-7 1. Walking with Jesus: Mortify

The way of the flesh, the sin nature of fallen man

- with which the holy Creator God is greatly displeased
- upon which He will have his vengeance and indignation
- of which we are all guilty
- which are a normal way of life for the children of disobedience/disbelief

We have already been instructed

Matt 22:36-40

Eph 2:1-6

1 Cor 6:9-11

Rom 6:16-22

Now, the 4th time the Church is reminded that we are no longer what we were

To continue walking with Jesus, we are being instructed to continually mortify

- put to death
- subdue
- “pull the plug on the life-support system keeping alive”

the sinful lusts of the flesh, our carnal body that came from dust and will return to dust:

- fornication...”harlotry”, every sexual relationship outside the God-ordained and blessed relationship of marriage, one man and one woman
- uncleanness...”moral impurity”, every thought and deed that is outside the nature and character of God
- inordinate affection...every corrupt, inflamed passion and carnal lust
- evil concupiscence...every depraved and forbidden longing
- covetousness...idolatry, a consuming greed for things of the earth, the worship of and serving anything that is not the OTL God Who alone is worthy of worship and is very jealous

Very often these self-destructive behaviors are sexual in nature

If someone is living in a sexual relationship outside of marriage (ensnared in the sin of fornication) and they want to walk with Jesus, they must repent and move out!

No matter how much they may “love” that person

No matter the financial difficulties it may present

Change their

- perspective on right and wrong
- mind/desire
- behavior/lifestyle
 - My way does not work, it hurts too much
 - I want God’s way, I want to be right with God
 - I want to change!
 - I need help to change! (humility)

If someone is sleeping with someone with whom they are not married (ensnared in the sin of fornication) and they want to walk with Jesus, they must repent!

No matter how much they may “love” that person

Even if “everyone is doing it” or “that is how things are done now.”

Regardless of social acceptance and peer pressure

Change their

- perspective on right and wrong
- mind/desire
- behavior/lifestyle
 - This is not right and God will not bless it
 - I want to be right with God
 - I want to change!
 - I need help to change! (humility)

If someone is living the LGBTQ+/Trans/Drag lifestyle (ensnared in the sins of fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, and evil concupiscence) and they want to walk with Jesus, they must repent!

No matter how “cool” and celebrated and protected such a lifestyle may be in society

Change their

- perspective on right and wrong
- mind/desire
- behavior/lifestyle
 - My way does not work, it hurts too much
 - I want God’s way, I want to be right with God
 - I want to change!
 - I need help to change! (humility)

If someone covets someone or something of this world such that it affects what they say and do (ensnared in the sin of idolatry), and they want to walk with Jesus, no matter how sparkly or beautiful or handsome or “valuable”, they must repent and remember!

Coveting things of the world is an exercise in futility: all things of the world stay in this world and go the way of the world – burned up in fervent heat

Other lusts in our lives to be repented of if one wants to walk with Jesus might be

- revenge/vengeance
 - Regardless of the severity of the injury inflicted upon us, vengeance belongs to God alone
 - Those who walk with Jesus are called to
 - love and forgive their enemies
 - overcome evil with good
 - bless those who persecute us
- gossip, taunting, baiting, nagging, pot-stirring, and poking-the-bear to cause strife because one gets a perverse pleasure from it
 - Those who walk with Jesus are called to
 - respond to harsh words softly, not with words to stir up anger
 - bite our tongue
 - edify and encourage
- drunkenness
 - Those who walk with Jesus are called to a sound, right, sober mind

Whatever the lust of the carnal flesh, the flesh is never satisfied

All lusts are cruel task-masters:

ever-demanding, misery-producing, and self-destructive

And remember what Jesus said about following Him:

Matt 16:24-25 *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*

Matt 18:3-4a *Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

Matt 26:41 *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

Give Me what you hold dear and I will give you what My Father holds dear.
Give Me what you think is good and I will give you what I know is best.
Be willing to repent and I will change you, from the inside out.

We who want to walk with Jesus must examine our lives:

Where am I tempted to please and honor myself instead of pleasing and honoring God who so loved me that He gave Himself for me?

Avoid those places!

