

Series: Living to Be a Witness

Lesson 8: “Living a Holy Life – Part 1”

*Announcements, encouragement to invite people and opening prayer.



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** What did it take in the days of the old west for a miner to strike gold?

Bottom Line: Our choice on *HOW* we live our life of faith leaves a powerful witness. God will show us the plan that will make that life a reality.

LESSON PLAN

Background: The ringleader of the faction in Colossae was advocating an esoteric wisdom for daily life that would allegedly help the Colossians deal with evil spirits and cope with life's circumstances. Esoteric simply means something that only a few people will be able to understand. A deep or hidden wisdom. The Greek word (*ethelothrēskia*) pronounced ETH-EL-AH-THRĀ-SKI-AH, could also be translated “voluntary worship,” which may allude to the fact that the false teacher was stressing the Colossians' freedom to choose this strange path which was contrary to apostles' teachings. The *severity to the body* refers to the fasting and taboos that were part of the ascetic behavior advocated by “the philosophy.” It may have gone beyond this, however, to include forms of self-mutilation similar to what was practiced in some of the local cults. Such asceticism may appear to be spiritual, but it actually promotes nothing more than confidence in yourself rather than in Christ. From the beginning, torturing yourself in the name of Jesus was taught by false teachers and corrected as false by the apostles. It was like the secrets that many so-called religious sects practice that you can know but never really tell because they are for the select ones. Paul says don't listen to these people who look holy and preach this weirdness in the name of Christ. It's a lie.

Question: How do we know when someone is adding something to Scripture that sounds very holy or looks very holy but may or may not be of Christ?

Read Colossians 3:1-4

1. If you have been raised with Christ, what are you and I to seek?



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Question: How would you explain that command of God to a new Christian?

2. What reason does Paul give for these instructions for focusing our minds and hearts on the things of heaven?

Question: How does an unwillingness to die to our attachment to this world’s values and treasures cripple our faith?

Read Colossians 3:5-6

3. We are to load up and kill those worldly things in this life that can take our eyes off our Lord. What are the specific earthly things Paul mentions we are to put to death?

Read Colossians 3:7-11

4. Now Paul gets even more specific. He tells us how to spiritually clean house. What does Paul tell us to get rid of?

Get rid of ALL the following: anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, lying, prejudice or racism. Notice God has Paul tell us we MUST, this is not optional for a Christian. Get rid of is an aorist imperative, which means it is a command and it is a complete choice, like cutting off a limb on a tree so it no longer can grow branches. Let’s look at these more closely

- a. **Anger** – (This meant seeking or wishing for revenge, dwelling on something until it keeps your emotions captive. Why is that so important that we die to that emotional lifestyle once and for all)
- b. **Rage** – (It comes from the word for passion, breathing hard. Fierce indignations that dominate our thoughts. It creates a violent emotion in our mind. Obviously there is no room for that trait in our life. It numbs the heart of the ability to give grace.)
- c. **Malice** – (Wickedness of the heart, mind or character. The desire to do evil to someone.)

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- d. Slander** – *From the word for blasphemy. When used of men it involves to speak evil against, to tear down and to destroy or attack another’s character to bring them down.)*
- e. Filthy language** – *(Obscene talk from your mouth. Language that is off color, nasty, abusive, sexual. It does not differentiate between joking and serious talk that is obscene. It simply is not to come from a Christian’s lips for any reason. This is an area that far too many Christians try to explain away. They see language on the edge as simply fitting in with our culture. God does not see it that way. Remember, the Greek and Roman culture was filled with filthy language and Jesus nor His followers choose to use it to fit into their culture. They were creating culture from God.)*
- f. Lying to one another** – *(In the new culture of Christ our “yes” must always be completely true and our “no” likewise. No should ever wonder if we are telling the truth because we have been caught twisting it in the past.)*
- g. Racism and Prejudice** – *(Have someone read 2 Peter 3:8-10. Then ask, “Who does God really want to save? Why are His favorites? If we have the mind of Christ, there is no one we do not want to reach equally for our Lord with the message of His grace and mercy.)*

Questions: Which of these worldly traits do you believe is most ignored in the church? Why? Should we not be discipling one another to help the body of Christ become more radiant and therefore more effective in changing our culture?

(Stop and pray God would help us become better at discipling those struggling in this area of focused faith.)

Read Colossians 3:12-17

- 5. What clothing should we pick out that would be pleasing to God to look our very best?

Question: Which piece of God’s wardrobe do you most often forget to put on?



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6. Why do you think God used the words “to bear” and “forgive” together in verse 13?

Question: Why is it so hard to bear up, to be patient with a person with whom we have a conflict?

7. What is the perfect bond of unity that we are also to put on?

8. What act of worship wraps all these commands together?

Peace is ruling our hearts and drawing us to the Word of Christ and we teach and admonish, excite each other in our faith with God’s wisdom from His Word, with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, coming together before Christ with thanksgiving and grateful hearts. Psalms were songs to the accompaniment of plucked strings, hymns were songs with lyrics addressed directly TO rather than just about God, and spiritual songs meant any type of song with a spiritual message contained in it.

Interactive Teaching Idea: At each table, share the songs that teach you most, the ones that move you the most and the ones that focus on what you want to say directly to God.

Final Questions: What is the one idea that stands out to you most from this lesson?