Colossians 3:15-17
“Do Everything in the Name of the Lord Jesus”
Sermon
Tim Black

1.

Introduction

1.

In verses 12-14 of this chapter, Paul taught us to put on the Christian virtues of “compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience” as the new clothes which fit the new man God has made us to be. Rather than being selfish on the inside and expressing hatred on the outside, as new creatures we should put on selfless love on the inside, and on the outside seek to live lives of thankful blessing. It is to this outward expression of Christian virtue that Paul directs our attention in today’s passage. What are the right ways to express the Christian virtues of “compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience”?

Paul tells us three ways we should do this:

2.

Outline

1.

Let the Peace of Christ Rule in Your Hearts v. 15

2.

Let the Word of Christ Dwell in You Richly v. 16
3.

**Do Everything in the Name of the Lord Jesus v. 17**

1.

As this last exhortation is the more general, I've taken it for the title of the sermon.

2.

**Divisions**

1.

You may wonder whether these verses deserve to be treated as a separate unit in a separate sermon. They certainly continue the general thought of vv. 12-14, but Paul indicates in several ways that vv. 15-17 contain a unique focus.

2.

**Boundary markers.** That vv. 15-17 are distinct from the verses that precede them can be recognized in several ways.

**V. 14**

placed a capstone on the list of Christian virtues that preceded when it says

"**Over all these put on love.**"
Col. 3:15-17 - Do Everything in the Name of the Lord Jesus

Written by Tim Black
Tuesday, 03 July 2007 12:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 03 July 2007 12:06

"And

v. 15
speaks in a new way. Alexander Maclaren distinguishes the “
peace of Christ
” in
v. 15
from the preceding virtues, saying “In substance it is closely connected with them, though in form it is different, and in sweep is more comprehensive.”

Internal unity. But the unity of vv. 15-17 can be seen more clearly by considering its contents.

1.


2.

Christ. More strikingly, each verse of this passage

3.

Paul’s broader threelfold theme. Additionally, Paul’s broader threelfold theme of the Christian heart, mind, and life is apparent in these three verses’ respective foci on the Christian’s character (15), conversation (16), and conduct (17), and v. 15 even speaks explicitly of the Christian’s “heart.”
Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were
called in one body. And be thankful.

2. We could alternatively phrase this point as follows: Express Christian virtues by peace and thankfulness in the body of Christ.

3.

There are two exhortations in this verse, separated by the reason for the first exhortation. The first exhortation is the chief one, because while the second one is equally forceful as an exhortation, it is brief, and the thankfulness it commands is gently woven throughout the following two verses as the attitude of our singing and the prayer that should accompany our doing
everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.

4.

The two exhortations are interrelated, however. We maintain peace by being thankful, and we destroy peace by being ungrateful.

5.

Exhortation.

1.

“Peace”
What is “the peace of Christ?”

We recall Christ’s promise while He was still with us, saying

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
The peace Christ left us should keep our hearts from being troubled or afraid. In substance this peace is the same as what Paul elsewhere calls the “peace of God” in Philippians 4:7:
Philippians 4:7  And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

In both cases, this peace has a beneficial emotional and attitudinal effect on your heart, just as here in Col. 3:15 this peace should rule in
your heart
. (Cf. Is. 26:3)

- Is this peace a peace between you and God, or between you and your neighbor?
The phrase “of Christ” indicates Christ is its source, which draws our mind to the peace He has made between us and God, and the reason adjoined that we have been called to this peace “in one body” draws our mind to our human relationships with our fellow members of the body of Christ. So it seems best to take this peace to be the result of reconciliation with both
God and our neighbor.

We see these two sides of this peace elsewhere in the book of Colossians. Paul’s purpose in Col. 1:1 was to convey “Grace to you, and peace
Christ has reconciled “heaven” and “earth,” making peace by the blood of His cross (1:20-22), He has made peace between “
Greek and Jew

(3:11)

), and now is the source of forgiveness for those who must “forgive each other” (3:13).

The more you have peace with God, the more you can have peace with yourself, and with others.
“Rule”

Paul says this peace should “rule” in your
hearts. More literally, this word “rule” means “be umpire.”

The idea is that just as an umpire or referee presides over an athletic competition and decides what plays are
foul or fair and what competitor wins or loses, so the peace of Christ must be the deciding factor wherever there is a conflict of desires, motives, or impulses among the members of the body of Christ.
“One body”

The reason why the peace of Christ must
rule is that we were called to it as members of one body. You are called to be reconciled to God, and to be reconciled to one another. And now you are fellow members of Christ’s one body.
Illustration

My youth group’s volleyball games—the ultimate goal was not to win, or to defeat and
ridicule the other team or even the players on your own side, but to mutually encourage one another.

