

## Maximize Your Potential Colossians 3:14-17

**Been said that Outlook determines outcome; attitude determines action**

A) What Paul writes here in Col 3 would support that Statement .

B) Paul declared in v.1-4 *Since we have been raised with Christ – Seek those things which are above not the earth*

1) *Set your mind on the things above.*

C) As Christians we have gone thru a RADICAL transformation – We died with Christ – Old man – Crucified with Him

1) But we also have been raised –

D) We have a New standing before God – Old { Lost doomed – Hell

1) **New Standing** { Found / Saved / Heaven

**That New Standing should lead us to have a New mindset**

A) Mind set on the things above – not the earth

B) Also a New Wardrobe – **Take off the Grave clothes** – the fleshly deeds that are a part of us that Died with Christ

1) Put on the Grace clothes – Those attributes of the Spirit that are a reflection of Jesus

C) IN our study last time we noted that in order to effectively do that we need **to STARVE the flesh – FEED the spirit.**

D) Well Paul continues on this theme in the verses that follow where he gives us **4 attitudes to embrace that will affect our actions**

1) 4 attitudes to incorporate that will have a profound affect upon our relationships in the Church / at home / Work / at Play

E) That is what we want to consider today as we look at verses 15-17

**READ**

**ATTITUDE #1 V15 *Let the peace of God rule in your hearts,***

A) 1<sup>st</sup> of all Note that the peace of God in reference here is not in the context of our Circumstances –

B) This is different than say – Phil 4:6-7

***6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.***

C) The context there in Philippians is concerning our circumstances – instead of worrying – we seek God and as we do – **He meets us with a Peace**

1) A peace that is not because of understanding – but a peace that surpasses understanding – a peace that Guards our hearts and minds

D) A peace that sets our hearts at ease – a peace that quiets our minds

1) A peace that enables us to rest in the faithfulness of God / the power of God / the Grace & Love of God

E) Phil 4:6-7 is referencing the peace of God as it relates to our circumstances

1) But the focus here in Col 3:15 is different – He is talking about our relationships with in the body of Christ

**Look at it again V.15 *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body;***

A) **You were called in one body – Let peace rule**

**B) Similar thing in Heb 12:14-16 *14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;***

C) **Pursue = make it a priority / make it your passion**

**So the first thing to note is that this peace of God is in reference to our relationships – #2**

**We are to let peace rule – Speaking CHOICE !!!**

A) The word rule here in the grk is brab- yoo – it speaks of a referee or an umpire in the world series

B) Literally the word means to arbitrate –

1) so the idea here is that the peace of the God is going to arbitrate or help us make decisions about things that come into our lives.

C) “Let the peace of God be *the umpire in your heart amidst the conflicts* of life. Let it decide what is right. Let it be your counselor.”

**How much misery we would avoid if we permitted “the peace of God ” to umpire in our hearts.**

A) How many words would we hold back if Peace of God were the arbitrator in our lives?

B) How many sleepless nights we would forego if we did that.

1) How the Church needs this too, so many hang-ups in the Church – people walking around with bitterness & unforgiveness

C) Which the Bible says radically affects their own relationship with God

1) He doesn't hear our prayers when we have bitterness & unforgiveness in our hearts

D) Thinking about this the other day: Easier to not deal with today than in Paul's day – { **Today I can Leave my problem – go to another Church**

1) Take the path of least resistance – many do. – Carrying baggage

E) Paul's day there wasn't another Church – Leave fellowship all together or deal with my Problem person.

1) Not taking the path of least resistance but taking the path of least self-preservation – Being willing to die to self – my rights / perception

**But that is what the peace of God is all about – That is how it was created – It started with a Sacrifice – the sacrifice of Jesus**

A) Now I want to discuss this some more on Wed. communion –

B) See I see a **profound connection** between the Letting the peace of God rule in our hearts & the Lord's table

1) The example seen in our Lord's cross – I hope you can be here Wed for what I think will be an important time in the word & communion

C) But this is Attitude #1 *Let the peace of God rule.....hearts*

**Attitude #2 V. 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.***

A) Now, the word of Christ would be the scriptures in their entirety really. He's not talking **ONLY** about the words of Jesus – GOSPELS

B) He's talking about the entirety of scripture because all scripture is given by inspiration of God. So, all of the Bible are really the words of Christ.

