

PILGRIM

HOME CHURCH

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

1. Think of clothes shopping either recently or as a child. What memories, experiences, fears, joys come to mind?
2. What is your favourite kind or piece of clothing (be honest, we all wear clothes!). Why?
3. Read the main passage. There is a list of virtues in Colossians 3:12. What do you think about these? How do you define them? How aware are you that these are things the Holy Spirit is growing in you? "Being tenderhearted doesn't mean being sentimental. Being kind doesn't mean being a soft touch. Humility isn't the same thing as low self-esteem. Meekness is not weakness. How might you instead define each character trait? How is a foundation of strength and confidence in Christ's peace the deciding factor in each" (Wright)?
4. What does "bear with one another" in Colossians 3:13 mean?
5. What about "forgive as the Lord forgave you." How do you think that works?
6. The church is a spiritual family and a "a lab of love". How do you see us helping one another live out/wear these clothes of virtue?
7. Love binds all the other clothing together in Colossians 3:14. What do you think about that?
8. We are to practice these virtues in the world, but particularly in the church, "one anothering" each other instead of "othering" each other. Why do you think starting in Home Church and our larger parish/congregation matters?
9. Colossians 3:16 portrays believers as teaching one another, exhorting (insistently encouraging) one another and singing to God with grateful hearts. How do we practice these three things?
10. In all these, which do you find hardest and which have you noticed growth in yourself and our community at Pilgrim?

PRAYER: Ask the Holy Spirit to remove anything in your life which needs to be removed, and to increasingly clothe you with Christlikeness.

OCTOBER 25, 2020

COLOSSIANS

NEW CLOTHES | 3:11-17

What are you wearing? Clothes communicate a lot of different things. Paul tells us that there are things we take off and other things that we put on. What are you wearing? Jesus gives us a new set of clothes, a new way to engage others around us. We put on clothes as part of our engagement with others. Paul shares a better way, the Jesus-Centred way of being in community with others - the beloved way of being a friend, a family member, a co-worker clothed with Christlikeness.

Colossians 3:11-17 (CEB)

¹¹ In this image there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all things and in all people.

¹² Therefore, as God's choice, holy and loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Be tolerant with each other and, if someone has a complaint against anyone, forgive each other. As the Lord forgave you, so also forgive each other. ¹⁴ And over all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. ¹⁵ The peace of Christ must control your hearts—a peace into which you were called in one body. And be thankful people. ¹⁶ The word of Christ must live in you richly. Teach and warn each other with all wisdom by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ Whatever you do, whether in speech or action, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God the Father through him.

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
 - Love 3:12-14
 - General Instructions 3:15-17

INTO THE WORD(S)

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).

LOVE 3:12-14 Love ties all the virtues together. "Love is a rugged covenantal commitment to another person to be with that one and for that one as both journey into Christlikeness" (McKnight, 318).

Colossians 3:12 *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience,*

Colossians 3:13 *bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if someone happens to have a complaint against anyone else. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also forgive others.*

Colossians 3:14 *And to all these virtues add love, which is the perfect bond.*

Thomas Oord: "To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic/empathetic response to God and others, to promote overall well-being." Love is about doing good, something beneficial, positive or helpful. God expresses agape, eros and philia love. We also are to learn to express these loves.

Agape is "in spite of" love.

Eros is "because of" love. (**Philippians 4:8,9**).

Philia is koinonia love, "alongside of" love.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS 3:15-17

Colossians 3:15 *Let the peace of Christ be in control in your heart (for you were in fact called as one body to this peace), and be thankful.*

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

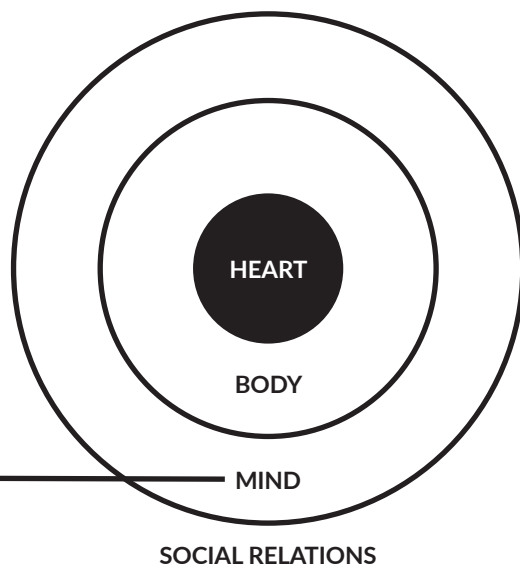
Colossians 3:17 *And whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

BIG IDEA REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS

INSIDE-OUT TRANSFORMATION OF JESUS' DISCIPLES TO BECOME LIKE HIM

SOULISH PERSON (social relations, body, mind, heart)

The disciple says "yes" to God with his/her entire person.



1. The Gospel and the Spirit

The Words of Jesus' Gospel energized by the Spirit, penetrate social relations and the body to the mind. The battle rages in the mind of the would-be disciple, but the war is for his or her heart.

2. The Obedience of the Would-Be Disciple

The heart-will makes a decision for or against Jesus. As the heart says "yes" to Jesus, the truth of the Word of God energized by the Holy Spirit penetrates to the heart, bringing regeneration and setting the person free to become Jesus' disciple (John 8:31-32).

3. Transformed to Love As Jesus Loves

The regenerated heart is the beginning of the transformation of the disciple into the image of Christ, particularly to love like Jesus loves (John 13:34-45). The Spirit--indwelt heart directs the inside-out transformation process of mind, body, and social relations.

4. Becoming Like Jesus in Our Entire Person

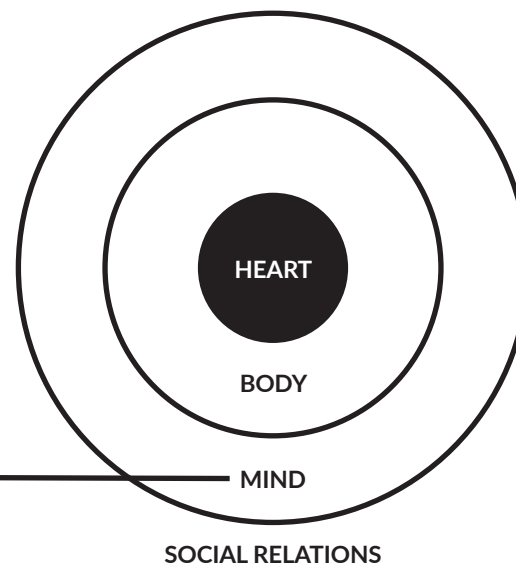
The disciple who continues to say "yes" to the Word of God is transformed to bear the fruit of the Spirit (John 15:7-8). The disciple is enabled to say "yes" to God with his or her entire person. The process of inside-out transformation goes on throughout the entire life, as the disciple continually appropriates the truth of the Word in the Spirit to become more like Jesus.

*Adapted from Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs NavPress, 2002), 38. I have adapted the schematic to illustrate the person that Jesus describes as entering and living in the kingdom of heaven.

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