

Epistle of Paul to the Colossians VII

(Chapter 3)

Focusing on Growing and Overcoming

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Colossians 3:1: “Therefore, if you have been raised... [out of that watery grave] ... together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth... [and all that it stands for] ...For you have died... [to yourself and this world] ...and your life... [your spiritual life and eternal destiny] ...has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory” (vs 1-4)—through the power of the Spirit of Christ in you, rather than subjecting yourselves to the regimen of the philosophies of men and the worship of fallen angels, which all refers back then to Col. 2.

Verse 5: “Therefore, put to death your members, which *are* on earth: sexual immorality... [promiscuity] ...uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires... [the unbridled mental sexual obsessions of your imagination] ...and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, among whom you also once walked, when you were living in these things. But now, you should also put off... [strip away, cast aside and renounce] ... all *these* things: wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth” (vs 5-8)—eliminate these degrading character traits and habits.

All of this shows that the inner battle of growing and overcoming Christians is not perfect. As a matter of fact the real truth is *with God’s Spirit in you*, the longer God’s Spirit is in you, *you understand how evil that human nature really is*. You come to the same point that the Apostle Paul did in:

Romans 7:19—Paul said: “For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me. Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members. O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death? I think

God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ....” (vs 19-25)—that he will be saved out of this.

So, all of these things show the character traits and things, as a result of human nature and the pull of the flesh and what we need to overcome.

Colossians 3:9: “Do not lie to one another, *seeing that* you have put off... [and fully renounced] ...the old man... [your old self that was buried in the watery grave of baptism] ...together with his deeds... [behavior and way of living] ...put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him” (vs 9-10). That is very important for us to understand.

We will see what the Apostle Paul was saying about being renewed within. It is continuously being renewed, continuously growing, changing and overcoming.

2-Corinthians 4:14: “Knowing that He Who raised the Lord Jesus *from the dead* shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present *us* with you. For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the abounding grace may cause the thanksgiving of many to overflow unto the glory of God. For this reason, we do not lose heart...” (vs 14-16).

- Paul is talking about the ministers
- Paul is talking about the brethren
- Paul then talks about his own difficulties

and we’ll see how he puts that in proper perspective.

“...but if our outward man is being brought to decay, yet, the inward *man* is being renewed day-by-day” (v 16). You can tie that back in with ‘give us this day our daily bread’ (Matt. 6). And that means ‘help us today, God, with everything that we do, keep us from the evil one today, Oh, Lord.’

Verse 17: “For the momentary lightness of our tribulation...” Paul is talking about the trials that he went through, the trials you are going through, the trials I am going through, whatever they may be, whatever your circumstances are. Paul says that compared to eternal life, it is:

“...is working out for us an immeasurably greater *and* everlasting fullness of glory; while we consider not the things *that are* seen, but the things *that are* not seen. For the things *that are* seen *are* temporary; but the things *that are* not seen *are* eternal” (vs 17-18).

That is what we must keep our hearts and minds focused on continually. That's why Paul emphasizes here in Col. 3, it is going to make overcoming easier, because you are focusing on the eternal spiritual things of God while you are overcoming and putting out the physical things and the character problems that you have. You can overcome them with a far more effective way and means *if you're focusing in on what God can do for you.*

Colossians 3:11: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision..."—no physical barriers or qualifications, which is very important. Remember what Jesus told the Jews when they said 'Why, we are in bondage to no one, we are Abraham's seed'; and Jesus said, 'Well, if you were Abraham's children, then you would do the works of Abraham, you seek to kill Me and that Abraham did not do.'

Remember what John the Baptist said to the Pharisees when they came out wanting to be baptized, he said, 'Don't come and tell me that you are Abraham's seed because God, from these stones, can raise up children to Abraham.' So, there is no physical barrier even though we are still physical in the flesh. The way God is dealing with us and qualifying us for the Kingdom of God is not going to be Jews first, Greeks second, it's not going to be circumcision first and uncircumcision second.

That is what he writes here, v 11: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* all things... [of Christian character and enlightenment] ...and in all."

In other words, *if Christ is in you* that is the important thing. I know with all of us, we look around us and we are a weak and motley crew. But that is okay, God can use us, we will keep our heart and mind on Christ.

Verse 12: "Put on then..."—clothing yourselves with Godly, Christian character, with the fullness of God's way, even His love and attitude, in your mind.