1) The entirety of the Word of God –

C) Again we have this **ACTION PHRASE** that speaks of Choice – *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*– **YOUR CHOICE**

1) The word Dwell means to be at home in your heart

D) Richly = abundantly or extravagantly !!!!!

1) Extravagant = the quality of exceeding the appropriate limits

E) I can think of 100 areas where **we should not exceed** the appropriate limits – but hiding God's word in our hearts is not one of them

1) We need to be filled with as much of God's word as we can possible get

**So HOW do we allow the Word of Christ to dwell in us Richly – suggest 3 ways**

A) #1 By hearing it - **Rom 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.***

**B) Rev 2:7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**

C) **Hearing the word taught** – Put yourself in a position to hear the Word – Being here Sundays / Being hear Wed.

1) Husband – Wash your wife in the word – That is one way – being with her in Bible study – talking about it later.

**This is one area that we are moving away from more and more in American Church life**

**A) We as a nation have the most amount of Churches – and yet we are incredibly Illiterate Biblically**

B) Churches are abandoning Bible study – I heard this week of one Church that – canceled it's midweek service of Bible study { People weren't coming

**1) Now they meet weekly for Dinner & Dancing – Packing them in.**

**C) Churches today – emphasizing the Arts { Dances / Dramas/ others Music and worship / others community & fellowship**

**1) And I like all of those things – But they can't replace Bible study.**

D) **Guys this is a staple** – this is essential to your spiritual well being –

1) We can never get enough of God's word!!!!

E) KWAVE – **Even Better Tape lending Library** – Myself / Pastor Chuck / Jon Courson / Pastor Brian / Jack Hibbs /

1) Commuter – You could go thru the entire NT in a year if you did that.

F) SO #1 one you let the word dwell in you richly by putting yourself in a place to hear it on a DAILY BASIS

**#2 YOU HANDLE IT - 2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**

A) Study the word and then use it – give it away – Best way learn is by sharing what you have heard with someone else !!!

B) Family devotions / Work Bible study / teaching in Children's ministry.

C) Handling the Word –

**#3 HIDE IT - Ps 119:11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.**

A) Memorizing Scripture – Key to letting the Word of Christ dwell in you RICHLY

**Now Paul mentions 2 specific results of letting the word of Christ dwelling in us richly –**

**A) 1<sup>st</sup> is it HELPS US to minister in Wisdom: Teaching & admonishing one another**

**B) Teaching is the impartation of truth / admonishing = to exhort of to warn people about behavior / false teaching etc**

C) **Both are to be done in Wisdom** – that only occurs as we allow God's word to dwell in us richly

1) And be the Provide the Guideline for such teaching & admonishing

**See There is a lot of wisdom being espoused today that is not Biblical –**

A) Saying: God helps those that help themselves – is that in the Bible – Most people think it is

B) In reality – The bible teaches the opposite – God helps those who realize that they can't help themselves

1) **Job 4 Eliphaz** – God allow the innocent to suffer? Abel – JESUS

**D) Song : Listen to your heart – The bible says – the heart is deceitfully wicked .....**

Matt 15:19-20 **19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. 20 These are the things which defile a man,**

**So letting the word of Christ RICHLY dwelling in your heart is a key to conducting ourselves in WISDOM.**

A) It also produces in our hearts an attitude of Worship

B) It generates psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

1) Psalms were taken from the Old Testament book of Psalms. They sang psalms put to music, much as we do today.

C) Hymns were expressions of praise to God. It is thought that some portions of the New Testament (such as Col. 1:15-20 and Phil. 2:6-11) were originally hymns sung in the early church.

1) Spiritual songs emphasized testimony - Special songs like for offering.

D) So attitude #2 *Let the word dwell in you richly*

**ATTITUDE #3 is found in verse 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.**

A) The bottom line here is a commitment to bring Jesus into everything that we say and do, and then beyond that, to do these things as unto Him.