Application
The reality is that each of us sinfully wants our own comfort, happiness, success, and peace of mind, and when we don’t get them we gripe and moan and complain. We have no peace in our own
hearts, and we ruin the peace of others in the process. “If momma ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy.” But God has called us to peace.

- 

Do you lack peace in your thoughts, emotions,
words, and actions? Are you often troubled? Angered? Annoyed? Impatient? Listen to the tone of your voice—does it express peace, or conflict? Often a lack of Biblical peace in our own hearts leads to those outward-facing sins Paul warned against in v. 8: “
anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk.

” It leads to hatred toward others. We say, “I’m angry because of what he did.” “If only she would stop doing X, I’d be happy.”

-
But the solution is not to fix the other person. It is not to consider their moral reformation the source of your salvation. Nor is it to be their savior by telling them how to change.
The solution is to turn to Christ. You need His peace. Not yours. You need His version of peace, not yours.
His version of peace is to for you to live out the virtues in vv. 12-14, because of what He has done for you. He has made peace between you and God, so you should forgive as He has
forgiven you. Love because He first loved you. Be patient because He is patient with you. Be thankful for God’s kindness to you, and be thankful for the good things in that other person. In Christ you have a peace worth sharing
with others, if in fact you let it rule in your heart.
Exhortation: “And be thankful”

1. Paul’s exhortation to “be thankful” is more literally, “be ones who are thankful,” “be
thankful ones,” “be thankful people.” Though he is saying we should be thankful in our attitude and actions, he specifically roots that thankfulness in our person, our character.
2.

Let the Word of Christ Dwell in You Richly v. 16
1.

Upon the foundation of this peace we should build the beautiful house of biblical worship. Isaiah foretold this peace
and worship in the New Testament church saying

1. Isaiah 60:17-18

17 I will make your overseers peace
and your taskmasters righteousness. 18 Violence shall no more be heard in your land, devastation or destruction within your borders; you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.
2. It is only on the basis of the “peace of Christ” that men can “pray lift holy hands...
without anger or quarreling. ” (1 Tim. 2:8)

What then do we need to properly express Christian virtues as we worship God? What we need is the
word of Christ.” Paul says,

1.

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of
Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to
God.

2.

Express Christian virtues
by biblical worship. We should express Christian virtues by Biblical worship. That is, worship filled with the “word of Christ,” which is the
Bible. Bible-filled worship.

1. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.
Paul tells us to “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” Here is the central means of
growing in Christian virtues and in living them out. God works by means of His word to instruct our faith and guide our obedience, and even to give
us the primary content of the words we use to worship Him.
Express the word in teaching. The two chief ways we should use God’s word, and grow by means of it, are through
teaching and singing, and it is for this reason that teaching and singing take a prominent role in our worship services. Each
serve to fill your heart, and mind, and life, with the word of Christ.

- The character
of teaching: “with wisdom”

- The character
or content of our teaching should be “in all wisdom.”
The activity of teaching: “teaching and admonishing”
The activity of teaching has two methods: “teaching and admonishing.”
.” Teaching defines, explains, illustrates, and applies the truth of scripture. Admonishing is more practical
in focus. It rebukes, corrects, and trains in righteousness. Jay Adams titled his method of pastoral
counseling, called “Nouthetic Counseling,” after this word for “admonishing,” and rightly says a pastor’s
preaching and counseling should contain both teaching and admonishing, but there should be more
teaching in the sermon, and more admonishing in the counseling session.
The recipients of teaching: one another
The recipients of this teaching should be “one another.”
This word actually means that each one of you should be engaged in teaching and admonishing.
As such this verse focuses on worship, but not exclusively on corporate worship. In Sunday School,
in fellowship after church and during the week, in our homes and families, even in Christian
schools, we each should make an effort to speak the truth of God’s word to one another for
each other’s edification.
Express the word in singing The other way we
should let the word of Christ dwell in us richly is through singing. While teaching helps
us understand and obey the word of Christ, singing
helps us experience and remember the word of Christ.
The forms of our singing: songs of various kinds
The forms of our singing should be songs of
various kinds.

