

# Study Guide for the Week of June 8th

**Passage:** Colossians 3:12-17

## **Prayer Guide:**

This prayer guide is meant to help you facilitate a guided prayer time based on the discussion of the Word. You can be flexible in how this is used but we do want to pray in response to God's Word and collectively as a church for certain request. Remember, in communal prayer we are not a bunch of individuals having individual conversations with God and only taking turns doing so. We are having a communal conversation with God. Help remind people to "share the time" by being mindful of the length of prayers while also reminding them to pray as many times as they would like.

Facilitate through the following prayer topics:

- Spend time thinking about your own walk with Christ. Let that lead into:
  - Praise for who Christ is and how faithful He has been
  - Confession over the times you have neglected a grateful heart
  - Ask Him to give you a cherishing of the gospel as well as helping you to walk in the way He has called us to live
  - Ask the Spirit to guide you this week towards those you can share your story with

Collective prayer request this week: (this will feature a request for our church, city, or world that our whole church will be praying over. Encourage everyone to write this down somewhere or make a note and continue to pray for it each day)

-Challenge each person in your missional family to pray for one person the Spirit would lay on their heart to initiate a discipling relationship with

## **Context and Main Aim of the passage:**

**Main Aim:**The overall theme of Colossians is that "Christ is Lord over all of creation, including the invisible realm. He has secured redemption for his people, enabling them to participate with him in his death, resurrection, and fullness."

In this particular passage, Paul is spelling out what the Christian life should look like. He begins with our position in Christ, then focuses on our mindset as Christians - reminding us that we are dead to our old self and are new in Christ.

He then moves into very practical steps Christians can take to experience new life. He gives specific examples such as "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" and "be thankful" as well as "teach one another" and "admonish one another." There is what you might call a vertical element to the Christian life - that is, our relationship to God, His word, prayer, and singing to Him as well as a necessary horizontal aspect to our Christian life - teaching one another, admonishing one another, singing with and to one another.

**Context:**In this letter, Paul is responding to a form of false teaching that has cropped up in the Colossian church. While scholars debate what this particular false teaching could have been, the ESV study Bible makes this case:

“What likely happened at Colossae is that a shaman-like figure within the church had attracted a following and was presenting himself as something of a Christian spiritual guide (cf. “his sensuous mind,” 2:18). This person probably claimed to have superior insight into the spiritual realm and was advising the Colossian Christians to practice certain rites, taboos, and rituals as a means of protection from evil spirits and for deliverance from afflictions. When Paul hears of the spreading influence of this teaching that devalues Christ and fails to appreciate the new identity of believers “in Christ,” he writes this letter of warning and encouragement. He does not minimize the threat presented by the demonic powers but emphasizes the supremacy of Christ over all powers. He asserts the unity of Christians with the exalted Christ, which entails their sharing in his power and authority.”

**Potential Difficulties:** In what sense are we meant to admonish one another through “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs? What is a “spiritual song” and how is it distinguished from the other forms of song? “The word of Christ probably refers to the teaching about Christ as well as the words of Christ himself, which were part of the oral traditions passed on to believers in the early years after Christ ascended to heaven, before the Gospels had been written. Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (see note on Eph. 5:19) are one means of teaching and admonishing. Corporate worship has a teaching function through the lyrics of its songs. This was particularly important in the oral culture of Paul’s day...When Paul says ‘teach and admonish,’ he means we convey the message about Christ with warnings about the hazards of drifting from its truth (1:28) through singing praise (Eph 5:19). The psalms may derive from Scripture (1 Cor 14:26), the hymns may be praise of God and Christ (Acts 16:25; Heb 2:12), and the songs from the Spirit may be spur-of-the-moment compositions prompted by the Spirit (Rev 5:9; 14:3; 15:3).”

**Supplemental Passages:**

Romans 6 - Burial with Christ, Resurrection with Christ

Romans 12 - A similar list of Christian moral conduct and qualities, also beginning with our new mindset and identity in Christ

**Discussion Questions to Consider:** each week use this set of questions (feel free to add to, re-order or take-away as needed) as a guide to discovering the truth of the passage and the application for our personal lives and missional family

1. What stood out to you as we read this passage? Were there any lightbulb or “Aha!” moments?
2. What does this passage tell us about who God is or what He has done?
3. Is there an example to follow, a sin to avoid, or a command to obey?
4. How does this passage reveal our need for the person and work of Jesus?
5. What would our lives look like if we believed and submitted to these truths, avoided these sins, followed these examples, or obeyed these commands? What would our missional family look like?

6. What in this passage helped you to see more of Jesus and the gospel? Or what moved you to love/appreciate him more?

7. What actions and beliefs do you need to turn from based on the truths from this passage?

8. What is something you sense the Spirit is leading you to do in obedience to this passage?