

PILGRIM

HOME CHURCH

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

1. Suppose there was a business in which everybody behaved in the way described in Colossians 3:5-9. Would you like to work there, why or why not? What scenarios would come up in that environment?
2. Why would someone want to work in the business of 5-9?
3. What lists of rules do you have imposed on you in life (think government, work, school, friends, etc.)? Share some of them and what you appreciate (or not) about these lists.
4. Sex/desire and speech - some pretend such things are purely private matters. How do our behaviour in these areas lead to problems for the community?
5. Reread the text. Which of the sins in 5-9 are particular issues for you? Which virtues seem to require more effort?
6. In 10-11, Paul says that as we are renewed in Christ, old divisions of identity must decrease. How does this align with our modern values or confront them regarding identity?
7. What happens if we focus on the negative list without the first four verses and virtues in focus?

PRAYER:

OCTOBER 11, 2020

COLOSSIANS

THE LISTS: VICES | 3:5-11

The Bible is full of lists and yet is clear they don't bring us life. What do we do with these lists? We can ignore them, obsess over them, simplify them, or come to understand they are signposts on a journey towards living a love-centred life. This Sunday, we get into Colossians 3 and look at a list of vices.

Colossians 3:5-11 (CEB)

So put to death whatever in your nature belongs to the earth: sexual immorality, impurity, shameful passion, evil desire, and greed which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. ⁷ You also lived your lives in this way at one time, when you used to live among them. ⁸ But now, put off all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, abusive language from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another since you have put off the old man with its practices ¹⁰ and have been clothed with the new man that is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it. ¹¹ Here there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and in all.

A QUICK REVIEW

- The church is facing false teaching about a mash-up 'philosophy', focusing on angels and mystical experiences as required for true faith, and rule-keeping from Judaism.
- Paul was never at this church, but writing from prison based on reports and exercising relational-apostolic authority.
- Chapters 1-2 focus on theology foundations and "next steps" for them. Roughly doctrine.
- Chapters 3-4 provide more basic instructions, ethics/advice.
- "Paul never spoke other than as a pastor. His theology was a living theology, a practical theology through and through. The application is inherent in the exposition itself... [W]e can hardly avoid noting that all of Paul's letters were motivated by ethical concerns" -James Dunn (Gupta,123).

OUTLINE: CHAPTER 3 (N. GUPTA, S. MCKNIGHT)

- 1-4 Pursuing True Heavenly Life in Christ
- 5-11 The Negative Destroying and Setting Aside Earthly Way
 - The Exhortation, Colossians 3:5, 8-9a
 - The Theology, Colossians 3:6-7, 9b-11
- 12-17 The Positive: Cardinal Virtues of New Life In Christ: Love, Peace and Thanksgiving

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4

THE NEGATIVE: DESTROYING AND SETTING ASIDE EARTHLY WAYS

- *Colossians 3:1* Receiving Christ, (2:6) we share in his death and burial, and benefit from new life in him.

THE EXHORTATION

Colossians 3:5, 8-9a ELEVEN VICES TO RENOUNCE

Two Major Categories:

1. Sins of Desire

2. Sins of Disunity

Colossians 3:6-7, 9b-11 THE THEOLOGY

Three premises the commands are working with: (1) God's wrath is against sins like these, (2) they have been converted FROM such sins, (3) the inclusive body of Christ requires an alternative kind of moral fellowship (McKnight, 308).

Colossians 3:6 **DIVINE WRATH** Not that of the pagan gods of the Greeks/Romans (or the activists/conservatives) - not vengeance, vindictive, nor violent rage.

How to understand "wrath of God"

Colossians 3:7, 9b-10 CONVERSION

Colossians 3:11 MAKES IT ALL CLEAR, NEW SELF = NEW HUMANITY (2:15)

"Identity emerges not from one's ethnicity, heritage, [or modern sexuality identity categories], or status in the Roman Empire but from Christ" (McKnight, 312).

BIG IDEA REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS