

# Colossians 3:12-17

## Our responsibility to one another

How are members to treat and serve one another in the church

Believing the Gospel and being saved from sin and death, reconciled to God and to His Son is the most wonderful blessing from God that we could receive. It is a marvelous privilege to have our sins forgiven and to now have a loving relationship restored between us and God. The Christian life is filled with the amazing blessings of joy and peace, and our life takes on new meaning and purpose as we surrender our life to Christ Jesus the King.

This also comes with the amazing benefit of the Father's love, becoming a child of God and being adopted into His family, the church. As John writes,

**1 John 3:1** - See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, **that we should be called children of God; and such we are.** NASB

Along with this blessing of being in God's family, also comes the responsibility to treat one another with love and respect. We are to treat the members of God's family with the same love that He has loved us with and walk after Him and follow His example of love and care for each other just as He commanded us.

**John 13:34-35** - 34 "**A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you,** that you also love one another. 35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." NASB

In order to examine this responsibility of love to one another more closely, let's look at the passage in Colossians 3:12-17.

**Colossians 3:12** - 12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; NASB

**A. And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved** - Here the Apostle reminds them of their election by God and of the Love of God which was upon them from the beginning....that they are "**chosen of God**".....it is no small thing that they would be "**chosen of God**," .....this speaks of their divine election, the decision in the heart and mind of God to save these Colossians from before the creation of the time..... Paul writes in many places of this **election**....consider...

**Ephesians 1:4-6** - 4 just **as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself,

according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. NASB

**2 Thessalonians 2:13** - 13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, **because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation** through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. NASB

See here the free grace of God expressed to a helpless people, a people who had earned God's wrath, but instead received His mercy.....and therefore they have become His "***holy and beloved***" saints! Paul speaks here that they are both "***holy***" and also "***beloved***".... First that they are "***holy***," that is *set apart* by God to be His special people, the Greek word here is *hagios* which means *sacred* or *morally pure, consecrated or cleansed for special use*, and is also used for the English NT word *saint*. Moreover he describes them as "***beloved***," that is they are dearly loved by God. Notice here God's disposition toward His church, He "***dearly loves***" them. And because He has decided to love them, He has "***chosen***" them and set them apart from all other people in the world for His own purpose, to be His own people, His saints, His holy ones,

**Titus 2:14** - who gave Himself for us, **that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession**, zealous for good deeds. NASB

And so Christ's people in His church are His "***chosen, holy and dearly loved***" people! Amazing,.... wonderful,.... marvelous! It is for this reason that we have a great responsibility to one another in the church and are to treat the other people in the church around us with the utmost love and respect. Therefore Paul will now describe how we are to treat one another.

**B. put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience** -

He says, "***put on a heart***"...notice here he gets right to point. If you are going to love and respect your family in Christ, you must do it FIRST in your heart, that is, it must be sincere and genuine(Rom 12:9)....make sure it lives in your heart, in your longings and affections, in the deepest part of your being.....And what should live there.... "***compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience***"....Ah Hah! Now this is how a Christian is to live....and this is how a Christian is to love....especially other Christians...in fact it is by this love for other Christians that we know we are really Christ's disciples....

**1 John 3:14-18** - 14 **We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.** He who does not love abides in death. 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. 16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in

him? 18 Little children, **let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.** NASB

Here in Colossians 3:12, Paul describes what this Christian love looks like practically in our life....it is, “*compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience*” .... Here is how we treat one another in the church....

**In Compassion**.....are you concerned about others?....we are to be moved in our inner self with concern for others....to be considerate and loving toward others in our hearts, with a godly longing and affection....and to put this concern to action and do something about it....and compassion in our hearts moves us to mercy and kindness with our hands....

**In Kindness**....we are to be kind to others, to express benevolence and goodwill to people...with real action....in good deeds and kind words...we are to devise ways to bless our church family, not to ignore or to harm them...we must help them when they are in need and we speak to them with words that encourage and benefit them....we should be a blessing to others, not a curse...we should serve them in love, with mercy in our hearts....

**Humility**.....we are to humble ourselves before others...we are to lower ourselves before others, to make ourselves of no account and others of much account.... to consider others as more important than ourselves....as Paul writes in Philippians....

