

# Epistle of Paul to the Colossians VI

## (Chapter 3)

### Baptism and Walking in Newness of Life

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Now we have come to Colossians 3:1 and as we have done before, I am going to go ahead and read down certain sections of Scripture and then we will go back and we will coordinate those with other Scriptural references and bring it all into focus.

Colossians 3:1: “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died, and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory. Therefore, put to death your members, which *are* on earth: sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry” (vs 1-5). Of course, that is what we see at Christmas time.

Verse 6: “Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, among whom you also once walked, when you were living in these things” (vs 6-7).

Now, let’s go back and let’s take it verse-by-verse and go through it. Remember that Col. 3 is written after everything that we went through in Col. 2, perhaps, one of the most difficult chapters in the entire New Testament. If you can understand that, then I don’t think you are going to be hung up on any difficult Scriptures in the New Testament whatsoever, except that it just may be a matter of technical understanding of what the Greek may be.

Let’s come back to v 1: “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God.”

Rom. 6 tells us all about baptism and what it means. This is very fundamental. It also shows us the whole meaning; the symbolism of it and it also shows that there must be baptism. There are people today, who believe that you can receive the Spirit of God without baptism, but that is not true; that is not so.

When God gives the Holy Spirit, without baptism or prior to baptism—like He did with Cornelius—then the person is to be baptized. And always remember that *you never take an exception*, as you find in the case of the exception of Cornelius and his household *and make that the rule or the*

*standard—modus operandi*. And we know that through baptism you are to be baptized completely immersed in water. You are to be raised out of the watery grave, have hands laid on you for the receipt of the Holy Spirit.

I want you to notice the parallel in the writings of the Apostle Paul. Colossians—the way it is written is considerably more advanced than we have in Romans. Romans gives the fundamental details of it, whereas in Colossians, he said, ‘wherefore, if you are buried with Christ.’ In other words, he is assuming they know everything that is contained here in Rom. 6.

The Apostle Paul, says concerning baptism, Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound?”

For all the Protestants who believe in grace, that is one thing that too many of them practice. Some of them are trying as hard as they can to not sin, but the problem is you cannot overcome sin by just beating the flesh as we learned in Col. 2. It must be Christ *in* you that is doing the overcoming.

Verse 2: “MAY IT NEVER BE!...” Now, let’s understand that ‘God forbid’ (*KJV*) in the Greek means *may it never be*. In other words, it is not something that God is going to stop or forbid, but he is saying, *may this never even be; don’t let it come into mind; don’t let it exist*, because that is not the way of God. God wants *His* laws, *His* commandments, *His* way, *His* love and *His* faith *written in our heart and our mind*. That is the whole purpose of the New Covenant.

“...We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?” (v 2. Then he explains what it means to be *dead to sin*. He explains in Rom. 7 that we still have *the law of sin and death* in us and we have to overcome and grow in grace and knowledge, and that is true. We will see how that parallels in Col. 2 as we go through verse-by-verse.

Verse 3: “Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized **into** Christ Jesus, were baptized **into** His death?” That is a tremendous thing, and the Greek means that we were conjoined *into His death*.

Verse 4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him though the baptism **into** the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of

the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life” (vs 3-4)—which is what we are going to see that Col. 3 is all about and it expounds it even more about this newness of life.

Verse 5: “For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin” (vs 5-6).

That shows the whole meaning of what it means to be, that if you have died in Christ and were raised out of the watery grave, *your life is then hidden in Christ Jesus!*

Colossians 3:1: “...seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God.” How are we going to be able to do this? We are going to be able to do it, *because of the Spirit of God in us!* I’ll tell you what, one of the things that is so very, very important is that when you have the Spirit of God and these things are in your mind, in your heart and in your being, then *you are going to be seeking the things of God*, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.

We find this in Eph. 3, where it tells us in one of the most inspiring sections of the whole Bible, and in hearing me preach any length of time as many of you have, you know that I go there many, many times and cover this. This is what we are to set our minds on: *on the things which are above!* And I tell you, if there is any one thing that I see, know, learn and understand more is—the way you overcome sin to the greater degree—that you really *focus in on loving God*. You put that as the primary thing. That is the greatest thing to set your mind on.

Ephesians 3:16—Paul writes: “He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; and that being rooted and grounded in love...” (vs 16-18).

That is the whole way you are going to set your heart and your mind on the things that are above.

“...you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints...” (v 18). Brethren, this is one of the goals that we all have to have. This is the whole meat and purpose of what God wants us to comprehend and understand and grow to.

“...what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so that you may be

filled with all the fullness of God” (vs 18-19).