"...as *the* elect... [selected ones] ...of God, Holy and beloved..." (v 12)—and cherished ones in Christ. I might just add there, so when all else fails and everyone else fails, ***remember that God loves you!***

Develop these attributes of God: "...deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering" (v 12).

Let's go back and let's look at some Scriptures on how we can do all of these things, and let's see how we are to put out these things and put

on Christ. Christ is in us and it is the earnest of God's Holy Spirit, which is the promise of eternal life. Remember that God, Who promises, will fully deliver, because *God cannot lie!* That is what Paul wrote of Abraham: he said that Abraham was fully persuaded of *what God had said He would do!* So now, with Christ *in* us, we can overcome.

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh." That is the key thing you cannot overcome carnal mindedness with carnal mindedness, it won't work. It's just like you can't bail the ship out if you're pouring water in it. You can't put the fire out if you're throwing gasoline on it.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal... [we know they are spiritual] ...but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds... [the strongest hold that there is in the world for you is your mind] ...casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ" (vs 4-5). If Christ is *in* you, you can do it. That is the tremendous thing.

Let's just remember the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. The Pharisee came and he was doing all these things by carnal means. He said, 'God, I thank you, I am not like others' (Luke 18). He was looking out and judging around and comparing himself with others. It says in Col. 3 that those who compare themselves among themselves are not wise.

Verse 12: "But we dare not join ranks with or compare ourselves with those who are commending themselves; for those who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, have no understanding."

Why? *Because, in comparing yourself among yourselves, then you are not comparing yourself to God!* And that is what happened with Job. Job was comparing himself with himself and what he was doing and others were doing—and yes, in the flesh he was perfect, but compared to God, what was he? Well you read about his repentance (Job 42).

Verse 5: "...bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ." The Apostle Paul gives a little more detailed information on how to do that in Col. 3; how that *we are to put out* these things but ***put on Christ, put Christ in!*** Remember the whole theme of the book is: ***Christ in you, the hope of glory!***

Let's and see how Phil. 2 parallels right along with what Paul was writing there. Notice one of the things that is so vitally important, if you are concentrating on these things. As Paul wrote in the book of Philippians you are not going to be just overloaded and burdened down with all the carnality.

- God will give you His Spirit
- God will give you His love
- God will give you His contentment

Philippians 2:1: "Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the Spirit*..." Showing that it all has to come with the Holy Spirit in us, and by this Holy Spirit, the power of God, we fellowship with God. This is really the most important thing.

You can have social clubs, you can have people gathering together, yes, you can have churches gather together. When I was up in the Northwest I learned, to my dismay that many of the brethren of God are just coming together to fellowship because it is a social club. Well, people can get together and have 'do-goodism' and 'feel good,' and pat each other on the back and all this sort of thing, but *that is not the fellowship with the Spirit of God*, with Jesus Christ and God the Father.

1-John 1:3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ."

That's where it has to be: in prayer, in study, in yielding to God, in letting God's Spirit work with you. Then you have that fellowship of the Spirit.

Verse 4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full." That is what God wants us to have.

I'll tell you one thing, with all the disasters going on, with all the troubles going on, all the hand wringing in the world is not going to help, because we are in such a situation that now God's hand is going to be against those who are evil and we are not to participate in the world nor the things that they do. We just need to ask God to help us, guide us, protect us and spare us.

Philippians 2:1: "...if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the Spirit*, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions"—that your feelings are true and come from within, from the very depths of your innermost being.

Verse 2: "Fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind..." We are again going to see how that

Paul is very inspiring in these Epistles of Eph., Phil. and Col. and focuses in on Christ in you.

"...having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory..." (vs 2-3). How does strife and vainglory come? *It comes by comparing yourself among yourselves* and those that do so are not wise.

"...but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus" (vs 3-5).

I tell you, that is so profound. I was studying the first chapter of the Gospel of John again, and there is so much there, that even after having done the study through the whole Gospel of John, I feel like now, we are just ready to start studying it again what is there, every word is loaded.

Here is the mind that Christ had, He didn't have vainglory, He didn't have self-righteousness, ***He was righteous because of love, He was righteous because He was God!***

Verse 6 "Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [and that means actually existing in the form of God] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross" (vs 6-8) When Paul says, 'let this mind be in you,' that is what he is talking about.

Colossians 3:13: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you... [blotting out, forgiving and forgetting all your sins, transgressions and offences against Him] ... so also you *should* forgive."