**Philippians 2:3-5** - 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, **but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself;** 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, NASB

Humility is the chief characteristic of godliness in the Christian Life.....it is the wellspring of all other virtue....Humility is the opposite of pride.....we must forsake our pride if we are to love other people....we are not to be puffed up and conceited toward others, considering them of less account than ourselves, but rather to regard them as higher than us, to make ourselves low, and to do this with sincerity in our hearts....pride is the chief enemy of our souls and humility is the medicine which kills pride.....May God help us to humble ourselves before Him and before our church family.....

**Gentleness and Patience** .... “*Gentleness*” is that quality of character whereby we have restraint and temperance in our attitude....it is to have self control over our emotions, in a meek and mild way....and this we cannot do with out “*patience,*” that good fruit of the Spirit that allows us to bear with others and to suffer long toward them without complaint....to suffer without complaint... we are to be gentle and patient toward God’s people, with meekness and temperance, with

kindness and compassion in our heart...we are to treat them as soft and gentle lambs, not as roaring and fierce lions...Christians are to be gentle and patient people, especially toward our brother or sister, for whom Christ died....

Are you having problems in your marriage?.....problems in your family relationships?....problems getting along with people in the church?...Hear the Word of the Lord..... ***“put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility and gentleness, and patience”*** .....

**Colossians 3:13** - 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. NASB

**A. bearing with one another** - Here explains the patience he mentioned in the verse before, that is, suffering long with each other...***“bearing with one another”*** .....enduring each others failings, and even their injuries toward us..we are not to be easily provoked with others, but rather willing to bear others burdens and weaknesses....many times these may be things that annoy us or irritate us, but we are to patiently bear with these.....

**B. and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you** – And when we have been offended, or irritated or provoked by a brother or sister, we must forgive...***“forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you”*** .....forgive, you must forgive...

**Mark 11:25-26** - 25 "And whenever you stand praying, **forgive, if you have anything against anyone**; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions. 26["But **if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.**" NASB

Christians must forgive.....this is our way of life...this is Christ’s way of life...our entire union with Christ is based in the forgiveness of our own sins...this is how we became Christians, we were forgiven....and this is the primary thing that distinguishes us from the unbeliever....we have been forgiven....therefore we must be willing to forgive, and to love and to heal. We must not hold the sword of vengeance but rather the healing salve of forgiveness.

**Colossians 3:14** - 14 And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. NASB

**A. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity** – Here he writes, “beyond all these things”....if putting ***“on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility and gentleness, and patience”*** isn’t enough...or bearing with one another and forgiving one another were not enough added....here he tells us “beyond all these things”.....***“put on love”*** ....Here is the crown that rests on the head of all other Christian virtues, it is Love....This is the substance of

Christianity! This is the great and foremost commandment! This is the purpose for which we were made, to put on love....

**1 John 4:16** - 16 And we have come to know and have believed **the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.** NASB

Are you in Christ....then your life is to be characterized by love....

Here Paul writes that love is..... ***“the perfect bond of unity”***....love is the ***“perfect bond,”*** it is the glue that holds us together....love for our brethren holds our hearts together in the inner man, where there is a sweetness of charity toward our brothers, and a longing to see them blessed and benefitted.....to see them prospered and healed, cared for and lacking nothing....love is ***“perfect”*** to motivate our hearts for our brother’s good and brings us together as one....it is the ***“bond of unity”***....love for our brothers and sisters the harmony that holds our hearts and lives together as one...it is ***“the perfect bond of unity”***...though we may have many other Christian virtues, if we have not love, these lack the completeness and the harmony that is motivated by love....love must be the reigning principle in all our virtues...

And when we love, we strengthen the quality of all the others virtues...listen, if you love, you can be compassionate, and kind...if you love, you can be humble and gentle....if you love, you can be patient and bear with even the most difficult people... if you love dear Christian....you can even forgive.....and then we are truly Christ’s disciples....when we abide in love.....

