

## A Chosen Community

### God's Word:

Colossians 3:1-2, 8-17

### Key Verse:

“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience ...”

Colossians 3:12

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### Breaking It Down:

Chapter 3 of Colossians starts with some powerful words. Notice that it says: “***IF*** then you have been raised up with Christ ...” The operative word here is “if.” That means that you must first meet these criteria before you can move on to the rest of the sentence. It is conditional. *If* you have been raised with Christ, *then* you are to set your heart on things above, and *then* you are to set your mind on the things of God, not the things of this world. Jumping ahead to verse 7, this chapter declares that we once lived a different life with different desires (those stated in verse 5). Now we see the next part of the above condition, “***but now...***” The word “*but*” can be used as a preposition meaning “*with the exception of.*” It can also be used as a conjunction meaning “*on the contrary*” and, coupled with the adverb “*now,*” means “*at the present time.*” Verse 8 then means: with the exception of the present time, you are no longer this person. In verses 8 and 9, the Bible lists the things we must “put aside” or get out of our lives. The next verse, verse 10, states that we are to be a new creation. We are to put on this new self, a person who is now fashioned in the image of the One spoken about in Genesis 1 and John 1. It is in His eyes – the One with whom we were raised – that we are all loved equally, regardless of who we have been in the past.



As these new creatures, raised in Christ, we are to be compassionate, kind, humble, gentle, and patient. We are to forgive each other for all things. Paul, who penned this

letter to the church at Colossae, takes this forgiveness thing to a higher level. In verse 13, he says that we (including us today) are to forgive “as the Lord forgave you.” Think about that. To what extent has God forgiven you?

All of these things that we must do are bound together in love, and by love, and are commanded by the One who *is* love.

This section of the message ends with Paul exhorting that church and all of us to “let the word of Christ richly dwell within you,” to let Him be in your heart, to let His word guide you in all that you do, and to do everything in Christ’s name.

### **Living It:**

Growing up in Los Angeles, California, molded and influenced the way I did certain things just as I’m sure wherever you have been growing up has played a role in shaping and influencing you.

Living in California forced me to develop what people call a thick skin. The part of L.A. where I lived made people tough. You had to be that way. You could not be weak. In particular, whenever we had problems with someone (it was the same for men and women), there was a certain way we went about resolving the issues at hand. First, there was a question asked: Do we have a problem? This would lead to one of two possible answers. It was either: a) “No,” meaning there was no problem or the person really didn’t want to take the issue any farther; or b) “Yes.” If the person answered “yes,” that would lead to another question: You wanna do something about it? Again, there were two possible responses: a) “No,” as above; and b) “Yes.” By answering “yes,” you mutually agreed that, indeed, there was a dilemma and that a good old-fashioned (or maybe not so good) fight was about to occur. Of course, the fight would occur and the problem would get resolved (kind of).

I am a different person today, now that I have accepted Christ as my Savior and asked Him to be Lord of my life. Do you think I still resolve my problems in the same fashion? No way. How could I? I’m not the same person. I don’t live in the same place – and I don’t just mean geographically. I now live a life that “is hidden with Christ in God.” (Verse 3)

As a result, these new surroundings influence my life and so my approach is different. I seek a higher ground now. I am held to a higher standard



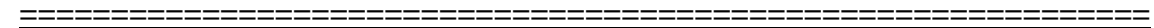
now. I answer to a higher authority now. If I were still to resolve my conflicts by asking the above series of questions, wouldn't that be evidence that I hadn't really changed? That I didn't really have "a new self"? That I was just the same old L.A. guy trying to do things my own way?

I was asked once: Is the change, the conversion, the new creation in Christ, seen through a person's actions or his reactions? If we continue to (we, meaning those of us who have accepted the gift of salvation), act, react, talk, look and live like the rest of the world, then what's the point of converting or accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior? If we do that, how can anyone tell us apart from the rest of the world? Isn't that the point -- to *be* different because we *are* different?



**Understanding It:**

- 1.** In breaking it down the author makes reference to Genesis 1 and John 1, what specifically is he talking about?
- 2.** What are the qualities that a Christian must live with (V. 12)? What is the meaning of each?
- 3.** Are we mostly judge by our actions or reactions?
- 4.** Name one the qualities that you would like to have (Q.2) that you don't have and describe why?



**Doing It!**

Have you made the choice to follow God? If you have are living like you have made the choice to follow God. This week think about one thing that you can get rid of that is ungodly in your life.

