

Forgiveness is for Believers

Week 1 Study Questions- Colossians Overview

I would like this week's study to be self-reflective. What are your hearts and minds set on? How does your "heavenly wardrobe need to be updated?"

Paul commands the Colossians to set their minds on heavenly things, the things of God himself, his sovereign reign over the universe, his character, his presence. As Christians, our minds should be set on, or preoccupied with, eternal realities.

Paul also commands the Colossians what not to set their minds on, earthly things, like status, honor, status, position.

Remember this great example Paul gave to the Philippians of what to think about; whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable— anything that is excellent or praiseworthy. Recall that the Bible is the source for these things.

1. What preoccupies your thoughts throughout the day?

2. Are there any earthly things your mind seems to keep going back to?

3. What do you need to do differently so your heart and mind are set on the things mentioned above?

Look at the long list Paul says to put to death, or to put off, from our former lives. Colossians 3:5-10 reads: "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."

4. Think about your life before Christ. Are there some "dirty clothes" you have kept on wearing, even though you've been made new? List them below and pray that God will help you keep them off.

We also learned about our “heavenly wardrobe from the hands of the ultimate tailor”.

Because believers should have new behavior and a new attitude, Paul immediately commands them what to put on in verse 12, which says: “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” And then Paul adds bearing with one another and forgiving each other in verse 13.

(Remember, the verb “putting on” is a present imperative, meaning we are to keep putting these on.)

4. Which pieces of your wardrobe do you have to continually put on?

5. Some pieces may be easier to keep on than others. Are there any you’ve put on and have kept on? Remember to thank God for that. This shows progress as a new man.

Finally, Paul says to cover all these virtues with love that binds them all together in perfect unity. One author calls love the “sash” that holds our other garments in place. Love produces unity in the church and allows true fellowship together.

6. Can you think of a time when your inability to love another believer has led to disunity in the church? If so, have you sought forgiveness from God?

7. Is there someone in your life who is just unlovable? If you are having a hard time loving someone, recall the love God has shown you. Romans 5:8 says: “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” May this verse motivate you to love the unlovable.

Our goal as believers is to grow more into Christlikeness, and putting on our new wardrobe is putting on Christ. Let’s be a church that wears our heavenly wardrobe well.