**Colossians 3:15** - 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. NASB

**A. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts** – Here see the Prince of Peace in His rightful place, ***“ruling in your hearts”***.....Let PEACE RULE....this is profound...let PEACE preside in your ***“hearts,”*** sit as King there, govern and control you.....dear Christian, does the peace of Christ RULE your life? Why should you live in the tumult and tossing of the sea...why should you live in conflict and strife with your brethren? ***“let the peace of Christ rule in your HEART”*** ....let it rule in the inner place, we no one sees but you and God, let your thoughts and intentions in your ***“heart”*** be ruled by Christ’s peace.... When a man loses his peace, it is an awful proof that he has lost something else; that he has given way to evil, and grieved the Spirit of God. While peace rules, all is safe... Let harmony and calmness season your thoughts toward your brothers and sisters...

**B. to which indeed you were called in one body** - Family, This peace, Paul says, is that ***“to which we were called”***.... He ***“called us”*** to peace.... ***“in one body”***....we were called to peace and harmony with our brethren, let us therefore

let peace rule and reign among us.... we were “*called*” by God to peace...to King Jesus, the Prince of Peace....we will answer the call and lay down our swords?...why should we fret?...do we not have eternal life?...are we not loved by God?...will He not see us through til the end, when we will lie down and rest in His peace forever??...Rest your soul now in the promise of God....we will lie down in peace.... (Hos 2:18)

**C. and be thankful** - “*And be thankful*” .....that is, to be appreciative of the benefits we have received from God....to be grateful, to have gratitude in our hearts....to realize that even though we deserved death, and rightfully so, Christ has of His free Grace given us life.....even though we offended Him, and blasphemed His name by our countless sins, and even though we provoked Him to anger 10,000 times by our rebel thoughts, words and deeds....He has repaid us with kindness and mercy and love.... Amazing love! How can it be, That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?.....family, let us rejoice with thanksgiving for the grace of our God!

**Colossians 3:16** - 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. NASB

**A. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you** - “*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you*” ....we are to possess the Word in abundance....to let it fill our hearts and our minds so that our cup overflows with the rich Truth of God’s Word....as the Psalmist writes...

**Psalm 119:127-130** - 127 Therefore **I love Thy commandments** Above gold, yes, above fine gold. 128 Therefore **I esteem right all Thy precepts concerning everything**, I hate every false way. 129 **Thy testimonies are wonderful**; Therefore my soul observes them. 130 **The unfolding of Thy words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.** NASB

If we are to fulfill our responsibility to one another in the church, we must allow Christ’s Word to richly dwell with in us....in our hearts and in our minds....we must meditate and ponder the Word continually...let it permeate our thoughts...

**B. with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God** -

And not only dwelling in us, but we are to affect one another with the Word...“*with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God*” ....this is what we Christians do every day of our lives...we gather to let the Word richly dwell in us as we exhort one another with it and sing to the Glory of God, rejoicing in all He has done for us, hoping together for the final day of Glory to which we shall speedily go.....Acts 2:41-47 is perfect example of how this lived in the early church...consider....

**Acts 2:41-47** - 41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. 42 And **they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.** 43 And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. 46 **And day by day continuing with one mind** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals **together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God, and having favor with all the people.** And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. NASB

**Colossians 3:17** - 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. NASB

**A. And whatever you do in word or deed** - The Christian life is not just something we do on Sunday.....it encompasses everything we do and everything we say.....Jesus is our Master and King, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week....He is Lord in our hearts, and in the secret place of our minds....

**B. do all in the name of the Lord Jesus** - All of these verses we have just examined here, have explained to us what it looks like in daily life to do ***“all in the name of the Lord Jesus”*** .... And listen...If you can't do what your doing ***“in the name of the Lord Jesus,”*** you shouldn't be doing it! This is a good rule to apply to everything we do.....then we shall know if we have God's approval in doing it....

May He help us to glorify Him in all that we say and do!

**C. giving thanks through Him to God the Father** – Our life is Christ is very we rich! We are rich beyond belief....our life is filled with the riches of God's grace...His wonderful love and compassion towards us...His amazing humility and gentleness and patience fills our hearts....the forgiveness of our sins, who can tell of the wonders of forgiven sins!....His peace in our hearts, His Word richly dwelling in our minds! The glory of Christ's presence with us!....we have much to be thankful for.....therefore let us give ***“thanks through Him to God the Father!”***

Lets's Pray.