

Colossians 3:12-17

12 Once the description of Jews alone (Deuteronomy 7:6 - chosen, holy, and beloved) now applied to all who believe. Compassionate hearts - before Christianity there was little mercy for suffering animals or people, no help for the elderly, or the handicapped. We can say that most of the compassion in the world for all needy, most of what has been accomplished in meeting these needs has been done in the name of Jesus.

Kindness *chrestotes*- the act of those who consider the good of others as dear as their own.

Humility *tapeinophrosune* - Some say it was a virtue created by Christianity. It is based on being a created being, and that all men are made in God's image. Classical Greek did not have the word.

Gentleness/meekness *protes* - strength under control - angry when he should be but not when he shouldn't.

Patience *makrothumia* - never losing patience with fellow man. Not allowing bitterness or wrath! A reflection of divine patience; forbearing and forgiving. We saw the word in the opening prayer. It is what we are asking God to instill in us.

13 "Bearing with one another" is included in *makrothumia* but reiterated to emphasize the need to not write people off. Forgiveness is mandatory because Jesus forgave us. That does not mean you invite the wolf to do more damage, but that you do not maintain a bitter spirit against a person and continue to hope for their salvation or restoration. (Matthew 6:14-15)

14 The most outer cloak which keeps all the other virtues in place "Love", the first fruit of the Spirit. God is love. (1John 2:9-11)

15 Let peace be the "umpire" in your heart. Paul drew on a sports term to help them understand how the Holy Spirit works within us. If there is a dispute in your heart, ask yourself which side gives a sense of peace? Jesus should be the One whom we allow to decide between the conflicting emotions and choice of direction in our heart. When we do, we have a sense of peace. When we make the wrong decision, there is a lack of peace. This is one God given inner sense that can help us determine God's will. The church is called to peace individually and corporately. We should do everything possible to maintain that peace. A thankful attitude helps create an atmosphere of peace. If we are in Christ, we have plenty to be thankful for even in the most difficult circumstances of life. (Philippians 4:7)

16 Let the Word dwell richly in you! How we need to take up this instruction in our day. Our teaching should be from the Word, for then it is in all wisdom! Don't mimic what is

popular in the world. Stick with the unchanging Word of God. Memorize it. Meditate on it. Apply it. See the sermon – Treasure Chests (Psalm 119:9,11) The Word will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Word.

Sing! It is imperative. Jews of that day would sometimes spend all night in singing. The church inherited the love for praising God in music. The earliest descriptions of the church include song, usually songs of gratitude. (Ephesians 5:19) Singing songs of gratitude can lift your spirit and change a discouraged mood. Singing is something that affects us deeply. I have seen Alzheimer patients that didn't know their children sing every word of a hymn. Sing!

17 To do or say something in Jesus' name is to do it at His direction, under His authority. Whatever we do or say, we should consider if Jesus would sanction it. Is the act or words done with a heart grateful to Him? (1Corinthians 10:31) Does it bring Him glory?

Questions

- 1 In what way is verse 12 and 13 the same as Romans 13:14?
- 2 How does love keep all the other virtues in place?
- 3 Do you practice verse 15? Do you have an illustration from your life?
- 4 Do you practice verse 16? If not, what should change in your life?
- 5 Is verse 17 your motivation? If not, how can it become so?