



Leader Guide

Don't Just Go to Church—Be the Church

October 22, 2023

Main Passage: Colossians 3:12-17

Theological Theme

The book of Colossians begins with sweeping statements about the glory and sovereignty of God. Believers proclaim God's glory by living their lives committed to Him through the local church.

Introduction

- ? What are the greatest hindrances in our community to regular church engagement, even for those who claim to follow Christ?
- ? How can competing desires and activities distract a family or individual from proper commitment to Christ and the local church? Why is this topic often contentious?

1. Let Peace Rule (Colossians 3:12-15)

Throughout the New Testament, the Christian life is pictured as the putting off the old self and putting on the new self—sort of like changing from old dirty clothes to new clothes. Colossians 3:12 begins with that same image. In Galatians 5:19-23, Paul described the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, etc.) as well as the fruit of the flesh (impurity, enmity, strife, jealousy, etc.). The fruit of the Spirit comes about because of the Holy Spirit's work in your life. The fruit of the flesh is normal to the natural, unsaved person. In our passage in Colossians, Christians are essentially being commanded to put on the fruit of the Spirit.

- ? Read Galatians 5:19-21. What is the fruit of the flesh? Which characteristics in this list do you see as most threatening to a local church?
- ? How does this list compare with the Paul's exhortation in Colossians 3:12-15?
- ? Application: What is your daily experience of the peace of Christ? How do we open ourselves up to this peace ruling in our lives? In what sense has Christ made peace for us?

2. Praise the Lord (Colossians 3:16)

The church is a family, but it is a family with a purpose. When the church gathers, it is not a social club or a civic organization. The church of Jesus Christ can and may do many things, but it must do a few things, and perhaps above all else, when the church gathers it must worship the Lord. When you hear worship, you may think about singing, but there is much more to worship than singing.

- ? What is your favorite song to sing in church? What about this song speaks to you? How does this song remind you of your identity in Christ and glorify God?
- ? As you pray over your next corporate worship service, what are some specific ways you can pray for your pastor and worship team?

- 🔍 Application: How is God calling you to be an active participant in your worship service and not just a passive observer?

3. Make a Difference (Colossians 3:17)

Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of Jesus. If the church is who you are instead of simply where you go, then it makes sense that you will continually act like a follower of Jesus. You should represent Christ when you pump gas and buy groceries. You should represent Christ at school and work. We should do all things to the glory of God.

- 🔍 In what areas of your life do you struggle the most to honor God? What might you need to start or stop to make a change toward godliness in this area?
- 🔍 How is ministry to the world around you a form of worship?
- 🔍 Application: Who is God calling you to love in word or deed? How will you respond?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).