If you're looking around judging and comparing then you are not going to be forgiving, you are not going to be understanding. We are to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves,' that is correct. We don't have to be dupes and stupid, but we are to be *forbearing* one another.

Let's see what happens when judgment reigns supreme. Unfortunately, brethren, that is how too many Churches of God are run. They are run on *judgment*. It is amazing! I heard a sermon by a so-called 'leading' evangelist and all he did was just *up himself*: how many rich people he knew, all the physical things and comparing himself among himself and others. It was unreal; I couldn't believe

it. All that judging does is create an atmosphere of self-righteousness and picky-ness that *destroys true love and real Christian attitude* led by God's Spirit.

Matt. 6:33 shows that the message of Christ was the same as the message of Paul, was the same as the message of John, and was the same as the message of Peter and so forth.

Matthew 6:33: "But *as for* you, seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness..." Jesus' message was exactly the same. That is the first thing we are to do.

"...and all these things shall be added to you... [the physical things that you have need of] ...Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow; for tomorrow shall take care of the *things* of itself" (vs 33-34).

That doesn't mean don't plan, but it means don't go ahead and rely on your plans that they are absolutely going to be done the way you thought.

"...Sufficient for the day *is* the evil of that day" (v 34). There are going to be enough difficulties and problems come along on a daily basis that you just cannot rely on all of the physical plans and things that you are going to do. I call your attention to the earthquake in Southern California. Everybody's plans were suddenly changed, and the evil of the thing at hand was overwhelming. But out of all that suffering, what did it do?

- crime went down 80%
- people helped one another
- people went out and did the things that they needed to do
- everybody, in amazement, said, 'well, I wonder why we can't do this all the time'

When the disasters come, when the evil comes, then people realize their inadequacies. Out of all of this evil we can look around and boo-hoo and complain and all this sort of thing, but how many people are going to begin to wonder *if* God exists, 'I don't feel adequate to myself any longer.' Out of that, *if* there is repentance, God can make good happen.

Matthew 7:1: "Do not condemn *others*, so that you yourself will not be condemned." I tell you one thing, isn't it true when you hear someone judging someone else and running them into the ground, do you think that that person would stand for anyone talking about them in that way? Here 'judge' means *judge not to condemnation*. There is a kind of judgment that we are to do. And it is far different, far, far different than people generally suppose.

John 7:24: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." If there is any kind of judgment we need it is *righteous judgment*. In the world and with business affairs, from day to day we need:

- judgment
- wisdom
- understanding

otherwise you are going to get clobbered.

In Matt. 7 what He is talking about is the interpersonal relationship between people and brethren so that you are not going around judging each other and you end up like the Pharisee who, through all the physical means—fasting, tithing, not committing adultery, not exhorting, which things are required—he wasn't repentant. He said, 'and that publican over there.' The publican repented and said, 'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.' And Jesus said, 'I tell you that man went down to his house justified rather than the other.' So, there is a perfect example of the kind of judgment that Jesus is telling us to not do, that is *judge unto criticism and condemnation*.

Matthew 7:2: "For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged... [living law] ...and with what measure you mete out, it shall be measured again to you. Now, why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye, but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye? Or how will you say to your brother, "Allow *me* to remove the sliver from your eye"; and behold, the beam *is* in your *own* eye? *You hypocrite*, first cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then you shall see clearly to remove the sliver from your brother's eye" (vs 2-5).

Gal. 6 shows us how we are to do this. It doesn't mean that we don't make judgments; it means that *when we do, we consider ourselves*. We will see what the Apostle Paul wrote and said to amplify what Jesus gave there in Matt. 7.

Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in some offense, **you who are spiritual**... [the opposite of self-righteous, those who have the mind that we have just been talking about] ...restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted." Not only tempted because of sin but tempted because of judgment and condemnation.

Now let's look at the opposite teaching of this, and Matt. 18 is something that is really profound and very important and what we need with each other—toward each other—and part of our Christian living that needs to be emphasized, in many cases it has not been emphasized in the way that it needs to.

Matthew 18:21: “Then Peter came to Him *and* said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?’” That seems like quite a lot. Have you ever had anyone sin directly against you seven times in a day? *Well, probably not!* Peter thought he going above and beyond by saying seven times.

Verse 22: “Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven.’”—which is 490; 70x7. This is showing the difference between the perspective of forgiveness from a human point of view and the perspective of forgiveness from a Godly point of view.