God is able to do that and God *will* do that, you just wait and see. Realize that if you focus in on the love of God that that is going to help you to be able to grow in that particular way.

Now let’s see concerning the New Covenant, concerning what is the basic, fundamental thing that we get into our system—in our heart and mind—as the Holy Spirit will lead us. We have to *put in*, we have to *drink in* of:

- God’s way
- God’s Spirit
- God’s laws
- God’s commandments

Hebrews 10:16: “‘This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,’ says *the* Lord, ‘I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds’”—which is really a tremendous thing, and the Greek means *to inscribe as in a stone*.

They now understand that if you use your mind constantly that you are going to be alert mentally all of your life. Of course, there comes a time when we reach toward the end of our lives that we aren’t going to be as mentally sharp as we were when we were younger. But they found that even in cases where there is advanced age, that people who use their minds, because of the way that the brain was made and built to function, that their mind actually becomes greater and better and sharper.

I’ll tell what, from what I know of some of the ministers I know of I will take any of the people that I know of who are advanced in age and who have used their minds and have really studied their Bibles, and I’ll stack them up against some ministers I know and they’ll put those ministers to shame. That is the whole part of the covenant that God is giving us that He is doing so we can focus in on the things that are at the right hand of God. We will see how this all ties in with it:

Psalms 46:7: “The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.” This is what God is going to do. He is *with* us in everything that we do, because:

- He’s given us His Spirit!
- He’s given us His commandments!
- He’s given us His love!

*That is what we need to focus in on!*

We are going to see what appears to be the guide that Paul followed to write Col. 3 It mixes in with some other things, but it has almost the same

thing—put on/put off—that we find in Col. 3. We are going to go through quite a bit of

Psalms 37:1: “Do not fret yourself because of evildoers, and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb” (vs 1-2).

Part of the problems that we have in relationship to that is that *we are not patient enough*. As I mentioned in the sermon that I did on *How to Use the Holy Spirit*, when we see all the world prospering we get frustrated. Well, David says don’t get frustrated.

Verse 3: “Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and cherish faithfulness.” Tremendous promise from God. We’ll see how that follows right closely along with Col 3.

Verse 4: “Delight yourself in the LORD...” Rather than saying: ‘Oh well, I just wish God hadn’t given this commandment. Oh my, this is so tough and I’m looking out here and seeing all these other people who aren’t keeping the commandments and man, they don’t seem to be having the difficulties.’ But turn it around the other way:

Verse 4: “Delight yourself also in the LORD, **He shall give you the desires of your heart.**” As we just read in Eph. 3, ‘above and beyond all that we could think or ask.’ So, He will do that.

Verse 5: “Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.” That is why this whole theme is:

- *rest* in the Lord
- *trust* in the Lord
- *look* to Him
- *set your affection* on the things above

Verse 6: “And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of him who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret yourself, it leads only to evil” (vs 6-8).

We’ll see how this really follows along very nicely.

Verse 9: “For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.” And not only are we going to inherit the earth, but we are going to have the inheritance of New Jerusalem.

I will let you read all the rest of the way

through because that’s helpful, too, in understanding Col. 3.

Verse 27 is the exact same thing that we find in Col. 3: “Depart from evil and do good; and live forevermore. For the LORD loves justice and does not forsake His saints; they are preserved forever, but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the earth and dwell in it forever. The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice. The Law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide” (vs 27-31).

There is a tremendous promise from God. Notice how that ties right in so nicely with what we read there in Heb. 10. “The Law of his God is in his heart...” therefore, that will give you the guide and the understanding as led by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 34: “Wait on the LORD, and **keep His way**, and He shall exalt you to inherit the earth; when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.” When are the wicked going to be totally cut off? *At the return of Jesus Christ!* So, this flows right into everything that we have in the New Testament.

Colossians 3:2: “Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died, and your life has been hid together with Christ in God.... [a tremendous and absolute blessing] ...When Christ, *Who is our life...*” (vs 2-4).

That is really something to contemplate and understand. If Christ *be in you* and the Father *be in you*, **He is your life**, because as Jesus said, ‘the words that He spoke, they are Spirit and they are Life.’ We have something that God has given us with the promises, which is so sure, that we need not be discouraged one minute concerning anything. We might get down and depressed a little bit, but when you do as Paul said here, ‘be minding the things that are above’ and realize that when Christ is going to appear:

“...then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory” (v 4).

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!.... [v 2]: ... and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is.”

