

A devotional to accompany the sermon series.

Colossians 3:1-17 ¹So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, ³ for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your^[a] life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.

⁷ These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. ⁸ But now you must get rid of all such things: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹ In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, enslaved and free, but Christ is all and in all!

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Consider committing Colossians 3:1-17, to memory. You will find it valuable for meditation and even transformation.

Sunday, August 3, 2025

Please join us for worship today. You are welcome at the 9 AM traditional service or the 10:30 AM praise service. Live streaming for both is available on YouTube, FPCAmbler.org and Facebook. Childcare is available for both services.

We begin a new sermon series entitled "Memorize This!" today. The scripture text is Colossians 3:1-17. Consider reading this passage before worship. Do these verses bring conviction to any area of your life?



This week's devotions were written by Leslie Wise

Monday, August 4, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:1-17, Romans 6:4

Reflect: Some days I stand in front of my closet and declare that I have nothing to wear. After trying on and considering many selections, they all end up lying in a heap on the bed. Even though I am blessed to have a closet full of clothes, there are some days when none of them seem to fit the occasion. After reading through Colossian 3:1-17, I had the same reaction as I did to my closet; the putting on, taking off, laying aside, considering, leaving behind. Where to begin? I decided to lay aside a dress that I've had for many years. It takes up space in the closet. Why do I hold on to it? Comfort? Identity? Memories? Fear? Protection? There are many reasons why we hold onto things. Think about what you may be holding onto that is not benefiting you anymore. It takes courage to let go of the old in order to make way for "newness of life".

Prayer: Father, we cling to so many things. We just can't seem to let them go, even though they may be detrimental to us. Deliver us from the fear of being parted from comfort; to what has always been. Help us to experience the joy of change.

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

Read: Colossians 2:3-15 Colossian 3: 4

Reflect: Acting upon the verses considered for this sermon series seemed like an impossible task. I try to change but how easily I slip back into my old ways. I found hope when reading Colossians 2: 13-15. My "certificate of debt consisting of the decrees against me has been cancelled and nailed to a cross". We've been forgiven and are now free. When going through any rehab process, we can fall but get up and keep walking in the right direction. Like Paul, we have not attained the end result yet. When Christ is revealed, only then will we be revealed "in glory." Our final apparel will be fit for a feast with the Savior. The new self we have yearned for will be made perfectly manifest. Until then, we take two steps forward and one step back rejoicing along the way.

Prayer: Jesus, we still live as though we need to earn what You freely give. Help us not to be discouraged by the "one step back". Thank you for being a loving Shepherd who brings us to green pasture.

Wednesday, August 6, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:1 Psalm 40:2

Reflect: How do I keep seeking things that are above when the muck and mire of earthly living exerts its downward pull? Like quicksand, the more I push against it, the deeper I sink. Some days, it's all I can do to keep my head above the miry pit; just trying to breathe. I decided to check into how to survive quicksand; not practical in my given situation! My first impulse would be to call for help but it's usually the last thing I do. My mantra is "I can get myself out of this all by myself." It doesn't usually work, so the sinking continues. I'd rather sink than admit failure. Pride is not a helpful deliverer! How many of us live in the "quiet desperation" that Thoreau wrote about? We bear so much "needless pain" alone. God promises to deliver us from the miry pit but often uses others to help pull us free.

Prayer: Jesus, give us the grace and courage to ask for help when we need it. Pride can silence our hearts and lips. Help us to realize that when we ask for aid, glory comes to call.

Thursday, August 7, 2025

Read: Colossians 3: 3 Acts 16: 16-31

Reflect: Colossians is known as one of the "prison epistles". Paul wrote Colossians while on house arrest in Rome. Paul was given the freedom to write and receive visitors but was physically chained to a guard at all times. I'm so easily discouraged by some of physical and mental restrictions I face. I delude myself into thinking how much more I could do, if my gas tank wasn't always near empty. We are all constrained in some way while on earth. Prisons come in many forms whether selfmade, circumstance or situations over which we have little or no control. We are all chained to our old man. Paul's limitation became a great strength. He did not let prison deter him. Because of this, we read these verses over one thousand years later in Colossians. The Bible doesn't say what impact Paul had on the Praetorian guard. Try to imagine what the guard's reactions may have been.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for no matter what we face in life, our life is hidden in you. The cross could not contain You; prison could not contain Paul. A song broke through a jail cell and brought freedom in its wake.