Go back and look at all of the different ones in the Old Testament, and as I mentioned before, Ahab is one of my favorite characters in the Bible, not for the evil he did, but *to show the quickness of the forgiveness of God* when he did sin. God sent Elijah there to judge him, condemn him and throw his flesh outside the wall, and the dogs were going to eat it and lick the blood of Jezebel. Ahab repented and walked tenderly. Then Elijah was on his way back home and God said, ‘*Now behold my servant Ahab, see how he walks tenderly.*’

So, that is an amplification here of the seven times seventy. This is the kind of forgiveness we need among each other. But I’ll tell you one thing that is so important, if you are concentrating on Christ in you, loving God and growing and overcoming, each one of us, individually, I tell you what, there are going to be so few offences that you are not going to need the 490 times a day to handle the difficulties with your brothers or your sisters.

Then He gave this parable, v 23: “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man, a *certain* king, who would take account with his servants. And after he began to reckon, there was brought to him one debtor who owed *him* ten thousand talents” (vs 23-24).

That is an awful lot, we’ll just liken that say to \$50-million, just to round it out. It is somewhere close to that in today’s money.

Verse 25: “But since he did not have *anything* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.”

Now let’s understand that you couldn’t, in over a hundred thousand lifetimes, repay that if you were sold into indentured servitude to repay the loan. This is likened unto our debt against God. You can’t pay that back as a debt. In other words, *you cannot, by your works, repay God for the sins of your life.*

God can forgive you that through Jesus Christ. Then that puts a different obligation upon *us*. It also shows the price God paid for sin. It also shows the value of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Of what value are you going to put on the sacrifice of Christ—Who was God—Who became flesh, so that He could die to pay for our sins? There is not very much you can do to compare that in a matter of money or monetary remuneration or wealth or whatever.

Verse 26: “Because of this, the servant fell down...” I guess, if you owed that amount of money and someone said, ‘You are going to pay every last dime.’

“...*and* worshiped him, saying, ‘Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ And being moved with compassion, the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt” (vs 26-27).

Still, in forgiving the debt that is really something only God can forgive. You see how quickly, in this example, that the lord of the servant was moved with compassion and loosed him and forgave him the debt. Being loosed, we are loosed from the bondage of sin. It has the same exact meaning and connotation there. You can tie that in with Rom. 6.

This shows what we do in our pompous arrogance and self-righteousness if we don’t have the mind of Christ in us.

Verse 28: “Then that servant went out *and* found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred silver coins... [that’s like saying one hundred dollars] ...and after seizing him, he choked *him*, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe.’ As a result, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’” (vs 28-29).

Isn’t that how people do? They focus in sometimes, on the most minute, picayune little thing and just become incensed and inflamed and bitter and run for the throat.

Verse 30: “But he would not *listen*; instead, he went and cast him into prison, until he should pay the amount that he owed.” How do we cast people in prison? Well, we literally don’t run down and throw them in the jail—do we? *No!*

- we cast them in the prison of estranged fellowship
- we won’t talk with them
- we won’t look at them
- we won’t recognize them
- we won’t be kind to them
- we’ll turn our head and be snippy and

gossip behind their back and all that sort of thing

So, in a sense, when you have this *unforgiving attitude toward brethren*, then you end up in a situation that you are literally putting them in prison. Many times, they don't even know what is going on. All of us have experienced that!

Verse 31: "Now, when his fellow servants saw the things *that* had taken place, they were greatly distressed; and they went to their lord *and* related all that had taken place. Then his lord called him *and* said to him, 'You wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me. Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?' And in anger, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him. Likewise... [in the same manner] ...shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each *of* you does not forgive his brother's offenses from the heart" (vs 31-35).

Just remember the words of Jesus when He was on the cross dying, He said, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Remember the words of Stephen when he was being stoned to death, 'O Lord, lay not this to their charge.' So, it shows the tremendous obligation we have in love and forgiveness and so forth and in being able to follow through as the Apostle Paul said in forgiving one another.

Colossians 3:13: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; **even as Christ forgave you...**"—blotting out, forgiving and forgetting all you sins, transgressions and offences against Him.

The New Covenant: our sins and iniquities, **He will blot out and 'remember no more'** (Heb. 10:17)

"...so also you *should forgive*. And above all these things *put on* love.... [that Godly, Divine love, which is the bond of cohesiveness that unites us all together in spiritual maturity] ... which is *the* bond of perfection" (vs 13-14).

