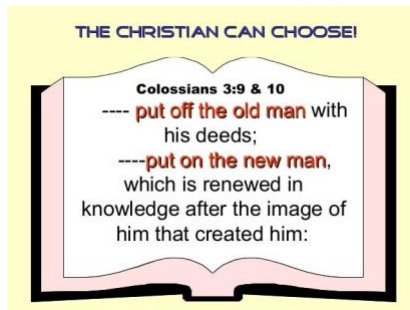


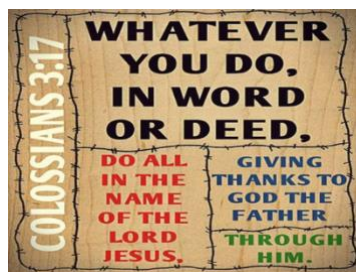


¹If then you were raised with Christ, **seek those things** which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ²**Set your mind** on things above, not on things on the earth. ³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

⁵Therefore **put to death** your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

⁸But now you yourselves are to **put off all** these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹**Do not lie** to one another, since you have **put off the old man with his deeds**, ¹⁰and have **put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him**, ¹¹where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

¹²Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **put on** tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. ¹⁴But above all these things **put on love**, which is the bond of perfection. ¹⁵And **let the peace of God rule** in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and **be thankful**. ¹⁶**Let the word of Christ dwell** in you 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. ¹⁷And whatever you do in word or deed, **do all in the name** of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks** to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3:1-17, NKJV).



I know many of you are not grammarians, but there are at least 14 imperatives in what I just read. An imperative is an ORDER. Paul is ordering believers and calling them to action if they are to "walk in Christ." I want to say right at the start, that these are orders that we do NOT DO TO EARN OUR SALVATION, but we do these things because of who we are in Christ. This is conduct becoming a Christian, and it is conduct that pleases the Lord. These actions can only be done successfully through the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. When we came to Jesus, we were redeemed from

the slave market of sin, but the reality is that from time to time we choose to move back into the slave quarters instead of walking free in Christ. That is when we are walking in the flesh (sin). The spiritual reality is that we are no longer slaves to sin, but when we are not walking in the Spirit, we are going back where we do not belong.

Verses three and four remind us that we are buried in Christ. That means that our identity has been replaced by a new identity, His identity. When I was a little boy, my dad taught me who I was as a McMullen, and while doing so, he taught me what was expected of me as a McMullen. This gave me guidelines/instructions to live my life. When we are buried in Christ, our old identity is gone, and we have a new identity. After coming to Jesus in faith, we are sons and daughters of God.

As royalty, our father the King, expects us to live out that identity in our daily lives. When we think, say, or do things contrary to our identity, that is sin. This is when we choose to temporarily walk away from what God intends for us. When we do this, we temporarily break fellowship with the Lord. This is what the Apostle John is speaking about in 1 John. John says, *"⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (1 John 1:9-10, NKJV).*

Some of you have asked me, "Why would we have to ask for forgiveness when all of our sins have been paid for at the cross." If you speak languages other than English, this is rather simple to understand. When you sin, it is not a change in your permanent STANDING but it is a change in your temporary STATE. You are still a child of God, but you are walking in disobedience and this creates a distance between you and God. You have moved. He has not moved. It has been summarized, that "our standing is what we are in Christ. Our state is what we are in ourselves. Our standing is the free gift of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our state represents our response to God's grace."¹

In Spanish (as is in most Indo-European languages) there are two verbs for "to be." One is "ser" which means "to be" in the sense of your **permanent 'standing.'** An example of this would be to say: "soy hombre," meaning "I am a man." Regardless of what contemporary society may say, I am a man and there is nothing I can do to change that. Then there is another "to be" which is "estar." Most people in Texas have heard the question "Como está usted?" It means "how are you" (what state are you in right now). That is a question as to your **temporary state** of being. An answer might be, "Estoy

¹ MacDonald, W. (1995). [*Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*](#). (A. Farstad, Ed.) (p. 2008). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

enfermo" which means "I am sick." That is something that changes. I may or may not get better.