In other words, ***the whole plan and purpose of God, for us, is that He is going to share His magnificent, splendor and glory with us!***

With that in mind, let me read you the section that I have in ***The Beliefs of the Christian***

***Biblical Church of God*** booklet concerning mankind:

The One of the God Family Who later became Jesus Christ, personally created Adam and Eve with His own hands, in their image and after their likeness, a little lower than God (Elohim)—the Hebrew word ‘Elohim’ is a plural noun for *God*. Human beings are flesh and blood and do not have inherit immortality within themselves. However, God has added to the human brain a spirit essence called the spirit of man. This spiritual dimension of human brain imparts mind, power and intellect. Therefore, human beings have the capacity to think, to think beyond their minds and bodies, to speak, to learn, to write, to plan, to devise, to create, to build, to control, to teach, to choose, to worship, to build character, combined with all the emotional feelings and expressions. God made them male and female for the expression of intimate, personal love with each other as husband and wife. And through this physical union, they would create children after their own kind; produce families, clans, tribes and nations.

Adam and Eve were not created with a sinful nature, but after sinning, by eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God, in His judgment, sentenced them for their sins to the penalty of death and a sinful nature. This sinful nature was passed to all mankind by physical inheritance. As a result, human nature is naturally hostile to God and not subject to His laws or commandments. From conception, human nature is a mixture of good and evil and all die in Adam. When a person dies, his or her conscience thoughts cease. The body returns to the dust and the spirit in man goes back to God. Only through God the Father’s gracious and merciful plan of salvation, through Jesus Christ and the Father’s personal, individual calling, is it possible for a person to be redeemed and saved from this sinful nature of death. God’s overall plan and purpose of salvation for each human being is complete reconciliation with God the Father through Jesus Christ. And that he or she may ultimately enter into the family of God, as a literal son or daughter of God, sharing the same eternal existence as God.

That is a tremendous thing, brethren! In the *Beliefs I start out with the **God Family***. That is interesting in

the light of the things that we have heard recently. Then:

- God the Father
- God the Son, Jesus Christ of Nazareth
- mankind
- God’s love to us
- our love to God

It is so tremendous, it is absolutely just overwhelming and magnificent when we think that what Paul is talking to us about, and writing about, is the very greatest Being in the universe, the Sovereign Ruler of the universe has *called* us and has *given* us:

- access to Him through prayer
- access to His Word through study
- access to growing and overcoming

So that we may be in the Kingdom of God forever and ever and ever. When He appears, we are going to be meeting Him in the air on the Sea of Glass and He is going to share His magnificent splendor and glory with us.

We look to Christ when He returns, Philippians 3:21: “Who will transform our vile bodies...”—of sin like unto the glorious body that He has, at His appearance and at His coming.

Notice what we have in Col. 3:5 *the command to put away all of these things*. I made a rather long interjection here in parentheses, in the *Expanded-Amplified Translation* booklet. The reason I did that is, because, I tried to bring a quick summary of everything in Col. 2, talking about philosophy and fallen angels and put that in perspective with what Paul is talking about here.

Colossians 3:5 (AT): “Therefore, (through the power of the Spirit of Christ in you—rather than subjecting yourselves to the regimen of the philosophies of men and the worship of fallen angels), you are to put to death, mortify, what is earthy in you...” In other words, this is a basic beginning on how to overcome and put down sin.

Let’s see something that goes right along with this and how we are to do it, 2-Corinthians 10:4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds, casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ” (vs 4-5).

That says an awful lot. This tells us, how we are to overcome sin, overcome lust. What is it doing?

- we are focusing our minds in on Christ
- we are bringing it into the obedience of Christ!

*We are to overcome it through:*

- the faith that we have
- the love that we have
- and focusing in on the things which are above

This is the way to overcome the degrading pulls of human nature.

Colossians 3:5 (FV): "...sexual immorality..." and promiscuity. The greatest problem that human beings have, complete misdirection of what God created in us to have intimate personal love with husbands and wives, and we see how it ruins societies; it ruins lives.

You personally may know—I personally know—those people who have gotten so caught up in this that their lives are ruined and destroyed, and unless they turn to Christ, it is just a complete shambles the rest of their lives. They may be able to kind of block it out of their mind and kind of live with it, but nevertheless, that is always there to haunt them.

"...uncleanness, inordinate affection..." (v 5). Let's understand something about the term *uncleanness*: any sin that you commit puts you into a state of either physical uncleanness or spiritual uncleanness. This has to do with more of the *uncleanness of mind*. You have heard of what is said, 'a dirty mind'? This is what that is referring to in lewdness.