Now let's learn a really tremendous lesson:

- the more that we study on love
- the more that we think on it
- the more that we try and practice it
- the more that God gives us
- the more that we realize how much we lack it

I tell you what, if you prayed and asked God: 'Oh, help me to have more love.' Don't be too surprised

at some of the circumstances you find yourself in so that you may show that *love*.

1-John 4:10: "In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God..." We are not going to come and claim any great spiritual initiation on our part or any goodness from ourselves.

"...rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins.... [notice how John writes very similar to how Paul wrote] ...Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another" (vs 10-11).

Verse 16: "And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him." That is what we want brethren; that is how God wants it to be with every one of us.

Verse 17: "By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love *of God* is perfected within us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment..." See how that is juxtaposition there with judgment. Love, forgiveness and mercy compared to judgment.

"...because even as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in the love *of God*; rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love *of God*" (vs 17-18).

If that is the struggle that you are going through, just go to God and say; 'O God, I don't know, just help me and guide me and grant me your Spirit and just grant me your love and the understanding.' And it's going to be a lifelong pursuit, it is not going to come like some sort of funnel being put in the top of your head and God is miraculously going to pour it in. It won't happen that way.

Verse 19: "We love Him because He loved us first."

- God is the One Who *calls* us
- God is the One Who *gives* us of His Spirit
- God is the One Who *gives* us of His love and understanding
- God is the One Who *works* the character in us

Here is a real, lifelong lesson: **God is always going to give you someone somewhere that is going to be most difficult to love!**

Verse 20 "If anyone says, 'I love God'... [it's like the Pharisee there in Luke 18] ...**and hates his brother, he is a liar....**"

1-John 2:9: "Anyone who claims *that* he is

in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes” (vs 9-11).

Brethren, that is what is happening to too many of the people of God, with all of these false doctrines coming in and the things that are happening. I just cannot believe the things the different ones are telling me that is happening in the Churches of God. It comes down to pitting one against the other; judging one against the other, and they are all beginning to walk in darkness and go back into this world.

1-John 4:20: “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar. **For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?**”

This is the test, this is perhaps the whole fulcrum, the crux of our Christian existence: *not only are we to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul and being*—which we are; *and love our neighbors as ourselves*—which we are, ***but we are to love each other as Christ loves us!***

Verse 21: “And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother.”

I would just have to say, brethren, that at the Feast of Tabernacles, this year, I think we had that kind of spirit and attitude that God gave to us. We are not going to stand up and take any credit and say hurray for us, because God is the One Who has to give it to us, and that is something we need to continually keep in mind.

That is why I put it this way in bringing to bear and focusing in on this verse, Colossians 3:14: “And above all these things *put on* love... [that Godly, Divine love] ...which is *the* bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts... [peace and rulership] ...to which you were called into one body, and be thankful” (vs 14-15)—*reflecting the preciousness of your calling!* That’s a whole mouthful in itself there.

Let’s review a couple of things concerning this. Because Christ has given us the kind of peace, which the world cannot give. The very words of Jesus Christ, and He is the One Who made the way for the peace. He is the One Who paved the way because of His life.

John 14:27: “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give *it* to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it fear.”

That’s the kind of peace we need. Christ is there, advocating for us. Christ is there, interceding for us. We don’t have the hostility toward God because we have peace through Jesus Christ. Now, you go back and read the introduction to every one of the Epistles of the Apostle Paul and you will see that he has, ‘grace and peace be to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.’ And that is the reason that he is putting it there.

John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him...” That means *reach down and select him*. That’s why we are to have the love of God and the love of each other because God is the One Who has done it.

“...and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’... [Christ in you, God the Father in you] ...everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me” (vs 44-45).

In other words, in this calling that God gives, we have not emphasized the fact that you must ***hear and answer*** that call and ***learn*** of the Father, and that is because we are coming to Christ. That is really something when we understand it. That’s why *we* have peace. That’s why in all the troubles and difficulties that we see in the world, ***we can have peace through Christ!*** It doesn’t mean we don’t have compassion. It doesn’t mean we don’t understand their suffering. It doesn’t mean any of those things. It means that *we have peace with God the Father!* We are *in* Christ and *in* God the Father! That is what is so profound and what is so important.