- Social Media
- TV \ Entertainment industry is given over to
- movies / and sells sex
- where the “children of disobedience” gather to do what they do

See the world as God sees it and put up mental and spiritual “Bio Hazard” signs!

Is there someone that tempts me to sin against God, to grieve the Holy Spirit?

Avoid that person/people!

Put barriers in place

How can I mortify these God-offending and Self-destructive things?

1. a mindset shift – v1-4

2. the help of the Holy Spirit

Only by the power of the Holy Spirit can we subdue the self-serving and self-destructive passions of our flesh (1 Cor 9:27)

And we need to ask for His help BEFORE we need it!

When warring against our carnal lusts, we must be on the offensive, not the defensive

3. unquestioned obedience (by faith of a child) to the Word of God

Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Feeding our lives with the Bread of Life to strengthen the spirit.

Spirit vs flesh: whichever we feed more will be the stronger

By feeding the Spirit and subjecting/subduing/mortifying the flesh:

- hearts and minds and eyes and ears are guarded with holiness
- boundaries for our flesh are set and protected by the Holy Spirit
- increased ability to listen to and obey the still small voice of God!
- increased ability to listen to our conscience, the moral code of God hard-wired in all of us, lest it become seared by following the world
- strength to obey that produces strength to obey

v8-9 2. Walking with Jesus: Put off

But now...because something wonderful happened to us!

We were given the power of God to become a child of God!!

We were given a new heart and a regenerated spirit!

We were made new creatures in Christ!

We were made the righteousness of God in Christ!

We were invested with the nature and Spirit of Christ whereby we can say No! to

- sin
- the flesh, this body of death and its self-destructive lusts

We can now walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh because the ever-demanding, misery-producing, and self-destructive lusts of the flesh have been mortified/subdued!

We have the wherewithal to throw away the putrid garbage (a days-old chicken carcass) and divest our lives of

- anger, a self-centered and selfish display of our thwarted-will-be-done
James 1:20 the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God

- malice, malevolence, an evil root of a fierce, self-centered, and selfish passion/indignation to harm others

Eph 4:30-31

Titus 3:3

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another

1 Peter 2:1

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

- blasphemy, vilifying the Creator God who alone is good and holy and pure, daring to elevate one's created Self above Him as the Lord/Supreme Authority of one's life

- filthy communication
 - Eph 4:29 Corrupt communication instead of edification and grace
 - Matt 15:18-19 *those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*
 - James 3:6 And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.
- lying, falsehoods and deception that produce ill-will, strife, and confusion

Side note: the darkness of Islam, the spirit of anti-christ, covering the planet is a religion of anger, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, and lying

v10-11 3. Walking with Jesus: Put on

We have a new man, a new character, a fresh “change of clothes”!

1 Cor 15:20-21, 42-49

Eph 4:22-24

The mysteries of God have been revealed to us by the Word of God and the Spirit of God
We have received into our hearts and minds this life-changing, life-giving knowledge by
faith, the faith of a child

We have been made clean and incorporated into another Body, the Body of Christ that
moves in the world according to the will of the Head of the Body, Jesus Christ,
calling others to be changed as we were

Yet, in our dual-nature torment (Gal 5:17), we struggle still in our walk with Jesus

We abjectly and daily need God’s help to continually

- divest our lives of the old man
- invest our lives with the new man

Rom 7:14-25

With

1. a mindset shift – v1-4
2. the help of the Holy Spirit
3. unquestioned obedience (by faith of a child) to the Word of God

we daily strip off the filthy clothes of our righteousness and put on the fresh, clean, white
linen garment of Christ’s righteousness to the glory of God the Father

v12-13 Therefore, as the (made) holy and beloved children of God, we put on/invest/live Christ's nature/character

- bowels of mercies
 "spleen" or "intestines"
 Mercy upon mercy upon mercy in the deepest part of our being and
 mercy upon mercy upon mercy from the deepest part of our being.
 The mercy of the Living God who delights in mercy given to us!
 Matt 5:7
 Matt 10:8
- kindness...benevolent other-centeredness, the Golden Rule
- humbleness of mind...humility, not thinking more highly of ourselves than we should (after all, Rom 3:10, 23)
- meekness...humble gentleness from a soft heart
- longsuffering...the fortitude of being patient with others
- forbearing one another...putting up with each other and holding each other up
- forgiving one another
 Eph 4:32
 Matt 6:14-15
 Matt 18:21-22

v14 And above all those things in Jesus' character in v12-13, the most important of all: charity/*agape*