"...evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry..." (v 5). This is what the whole society is trying to get everyone to focus in on, because of the world we live in; you could call it *condom mania*.

Verse 5 (AT): "...—(the unbridled mental sexual obsessions of your imagination)—those evil and wicked lusts [thoughts] and yearnings..."

That is going to be one of the major, driving forces of any human being, which if it is not contained, with the Spirit and the power of God, it is not going to be overcome.

1-Cor. 9 is what the Apostle Paul did in his overcoming, in his putting the flesh down, in his changing so that he could qualify for the Kingdom of God. Every one of us has our part. Ultimately Christ has to do all of it, but we have our part and we must work with and cooperate with the Spirit of God as it leads us. We have to put forth the maximum effort that we can.

1-Corinthians 9:24: "Don't you know that those who run a race all run, but *only* one receives

the prize? That is the way you *are to* run in order that you may obtain *the prize*."

What he is saying is that we are to live our Christian lives with the whole thought in mind that the goal of eternal life is like receiving the first prize, or the first place, as you would compare that to some of the sports and things that you would see or watch.

Verse 25: "For everyone who is striving *for mastery* controls himself in all things..." He *disciplines* himself. He doesn't have the excesses and so forth, and he says that those who do this, they *discipline* themselves.

"...Of course, they *do this* so that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we *are striving for* an incorruptible *crown*" (v 25). What God has held out for us is even so much greater, so much better, so fantastic!

Verse 26: "I, therefore, so run, not as one who is uncertain..." You can't be uncertain, you have to ask God for the:

- full faith
- full love
- full understanding
- the blessing of His grace
- the blessing of His mercy

and everything that God does in dealing with you and also in dealing with others.

"...so *also* I fight, not as beating *the* air.... [just not out there wailing his arms around] ...But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection..." (vs 26-27). The Apostle Paul was showing the extent of the effort that he put into overcoming. When we come back to Col. 3 and see what we are to put off and to put on, then this makes a whole lot of sense.

"...lest, after preaching to others, I myself might be rejected" (v 27). So, the Apostle Paul really understood the whole thing concerning the pulls of the flesh and all the difficulties of growing and overcoming, putting down sin and bringing every thought into captivity.

Here is a whole tremendous and wonderful verse, Galatians 5:16: "Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit..." In other words, let the Spirit of God *lead* you. Let the laws of God be *written in your heart* and *mind*. Let them be *the guide* for what you do. Add to that, the *faith of God, the hope of God, the love of God*.

"...and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (v 16). That is, what you might say, the counterpoint of philosophy: the only way you overcome the lust of the flesh is to deprive it,

because they don't have the Spirit of God to overcome, so they are trying to figure out how they can do it. That's what ends up being so futile. But with the Spirit of God we "...will not fulfill the lust of the flesh." I'll tell you one thing, if you really focus in on the love of God, you are not going to be fulfilling the lust of the flesh.

This shows the fruit of the Spirit; v 22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law. But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts" (vs 22-24).

Galatians 2:20<sub>[transcriber's correction]</sub>: "I have been crucified with Christ, yet, I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me...."

Galatians 5:25: "If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vainglorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another" (vs 25-26).

So, there are some tremendous lessons for us here on:

- how to grow
- how to change
- how to overcome
- how to yield ourselves to God

Let's come back to Colossians 3:5: "...inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

We had the occasion to go up to San Francisco, and right across the parking lot was Macy's Department Store. We had a little time to kill before our appointment so Dolores and Rachelle went in there to shop and I hate shopping so I found myself a little chair to sit down in, while they wandered through the store for twenty or thirty minutes. They didn't end up getting anything. But I just sat there, and of course, it was right during the Christmas shopping season and you could almost smell the covetous cravings for physical things as people are walking in and walking out.

I'll tell you, in San Francisco you have to be prepared to see all kinds of odd and weird looking people. It is unreal! But anyway, people going around, they are all hyped up on the music for Christmas shopping, they are all kind of in a trance, walking around, seeing what they can buy. Walking out the doors with shopping bags full of things and just caught up in this whole thing of Christmas. That's exactly what Christmas is all about. To appeal to the covetous and the avaricious and the idolatry of doing good under the guise of evil, of which then is idolatry.

I was thinking, as I was sitting there, watching all of this and wondering why people go through this, and it really dawned on me. The reason people get caught up in Christmas so much is that, it appeals to *their lying and deceitful nature*. What is one of the things that a lying and deceitful nature would have you do? *Do good with a lie!* You think on that! Everything that Christmas is based upon is a lie! But then they try and do good.