When you became a Christian, your **STANDING IS RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE GOD**. But when you do sin (and you will), then your **TEMPORARY STATE IS SINFUL**. That is what John is talking about. You are in fact rebelling against your true identity in Christ. Confession is not for God's benefit, but for ours. The purpose of 1 John 1:9, is to provide a mechanism (so to speak) for you to "reboot" and "rebound;" getting back into the game. It is a means and a method for you to confess (agree) with God that what you've thought, said, or done is outside of who you are in Christ (a new creation in Christ). You have sinned, and He promises to "cleanse you from all unrighteousness." Your sins were paid for at the cross, but you and I inhibit our sweet fellowship when we engage in sinful behavior. In confessing, He assures us that we are forgiven and are back in sweet fellowship with Him. He cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

When I was little and I would do something wrong, my dad would relate it to rules that McMullens follow. It didn't change my STATUS AS HIS SON, but it did change my FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM AS HIS SON. He still loved me and I was still his son, but I had removed myself from close fellowship with him. Dad never moved. I moved, and when I asked him to forgive me, he did. And this brought ME back to where HE was. I think 1 John 1:9 is exactly that. It is about **positional holiness** versus **practical holiness**. I am positionally holy before God, but sometimes I don't practice that holiness. We are talking about **standing** versus **state of being**. I just thought I'd mention this to clarify what I believe this says, and how it helps us to stay in sweet fellowship as we do (or fail to do) what these imperatives tell us.

Last Sunday we were told to avoid legalism and spiritualism because they have no power to change our lives. Legalism was creeping into the Church in Colossae. It is rule-making and rule-keeping in order to somehow attempt to achieve righteousness. Spiritualism was a movement entering the Church in which some claimed to have secrets to being more holy; the idea that others were missing something in their walk with Christ.

One Wednesday, we began with verses one through four and discussed "seeking things above and setting our minds on things above." It is difficult to stay focused on what is above. In my prayer time so often when I begin to pray, my mind will suddenly jump to something else. I will find myself creating a "to do" list in my mind, or thinking about anything except the conversation I am having with the Lord. On Wednesday, I told you about several methods that I use that might help you in your focus. One for me was listening to praise music while I enter into a conversation with God about my day. What you set your mind on often has to do with what you are treasuring. Are you treasuring

things of the world or things of God? Jesus said, ²¹ *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* (Matthew 6:21, NKJV).

I would add that where your heart is, there will your treasure be also. Put your heart on things above. Set your mind on those things.

- Seek the things that are above
- Set your mind on the things that are above
- Put to death therefore what is earthly
- Put off the old self
- Put on the new self
- Let peace rule
- Let the Word of Christ dwell
- Do everything in the Name of the Lord
- Giving thanks

In the following verses, Paul gives us specifics on HOW TO LIVE OUT OUR LIVES. I've provided a list to the left that shows some of the actions that we are commanded to take. These are present imperatives. And as mentioned, these actions can ONLY BE FRUITFUL THROUGH THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. ²

On Wednesday night we looked closely at the beginning of this chapter in which Paul urged the Church to "SET your mind on heavenly things." He's telling us what to do. We talked about how that is a choice, and it is something that takes a certain degree of discipline. We can't do these things in our flesh, but we can do all of these things through the power of the Holy Spirit. With the Spirit, they will give life. If you are an unbeliever and you try to do these things without the power of the Holy Spirit, it can only end in defeat.

In verse 3, we were told that we died. Here we are told to **put to death** our **members which are on the earth**. In these two verses we have a very clear illustration of the difference between a believer's standing and state. His standing is that he has died. His state should be that of reckoning himself dead to sin by putting **to death** his **members which are on the earth**. Our standing is what we are in Christ. Our state is what we are in ourselves. Our standing is the free gift of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our state represents our response to God's grace.