Notes Rom. 8:1-13 showing how then we overcome the whole carnality of our humanness through Christ, Who came in the likeness of sinful flesh and has sent His Spirit to be with us.

Colossians 3:16: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you...”

- that’s why *study* is important
- that’s why *prayer* is important
- that’s why *meditation* is important
- that’s why *communicating* with each other is important, and so forth

“...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” (v 16). That’s really, really quite a thing and it expands into:

Verse 17: “And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed... [any deed or endeavor] ...*do* all in *the* name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him.”

Now let’s amplify vs 16-17. What is the basic message of God? This is basic and this is profound. This is something that we continuously grow in the knowledge and understanding of, that we continually experience the profound spiritual Truth of this verse:

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...” Christ was willing to go, because Christ divested Himself of His Divinity and took upon Him human nature, took upon Him the form of a human being as, not only the form but was a human being in every aspect as we are (Phil. 2).

“...so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life” (v 16). That is the profound message that we need to focus in on, but not just that verse, this is the overview, all of the rest of the love of God and the New Testament and the Bible, Old Testament, New Testament combined, come together to create this.

Verse 17: “For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit... [ties in with Col. 3 so marvelously] ...because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death” (vs 1-2).

Just like loosing that man from his debt, you have been *freed from the law of sin and death*.

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the law to do... [that is just the principle of the law itself] ...in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, **condemned sin in the flesh.**”

That’s why there is no condemnation to us, brethren. We need not go around with a guilty conscience and being smitten down because of things like that. Go to Christ; unburden yourself through Christ:

- through prayer
- through forgiveness
- through yielding to God

He did not come into the world to condemn the world, but that it might be saved.

John 3:18: “The one who believes **in** Him...” Greek ‘eis’: a profound and deep belief, out from yourself and into Christ and from Christ back into you.

“...is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged... [God doesn’t condemn them, they condemn themselves] ...because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed; but the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (vs 18-21).

From vs 16 thru 21 is the whole message of the Gospel. The rest of it is expanded out from there. So, if you have this mind and this heart and you are doing these things and in yielding to God, that is the message to focus in on.

There is something else that we do in fellowshipping with each other, in coming together and understanding God’s Way and God’s Truth. I ran a little survey one time doing Mal. 3:16 in as many books of the Bible as possible, I just did it for a study and it’s amazing how frequently they come up and hit right on and coordinate with John 3:16.

Malachi 3:16: “Then those fearing the LORD spoke together, *each* man to his neighbor. And the LORD listened and heard...”

- God listens to us
- God answers our prayers
- God, with His Spirit in us, has given us eternal life

so that we can grow and change and overcome!

“...And a Book of Remembrance was written before Him for those who feared the LORD, and for those who thought upon His name. ‘And they shall be Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘in the day that I will make up My own special jewels...’” (vs 16-17).

God is going to give us a crown of life, and God is going to give us eternal life and a place in New Jerusalem. Didn’t Jesus say: ‘I go to prepare a place for you’? *Yes, indeed!* When New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven, there is going to be your name written where you are going to be, your abode, your dwelling place in New Jerusalem.

God says: “...‘And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him’” (v 17). That’s a tremendous thing, brethren, when it says:

'let the message of God dwell richly in you, deeply in you.' That is what it is talking about.

Verse 18: "Then you shall return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between the one who serves God, and the one who does not serve Him." That's tremendous, those are really fantastic and marvelous and wonderful things.

Now let's concentrate on where it says singing psalms in your heart. We are going to spend a little time in the book of Psalms; there is quite a bit here that we can learn and know and understand.

Psalms 95:1: "O come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise... [that's for all of us who can't sing] ...to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise to Him with psalms" (vs 1-2).

So, you can see how the Apostle Paul expanded that when he comes to Col. 3 and how we are to grow and how we are to change and how we are to overcome.

Verse 3: "For the LORD is a great God and a great King above all gods." Part of the reason we get down and discouraged is because we don't look to the greatness of God and the power of His might.

Notice what David wrote here, v 4: "In His hand are the depths of the earth; the peaks of the mountains are also His. The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand..." (vs 4-7). We have a hymn in the hymnal, which is taken right out of Psalms 95.

"...Today, if you would but hearken to His voice: 'Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways"; to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest.'" (vs 7-11). Put in your notes, right there, Heb. 4 showing that that also applies to us.