The whole Santa Claus thing, the whole bit on that and everything, that just keeps them all wrapped up in the things of the world, the things of the flesh, the covetousness and the greed, which are in fact, idolatry. If a Christmas tree in a house is not idolatry, I don't know what it is. I personally think that it symbolizes the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* and symbolizes those of the world who are celebrating their own fall, through deceit, which they don't even understand that that is what they are celebrating.

I asked a man with whom I was talking about a Christmas tree. I didn't give him the answer, I just wanted to see what his response would be: Why do we have all of these orbs and all of these Christmas lights and balls and things like this on Christmas trees and why do people bring a tree into their house? Well, he told me: 'It's fun, it's beautiful, it's entertaining, and it's wonderful.' It was really something!

Colossians 3:6: "Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience." *Those who obstinately refuse to believe and obey God!* If I would have given that person just the whole naked truth about Christmas, he would have really been thrown for a loop and look at me as if I am crazy. *Their time is coming!*

Verse 7: "Among whom you also once walked, when you were living in these things." All of the physical things are going to come tumbling down. Now we are getting into some of the things we need to overcome, which I have found with my own experience are those things that you can overcome far better by really focusing on the love of God, the laws of God and so forth.

Verse 8: "But now, you should also put off..."—strip away, cast aside, and renounce. There is a whole process: we are to *put in* Christ; we are to *put off* and *put out* all of these other things that he lists here:

"...all *these* things: wrath, indignation, malice..." (v 8)—anger! Of course, these are the things that get us more than any thing else. Remember, he is talking to converted Christians. He is saying to put these things away. So, it is no

surprise, we have these things to work on. *Yes!* I'll just have to say that is what I need to work on an awful lot.

"...blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth" (v 8)—emotional outbursts of temper, and hateful rages—malignant, bitter thoughts of spitefulness.

I'll tell you what, if there is any one thing that can spoil an attitude it is bitterness. Especially if it is bitterness against God, because things didn't go the way that you wanted. *Now, think on that statement!* Maybe what you wanted is not God's way. So, rather than be bitter, as some people are, go to God and say, 'God, help me to understand.'

"...bitter thoughts of spitefulness; blasphemy and cursing; obscene, vile or foul language from out of your mouth. [Eliminate these degrading character traits and habits]" (v 8).

Even the Proverbs say, 'Don't be around an angry man, lest you be like him.' Don't be around someone who has a foul mouth, lest you begin picking up what he is saying. I know, I have experienced it and you have experienced it. If you are around people who are using bad language, swearing or cursing, you will inadvertently pick it up in your mind, though you don't want to have it there, but just being around and hearing those kinds of things, *it puts it into your mind.*

These are the things that you need to put down and put away and stop and really yield yourselves to God in a way that is going to be right and good and true and loving. You'll feel better when you get these things out of your mind. The next time you really smash your thumb with a hammer or whatever it may be, then you will find out what sort of progress you are making.

Verse 9: "Do not lie... [speak deceitfully] ...to one another..." Paul is talking to Christians.

- Have Christians lied to each other? *Yes!*
- Have they spoken deceitfully to each other? *Yes!*
- Is it something that they should do? *No!*

That is why Paul says *put it away.*

"...*seeing that* you have put off the old man... [which was buried in the watery grave of baptism] ...together with his deeds" (v 9). There is the whole operation of putting off/putting out, getting rid of.

Let's see that Paul was teaching the same thing in a little bit different way than he is here in Col. 3; notice how closely this parallels what Paul wrote:

Romans 6:8: "Now, if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord.... [he gives an overall statement]: ...Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof" (vs 8-12).

He didn't say you are not to have sin and you are to be completely perfect, because we know that is an impossibility. What he is saying is, *don't let it rule in your lives; don't let it reign in your lives!* If you walk in the Spirit, you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Verse 13: "Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God."

There is the whole profound and important lesson of changing, of growing, of overcoming, of putting out, and that is how we put out.

Rom. 8:9 is also very important for us to understand in our relationship with God and in our relationship with each other, in changing, growing and overcoming.

Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh... [not living as a carnal human being, without the Spirit of God] ...but in *the* Spirit, **if the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you....**" That is the most profound and important thing, brethren; that the Spirit of God dwells in you.

There are times because of difficulties, because of sin, *or* because of sorrow *or* times of frustration and not knowing exactly how God is going to work things out You may feel like there is not as much of God's Spirit in you as you would like. But don't worry; it is still there. God doesn't take away His Holy Spirit unless you absolutely commit the unpardonable sin, and if you do, you will never be the same person again. Nevertheless, if we have the Spirit of God dwelling in us, then we are His.