A wonderful thing about parenthood seen time and time again:

Before the child (first) is born, everything is all about me

After the child, everything is not longer about me but the child...someone else

Such is *agape*, the Father's love for us

No strings attached, unchanging, absolute

1 Cor 13:1-8a

1 John 4:7-18

God's love is the strong "ligament" that keeps us secure in our relationship with Him

God's love is the "uniting bond" that keeps the Body of Christ

- attached to the Head
- together
- complete
- separate from the world as God's witness in the world

v15-16 4. Walking with Jesus: Let

By

- mortifying/subduing the lusts of the flesh
- then putting off our filthy rags, our days old chicken carcass
(cannot put off the old man until he is deadened)
- then putting on the righteousness of Jesus Christ
(cannot put on the new until we put off the old)

we let (yield to, gladly submit to) the peace of God

- the rest of God, rest from our labors to earn God's love
- the quietness of God
- our peace with God (Rom 5:1)

rule/govern every dimension and aspect of our lives;
we move peacefully in this world gone mad

And we are thankful/grateful for

- the rest of God from our fruitless labor to save ourselves and from our endless striving to be pleasing to God of our own works
- the quietness of God in a very noisy, hostile, and unsettling world
- our peace with God in a world at war with the Almighty Creator

And by

- mortifying/subduing the lusts of the flesh
- then putting off our filthy rags, our days old chicken carcass
- then putting on the righteousness of Jesus Christ

we let (yield to, gladly submit to) the Word of Christ dwell in us, taking up permanent and directing residence in our very soul and in the deepest parts of our being

If we want to walk with Jesus, if we want to live according to the character of Jesus, we need to repent/change our ways and embrace His ways
His ways are revealed in the Word of God so we must be daily in the Word of God, reading hungrily for His righteousness to walk by faith and in the Spirit with Jesus
Rom 10:17

Then we will flourish with His abundant

- wisdom
- teaching, instruction in righteousness
- gentle warnings and encouragement and edification with each other

Speaking to each other in "beautiful songs" as He "sings" to us
Song of the Lord
Psalms
Song of Moses
Song of the Lamb

Songs are “triggers” to the mind, causing us to remember

- persons
- events
- places
- smells
- sights
- sounds

May we “sing to each other” to remind each other of

- Jesus Christ, our Bridegroom
- the kingdom of heaven
- the sweet fragrance of salvation
- blessed hope of seeing the glorious face of Jesus soon
- the glorious worship of God in His Throne Room

Our song is also our life...how we live, for whom we live.

Others will believe what we do more than what we say

v17 By

- mortifying/subduing the lusts of the flesh
- then putting off our filthy rags, our days old chicken carcass
- then putting on the righteousness of Jesus Christ

we let

- the peace of God govern our lives
- the Word of Christ dwell abundantly in us, directing our paths

so that whatever (all inclusive) we say or do, we say and do it in the name/character of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior

Whereby we express our thanks and eternal gratitude to our Father in Heaven who loves us and made us His own

We cannot escape temptation

We cannot block the endless stream of filth coming at us from the world
unless we leave the world (1 Cor 5:10)

But what do we do with the temptation and the endless stream of filth from the world
stirring lust in our hearts?

Rebuke and turn from?

Entertain/indulge?

With the mind of Christ (v1-4), we live like Christ in this world, walking with Jesus by

1. mortifying
2. putting off
3. putting on
4. letting

Off with the stinky rags (Is 64:6) of self-righteousness

On with the pure, spotless garment of Christ's righteousness

Zech 3:1-5

Rev 3:4-5

Rev 19:6-8, 14

Self is to die daily

Jesus is to live daily

The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak

We continually need God's help, which is but for the asking by the faith of a child

John 3:30

The life-long process of being conformed into the image of Jesus Christ