

***“Paul’s Letter to the Colossians, Living Above and Beyond This World System  
Part 3”***

**Review:**

- ***Only the Reckoning That Counts Makes the Difference in Life — Put Off!***
- ***Only the Reckoning That Counts Makes the Difference in Life — Put On!***
- ***Only the Reckoning That Counts Makes the Difference in Life — Dwell!***
  
- ***Only the Reckoning That Counts Makes the Difference in Life — Put Off!***
  - ***The reckoning that counts makes the difference. The promise of Col. 3:5 and also Rom. 8:13 is realized, he writes here, when we mortify, or reckon that we have already put off, as it were, “the old man with his deeds” through our identification with Christ in his death.***
  - ***This is how the Lord God and our Lord Jesus see us from their heavenly perspective, and that is what counts! In these verses and in the others that speak to the same truths (Gal. 5, Rom. 5-8, and many more), we are taught that the Lord has today, under grace, provided the way for our deliverance from the POWER OF SIN, and that it is through the KNOW-RECKON-YIELD dynamic we have seen so clearly revealed here in Colossians. The clothing analogy is used effectively here by the apostle to bring those truths home to these believers in this letter.***

***And, as written in Romans 6, Christ now lives in a new way altogether than before his death, burial, and resurrection. He paid the full price for our sins ONCE FOR ALL! Now he lives apart from sin altogether in his new quality of resurrection life. And we are encouraged to do the same.***

***Consequently we now need to put that to the test, applying it in our daily, moment by moment living and for this Paul here in Colossians uses the clothing analog where we learn how to live in a world of sin but above the ongoing power of that sin in our lives:***

***Col. 3:8-9***

***8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.***

***9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;***

- *Having put off, by reckoning on the identity we now have in Christ Jesus, the “mortifying”, we then also need to put it on, also by reckoning! The clothing analogy is used again here of removing the old so that new clothing may be put on in its place. It is a perfect analogy of the dynamic of living under grace according to the apostle Paul and the Spirit of our God who inspired or breathed it out onto the written page for our great and transforming blessing and benefit.*
- ***Only the Reckoning That Counts Makes the Difference in Life — Put On!***
  - *So we see the whole dynamic of Christian living here unfolded before our very eyes. This is a dynamic situation, moment by moment, as the need expresses itself. It is not all at once and forever the same as so many teach, none of whom seem to know much if anything of these marvelous teachings. They are so caught up on the “experience” side that they do not know of what Christ has actually accomplished in his death, burial, and resurrection.*

*And so their “experiences” are often false and contrary to what God is doing today under grace and therefore not a mark of the Lord’s work in them at all. Consider well who is really behind those works the religious world may indeed call spiritual.*

### **Col. 3:10-14**

10 And have **put on** the new *man*, which is [*being*] renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

12 **Put on therefore**, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

14 And above all these things **put on** charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

- *So having put off the old man AND have put on the new man (as the Lord sees it, for this is his work entirely), we are now to reckon upon that truth in our own living experience. The normal consequence of our reckoning then is what is written here: “bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any:*

even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”

**Our Outline Today: The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – Even When It Is Hard!**

- ***The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – For That is the Heart of True Spirituality***
- ***The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – What is that Teaching?***
- ***The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – Even When It Is Hard – It Transforms Our Private Lives***

**Next Time:**

- ***The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – It Transforms Our Prayer Lives***
- ***The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – It Transforms Our Public Lives***

**Today: The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – Even When It Is Hard!**

**I. The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living – For That is the Heart of True Spirituality:**

- ***I want to start there again today for in those verses I have just read Paul summarized the essence of true spirituality. Let's read them again:***

**[READ ] Col. 3:12-17**

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

14 And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

**Compare this teaching with the Ephesians parallel passage, Eph. 5:15-21:**

**Eph. 5:15-20**

**15** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,  
**16** Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. [*Compare with Col. 4:5*]  
**17** Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.  
**18** And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;  
**19** Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;  
**20** Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; [*And then this amazing all inclusive exhortation:*]  
**21** Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

- *So, thanksgiving is grace receiving (Col. 3:16-17; Eph. 5:20). The new life of Christ in us, the hope of glory, flows like an artesian well, bringing forth songs of grace in the heart (and, of course, "... in the night"). This word of Christ is to dwell in our hearts with the result we read of here. But, we have learned, this is only possible if we RECKON upon what we KNOW of Christ's completed work and then in daily living, when the going gets tough, bear forth the fruit of the spirit.*
- *Paul in this passage in Colossians likens this abundant living under God's inexhaustible grace as with clothing which needs to occasionally be put off and other clothing put on. For he writes that we must put off the old ways of the old man and put on the new life of the new man that God is working to transform us into one step at a time. And this is all when, and only when, "the word of Christ is dwelling in our hearts ..."! What a blessed way of living indeed that is. Amen.*
- *Let's look into the teaching of that here today:*

**II. The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living — What is the Teaching?**

**[READ ] Col. 3:18-22**

**18** Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.  
**19** Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them.

20 Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.