"...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness" (vs 9-10).

So again, we have the same thing that Paul

is writing about, the contrast between the flesh and the Spirit, to put out one thing and to put on another thing.

Verse 11: “Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies... [to make alive your mortal bodies, obviously at the resurrection] ...because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.... [How is this done?] ...For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God” (vs 11-14).

That is pretty powerful, what Paul is writing, how we need to grow, change and overcome. Here comes what we need to do:

- if you put something out, *you need to put something in*
- if you take something off, *you need to put something on*
- if you get rid of sin, *you need to put in righteousness*

That is the whole thing that Paul is talking about.

Colossians 3:10: “And have put on the new man... Christ in you; your new self] ... who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him.”

There is the whole process of overcoming. You can see by this, this is a very high level of Christian growth:

- may we attain unto that
- may we really understand and realize that in a way that we ought to

Verse 11: “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew...” No physical barriers or qualifications, which is important to understand, especially when you reflect on what the Jews said to Jesus, they said ‘we be Abraham’s seed.’ Well, it’s not because of *what* you are; *it’s because of Who God is*. There is no physical qualification that God is laying down for a person to be a Christian, as we saw with the circumcision of the heart and so forth.

Verse 11: “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* all things, and in all”—of Christian character and enlightenment.

Let’s see where the Apostle Paul again wrote of this and shows who are the true seed of

Abraham. It ties in exactly with what we are talking about here.

Galatians 3:26: “Because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” ***If you are the children of God, it doesn’t matter what your physical status is!*** It is true there are prophecies for different nations. It is true there are prophecies concerning the ten tribes of Israel, of which we are in the midst of. I am convinced that here in the United States we are ‘going down the tubes’ just like Babylon the Great. However, please understand that every time Israel and Judah sinned they became Babylonianized. You cannot count on the fact that you are who you are physically to come to God and say because of who I am you must do something for me. ***That is not faith in Christ!***

Galatians 3:27: “For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ.... [baptized into His death, His burial and resurrection and so forth] ...did put on Christ.” Christ *in you* is the *hope of glory*, which was the whole focus of the first chapter of the book of Colossians.

Verse 28: “There is neither Jew... [a Jew has no standing before God *because* he is a Jew] ...nor Greek...” A Greek has no standing before God *because* he is a Greek, or you can put in any other nationality or bloodline that you want there.

“...there is neither bond nor free...” (v 28). If you are free and a slave of sin *you are still in bondage!* If you are a slave and you are free of sin because of Christ *you are free!*

“...there is neither male nor female...” (v 28)—as far as Christian growth and overcoming is concerned. There is male and female as far as our physical lives are concerned, but a man isn’t going to come to God and say ‘Well God, you made me the head of my wife, so therefore, I deserve better.’ *It won’t happen!*

“...for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (v 28). ***That is your spiritual standing before God!*** Your spiritual standing before God does not eliminate the fact of your physical status, but just as ***your physical status has no standing with God*** on account of salvation.

Verse 29: “And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.” That is what is so very important for us:

- to know
- to realize
- to understand
- to live by
- to really concentrate on

In the process of putting out all of these sins, in the process of beating the flesh as it were as the Apostle Paul said, that he fights, and he fights putting down these physical things—lust, greed, works of the flesh—by walking in the Spirit. Here’s what we need to do:

Colossians 3:12: “Put on then...” Clothing yourselves with Godly, Christian character, the fullness of God’s way, even His love and attitude, in your mind.

Let’s understand something here that is very interesting. Here is part of the message to the Laodiceans. I don’t want to focus in on the whole message, but I want to focus in on just one part.

Revelation 3:18—Christ says: “I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich; and white garments...”

You buy from Christ, the white raiment/garment. Tie that in with Matt. 25:9, about the ten virgins: five were wise, five were foolish and the wise told the foolish: ‘Well, you have to go to them that sell and you buy.’ That is the same message that is here, we are to come to Christ and through the righteousness that He gives us, we are to purchase without physical money—but with the Spirit of God—the white raiment, *the righteousness of Christ*. Why?]

“...so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed...” (v 18). That is really very important, we are to be clothed, we are to put on, we are to have all of these things put into our hearts and minds and being.

Here is how we are to do it; we are to, Colossians 3:12: “Put on then, as *the elect of God*...”—Christian character, the fullness of God’s way, even His love and attitude, in your mind. Remember the calling that God has given you it is from God the Father, Himself.

