



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Something Old, Something New -Pt. 1 (Colossians 3:5-9)

APRIL 5, 2011

Paul Meinsen / (573) 418-2077 / www.capitolcom.org / paul.meinsen@capitolcom.org

### **Weekly Bible Study Schedule**

• **Tuesday, April 5, 7 AM in HHR #5**

**-Breakfast Provided**

• **Tuesday, April 5, 8:30 PM in Room #225**

**(Sen. Bob Dixon's office)**

*During the Legislative Session of 2010, we walked through the first two chapters of the Apostle Paul's letter to the church at Colossae. It is our plan to finish the book of Colossians by the end of the 2011 Legislative Session. Even if you were not here last year, we will get you caught up so the studies and discussion will be beneficial.*

The first half of Paul's letter is filled with incredible teachings concerning the person of Jesus Christ and what He has done on behalf of men. But the question remains: What does this have to do with me or anyone else whoever lived? Does the truth about Jesus have any impact on anyone--especially those who claim to follow Him?

The second half of Paul's letter answers that question. The person and work of Jesus Christ is the foundation and reason for the believer's mindset and actions. It has everything to do with what a follower of Christ is to live and think. It is not just some abstract theology that has nothing to bear upon the everyday life of people. Rather, it "must pervade a man's whole nature. It affects not only his practical conduct, but his intellectual conceptions also."<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

In the last study, we examined the transitional passage of Colossians 3:1-4 where the author, the Apostle Paul, taught that the followers of Jesus are to keep their eyes and set their mind on the things above rather than things here on this earth. This was due to their new position in Christ Jesus. They were once dead in their sins, but now have been spiritually resurrected with the physical resurrection of Jesus.

Over the next eleven verses, Paul fleshed out the changed life of a follower of Jesus. In this passage, he discussed what needs to be taken off and that which needs to be put on.

The imagery Paul presented is similar to today when a baseball player goes to a new team. The player does not go onto the field with the uniform of the old team nor does he talk about the games of the old team when he is at a post-game news conference of the new team. He has on the new team's uniform, promotes the new team's aspirations and goals, and discusses the new team's game in the post-game interview.

When one has gone from spiritual death to spiritual life, there will be drastic changes in one's behavior, one's thoughts and one's outlook. When one has his or her eyes and mind on things above, things on earth will be quite different.

*Colossians 3:5-9 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. <sup>6</sup>For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, <sup>7</sup>and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. <sup>8</sup>But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices...*

In this study, we will examine at the things that the Apostle commands to take off and the reasoning behind it. In future studies, we will examine the things one should put on--one does not want to walk around with no "spiritual clothing" on.

### THE THINGS OF THE OLD SELF

The Apostle Paul made two lists of old things which need to be discarded. The first of which is found in verse 5. He starts with outward, visible actions and then moves toward the inward attitudes from which the evil actions began.

The first of the lists have the common thread of sexual sin--immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire. These, in unison, cover the any type of unlawful sexual activities and the inward drive to participate in them. In essence, this is any sexual conduct outside of the marriage covenant of a

### CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS & STAFF: TUESDAYS @ 7AM, HEARING ROOM #5

LEGISLATORS: TUESDAYS @ 8:30PM, ROOM #225

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE: THURSDAYS @ 7AM, BROADWAY BUILDING 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR CAFETERIA

PROCLAIMING THE GREATNESS AND GLORY OF GOD IN THE MISSOURI STATE CAPITOL

## Something Old, Something New -Pt. 1 (Colossians 3:5-9)

man and woman. This can be seen in other New Testament passages such as the Jerusalem church instructing Gentile believers to abstain from sexual activity outside the marriage bond (Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25; cf. Ephesians 5:3, 1 Thessalonians 4:3). Paul was appalled by the accepted, but horrible sexual behavior of one of the members of the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 5:1) and he instructed them to put that man out and to stay far away from the sin (1 Corinthians 6:18).

The Apostle also instructed the Colossian believers to put away greed. This inappropriate desire for more is a driving force behind sexual indulgences. It is an attitude that propels people to want more and more and more of anything. James said greed is also the source of fights and quarrels amongst the brethren (James 4:2).

Concerning greed, Paul says it “amounts to idolatry” (3:5). There are two

### Other Lists of Virtues and Vices

Romans 1:29-32  
1 Corinthians 5:9-11  
1 Corinthians 6:9-10  
Galatians 5:19-23  
Philippians 4:8  
1 Timothy 3:1-13  
Titus 1:5-9  
1 Peter 4:3

quick explanations. First, if one constantly desires more and more and cannot get enough, who is being served? And what is ultimately being worshipped? It is not God; it is one’s own body and desires. Secondly, when one gets and gets and gets, who receives the thanksgiving? The covetous, greedy man does not show gratitude and contentment with God’s blessing; he

continues to want more and more. These are the essence of idolatry.

Friend, do not be deceived. When people sin, at its foundation, they are doing what they please rather than what pleases God—who is the Creator and Sovereign of the Universe. In short, they are worshipping themselves instead of God, and that is idolatry. Stephen Charnock wrote:

All sin is founded in a secret atheism... All the wicked inclinations in the heart ... are sparks from this latent fire; the language of every one of these is, “I would be a Lord to myself, and would not have a God superior to me.” ... In sins of omission we own not God, in neglecting to perform what he enjoins; in sins of commission we set up some lust in the place of God, and pay to that the homage which is due to our Maker.... We deny his sovereignty when we violate his laws ... Every sin invades the rights of God, and strips him of one or other of his perfections.... Every sin is a kind of cursing God in the heart; an aim at the destruction of the being of God; not actually, but virtually ... A man in every sin aims to set up his own will as his rule, and his own glory as the end of his actions against the will and glory of God.<sup>2</sup>

The second short list in verses 8 & 9 includes:

- “anger” -- which is the wrath of man which does nothing to achieve the righteousness of God (James 1:19-20). It includes a bitterness that can take root in one’s heart.

