

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.

” 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.”

[1](#)

3.

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

1.

Thankfulness. Each verse of this passage mentions Christian thankfulness. “ [Be thankful](#)” (15),
“ [gratitude](#)
[in your hearts](#)
” (16), “
[giving thanks](#)
” (17).

2.

Christ. More strikingly, each verse of this passage

places Christ prominently at its center. “ **Peace**
of Christ

” (15), “

word of Christ

” (16), “

name of the Lord Jesus

” (17).

3.

Paul’s broader threefold theme. Additionally, Paul’s broader threefold 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

”

▪

1.

Body

1.

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

1.

First Paul exhorts us to **let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.**

1.

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.

2

-

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 mamma 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 1

**7 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
h wisdom
”

—

The character

or content of our
teaching should
be “in all
wisdom .”

—

**The activity
of teaching: “te
aching and
admonishing
”**

-

The activity
of teaching has
two methods: “t
eaching 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

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 ”

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



Psalms

Hymns

Spiritual song

Kind of song:

With musical ac

Praise God

General songs

Content:

Largely OT Psalm

Probably new (N

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 *ot*
her 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 wor
d 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.

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

■

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

mouth-
ing 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 n
ot
praising God

from your
heart.

—

Do Everything in the Name of the Lord

Jesus v. 17

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-comprehen
sive 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. Y

ou 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

e 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 Wor

thy is the

Lamb who

was

slain, to

receive
power and
wealth and
wisdom and
might and
honor and

glory and
blessing!

1 Maclaren,
320.

2You can
see both
sides of this
reconciliation
working in
conjunction

with each
other in Eph.
2:13-18. E
phesians
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 15
by
abolishing

the law of
commandme
nts 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.