

Love Letters

Week 14: Colossians 3–4

Is it possible to be saved & yet not find satisfaction & significance in the Christian life? Yes, sadly, it is possible to receive Christ as Savior but not progress very far into spiritual growth or fulfillment. God does not intend for it to be this way & Paul realized that fact; hence, he calls all believers to gain ground daily in their Christian walk by looking up to a higher perspective. Rather than simply enduring the disciplines of the sanctified life, God's desire is that we passionately pursue our relationship with Him, so that we may prosper every step of the way. Here in chapter 3 the challenge is to make the ordinary, extraordinary by placing Christ at the center of everything.

The Higher Perspective ~

Read Colossians 3 & 4

1. Paul begins by elevating the believers' perspective in vs 1. Why does he encourage God's children to look & think higher?
2. Because of our identification with Christ, where should the believer's mind be focused? Why (vs 1-4)?
3. In vs 5-9a, the focus shifts to the kind of behavior the Christian should not be engaged in. Where does Paul say our minds should not be? Why?
 - a. How is it possible to turn our minds from sinful thoughts that motivate bad behavior to God-like thoughts that glorify Him? (vs 9)
4. List the specific things that are to be put to death in vs 5.
 - a. Why are these behaviors & heart attitudes to be utterly eliminated? (vs 6-7)
5. What are the old habits that must be replaced with new ones befitting a godly lifestyle? (vs 8–9)

The Christian Lifestyle ~

Reread Colossians 3:12–25

1. Name the various aspects of Christ's character that you as a believer are to put on. (vs 12-13)
2. The character qualities you just listed above are descriptive of God's people in the Old Testament pertaining to the nation of Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6). Consider how they might be applicable to you today as a Christian (see 1 Peter 2:9-10).
3. By what standard of measurement are you to forgive others? (vs 13)
4. Paul saves the most important aspect of the Christian's character for last. What is it & why is it so important? (vs 14)

5. What is the essential ingredient for maintaining unity in the body of Christ? (vs 15)

6. What is the aspect that ensures the believer will grow on to maturity? (vs 16-17) Whose name will be honored as we do?

Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing ~

Reread Colossians 4:1-6

1. Take the three aspects mentioned in vs 1 & note your thoughts on the value of each as it pertains to prayer.

a. Earnestly:

b. Vigilant:

c. Thanksgiving:

2. The fact that Paul is in prison does not prevent him from proclaiming Christ to all who would listen. Note Paul's specific prayer requests while he is in chains (vs 3-4).

3. For believers to remain effective in getting out the gospel message, what must they do?

a. Vs 5:

b. Vs 6:

▪ Personal: Reflect back on a few of your conversations this past week. How effective have you been in getting the gospel facts across?

▪ There's an old saying that "you can draw a lot more people with honey than you can with vinegar." What, are you as Christ's representative, are you doing to draw people to Christ rather than driving them away?

Witness with Your Life ~

Reread Colossians 4:7-18

The remainder of chapter 4 should be examined from the perspective of more than a list of Paul's co-workers & friends. Note what made them each important to Paul & the church.

▪ Vs 7-8: Tychicus

▪ Vs 9: Onesimus

▪ Vs 10: Aristarchus

▪ Vs 10: Mark

▪ Vs 11: Jesus Justus

▪ Vs 12-13: Epaphras

▪ Vs 14: Luke

▪ Vs 14: Demas

▪ Vs 15: Nympha

▪ Vs 16-17: Archippus

In Touch with Jesus ~

1. **LISTEN:** In what way did the Lord Jesus meet you in His Word this week? Be specific.

2. **LEARN:** How can you apply this understanding to your daily Christian walk?

3. **LIVE:** What step of obedience will you purpose to take in your walk of faith this week?