

3. **Let's KNOW and LIVE the Word of God** – In today's world all of us can easily be overwhelmed with media – TV, internet, books, newspapers, phones, etc! Such things can easily squeeze the Word of God out of our lives! Therefore, to KNOW and LIVE the Word of God takes strong, consistent, self-discipline – *but the benefits are important and the sacrifices will be worth it!*

- a. ¹⁶ **“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly** [literally – *The Word of Christ you let dwell in you richly; “you let dwell” is an imperative, a command*] **as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”** So how are you responding to God's loving command? *God wants to bless you and others through you* **through your faithful use of His Holy Word!**
- b. ¹⁷ **“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”** Can we sin in the name of the Lord Jesus? No, but unfortunately *some people use His name as they sin*. But to properly *proceed in Jesus' name* is to proceed according to the Word of God!

Conclusion: We were lost BUT our Savior: ♥ has come, ♥ has completed His Work, and ♥ will come again! Therefore, *today and every day*, let us REMEMBER and REFLECT who God has made us to be in **the Christ of Christmas!**

And all God's people said: *Amen!*

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God's Holy Children

Live for Christ!

Based on Colossians 3:12-17 NIV

1st Sunday after Christmas – 2010
December 26 → 10:00

Introduction: Dear friends, both on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, *I hope you had an excellent celebration of the Christ!* He should always be the focus of Christmas and hopefully the focus of our daily Christian lives!

In today's epistle reading from Colossians chapter 3, God is speaking to us through Paul so that we:

- **Remember who we are in Christ** – even though all people are sinners, there is – *in reality* – a huge difference between ↑those who are in Christ and ↓those who currently are not!
- **Reflect who we are in Christ** – God has taken extraordinary action to forgive our sins and make us holy; therefore, He wants our differences to show to others – *like salt that preserves from getting rotten and light that guides the way to the truth and salvation!*
- **Know and live the Word of God** – as Christians our lives are not our own; *Jesus is now our Lord!* Therefore, *we want to please Him and bless others!* We know such things will happen BEST when we know and live God's Word!

1. **Let's REMEMBER Who We Are In Christ** – ^{NIV} Colossians 3:12 “Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved...” The Bible speaks of God taking action to choose us:

- a. When: ^{NAS} Ephesians 1:4 “God the Father, chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world...”
- b. How many: ^{NAS} Matthew 22:14 “For many are called, but few are chosen.”
- c. Other names of the chosen: ^{NAS} Revelation 17:14 “Ten kings, will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

Therefore, in Christ, God has → loved us, → chosen us, → called us, → made us holy, and → kept us faithful! **We are so blessed in Jesus the Christ!**

2. **Let's REFLECT Who We Are In Christ** – As → a hammer drives nails and → a sweater keeps a person warm, so *those who are in Christ should reflect Christ!* Paul told us how in today's epistle reading:

- a. ^{12b} “...clothe yourselves with [*literally – you put on bowels / a heart of; in other words, from the INSIDE to the OUTSIDE of your being, proceed with*] compassion [*pity, mercy – care about others*], kindness [*goodness – take action according to the needs of others*], humility [*consider others to be more important than yourself*], gentleness [*be courteous – not a bull in a china shop*] and patience [*be long-suffering, confident that God will carry you through.*”

b. ¹³ “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” *So hard and yet so important! So how has the Lord forgiven us?*

i. He offered the GIFT of His forgiveness to us:

1. Before we acknowledged our sin!
2. Before we were sorry for our sin!
3. Before we asked for His forgiveness!

ii. The forgiveness He offers:

1. Is dependent on Him, *not us!*
2. Is full, *not partial!*
3. Is free in Christ, *never earned!*

- So WHY should we fully forgive all others? *Because we have been fully forgiven!*
- So WHEN should we forgive others? *Right away!*
- So HOW can we? *Powered by the Spirit and guided by the Word!*

c. ¹⁴ “And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” To put on love is to ✦ stop being selfish, ✦ notice the needs of others, and ✦ take appropriate action!

d. ¹⁵ “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” The living and dying of the Christ has brought peace – *a good relationship* – between us and God! Therefore, *as such peace rules in our hearts*, we will do everything we can to be in a good relationship with others (Romans 12:18)!