- “wrath” -- this is the “hot anger”; the outburst of wrath expressed usually moved by emotion.
- “malice” -- a general term for moral evil. Lightfoot explains that it is “the vicious nature which is bent on doing harm to others.”<sup>3</sup>
- “slander” -- many times coming from a heart filled with anger, wrath and malice. This includes disparaging remarks, lies, insults and other verbal barbs directed at others; of which none should come from the mouth of a believer (James 3:10).
- “abusive speech” -- another term in reference to a person’s speech (which reflects his or her attitude) toward another. This refers to obscene, derogatory speech intended to hurt.
- “lies” -- the words and action involved in deception and falsehood. “Lying characterizes Satan (John 8:44) and not God (Titus 1:2). Believers are to imitate their Heavenly Father and thus, speak those things which are truth.

*Ephesians 4:25, 29 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.*

### THE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE OLD THINGS

Paul paints two word pictures in response to these old things. The first response which deals with the sexual sins and greed is “deadly”. The New American Standard Bible translates the first part of verse 5 as “consider the members of your earthly bodies as dead”; it could literally be translated “start killing the earthly members”. This is not a mandate to literally start gauging out eyes or inflicting self-pain on oneself. It is a command to consider these actions and attitudes as dead and having no bondage on the follower of Jesus.

Since a follower of Jesus has been made alive in Jesus, one is to consider oneself dead to the old evil actions and desires. Those were the things found in the old life which was spiritually dead and separated from God (3:7). But things are now new--a new life, a new position, a new hope. Thus, the old is gone, dead, no longer enslaving. Paul teaches this same thing in Romans 6:11, *Even so consider yourself to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

The second word picture of Paul is found in verse 8, “put them all aside...” and followed up in verse 9 “you laid aside the old self...” Just like taking off dirty clothes and laying them in the basket, Paul says to take off the sinful practices, and put on a new practice of godliness (Colossians 3:10-15).

## Something Old, Something New -Pt. 1 (Colossians 3:5-9)

*Ephesians 5:3-5 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

The two pictures paint the same theme: the follower of Jesus Christ is to totally turn his or her back on the sinful practices of his or her spiritually dead life. One has now been raised with Christ to a life of holiness. A child of God is to be holy because the Father is holy (1 Peter 1:14-19). Sin, while it will still rear its ugly head in the life of the believer, is not to be the lifestyle or pattern of the one who follows after Jesus.

### THE REASONS TO PUT OFF THE OLD THINGS

The “therefore” in verse 5 gives one reason for the things Paul commands the believer. The followers of Jesus are to seek the “things above” and to set their mind on them. They have died and been raised with Christ; who is their life and with whom they will be revealed in glory.

Thus, with those things in mind, the believers are not to set their minds, nor their actions, upon the things of earth. It is these “earthly” things that Paul instructs to “kill” and “put aside”. Believers have a new life--which will be seen in their new lifestyle, actions and attitudes.

Another reason for laying aside these old sinful practices and mindsets is it because of these things that God’s wrath is going to poured out upon the “sons of disobedience” (3:6).

The wrath of God is not a pleasant subject with many people today--even to those in the “church”. And while the Bible reveals that God is love (1 John 4:8) and has shown much mercy, compassion, grace and patience, it also reveals that He is a God of wrath. A.W. Pink defines God’s attribute of wrath as “His eternal detestation of all unrighteousness. It is the displeasure and indignation of Divine equity against evil. It is the holiness of God stirred into activity against sin.”<sup>4</sup>

Scripture reveals God’s wrath poured out on those who were disobedient in the Old Testament: on Adam & Eve & the serpent (Genesis 3), on the whole world (Genesis 6), on Sodom & Gomorrah (Genesis 19), on Egypt (Exodus 2-14), on the nations that were expelled from the Promised Land, and on the Israelites as they lived in disobedience. It also reveals that God’s wrath will be poured out on those in the future who continue

to live in disobedience (Matthew 13:41-42; Galatians 5:16-21; Revelation 20:11-15).

God is described as a “consuming fire”—jealous for the honor and glory of His Name (cf. Hebrews 12:28-29).

*Deuteronomy 4:23-24 So watch yourselves, that you do not forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which the LORD your God has commanded you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.*

The most vivid expression of God’s wrath is seen as it is poured out on His Son on the cross (Romans 3:21-26; 5:6-11). He was not killed because HE lived in disobedience, but because WE lived in disobedience. He died so that our “certificate of debt” may be canceled (Colossians 2:13-14). He had no debt, thus no need to pay—so He paid for ours. His death appeased the wrath of God which was due unto us.

Paul gave a great reminder to the Christians in Rome and it serves as a great reminder to all believers. He wrote, *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God* (Romans 6:9-11).

### CONCLUSION

As a child of God, one does not live as a child of disobedience or a child of Satan. They are to live in the way that resembles his or her Father. Thus they put aside the things of old which corrupt and separate and bring about the righteous wrath of God. They now have new lives, focused upon the things above where their king reigns; lives which reflect the One who has qualified, rescued transferred, and redeemed them (Colossians 1:12-14).

Friend, God can forgive you of your sins--are you interested?

<sup>1</sup> J.B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (1879; reprint, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959), 209.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God* (reprint, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1979), 1:93-94.

<sup>3</sup> Lightfoot, 214.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1975), 83.