Friday, August 8, 2025

Read: Matthew 9:10

Reflect: In writing past devotions, I came to the realization that Jesus was a neighborhood guy. He had parents, siblings, a job. He enjoyed a meal with others, often being found reclining at table. As the Bible stated, "He dwelt among us". Colossians 3:1 reads that Christ is now seated at the right hand of God. But Jesus, in spite of the royal throne upon which he now sits, does not forget where He came from. He never became too good to come to back to the neighborhood of our earthly lives. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. Make room for Him where You live, set an extra place setting, invite Him to the stoop. Jesus will arrive from glory to the streets, setting His majesty by.

Prayer: Father, help us to see where we've become "too good" for others. Give us discernment as to where we hold prejudice. Help us to give back what we've been given so generously.

This week's devotions were written by Debra Lee

Monday, August 11, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:5-8

Reflect: As followers of Jesus, we are called to renounce sinful desires and behaviors rooted in our earthly, fallen nature, and grow into spiritual maturity with Godly characteristics of selfless love for others, self-control, patience, faithfulness, kindness, goodness, gentleness, the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23. We can only do this through the power of Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit. When I find I'm cycling on thoughts that feed negative emotions and lead to habitual, sinful speech, actions and attitudes that don't reflect God's character, I can turn to the Lord for forgiveness, help and renewal.

Prayer: Lord, show me when I fall short in my attitudes and behaviors so that I can be renewed by the power of Your Holy Spirit and reflect your Image through Jesus Christ.

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:5

Reflect: Paul tells Colossian believers to put to death the world's sinful patterns including sexual immorality, covetousness, greed, idolatry and excessive desire for material things. Doing so involves decisive spiritual action on our part to subdue the sinful inclinations of our fallen nature. Do my words and attitudes reflect Christ? When they don't, do I recognize this, repent, and surrender them to God and pray for His strength and guidance?

Prayer: Lord, help me when I struggle with anger, harmful speech, behaviors and attitudes. Make me aware of my sin and give me the desire to change to be the new creation you call me to be in Christ. Thank you for your forgiveness and mercy as I repent of sin, and for the strength to overcome sin and live in a way that honors You.

Wednesday, August 13, 2025

Read: Colossians 3: 6

Reflect: This verse is a wakeup call to take sin seriously and live in obedience to God. Paul says that it is on account of sin that God's wrath is coming. God's wrath is not like human anger. It is a holy response to evil. Sin has real consequences. Often, Christians are uncomfortable with the idea of God's wrath, focusing only on His love. God's Love and Justice go together. If sin wasn't punished there wouldn't be justice. Sin leads to judgment in earthly reality and the final judgement at the end of time. We are encouraged to understand the radical transformation that takes place when we come to Christ. Having been delivered by Jesus from sin reinforces the necessity of living differently as new creatures.

Prayer: Lord, I desire to overcome my sinful habits and to be transformed into my identity in Christ. I can only do this through You as You change and renew me through Jesus.

Thursday, August 14, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:7

Reflect: This verse reminds us that following Jesus means leaving the past behind. We often struggle with old habits or feel ashamed of old sin. Intellectually we accept that we are new creatures in Christ but find it difficult to internalize that the past does not define us, and that sin is no longer our master. Salvation is not only about forgiveness, but also transformation. We can participate in the process of sanctification by acknowledging and surrendering our old habits to God. Practical steps to rid myself of sinful behaviors and attitudes is to acknowledge my sin and turn to God in prayer for forgiveness, the strength to turn away from sin and to transform.

Prayer: Lord, I know you offer grace and power to change and protect me from the harm that sin causes. Thank you for Your forgiveness and infinite patience with me as I surrender myself to You to grow in faith and maturity, through Jesus and in His Name.

