

## Lesson 11 – Reformation: Thinking New Thoughts

March 14, 2021

**Background Passage: Colossians 3**

**Lesson Passage: Colossians 3:8-16 (KJV)**

**Background:** Paul had been imprisoned at Rome and received messages about heresies at the church in Colossae. Paul defended the faith by exalting the person of Jesus, and clarifying the true doctrine of Jesus Christ. Paul's epistle to the Colossians is to instruct the believers that salvation is only in Jesus Christ. The person of Jesus Christ must be understood accurately and that "He is the image of the invisible God and in Him all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in bodily form (Colossians 1:15, 19). When Jesus died on the cross, He put an end to the civil and ceremonial laws of Judaism. Believers can trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ, our God and creator. The epistle to the Colossians contains Paul's instruction about the new life in Christ which comes through a spiritual union with Christ in heaven. This new life produces a Christlike character: brotherly affection, forgiveness, peace, worship and ministry, devotion to Christ, and thankfulness in everything.

**Introduction:** God has given us the power of choice. Therefore, it is important to understand that our life is influenced by the choices we make. God desires that we make good choices so we can develop a Christlike character. As our heavenly Father, He is able to provide us with everything we need for life in this world. Before we accept Christ as our Savior, we cannot see things as God sees them. However, when we accept His Son, Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, helping us to live according to God's principles. Then we are able to make choices that are in line with God's expectations (2 Corinthians 3:18). Thus, we learn that transformation is an ongoing process that helps us to become Christlike. It has to do with how we think on a daily basis. When the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts, we become new creations, thinking new thoughts. These thoughts affect our behavior so that the people around us can see that we have new hearts. Paul advises us to meditate on positive things (Philippians 4:8). Positive things that emanate from a reformed and transformed mind. Scripture reminds us to think on these things that highlight our personality as reformed Christians. In His friendship with us, God wants us to exercise truth, honesty, justice, purity, and love. All these are in harmony with Christ's thoughts.

**Scripture Reference: Colossians 3:8-16 (KJV)**

*8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. 12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye 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.*

**Memory Verse:** "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". (Colossians 3:16) KJV

**Topic Explored:** “*Reformation: Thinking New Thoughts*” “*Garbage in garbage out,*” is what people say in the computing world. Is that statement also true when it comes to our minds? The entertainment (TV) world rates what is acceptable to come into our mind based on our age. The idea being that age makes a difference; older minds are less susceptible to bad influences. Is that true? Frankly, we think *garbage in garbage out* applies at any age because people of all ages are influenced by things around them. Ask yourself, do you sometimes find yourself using expressions that your friends use? Or, picking up habits of those that you are constantly around? Let's see what the lesson teaches about our minds/thoughts!

**Lesson Focus: Colossians 3:8-16 (KJV)**

**Verses 8-9** ~ Paul tells us that we must remove all traces of worldliness. The (other) (*See above scriptures not in our lesson text*) sins Paul lists (anger, wrath, and so forth) are regarded by many as "little" sins that Christians may overlook as “little danger”. Paul challenges us to put off the old man in *every* area of our lives. Each of these sins are primarily committed by what we *say*. When Paul calls the believer to a deeper obedience, he tells us to *bridle* our *tongue* (as did James in James 1:26 and 3:1-9). The more “notorious” sins of Colossians 3:5 are easily seen as incompatible with the nature of Jesus. But these "lesser" sins are also incompatible, so put off these sins also. In this section (Colossians 3:5-9) Paul showed two high priorities in Christian living: sexual morality connected with a right attitude towards material things, *and* simple getting along in love with one another. It is easy for a Christian community to compromise one for the other, but Paul (by inspiration of the Holy Spirit) insisted that they *both* have a high place in Christian practice. You have put off the old man with his deeds means that in Jesus Christ, the saints of God are *different people*. They have put on different characteristics.

**Verses 10-11** ~ As we put off the old man, we must put on the new man. The phrase Paul used was commonly used for changing a set of clothes. We can almost picture a person taking off the old and putting on the new man in Jesus. Because the new man is renewed in knowledge, he is hungry to know what *God says* in His Word. According to the image of Him who created him: Paul is clearly alluding to Genesis 1:27, where it is said that God created Adam in His own image. Nevertheless, now that the first Adam is regarded as the old man who should be put off and discarded, because now we are created after the image of the *second* Adam, Jesus Christ.

The new man is part of a family, which favors no race, nationality, class, culture or ethnicity. It only favors Jesus, because in this new family, Christ is all and in all. Among new creation people it doesn't matter if one is Greek or Jew or circumcised or uncircumcised or a Scythian or a slave or a free man. All those barriers are broken down. All of these barriers existed in the ancient Roman world; and the power of God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ broke them all down. Especially powerful was the barrier between slave and free, but Christianity changed that.

**Verses 12-13** ~ The new man is elect of God. This means that God has *chosen* the Christian, and chosen him to be something special in His plan. "Elect" is a word that should be taken both as a comfort and as a destiny to fulfill. Each one of the qualities mentioned in this passage express themselves in *relationships*. A significant measure of our Christian life is found simply in how we treat people and the quality of our relationships with them. Meekness shows how humility will affect my *actions* towards others. I will not dominate, manipulate, or coerce for my own ends, even if I have the power and the ability. Longsuffering shows how humility will affect my *reaction* towards others; I will not become impatient, short, or filled with resentment towards the weaknesses and sins of others. If anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave

you, so must you also. We are told to live forgiving one another, after the pattern of Jesus' forgiveness towards us. Understanding the way Jesus forgives us should always make us *more* generous with forgiveness rather than less generous.

**Verses 14-16** ~ Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection: Love is the summary of all the things described in this passage. Love perfectly fulfills what God requires of us in relationships. But above all these things put on love. "*Upon all, over all; as the outer garment envelopes all the clothing, so let charity or love invest and encompass all the rest.* The rule of the peace of God means that peace should *characterize* the community of God's people, and that peace is a standard for discerning God's will. The new man walks in the word of God and in worship with other believers. God delights in creative, spontaneous worship. The new man lives his life, all his life, for Jesus. He will only seek to do the things that he *may* do in the name of the Lord Jesus, and he will persevere in the difficulty of doing such things, knowing that he is doing them in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

### **Life Applications/Let's Talk:**

- 1. Does thinking new thoughts mean we have to abandon everything we used to do before we changed, including our old friends? Explain your answer.**
- 2. What does thinking new thoughts have to do with Christian growth?**
- 3. How does the Holy Spirit help us think new thoughts?**

### **Applications:**

- The world has much to offer that is inconsistent with the principles of God. However, Christ has given us the assurance that through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, He will always be with us to guide us. As a result, we are able to focus on heavenly things and on God's plan for us.
- The fact that we live in a world engulfed in sin does not mean we must participate in its sinful ways.

**Closing Prayer:** *"O, Lord, we come to you with open arms and our confessions to you. We are willing to change, to be made new and to be transformed more into Your image. We are willing to change our minds by allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us by the renewing of our minds and thoughts. We want the thoughts of Christ, pure and holy thoughts of love and peace. So, please Lord, take control of our minds and our thoughts so that we will have restored and renewed minds that till glorify Your Name at all times. It is our desire, Lord to become all that You desire for us to be. In Jesus' Name, we pray, Amen!"*