“...Holy and beloved...” (v 12). That’s what you are to God. When we look at ourselves in the mirror and see this aging flesh as it’s coming along or whatever it may be, it is hard for us to realize that we are “...Holy and beloved...”—consecrated, the beloved and cherished ones in Christ.

Of all that God is doing in the universe, what is He focusing in on more than anything else if it is not the children that He has called and given His Spirit to? That’s what He is focusing in on. And that’s what Christ wants. He wants us to grow in grace, to grow in knowledge.

Develop these attributes of God, “...deep inner affections... [flowing from the depths of your

innermost being, without any pretense] ...kindness, humility...” (v 12). Not the self-exaltation and the vanity and all the stupidity and things that we as human beings do.

“...meekness *and* long-suffering” (v 12). Here are all the things that we are to be *putting on*.

Verse 13 shows what this is going to do. “Forbearing one another...” Don’t be getting mad and angry at each other because of a little problem that may come along.

“...and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you... [blotting out, forgiving and forgetting all your sins, transgressions and offences against Him] ...so also you *should forgive*” (v 13).

Let’s see something that is really important, in our relationship with God and our relationship with each other.

- How many times have we seen this take hold the wrong way?
- How many times have we seen someone that God has called
  - ✓ whom God has forgiven their sins
  - ✓ whom God has given His Spirit
- and they come along and they forget that they have had their sins forgiven?

Matthew 18:23: “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man, a *certain* king, who would take account with his servants. And after he began to reckon, there was brought to him one debtor who owed *him* ten thousand talents” (vs 23-24).

You can liken that to; we’ll just round that off to \$10-million and be generous. If you were in debt, \$10-million, think of that. I know it is difficult when you have debt and you don’t have money coming in to try and figure where you are going to pay these bills, and especially, if the creditors come around and they are banging on the doors and beating in the walls and clanging on the phones. Just liken that to your own sins.

Verse 25: “But since he did not have *anything* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. Because of this, the servant fell down *and* worshiped him, saying, ‘Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ And being moved with compassion, the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt” (vs 25-27).

When we are in that status before God, because we forget what it was that God has done for us, we become focused in on the physical things; we

become focused in on a character trait or character flaw and we forget our own weaknesses and our own stupidities and our own sins. *We do!*

Verse 28: “Then that servant went out *and* found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred silver coins; and after seizing him, he choked *him*, saying, “Pay me what you owe.” As a result, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” But he would not *listen*; instead, he went and cast him into prison, until he should pay the amount that he owed. Now, when his fellow servants saw the things *that* had taken place, they were greatly distressed; and they went to their lord *and* related all that had taken place. Then his lord called him *and* said to him, “*You* wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me” (vs 28-32).

It shows the tremendous, immediate forgiveness that God shows toward our sins.

- Can we not give the same allowance, toward others that God will forgive them of their sins?
- Can we not be patient and forbearing and understanding in that way?
- Can we not grow in compassion with God’s Spirit to do so?

That’s hard to do, brethren, I know. If you have really been offended or someone has offended you, it is hard; it is not easy. It may take an awful lot of prayer on your part.

Remember this, v 33: “‘Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?’ And in anger, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him. Likewise... [here is the whole lesson] ...shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each *of* you does not forgive his brother’s offenses from the heart” (vs 33-35). That is very clear.

Paul is teaching exactly the same thing here in Colossians 3:13: “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*.... [here is the pinnacle that we are to come to] ... And above all these things... above and beyond the basic qualities of Christian character ...*put on love*... [that’s what it is in the Greek, the ‘agape’—that Godly, Divine love] ...which is *the* bond of perfection” (vs 13-14).

It is so very important that we do that, brethren. That very love that comes from God. {note sermon series: *Love of God* } Remember this, it is so absolutely important: *we love God because He loved*

*us first* and *that is how we ought to be loving each other*. I’ll tell you what, if we are in the process of growing and overcoming, putting out sin and putting off the things that Paul said—put off, put out, get rid of—and *put on Christ*, and *put on the Spirit of God*, then you know that the problems are going to be minimized.

As long as we are in the flesh and have human nature, there are still going to be some problems and difficulties, but let’s keep them all down to a dull roar, by using the Spirit of God. Only the Spirit of God can give us that. Only the Spirit of God can help us.

Here’s what we are to do: v 14: “And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection.” The only thing I can say is, recall this past Feast of Tabernacles, because, I tell you, that certainly, I think, epitomized almost everything that the Apostle Paul is writing of here.

When this happens, v 15: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts... [predominate and be the governing force] ...to which you were called into one body... [the Church, which is the spiritual Body of Christ] ...and be thankful... [reflecting the preciousness of your calling.”