Friday, August 15, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:8

Reflect: This verse instructs believers to put away certain negative behaviors, specifically anger (simmering resentment); wrath (uncontrolled outburst of temper); malice (desire to harm others); slander (speaking harmful things to damage someone's reputation); and filthy language (obscene or disrespectful speech). These sins harm relationships in our family, community and the world at large, and contradict the character of God. We can replace sin with Christ-like attributes including forgiveness, unconditional love, self-control, integrity, patience, among other qualities seen as evidence of a transformed life in accordance with God's will and reflecting God's character through the work of the Holy Spirit in our life.

Prayer: Lord, Thank you for your unfailing Love. Show me your ways, teach me your paths, and guide me in Your Truth. Give me understanding to obey you with all my heart. I ask that by the power of Your Spirit, Christ may dwell in me to do your will and reflect You in all I do.

This week's devotions were written by Marilyn Lobley

Monday, August 25, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:12-13

Reflection:

Chosen and Loved How wonderful to know that no matter what our worldly relationships are like, we are unconditionally loved by God. God handcrafted each one of us into a precious masterpiece, each of us unique—one-of-a-kind. Paul dwells a lot on this concept of being chosen and loved, but with this gift of grace comes responsibility---to use the gifts God has given us to grow into the people God created us to be.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, by your mercy and grace you have blessed us with your unconditional love. Help us to trust this truth, especially when we don't feel particularly loveable. In this culture that often fosters "sameness," help us to recognize our uniqueness and use the gifts you have given us to glorify you and to better this world. Amen

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:12-13

Reflection:

Clothe Yourselves This metaphor of clothing signifies the importance of actively putting on these virtues of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Faith involves participation. In Ezekiel 36:26 God says, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you." Through the power of God's Spirit, we are moved to dress ourselves in these virtues—all qualities that marked the earthly life of Jesus.

Prayer:

Good and gracious God, by the power of your Holy Spirit clothe us in righteousness, as willing participants in our faith. May our lives reflect your love, so that this world may be bound together in harmony. Amen

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:12-13

Reflection:

Characteristics of a Believer What does God expect of us? Is going to church, reading our Bible, teaching Sunday School, serving on a committee enough? Though there is nothing wrong with these things, notice that none of these things are listed in this scripture passage. We are called to be imitators of Christ, which involves our inner transformation. Without this our "works" are for naught. When we were created, God put a yearning in us for Himself. This longing for God cannot be filled with busyness, but only by the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. Transformation is a journey and we thank God that we do not walk this path alone. Wherever two or three are gathered in God's name, God is present.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, guide our steps in the way of Jesus. Help us to be imitators of your love, putting others ahead of ourselves and living a life of gratitude and humility. Amen

Thursday, August 28, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:12-13

Reflection:

Bearing with One Another Bearing with one another! That sounds like a daunting task and often it is. When we are wronged, we want retribution. When someone's lifestyle or beliefs clash with ours, we look on them with judgment. But God asks us to see the other person through his eyes, someone created in God's image whom he loves and cares for just as much as he loves and cares for us. As Jesus walked in our shoes, we are called upon to walk in the shoes of those with whom we differ. We may not always be able to offer OUR love, but we can offer them GOD's love and by so doing become more human, as Christ showed us through his humanity.

Prayer:

Dear God, by the power of your Holy Spirit, grant us the ability to meet others where they are rather than where we think they should be. Clothe us with understanding and compassion for those whose life's journey differs from ours and help us to see your reflection in them.

Friday, August 29, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:12-13

Reflect:

Forgive as Christ Forgave "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." These words, spoken by Jesus as he hung from the cross, are the ultimate example of God's forgiving love. Living in a culture that fosters a "me first" attitude often makes forgiveness hard, yet God commands it of us. It's so easy to feel victimized when we fail to see both sides of an issue. When we are wronged, we often seek retribution, but forgiveness is most important for the victim, because failure to forgive leads to resentment, anger, and depression that colors the victim's life.

Prayer:

Father, forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Grant us the grace to see the weakness in ourselves as well as in others. Help us to let go of the hurt and anger we feel and replace it with your love and understanding. By your grace give us the power that lies in the humility to see the truth in ourselves as you see the truth in us. Amen

This week's devotions were written by Beth Hedges, a missionary we support who grew up at FPCA and now serves in Armenia.