B) What this does is to turn every area in your life into a spiritual pursuit with spiritual opportunities.

1) Well When that is the case, nothing is hum-drum, nothing is ordinary.

C) Your job is no longer just a job, it's an assignment from God.

1) It's a platform to show forth His goodness and His heart and His creativity.

**D) Some of you can impact more people in a month through your business contacts than many pastors do in a year.**

1) To do that, you have to see your job, or your business as something that you do as unto the Lord and then you need to perform accordingly.

**If you apply this to raising your kids, raising your kids is not something that you do because you're a mom or a dad,**

A) It's something you do because God has entrusted these children to you and you are going to raise them in a way that brings glory to God.

B) And so when you put effort into them and pour resources into them, you are doing it as unto the Lord.

1) It makes all of the difference in the world.

C) Something changes in your life when you do what you are do because you are doing it as unto the Lord.

1) I was talking with a mom once who told me that she applied this verse to her daily Chores – made all the difference in the world

D) She wasn't cleaning her house for her husband - / kids / herself / but for the Lord

1) What used to be a mundane – necessity – became an expression of worship

**Think about all of the things that you do, are they spiritual activities or just a grind?**

A) If there are things in your life that are still a grind, then you are missing out on what they could be,

B) They could be spiritual pursuits which produce spiritual opportunities.

1) Can I encourage you – don't divide your life into Categories – the spiritual & the non-spiritual

C) Instead do it all for the Lord !!!!!

**LESSON: YOU EXIST FOR GOD – HE DOES NOT EXIST FOR YOU**

**D) If we would but live like that, oh how we would impact our world, if we would just live like that, with the glory of God in mind.**

1) The people who have lived with God's glory at the forefront of their minds are the people who have been most effective in their service to the Lord

E) So Attitude #3 – Do everything for the Lord and His glory

#### ATTITUDE #4 Have a THANKFUL HEART

A) This exhortation has been in just about every very verse that we have read today.

B) In verse 15 we are to let the peace of God rule in our hearts *and be thankful*.

1) 16 we are to sing with *GRACE or thanksgiving* in our hearts to the Lord.

C) In verse 17 we are to do all things in the Name of Jesus our Lord *giving thanks* to God the Father through Him.

**There is no doubt that one of the top priorities for the Believer is to be thankful.**

A) Here's why, thankfulness puts our focus on what God is doing, not on what God is not doing.

B) The Old Man, the Old Woman, has 20/20 vision when it comes to what isn't happening in our lives that we think should be happening in our lives, 1) God could be blessing us in twenty different areas of our lives in major ways, but what does our flesh pick up on?

C) The one or two areas where God is not doing what we want, those couple of areas where things aren't right,

1) our flesh can spot those things a mile away.

D) And then once we spot them, we FOCUS on them,

**What thankfulness does is to lift our eyes above that and focus us in on what God is doing in our lives,**

A) and most of the time, that God is doing far out weighs the rest of the junk that is going on, or at least it puts the rest of the junk in perspective.

B) So what we need to do is to cultivate an attitude of Gratitude.

1) We need to find the things that we can be thankful for and then express them to God.

C) And folks, it's the last part of this process that is so important, the **expressing of our thankfulness to God.**

1) What this does is to take everything to a whole new level, the flesh wants us dwelling on what is wrong,

D) Thankfulness lifts our eyes up to see what is right & good, and then the expression of thankfulness connects us to source of all that is right & Good!

1) And That's a cycle you want to get in.

**So those are the attitudes that we are to have that will affect our actions in the body of Christ**

A) Letting the peace of God arbitrate and lead us through the decisions of life,

B) Then allowing the Word of God to settle in and be at home in our hearts,

1) then a commitment to bring Jesus into every area of our lives by honoring him in everything that we do and say,

C) And then lastly, having a heart of gratitude and thanksgiving, recognizing the goodness of God, and expressing our thankfulness to Him.

Those are ATTITUDES that will maximize who you are in Christ, those are things that will put your life in the sweet spot of what God wants do in and through you.