

Living as Those Made Alive in Christ

Colossians 3: 12-17 -- ESV

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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.

As Christians mature in their knowledge and faith, they sometimes become discouraged by the seemingly imperceptible advancement in their sanctification, as evidenced by their inability to obey Jesus consistently. The flesh is a powerful deterrent to righteousness, and it is always with us to some degree until it is wholly defeated through our glorification at the time of death of the body.

The flesh is a stumbling block for us on the journey to sanctification. We are drawn by God, to Him, while we were his enemies. He opens our eyes to behold the beauty and glory of God in Jesus, we repent of our sins, are forgiven through Jesus' death, in our place. And having been bought by Him, we are wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him. Original sin, however, that tainted all humanity, AKA "the flesh", inhibits our ability to live 100% for Jesus. We want to, we strive to, and we fail over and over and over. How might we overcome discouragement on the road to glory?

Of course, pray for the ability to live as one among a group of God's chosen people, in whatever measure that pleases Him.

My great and wonderful God and Father. You know everything about me. Every thought, every action, every good work and every sin. I often grieve that I am unable to live rightly before you. I have good intentions to honor you with word and deed, but I often stumble and fall. Sometimes, even when I realize I'm in the moment of testing, when I'm paying attention to what I'm doing, I make a mess of things. It makes me aware of how sinful I am, how much I need your forgiveness, and how much I need you to change me.

I know I was your enemy, and yet you chose me to be yours anyway. There was nothing good in me, and if not for Jesus, there would be nothing good in me now. I am unable to keep your commandments, but I pray that you will allow me the grace to live according to your plan for me. Clothe me in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Teach me to forgive as you forgive me, and to love others as I love myself.

Let the peace of Christ rule in my heart and in the hearts of those in my church. Let us build each other up in the message of Christ and love each other as you love us. Give us wisdom and mercy in all our interactions, and may we praise and adore you through learning, singing hymns, and serving each other in the name of Jesus Christ, always giving thanks to You through Him. Amen.