22 Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

**[READ ] Col. 3:23-25**

23 And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

**[READ ] Col 4:1-5**

1 Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

**[Compare with Eph. 5:18]**

**III. The Reckoning That Counts Makes All the Difference in Living — Even When It Is Hard — It Transforms Our Private Lives:**

- *Now the detailed exhortations begin. Since the assembly met in homes (as here in Colosse), the private life of the family whose home the assembly met in was of utmost importance! This passage therefore is focused on home and family with the home and family present there in the home in which the assembly was meeting. The meeting halls were the homes of believers as Col. 4:15 indicates in reference there to the assembly in Laodicea that was meeting in the home of a man named Nymphas. So the teaching here would have special application to this home and its residents though the exhortations are generic and apply to all believers of course.*

*The Colossians teaching is a short summary of the Ephesians teaching if we compare the two, clearly written together. The parallels are striking. We will see that as we proceed through each exhortation.*

***First of all, Paul addresses wives in one verse, not explaining himself at all here, while in the Ephesians parallel section he provides a more complete teaching in three verses. The difference in detail is even more evident as we will see with what he writes about husbands, where the Colossian teaching is one verse and in the Ephesian's letter eight!!***

- **Verse 18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.**

***Comparing this with the Ephesians teaching we get the whole teaching and it's most important to understand:***

***Eph. 5:22-24***

**22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.**

**23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.**

**24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.**

- ***So the hierarchy that God has established in the family begins with husband and wives. Wives, the apostle writes here, are to simply submit to their husbands. He does add though this qualifier: "as is fit in the Lord". There is some similarity in other verses like 1 Cor. 7:39 "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." Though this seems to have special relevance to believing husbands, the wider application also has some truth in it also.***

***Paul does not address the circumstances in which many wives have found themselves having become believers while married, or, having married an unbeliever. Or, for other reasons (addictions, for example), they are in abusing relationships. This is not addressed here and I will also not address it today.***

- ***In the parallel Ephesian passage we see the words "as unto the Lord" in this context. The apostle goes on then to explain the divine hierarch in authority AND responsibility in the following two verses and that teaching is very important: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the***

church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” ***Wives, he writes, need to consider the spiritual realities of the marriage bond carefully before being themselves the cause of a breakage in that bond. Of course, one thing that should always be kept in mind is that our lives here in this world are not promised by God to be easy or always in every way to our liking. Rather, we are to trust in the Lord that he does all thing well and is working all things for our good. And, as always, this life is a preparation for eternity. Amen.***

***But now, on to the husbands where the teaching is far more detailed and pressing!***

- **Verse 19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.**

***Compare Eph. 5:25-32***

**25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;**

**26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,**

**27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.**

**28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.**

**29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:**

**30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.**

**31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.**

**32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**

- ***So the husband is exhorted so strongly here to love his wife as Christ loved the church, not to be bitter towards them even though they are imperfect and not always submissive. Love truly covers a multitude of sins, praise God and thanksgiving is always in order.***
- ***Note verse 33: “Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.” The Key to Marriage problems is here in these few words. The marriage counselors, whether Christians or***

*not, should confine their counseling I believe to this teachings here for effectiveness. But, it seems, few do.*

*Then the Children are addressed, but also in an abbreviated form:*

- **Verse 20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**

**Compare Eph. 6:1-3**

**1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.**

**2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)**

**3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.**

- *Again, the Ephesians teaching is more detailed, even quoting the Law of Moses. It is interesting that he quotes it fully with the promise that God made to the Israelites regarding the blessings of God for obedience and the judgment for disobedience. There is surely some food for thought there. But the idea here I am sure is that the parents and especially the father are responsible for the well being of the children. As long as they are living under the care of their parents, they should be thankful for their good provision. And he says much more next as he considers the fathers specifically:*

***Now for the Fathers who bear much responsibility regarding their own children!***

- **Verse 21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.**

***Compare the positive teaching in Ephesians compared to the rather negative one here in Colossians: Eph. 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.***

- ***Rather than provoking anger or wrath do to poor parenting skills (or simply self-serving carnality), Paul in Ephesians includes the encouraging words "... bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Disciple of a Godly sort should always be done in a fitting and appropriate way, and always "... of the Lord". That is challenging but it is what we as fathers are called to by the Lord God. Amen.***



○ **Verses 22-25**

***Now, finally, for the teaching on servants, or, as they were in Paul's day so often, bond-slaves, or at least, indentured servants! In Paul's day, slavery was common everywhere and was sanctioned by Roman law as "Res privatae, private property, or things belonging to individuals in contrast to res publicae" — quoted from a Wikipedia article. Of course, Biblical theology over time greatly changed the public view of slavery, this even in law itself. Praise God.***

***[READ ] Col. 3:22-25***

**22 Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:**

**23 And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;**

**24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.**

**25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.**

***Compare Eph. 6:5-8***

**5 Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;**

**6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;**

**7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:**

**8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.**

- ***So there must have been slavery in Colosse, even in the house church setting! This was the law of the land under Roman rule. It was not simply an employee - employer relationship thought these verses can surely be properly extended to that realm as is so common today. In fact, since Onesimus is mentioned in verse 9 and is the whole focus of the letter to Philemon who was the slave owner!***
- ***So the exhortation here is very appropriate in the slave owner - slave context clearly. This is not simply an "upstairs — downstairs" situation as made so popular on Masterpiece Theater in our days. No, slaves owned nothing themselves***

***and stealing was a common and acceptable way of life, but not for believers, Paul writes here.***

- ***Paul does not address the slavery issue directly, I think because he knew full well that the eradication of slavery in truth demanded the teaching he was giving here. Anything else (for example, just eliminating the legal support for slavery would not actually remove slavery in its essence but only make a change superficially. We see that of course in our own day, with slavery outlawed legally but with it continuing by the control of minds through lies and other equally enslaving means. Satan's methods often bring bondage and slavery as we all know.***

***And finally the Slave Owners!***

- ***Colossians 4, verse 1: Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.***
  - ***So the slave owners in fact have greater responsibility than their slaves since they are to treat their slaves with respect and dignity and with righteousness and equality. There is so much there, isn't there?***