



Sermon Study - Conversation Guide

May 19, 2024

“Choosing Our Destiny”

Colossians 3:12-17

This guide is a discipleship tool for personal reflection, family conversations, for home groups, and for Table Talk on Sundays @10:40 am and 12:15 pm on the Lowell Patio

Coastal Community Church
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If someone was to ask you this question, “Who are you?”, how would you describe yourself? Keep your answers in the back of your mind as we unpack Colossians 3:12-17, starting with verse 12.

3:12 *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,*

Notice how Paul frames up the command he gives to the members of the Colossian church. Right away, he tells the people who they are from God’s perspective – chosen, holy and beloved. What Paul’s saying, and the order in which he chooses to say it here, is very important. There’s a direct correlation between who we are and what we do. But which comes first? How many times in our lives do we identify ourselves by what we do? That’s not who we are, first and foremost. Paul gives us our identity from God’s point of view before he commands us to put on God’s nature.

How we choose to see ourselves defines the choices we make, and that shapes our destiny. In other words, knowing and embracing our identity from God’s perspective is critical in choosing the destiny He offers us.

We’re like trees. The fruit is our actions. Our feelings are the branches. Our thoughts are the trunk. Our roots are what we believe about God’s identity and ours. There are only two sources we draw our nourishment from – God’s truth about Himself and us, or the lies that Satan is speaking. We discern the difference by defining the three identity statements Paul gives. We’re God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved.

Our identity as God’s accepted, chosen ones comes first and defines what we do. When we feel rejected, if we’re not diligent in paying attention to our thoughts and feelings, we believe that’s who we are. We feel so much resistance in believing what God says about us because Satan knows belief is the root of choosing either life or death. *What we choose to believe about our identity in each moment shapes our destiny!*

For example, Paul reveals that God also calls us “holy” and “beloved.” One meaning for holy is being set apart, different. God is holy because He is different than us. We have limitations. We run out of love and generosity. God is infinite in both, and He constantly gives Himself away to us. Our only job is to receive the truth of what God is saying, that we are holy because that’s what He’s always giving us, His holiness.

You are also God's beloved, so choose to be loved. We resist when we believe the lies of the accuser, who tells us God is angry with us, disgusted with us, or even hates us. When we identify the lies, it’s

important to surrender them back to God and receive what He's saying instead. We call this exchange work or redemptive work.

“Father God, I’ve been feeling unloved and now I realize I’ve put that on as my identity. I reject the lie that I’m unloved and I command it to go to You to be judged, in Jesus’ name. In exchange, I receive the truth that I am Your beloved and I choose to be loved by You now, in Jesus’ name.”

We can pray this if we don't know what lies we're believing...

“Father God, I believe what You say about me is true. Show me the lies I’m believing about You and myself, and I will surrender them to You and receive what You say about Yourself, and me.”

3:13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

The practice and process of forgiveness is critical to believing and receiving what's true about God and us. When we choose to hold onto the pain we receive from others, we allow that hurt to tell us who we are rather than God. That's the voice of the enemy, not God as our healer.

3:14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

The Hebrew word for peace is shalom, which means wholeness and harmony. When we choose to put on God's love and all His characteristics revealed in verse 12, people take notice. The result is harmony, first with God, then within ourselves, and with those around us.

3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Whatever contradicts God's Word about us is a lie, whether it be our circumstances, other people, or our own thoughts and feelings. They can seem so real to us because they're always in front of us. Thankfulness helps us see who God is, and what He says about us, beyond the lies screaming in our faces. Prayers of thankfulness, interconnected with prayers of exchange, are great weapons God gives us as His chosen ones. Practicing them helps us choose our destiny in each moment.

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES: Tips for great conversation

- We aren't here to teach/fix each other, but to share our experiences.
- Show respect by listening to one another, asking clarifying questions.
- If you're quick to share, allow space and time for others to speak up.
- If you're slow to speak, your experience is valuable so please share.

INTRO

Invite everyone to introduce themselves and then read the Bible verses.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What part of the message and Scripture was most encouraging, and which part is most challenging?
2. What did You notice about God, and what did you notice about yourself as well as other people?

GOSPEL EXCHANGE (REDEMPTIVE WORK)

Jesus asks us to give Him our burdens (Matthew 11:28-29), whatever they may be (a lie we have believed about God or ourselves, our hurt or negative emotions, or even our concerns for loved ones), so He can carry them for us, giving us His peace (His completeness) in exchange.

What do you want to exchange with Jesus today?

What is the burden? "Lord Jesus, I give you my..."

What's His gift? "Lord Jesus, I receive your..."

ACTION QUESTIONS

1. What is one step of obedience you can take this week, based on what you've discovered today? (*NOTE – Consider prayerfully asking God to answer this question for you, taking 30-45 seconds to listen in silence, writing what you heard. If nothing comes clear, keep praying this week.*)
2. During the coming week, who can you share what you learned today? (*NOTE – Consider repeating the same step with this question as the previous question.*)