Psalms 96:1: "O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless His name; proclaim His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all people, for the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods, for all the gods of the nations are idols; but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are

before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary" (vs 1-6). That's where God wants us to be brethren right there with Him in the sanctuary:

- seeing Him
- serving Him
- loving Him
- understanding Him

Verse 7: Ascribe to the LORD, O you kindreds of the people; give to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; bring an offering and come into His courts. O worship the LORD in the beauty of Holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth" (vs 7-9).

Brethren, worshipping God "...in the beauty of Holiness..." is having the Spirit of God *in* you, in an earnest desire and loving attitude

- when you are praying to God
- when you are studying His Word
- when you are yielding to Him
- when you are in the very deep most inner part of your heart and your mind and your emotions
- when you are coming to God to pray

—you are all alone before God and with His Spirit and you worship and praise Him that is *the beauty of Holiness*, with Christ *in you*, that you can offer back to God the Father for all of His greatness and all of His love and all of His goodness.

Psalms 145:1: "I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You; and I will praise Your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable" (vs 1-3).

That's an absolutely fantastic way to come before God. Brethren, may we learn that! That's why, at the Feast, I said that if you are having difficulty in prayer and in study, go through some of these Psalms and then go pray to God.

Verse 7: "They shall pour forth the memory of Your great goodness and shall sing of Your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. All Your works shall praise You, O LORD; and Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom and talk of Your power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom" (vs 7-12).

Let's turn to another aspect of God's works. The greatest work that God is doing is not the creation of the physical things. The greatest work

that Christ is doing is *in us*, by the power of the Holy Spirit through God the Father, is Christ in you. This ties right in exactly. I don't know if the Apostle Paul was back there at Psa. 145 when he was thinking and writing here:

Ephesians 2:8: "For **by grace you have been saved through faith**, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is **the gift of God***, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship..." (vs 8-10).

Brethren, *we* are the greatest work of God. *We*, in growing and overcoming—which is Christ in us—*are His workmanship*.

"...created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (v 10).

So when he brings out here in Psa. 145, when it talks about all of His glorious works, brethren, that is talking about all of those in whom is the Spirit of God that God is working with to create His Family. Can there be any greater creation than His Family? God can create stars and suns and universes and all the physical things that there is. But:

- Is there someone who loves God?
- Is there someone who seeks God?
- Is there someone who is really striving after God?

That is the greatest creation!

Psalms 145:13: "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom..." It is talking about when Christ is on the earth and on in the fulfillment of Rev. 21 & 22.

"...and Your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD upholds all who fall and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. The LORD is righteous in all His ways and loving in all His works. The LORD is near unto all who call upon Him, unto all who call upon Him in Truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them. The LORD watches over all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy. My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD, and let all flesh bless His Holy name forever and ever" (vs 13-21). Brethren, that's a tremendous thing.

That's why the Apostle Paul wants us to really focus in on growing and overcoming with Christ in us; to put in the character of Christ, the Spirit of God, which He can give if we love God and

yield to Him and love each other the way that He wants us to.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Colossians 3:1-8
- 2) Romans 7:19-25
- 3) Colossians 3:9-10
- 4) 2 Corinthians 4:14-18
- 5) Colossians 3:11-12
- 6) 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, 12, 5
- 7) Philippians 2:1
- 8) 1 John 1:3-4
- 9) Philippians 2:1-8
- 10) Colossians 3:13
- 11) Matthew 6:33-34
- 12) Matthew 7:1
- 13) John 7:24
- 14) Matthew 7:2-5
- 15) Galatians 6:1
- 16) Matthew 18:21-35
- 17) Colossians 3:13-14
- 18) 1 John 4:10-11, 16-20
- 19) 1 John 2:9-11
- 20) 1 John 4:20-21
- 21) Colossians 3:14-15
- 22) John 14:27
- 23) John 6:44-45
- 24) Colossians 3:16-17
- 25) John 3:16-17
- 26) Romans 8:1-3
- 27) John 3:18-21
- 28) Malachi 3:16-18
- 29) Psalm 95:1-11
- 30) Psalm 96:1-9
- 31) Psalm 145:1-3, 7-12
- 32) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 33) Psalm 145:13-21

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- Matthew 6
- Luke 18
- Job 42
- Romans 6
- Hebrews 10:17
- Romans 8:1-13
- Hebrews 4
- Revelation 21 & 22

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Epistle to the Colossians #7
Focusing on Growing and Overcoming
Colossians 3

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