Monday, September 1, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:9-11 (focus on verse 9)

Reflect: Paul continues on from verse 8 as he adds lying to the list of things that followers of Jesus should not be doing to each other. Remember that this is about setting our minds of things above (3:1). Lying breaks trust and love. If we lie to each other then how can we trust and love each other? Even little white lies break trust. But as new people in Christ we put lying in the "dirty clothes pile."

Prayer: God, you are true, your words are true, and your ways are true. Help me to speak the truth in love to others. "Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely" (Ps 139:4). Spirit help me to examine my words and to not lie but speak and live new life in Christ.

Song: "Where Can I Go - Psalm 139" | Ellie Holcomb | OFFICIAL LYRIC VIDEO

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eb2mpkdhRHM

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:9-11 (Focus on verse 9b-10)

Reflect: We usually take off clothes daily and the next morning we put on new ones. Are there "old clothes" (old behaviors or thinking) that you want to remove in Christ? Take a moment to visualize them as a smelly, dirty shirt that you are throwing away. Then visualize putting on a nice, clean, and nice smelling shirt which the Holy Spirit's gives you.

Prayer: Father, Son and Spirit, help me to put off what belongs to the earthly nature. May these things be "put to death" (3:4) and may I be rid of them! Clothe me in your character, thinking and behaviors. Cleanse me and I will be whiter than snow (Ps. 51:7b). I take on new things in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Song: Moving Forward by Ricardo Sanchez with lyrics

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRxLgPbjsDM&list=RDNRxLgPbjsDM&start radio=1

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:9-11 (Focus on verse 10b)

Reflect: Look out the window at God's Creation. We see the diversity of creation: sky, sun, tree, grass, birds, even colors and textures. The Creator created an environment that supports diverse life. Here Paul says it is our character and behaviors that are being renewed in the image of God. That means into God's goodness, mercy, love and more. What image of God do you want to be renewed in you?

Prayer: Creator of all things, the stars, and the electrons, you are good in all ways. You created humans to reflect your image as good rulers, loving protectors and grace givers. Forgive me for the ways I have not been renewed in the knowledge of You. Help me to grow in what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy according to Your character. (Phil 4:8)

Video: Eric Ludy - He is (The Names of God) – (Return of Majesty Trilogy)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NscHCa395-M

Thursday, September 4, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:9-11 (Focus on verse 11)

Reflect: Cultures give status to particular ethnicities, looks, backgrounds and other criteria while others are looked down on. But in God's Kingdom it is different. It does not matter your ethnic or religious background; you can reflect God's image. Whether you are a "privileged" group or an "unprivileged" group, you can reflect Christ. Whether you have a low economic status or a high one does not matter in Christ.

Prayer: God, you do not judge us like society or media does. If I am rich or poor, young, or old, majority or minority I can come and be with Christ and in Christ. Help me to recognize the ways that I make judgements and condemnations based on society rather than Your standards. May Your Church reflect You welcome of everyone as part of Your Family.

Song: Mavis Staples "In Christ There Is No East or West"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szqu7LuNuhY&list=RDszqu7LuNuhY&start_radio=1

Friday, September 5, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:9-11 (review all)

Reflect: I am a new creation in Christ. This changes what I say and what I do. This changes my identity and how I see myself. This changes how I see others. Unfortunately, I am often far from living out this new creation. But God is at work, bringing knowledge and renewal. Thanks be to Christ has made this possible!

Prayer: Holy Trinity, I am new in you. I am <u>being</u> made new in you. Someday I will be <u>completely</u> changed when Jesus returns and makes over all of creation. Continue to show me what it means to this new creation in Christ. Transform me more and more into the image of you, my Creator.

