

COLOSSIANS(10:30 AM)

"SEASONED IN CHRIST"

Colossians Chapter 3:15-4:6 (NIV) – Page 1167 in our pew Bibles.

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 word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.* 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.*

Rules for Christian Households

¹⁸ *Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

¹⁹ *Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.*

²⁰ *Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.*

²¹ *Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.*

²² *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.* ²³ *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,* ²⁴ *since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.* ²⁵ *Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.*

4 *Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.*

Further Instructions

² *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.* ³ *And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.* ⁴ *Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.* ⁵ *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.* ⁶ *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.* ¹

¹ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#), (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Col 3:15–4:6.

IN-CHRIST – Seasoned in Christ

Colossians – Perspective “IN CHRIST”



As we close out this series on Colossians, Joe Hill and I would like to revisit the journey we have taken together with you over the past five weeks. The Holy Spirit has guided our focus towards the idea of connectedness with an understanding that by strengthening our relationship TO CHRIST we can then strengthen our relationships to one another - IN CHRIST, THROUGH CHRIST, and FOR CHRIST. As we continue our worship here today at St. Timothy's and finish out our series, God's Word will reveal to us the power of Christ to reflect in all we say and do. We will see more clearly that our actions each day unfold within the context of relationships – those we have close to home and more broadly to those in the communities with which we connect – in the workplace, in our neighborhoods, in serving others, and in our leisure time.

We began our journey learning together from Paul about the power of thanksgiving, prayer, and fellowship to create our connection IN CHRIST. His Word showed us that God will empower us THROUGH CHRIST to accomplish His desire FOR CHRIST at the hub of our lives!! It is not what we know, but WHOM we know that gives us our salvation and spiritual growth.

Joe Hill shared for us the images of Christ on THE THRONE AND THE CROSS. He helped us develop a picture of Jesus that we can carry with us each day in our hearts and minds – one of King and Savior. Jesus ruling over our lives on the Throne and sacrificing His life for us on the Cross. God's plan all along has been to give us himself – fully, completely, and sacrificially.

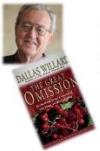
The week before last, God's Word showed that each of us could strive to live “in Him” more fully. We could be “rooted and built up in Him, strengthened by our faith in Him and overflowing with thankfulness for Him, and His sacrifice for us, as we live out our lives.” (Col 3:7) Paul throughout this letter is asking us to commit our lives and submit our wills to Christ; to grow and learn from His teachings; and to recognize the power of the Spirit at work in us and through us to stay aligned to God's plan for our lives.

Joe continued the series last week reminding us that when we position our lives IN CHRIST, then CHRIST resides himself in us. Through prayer and meditating on God's Word, we can search intently to more fully realize where Christ is at work in our lives. When we do, we will find that through the Holy Spirit, He lives in us! He transforms our character! In God's plan for this world and our journey in it, our character matters!

This week I believe Paul is giving us closing insights into how we can demonstrate to others that our life with Christ is at the center of all we say and do. Our most important take away from this series is: **God, himself, will give us thankful hearts as He dwells in our minds and rules over our hearts. A deep personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ will transform every area of our lives allowing us to be wise in our actions and seasoned in our responses to others. So that, those around us may see Christ at work in us and through us to proclaim His grace every opportunity we have.**

This week at the North American Lutheran Church Mission Gathering and Pastor’s Conference, Bishop John Bradosky shared, “following Jesus is not the easy way, it’s the only way.” Our confidence as Christians consists in understanding and living based on our own spiritual death and resurrection “in Christ”. God calls each of us as part of a community of Christ-followers to practice love, forgiveness, and graciousness.

The Great Omission



“There is an obvious Great Disparity between, on the one hand, the hope for life expressed in Jesus – found real in the Bible and in many shining examples from among his followers – and, on the other hand, the actual day-to-day behavior, inner life, and social presence of most of those who now profess adherence to him.”

Bishop John spoke of Dallas Willard’s words from The Great Omission... “There is an obvious Great Disparity between, on the one hand, the hope for life expressed in Jesus – found real in the Bible and in many shining examples from among his followers – and, on the other hand, the actual day-to-day behavior, inner life, and social presence of most of those who now profess adherence to him.” We, at St. Timothy’s, are to be a showcase of the reconciliation and peace Christ has brought here on earth (Col. 1:20–22; 2:14, 15), and within the broken world we experience throughout our daily lives. (Col. 11, 13).



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

(Colossians 3:15)

¹⁵ *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.* Christ give us an attitude of peace — in place of the attitude of discontentment and cynicism. Paul tells us this attitude is to “rule,” literally meaning to “function like an umpire” in all our human relationships and interactions.

We see in these passages as well as in Philippians 4:4-9 from our readings today an overwhelming sense of peace and joy. Living IN CHRIST, we can always obey the command to rejoice, even in the midst of challenges, adversity, and difficulties, because joy rests not on favorable circumstances, but “in the Lord.”

Paul calls us to a life of prayer and obedience in response to the peace of God. A peace that comes when we connect with Him to seek His understanding for life's circumstances. We can then put all we learn from His Words and the insights of His Holy Spirit to action in all we do.

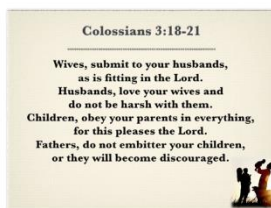
Let us look more closely at the “you” Paul uses here in this verse. He uses you plural —“you” as in “all of you in the church of Jesus.” We cannot grow into maturity in Christ Jesus without the encouragement, help, and support of coming alongside one another. In reality, everything we do, we should do for Jesus. We can go to work each day and do our jobs for Christ, or we can do them for our boss at work. We can fill our calendar with activities that grow our families for the Lord, or we can fill them with activities in response to the expectations the world tells us as parents. We choose the attitude and the motive for our actions anchored on His Word.