Here we should also notice the difference between law and grace. God does not say, "If you live a life of freedom from sin, then I will give you a position of death with Christ." That would be law. Our position would depend on our own efforts, and needless to say, no one would ever attain that position. Instead of that, God says: "I freely give to all who believe on the Lord Jesus a position of favor in My sight. Now go out and live a life that is consistent with such a high calling." That is grace!³

² Graphic taken from Calvary Chapel Ontario video Thru-the-Bible

³ Ibid

In verses eight and nine, Paul tells us, “**put off all** these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹ **Do not lie** to one another, since you have **put off the old** man with his deeds,”. These are speaking to how we deal with others around us. Don’t be angry. Don’t be filled with wrath. Don’t be a person who gets angry too easily. Don’t have malice in your heart toward others. That means wish the best for others even if they have been the persons who have hurt you. Blasphemy means slander. That means talking about people. We all know what filthy language is. Filthy language doesn’t belong in the mouth of a child of the King. James the brother of Jesus says, “¹⁰ *Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.* ¹¹ *Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?*”. (James 3:10-11, NKJV).

Don’t engage in these things! PUT OFF ALL of these things (the natural man that lived under the bondage of sin), and PUT ON the new nature. PUT ON the new creation (Christ-like nature that dwells in us by the Holy Spirit). So, walk “in Christ.” That means you put off the sinful nature.

Paul is reminding us that when we met Jesus and received Him as our Savior, WE RECEIVED A NEW IDENTITY. There was a change of identity, and now he is exhorting us to BRING OUR BEHAVIOR INTO CONSISTENCY WITH OUR NEW IDENTITY. Let your walk reflect what Jesus has already done in your life. Do this by PUTTING OFF THE SINFUL NATURE. Walk it out.

Verse 11 just says that we all now have one new identity. These distinctions don’t exist in heaven. All of us are the same before God. I am fond of saying, “There is one race; and that’s the human race. We are all just different shades of tan.” I told someone this last week that if they find someone who is “white,” then they’re looking at a dead person because there are no “white” people. There are only shades of tan. The sooner we see each other as one race, the faster we’ll come to seeing people as God sees them.

In verses 12, 13, and 14, Paul tells us how to live out the Christian life. Forgive as you have been forgiven. If you tell me, “Pastor, I just can’t forgive.” I’ll agree because YOU CAN’T FORGIVE, but Christ in you CAN FORGIVE. So focus on that. Then he says to PUT ON LOVE. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Let the peace of Christ govern over all of your dealings with others. I sometimes tell people, “DON’T MAKE EVERYTHING A BIG DEAL.” That is part of letting the peace of Christ rule in your heart. Paul continues in these verses to exhort us as to how we can have this life in Christ.

¹⁶ **Let the word of Christ dwell** in you 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. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, **do all in the name** of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks** to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3:16-17, NKJV).

Then in verse 16, Paul tells us to let the Word of Christ dwell in our hearts richly. Let his peace and His Word inhabit your heart abundantly, to overflowing. Look at this sweet picture of how we're to live together. We are to pour our wisdom into each other. We are to teach and be teachable. We are to encourage one another with "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." I love how Paul is telling us that THERE IS NO CHRISTIAN MUSIC, ONLY CHRISTIAN LYRICS. God loves all kinds of music. We are to refresh each other with psalms (praises), and hymns (traditional songs) and spiritual songs (new praise music).

We are to sing with grace in our hearts. And Paul sums it all up saying, "WHATEVER YOU DO IN WORD OR DEED, DO IT ALL IN THE NAME OF JESUS." That means let your thoughts, efforts, words, and deeds all be done in the power of Jesus and for the glory of Jesus. We do this all with thanksgiving.



identity in Christ.

As I've often said, thankful people are joyful people. People who are not thankful are never joyful. This whole lesson can be summed up in the hymn that we've sung today. Take my life and let it be, consecrated Lord to Thee. This is the heart of Christian living. This is how we are walking out our new

So, what is the BIG IDEA? **PUT OFF THE OLD NATURE – PUT ON THE NEW NATURE
WALK IT OUT BY FAITH AND NOT IN THE FLESH – IT HAS BEEN DONE-NOW WALK IT
OUT.**

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.