Song: Colossians 3:10-11 [Lyric Video] - The Bible Song

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6L9aZAC2s68&list=RD6L9aZAC2s68&start_radio=1

This week's devotions were written by Debi Ferrarello

Monday, September 1, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:15-17

Reflect: This portion of Scripture appears during the season of Christmas in the lectionary. At Christmastime, we think of the gift love born to us as baby Jesus. We can almost hear the angels singing, "Peace on earth, good will toward men." We speak of "Christmas spirit" and encourage one another to live with the same joy, peace, wonder, and gratitude all year long. How beautiful to put these verses in the context of Christmas in the heat of August! We are reminded to tap into that same sense of wonder, joy, and love and to sing together with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. So come, let us adore him. God and sinners are reconciled. We are, after all, one body.

Prayer: Dear God, because you are full of mercy and grace toward all you have made, may your peace rule in our hearts. May your Word live in us and through us always that we may be transformed into people of love.

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:15

Reflect: As I write this, I am not *feeling* the peace of Christ rule in my heart. I am caught up in personal conundrums and political angst well beyond my control. My heart aches for the brokenness of the world. How about you? And yet, this letter was written to believers of diverse backgrounds, each with their own set of personal issues and concerns. The "you" in this verse is not singular, but *plural*, as in all y'all. So, in the midst of political polarization and unholy anger that has poisoned even the Church, we are to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts and recognize that in Christ, we are one. Let's reflect on our connectedness and be *thankful*. Jesus himself put together an unlikely band of brothers---a tax collector serving the occupiers Roman government and a zealot for independence for example. With our hearts fixed on Jesus, and his love for wretched sinners (like me) let peace rule in our hearts.

Prayer: Lord God, I confess that I often allow outrage, not your peace, to rule in my heart. Help me to love the body of Christ of which I am grateful to be a part, celebrating diversity in the family of believers with true thanksgiving. May we "put on love" day by day, hour by hour, with humility and gratitude.

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:16a

Reflect: How do we let the word of Christ dwell in us richly? We need to know the word of Christ. We need to let it in, not just skim over words on a page. Psalm 119:11 says, "I have hidden your word in my heart..." We can let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, hidden in your hearts, by knowing the Scriptures and learning what they mean so they readily come to mind. I think there is also beautiful mystery in these few words. We remember that Jesus is the Word (John 1:1) and that He himself promises to abide, or dwell in us (John 15:4). This is no meager dwelling, but a new, expansive way of thinking, loving, being. A transformation. When the word of Christ dwells in us, our focus changes. Our priorities shift. This dwelling shapes us into people of gratitude, humility, and love. Let's meditate on the Word and commit it to our hearts to become God's people of love together.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your living Word. We invite you into our hearts that you may live in us and through us. Help us to learn from you and surrender our hearts to yours. May we hide your word in our hearts.

Thursday, September 4, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:16

Reflect: The word of God is described as "living and active" (Hebrews 4:12) and as we dwell in Christ and he in us, we surrender to his wisdom which is humble and always loving. What a wonderful way to teach! Did you know that the Psalms were meant to be sung? Some of them are full of joy and praise. Others serve to remind us that we can be completely honest with God about our feelings. Always though, we can have gratitude when we abide in Jesus and let him dwell in us. Gratitude that the God through whom all things were made and hold together dwells in us, calls his people a masterpiece (Eph 2:10), and does his magnificent kingdom work in and through us. Does that make you want to sing?!

Prayer: Oh Jesus, live in me and through me, I pray. Help me to surrender to you each day and hour that I may live with true wisdom and sacrificial love. Thank you for dwelling in me, even me. I am filled with gratitude and my heart sings.

Friday, September 5, 2025

Read: Colossians 3:17

Reflect: This is an exhortation to spend the day with Jesus...every single day. To rise in the morning giving thanks. To do dishes and email and commutes giving thanks. To use words that bless and point to God with gratitude. To do our work, however humble or mighty, for Jesus himself, giving thanks to God for every breath. Suddenly, there is meaning in the mundane, purpose in what seemed pointless, and opportunity in every encounter. Whatever we do, in word or deed, let us do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus with great thanksgiving.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we give you thanks for the great mystery that you live in us and us in you. May we give thanks for the very air we breathe and see every encounter as the opportunity to love that it is. We give thanks to God the Father through Jesus our brother, friend, and savior.