¹⁶ *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*



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. (Col. 16-17)*

Because Christ unites us with himself (Col. 3:3), we can let his peace guide us. Christ Himself through the Holy Spirit lives in each of our hearts so we can serve as His faithful servants and stewards (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Rom. 8:9). With God’s wisdom reflecting in our lives (Col. 3:3; 1 Cor. 1:30), we can live out the call of Christian love in every area of our life, including the everyday responsibilities that come through the roles and relationships Paul spells out for us in the remainder of this passage in verses 3:18–4:6.



God has given us our roles and relationships to be lived out IN CHRIST- He expects us to reflect HIM in these relationships.

¹⁸ *Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.* ¹⁹ *Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.* ²⁰ *Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.* ²¹ *Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.*

As I reflect on the loss of my sister a year ago to a debilitating lifelong battle with drug abuse and her finally succumbing to a viral infection that over took her body at the age of 49. As I grieve the passing of my Dad just a few months ago to go home to be with the Lord, I realize more fully that it our relationships through faith in Christ and those that He gives us to love that make the eternal difference in our lives.

Paul reflects in these verses Jesus expectations for us. Christ gives us life within the context of a community of love. His love also defines the marriage relationship for us as His people. (Eph. 5:22-32). Especially in His role as Savior, Christ serves as model for us as husbands (Eph. 25–27). The emphasis in the Colossians and Ephesians passages is not the husband’s authority to govern, but his responsibility to love. Christ calls us as husbands to adapt our lives to our wives’ needs, and to provide for their growth and development. In loving response, our wives are to walk in unity with us as their husbands expecting us to lead them toward Christ in every aspect of our lives as families.

Our children can also carry out Christ’s desire for love and unity by simply being obedient to their parents. For Paul, part of what characterizes divisiveness in our world is most easily seen in a child’s disobedience (Ephesians 6:1-3, Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2). As parents, we are to bring are children up with a sense of nurturing and helping them to flourish (Eph. 5:29, 6:4). As parents, God entrusts us as His stewards to help form their minds, feelings, and actions to reflect His image. Through guidance and discipline, we are to strengthen our children’s understanding of Christ. He calls us to give them training and instruction (to disciple them), we are to shape their minds through teaching them strong character as defined by His Word.



In Chapter 4 verse 2 Paul asks us to ² *Devote ourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.* As we heard In Isaiah 63, the prophet Isaiah is giving thankful recognition of God’s daily engagement in our lives. Isaiah earnestly prays to God for His continued compassion and kindness towards us as His people. He shows us God's ongoing plan of grace and redemption to guide us through the Holy Spirit to worship Him in praise and thanksgiving.

Two concrete ways in which we, as believers, can “devote ourselves and be watchful and thankful” ... “set our minds on things that are above” (Col. 3:2) are:

- (1) Praying (Eph. 6:18–20) and (2) sharing our faith lovingly and convincingly to those around us so that they may be drawn to the fullness of life in Christ. Paul asks us in verse 3 “*And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ...*”⁴ *Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.*



⁵ *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.* ⁶ *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

Our friends, neighbors, and co-workers are watching us, whether we know it or not. We never know when it might be the Lord’s timing for one of them to ask us about our faith, heaven, eternal life, or God. Therefore, we must always be ready. We must be prepared to season our conversation with salt.

Paul asks us to be watchful of our outward behavior towards others. As salt improves taste, what we say and do should likewise leave a “good taste” for others. As salt preserves food, we should likewise influence others IN CHRIST, “preserving” them with our grace-filled lives. As followers of Christ, we should be courteous, honest and compassionate, exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–25).

In closing, let’s ask ourselves - do we have graceful tongues? When we speak to others, do we season our words with salt to make them palatable and healthy? Are we learning how to answer effectively those who ask about your faith? Are we growing in our ability as to share God’s love for everyone?

Paul became “all things to all men,” so that he might “by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22). That should also be our goal.



Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Col. 4:5)

In today’s social media environment to guard against cyberbullying, students are asked to consider the acronym THINK when speaking to others:

T–Is it true? H–Is it helpful? I–Is it inspiring? N–Is it necessary? K–Is it kind? I would add the understanding – is it seasoned with salt. The salt of Jesus Christ at work in us and through us.

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-Dallas Willard

Dallas Willard shares further in the Great Omission. “The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heartbreaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as ‘Christians’ will become disciples – students, apprentices, practitioners – of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the Kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence.”

IN CHRIST, we can demonstrate to others that our life with Christ is at the center of all we say and do. God, himself, will give us thankful hearts as He dwells in our thoughts and rules over our hearts. As each of us seeks a deep personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, He will transform us in every area of our lives; allowing us to be wise in our actions and seasoned in our relationships to others. So that, those around us may see Christ at work in us and through us to proclaim His grace every opportunity we have. Let us pray.

TRANSITION TO WORSHIP: 10:30 AM – Join with me as we continue in worship with “How Great is Our God” – Paul calls us to “let the word of Christ dwell richly in us.” This song reminds us that God is no ordinary being sitting on a common throne dressed in rags. His very being, according to the Word, expresses magnificence that no words can fully capture. Together, through our voices, let us paint a powerful picture of who God is and how His Spirit reveals Himself to all those who are “ready” to see how wonderful our Almighty — God truly is.