

COLOSSIANS 3:12-15 | OUR RESPONSE (PART 5)

VERSE 12 – BLUE

The instruction is to imitate the elect. It is important to understand that the adverb **as** gives instructions for *how* to do it, not *who* is to do it. Compare Mark 8:24, 9:3, and 12:25 to understand the adverb *as*, which means *like unto*. This is a case in which *what is good for the elect is good for the Body of Christ*.

The instruction is that being **complete in him** (Col. 2:10), they were to have **bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering**. All of which are self-explanatory.

VERSE 13 - BLUE

Forbearing one another is literally, "once again taking hold" or "repeatedly taking hold." Those in the Body of Christ should not abandon the guy who falls!

The statement about forgiveness of **any man** that might **have a quarrel against any** is very broad, amazingly so. Literally, "if any with any have a complaint" then forgiveness is the answer. While other Scriptures would point out what must be done with doctrinal error or sin, this passage is about **quarrels** or "complaints." The word *μομφή* [momphe] and is used in Mark 7:2 when there were some "finding fault" with the Apostles who did not wash their hands before the meal. It is easy for Christians to find fault and have a complaint against other believers for very minor infractions. This should not be our spirit.

VERSE 14 – BLUE

Above all these things, or on top of all this, put on charity. There are several passages that place **charity** as the *crowning behavior* for Christians. See, for example, 1 Corinthians 13:13 and 1 Timothy 1:5.

The word **charity** is only used of followers of Christ (both Jew and Gentile). It is, in this sense, uniquely Christian. *Humanitarianism* or *philanthropy* are known to mankind in general, but **charity** is displayed by those who follow Christ. Sadly, the word lost its Biblical meaning and became a general word for *giving to the poor*. We should understand it in its Biblical usage as found in the King James Bible. If the things listed in verses 12-13 could be described as **perfectness**, then charity is **the bond of perfectness**.

VERSE 15 – BLUE

Paul adds two other behaviors. First, **let the peace of God rule in your hearts**. This is a command. For those who struggle with anxiety, the command will be more of a struggle than for others. Since it is **the peace of God...to the which also ye are called in one body**, then the **body** should help those who struggle with lack of peace.

The words **and be ye thankful** could either be connected to **called in one body** or a separate issue altogether, but thankfulness is called for under either circumstance.

COLOSSIANS 3:16-17 | OUR RESPONSE (PART 6)

VERSE 16 – BLUE

Those **complete in him** (Col. 2:10) are to **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom**. But what is this **word of Christ**? Is it only a reference to the *red letters*? Since Romans 16:25 speaks of **my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ** as a unit, surely the **word of Christ** includes the totality of Scripture, with emphasis on its fulfillment in Christ.

There are two instructions that aim toward letting the **word of Christ dwell in you richly**. First, **teaching and admonishing one another**. Both words relate to an effort to change thinking.

Second, **in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord**. Note that I have placed the **psalms and hymns and spiritual songs** with **singing** rather than with **teaching and admonishing**. While singing can be used as a teaching instrument, it is never put forth as the Biblical method of teaching. The **singing** is supplemental to and enhances the **teaching and admonishing** and this **singing** should be either straight from Scripture (**psalms**) or strongly based on Scripture. See Strong's Enhanced Lexicon entry #5876 for the comparison of **psalms** and **hymns** and **songs**.

VERSE 17 - BLUE

The summary statement of our response to completeness in Christ is that we should *speak* and *act* in such a way that it can be done **in the name of the Lord Jesus** while **giving thanks to God and the Father by him**. The word **by him** are *by Jesus*, the **mediator between God and men** (1 Tim. 2:5).

OUR RESPONSE – AN OVERVIEW OF COLOSSIANS 2:9-3:17

Colossians 2:9-15 describe the members of the Body of Christ as **complete in him** and He is **the head of all principality and power** (v. 10). Beginning in Colossians 2:16 and concluding in 3:17 there is a list of *responses*. In this commentary we have simply called the responses *part 1* through *part 7*. Now we shall make a quick analysis of each segment.

- Colossians 2:16-19 – Our response when judged by others for religious matters.
- Colossians 2:20-23 – Our response in relation to the Law (Torah).
- Colossians 3:1-4 – Our response in relation to our affections.
- Colossians 3:5-11 – Our response in terms of moral behavior stated in the negative (“thou shalt not...”).
- Colossians 3:12-15 – Our response in terms of moral behavior stated in the positive (“thou shalt...”).
- Colossians 3:16-17 – Our response in general.

This segment of Scripture is perhaps the most comprehensive list of “dos and don’ts” for the Christian life found in the Bible. What the 10 Commandments were for Israel and what the Sermon on the Mount was to the followers of Jesus, so this is for the followers of Paul, a “behavioral Magna Carta.”

Note: Arguably, 3:18-4:6 could be added to this list, chiefly in terms of interpersonal relations. We, rather, will take these verses that follow as more generally applied to all of society than as a response to being complete in Christ.