“Psalms, hymns, and
spiritual songs
Psalms
Kind of song:

With musical accompaniment
Praise God

General songs
Content:
Largely OT Psalms

Probably new (NT)
Any content, so
Some commentators believe the three words refer
exclusively to three kinds of OT Psalms, because each word is used in the Psalms in the Greek
OT, and so we should only sing OT Psalms in public worship.
However, this argument is not conclusive,
because these three words also commonly mean songs other than the OT
Psalms. The three terms are best taken to mean that our singing should employ songs
that have a variety of forms.
This passage itself teaches that not just the Psalms, but the whole Bible should fill
our singing. Paul calls the Old Testament as well as the New “the word
of Christ

” in Rom. 10:17. We must seek for the whole
Bible to dwell in us richly, especially as it proclaims the gospel of Christ.
Because Paul exhorts us to use singing as a
means of letting the word of Christ dwell in us, the NT
and especially its fuller revelation of Christ should be sung about!
Notice that this verse does not say our singing
must contain only the words of scripture. Rather, singing is a means for the
words of scripture to fill us, and the words of scripture filling us must be our guide to
determine whether a song should be sung in worship. If a song is richly Biblical, it
should be sung! If it is not richly biblical, it should not be sung.
The activity of our singing: singing with gratitude
The activity in view is “singing with gratitude.”
The persons in
our singing: from our hearts to God
The persons involved in our singing are indicated by the words “in your hearts”
to God.

"While our singing can be directed toward teaching and encouraging..."
our fellow believers, above all others the one to whom and before whom we sing is
God Himself.

- It almost
goes without mentioning, but you are the one who should be singing, and
you should sing from your heart. Singing the words and not knowing
what they mean is not singing with gratitude in your heart to God. It is
mouthing the words, but letting your mind, and your heart, and your
gratitude, go out the window, into the parking lot, over the events of the
week, or maybe just onto the funny bit of hair sticking out in the wrong
place on the person’s head in front of you! But it is not praising God
from your heart.
- Do Everything in the Name of the Lord
1. It is when you are built
on the solid foundation of peace with God and the members of the body of
Christ, when you are edified by the word of Christ through biblical
worship both corporate and individual, that everything you do can
become suffused with the sweet savor of life in Christ. And so Paul
exhorts us to that broader and even all-comprehensive reality of what it means
to truly be a “Christian.”

1.

Colossians
3:17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of
the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
2. Express
Christian virtues in whatever you do. Not only do others call
you a “Christian” as first happened in Antioch, not only do you
call yourself a follower of Christ, but in fact you are a follower
of Christ. You follow Him. You bear His name. You have the
honor of acting in Christ’s name, of displaying in your
character a replica of who Christ is. You have the great privilege of
knowing that God smiles on you and accepts you in Christ, His beloved
Son. But you also have the obligation to do only those things that bring
honor to Christ’s name. If you would not like to see Christ’s name
inscribed over one particular action, then don’t do that action.
Because you are a “Christian,” Paul calls you to express
Christian virtues in whatever you do.
1. The kinds of actions: word or deed
The kinds of actions in which you
should do so are “in word or deed.” This is intended to be a
comprehensive summary of every kind of action you can
do—as is indicated by the words “whatever” and “all”
” in the passage.
The stewardship of our actions: in
the name of the Lord Jesus
The stewardship of our actions is indicated by the phrase “in the
name of the Lord Jesus."

"In the name means by
His authority, or in recognition of His authority. Seek to do
everything so that you will meet His sanction and approval. Paul is telling
you to ask yourself something like, “What would Jesus do?” Or
better, “What would Jesus have me do?”

“Could I tell
my neighbor that I’m doing this action in the name of Jesus?”

“Could I tell
God?”
Our response and crown in our actions: giving
thanks

- Our
response
to God’s
great
kindness
toward us in
Christ should
be thankfulness throughout all we do. As the peace of Christ
rules we should be thankful people. As the word of Christ dwells
in us
richly we
should sing
with
thankfulness
in our hearts.
As the name of Christ rests upon us we should give thanks to
God the Father through Him.

We should give ourselves as
living thank offerings to Him, who is the sin offering for us. He is th
source, substance, and goal of our strength to do all things,
and so Christ should be thanked for all things!
“All things are from Him, through Him, and
unto Him!
To Him be the glory forever. ”
Indeed,
Revelation 5:12  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to
receive
depth and
wealth and
wisdom and
might and
honor and
glory and blessing!
1Maclaren, 320.
2 You can see both sides of this reconciliation working in conjunction
with each other in Eph. 2:13-18.
13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been
brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is
our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down
in his flesh
the dividing wall of hostility
by abolishing
the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in
himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16
and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross,
thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and preached
peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.
18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the
Father.