Then he shows exactly how all of this is done, v 16: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching...” That is what we are to let abide in us:

- the Word of God
- the Truth of God
- the love of God

Eph. 4 is really a parallel of Col. 3. As a matter of fact, you could put them, side-by-side, and study it.

Ephesians 4:21: “If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, according to *the Truth* in Jesus: That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth” (vs 21-24). That is the whole goal, brethren.

God is not going to *beat* us in the Kingdom of God. *He is going to lead us into it!* What is the most important thing of that? That by the Spirit of God we are

- going to be *inspired*
- we are going to be *uplifted*
- we are going to be *desiring and wanting*
  - ✓ God’s love

- ✓ His way
- ✓ His Truth
- ✓ His Kingdom
- ✓ His salvation

Then you can read all the rest of Eph. 4, where he goes through the same thing:

- put away lying
- don't be angry
- don't give place to the devil
- don't steal
- don't have any corrupt communication out of your mouth
- Grieve not the Holy Spirit.
- Put away bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking

Verse, 32: "And be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also in Christ forgiven you." That is tremendous, brethren, the way that these books come together.

Let's see again we have the same thing. I tell you, when Paul was writing these prison epistles of Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, God gave him an extra measure of inspiration. I think that He gave the extra measure of inspiration to Paul because he was so alone and so deprived and he didn't know whether he was going to live or die and he wrote these epistles from the very, innermost part of his being, if we could put it that way.

Philippians 2:1: "Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, fulfill my joy that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself" (vs 1-3).

That is something, brethren, which is really a very important attitude for us to have. What does that reflect? We will see what this attitude reflects.

Verse 4: "Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus" (vs 4-5). There is the whole goal of what we are to do, in character and growth and overcoming.

- Was not Jesus perfect in love? *Yes!*
- Was not Jesus perfect in obedience? *Yes!*
- Was He not perfect in faith? *Yes!*
- Does He not give these things to us? *Yes!*

He gives us

- His own *faith*
- His own *love*
- His own *hope*
- His own *strength*
- everything to be right in the very midst of our being

Here is how we are to really grow in grace and in knowledge with the Spirit of God:

Colossians 3:16 "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching..." That is so important brethren, I know there are people who, and I have heard it from people in other Churches of God, that what they do is they read the Bible. That's okay, that's better than not reading it, but we need to *study* it. Not only do we need to study it, we need to *ask God's Spirit to lead us and teach us what it means* because, to be just like this here, so that it will be:

"...richly and abundantly [in us], in all wisdom and understanding; teaching and instructing, admonishing and reminding each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts and minds to the Lord" (v 16).

That's really something that we can focus in on and I hope that we can have more occasions where we can do more singing and things like that.

Verse 17: "And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—**do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.**"

I tell you what, if we can all strive for this kind of overcoming, if we can put out the deeds of the flesh, overcome the works of the flesh and the pulls and the lust of the mind through the Spirit of God, and really apply Col. 3 in our lives, we are going to find that even in spite of all the difficulties and turmoil and wretchedness in the world:

- we are going *to know* that we are right with God
- we are going *to know* that God loves us
- we are going *to know* that we love Him
- we are going *to know* that we love the brethren

*That is real tremendous!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible, in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) Colossians 3:1-7, 1
- 2) Romans 6:1-6
- 3) Colossians 3:1
- 4) Ephesians 3:16-19
- 5) Hebrews 10:16
- 6) Psalm 46:7
- 7) Psalm 37:1-9, 27-31, 34
- 8) Colossians 3:2-4
- 9) 1 John 3:1-3
- 10) Philippians 3:21
- 11) Colossians 3:5
- 12) 2 Corinthians 10:4-5
- 13) Colossians 3:5
- 14) 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
- 15) Galatians 5:16, 22-24
- 16) Galatians 2:20
- 17) Galatians 5:25-26
- 18) Colossians 3:5-9
- 19) Romans 6:8-13
- 20) Romans 8:9-14
- 21) Colossians 3:10-11
- 22) Galatians 3:26-29
- 23) Colossians 3:12
- 24) Revelation 3:18
- 25) Colossians 3:12-13
- 26) Matthew 18:23-35
- 27) Colossians 3:13-16
- 28) Ephesians 4:21-24, 32
- 29) Philippians 2:1-5
- 30) Colossians 3:16-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 7
- Matthew 25:9

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- *The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians, An Inspirational Study; A New Expanded-Amplified Translation* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Beliefs of The Christian Biblical Church of God* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon: *How to Use the Holy Spirit*

Sermon Series: *Love of God*

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