



ONE YEAR FROM NOW • *Colossians 3:17*

Pastor Kenneth J. Spiller • January 1, 2023

BIG IDEA: Begin with the end in mind.

➔ **Have you made resolutions for the new year?**

Pastor Kenneth challenged us to think about our faith and how to honor Jesus in 2023. How can we honor him with everything? Our text this morning challenges us to do this and tells us what it looks like. In our text Paul was writing to the church in Colossae, a town in modern day Turkey. Colossae no longer exists.

In Colossians 3, Paul encourages the Christians by telling them and us:

1. They have been raised with Christ. (*Colossians 3:1*)
2. They are to set their hearts on things above. (*Colossians 3:1*)
3. Their lives are hidden with Christ. (*Colossians 3:3*)

➔ **How do these statuses encourage you as you begin the new year?**

Paul then tells them and us to put to death all sin and things which belong to our earthly nature (*Colossians 3:5*) things such as sexual immorality, lust, evil desires, greed, anger, rage, malice, slander, lying, filthy language. In short when we see these things in our life, our job is not to feed it, but to kill it. It is not always a quick process like Pastor Kenneth's removal of the snake. Paul is thinking of the cross of Christ. Our sins must be crucified and this can be a long and agonizing process. Often, we cannot do this by ourselves. We need a small community to help us through the process and to encourage us as we seek to put these things to death in our life. As Samwise Gamgee said to Frodo Baggins near the end of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Return of the King*, "Then let us

be rid of it once for all! Come on, Mr. Frodo. I can't carry it for you, but I can carry you!"

➔ **How does the command to kill these things in your life make you feel?**

➔ **If you are a part of a Community Group, are there things they can do to help you put to death the things that need to be killed in your life?**

As Christians, we are to put sin to death and develop Christlikeness. Paul tells us in Colossians that the qualities of Christlikeness consist of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience (*Colossians 3:12*), forgiveness (*Colossians 3:13*), love and unity (*Colossians 3:14*), and let Christ rule your hearts (*Colossians 3:16*).

➔ **Do you think of these qualities as attitudes to which we aspire or as like pads the football player wears to play the game?**

➔ **How are these new parts of our clothing as essential as football pads are to playing/being in the game?**

Paul summarizes what a Christian is called to do and say in Colossians 3:17, **"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."** In other words, "whatever you do, whether that's in behavior or speech, honor the Lord with it. And don't forget to give thanks to God." Deeds can be anything. Words are anything that passes our lips. "Whatever you do" knows no limitation, it is total and comprehensive. Just as a method actor never leaves character, our goal is to never leave our new identity in Christ. Our helper in the process is the Holy Spirit. Our faith community members can help us with that when they say about us, "Sally or Fred was really out of character yesterday," and begin to help us on the journey.

➔ **Have you thought of Colossians 3:17 as an aspiration but little else?**

➔ **Do you have a few people around you who can help you as your transform deeper into the character of Christ and stay in character all the time – every thought, word, and deed?**

More like Christ, my heart is praying;

More like Christ from day to day;

All His graces rich displaying,

While I tread my pilgrim way.

More like Christ in deeds of
kindness,

And in all the words I say;

Yearning for the souls in blindness,

Who are going far astray.

More like Christ in burden-bearing,

Helping all the sad and weak;

Tears and sorrows gladly sharing,

Others' pleasure would I seek.

More like Christ in self-denial,

Seeking not a life of ease;

Patient in the depths of trial,

That my Savior I may please.

-Charles W. Naylor



This is wholehearted devotion. As Christians, our whole lives fall under the reign of Christ. Every part of who we are belongs to Him, and if there are areas of our lives that rebel against the reign of Christ, we ask for forgiveness, surrender that to Jesus, and honor him in all things.

We can learn from the original language in this passage. The word for Lord here (as in “do it all in the name of the *Lord*”) is the Greek word *kyrios* which means master or Lord. It occurs nearly 750 times in the NT, eight times in this section alone. Jesus is Lord and not anyone else, including Caesar. If Jesus is our Lord (*kyrios*), then we are His *doulos*. *Doulos* is the Greek word for slave and is used 124 times in the New Testament. *Doulos* is translated as a servant in many places in the New Testament but literally means slave or bondman. It is the most common metaphor used to describe what it means to be a Christian. Slave sounds harsh so it is often translated as servant. As God’s servants or slaves, we were bought with a price; we are not our own, we are God’s own possession (*Titus 2:14*), and He is our “Master in heaven” (*Colossians 4:1*).

To call Jesus *Lord* (*kyrios*) means you must call yourself a servant *slave* (*doulos*). A problem we have in Christianity today is that we have people who call Jesus Lord but don’t call themselves slaves. Jesus asked the question, “**Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?**” (*Luke 6:46*). Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus. If you can’t do it in the name of the Lord, if you can’t honor Christ with that action or those words, don’t do it.

➔ **Where is an area of your life where you call Jesus Lord but don’t behave as His servant?**

➔ **Is there something you are doing that you should stop doing? Is there something you are not doing that you should start doing? Is there something that you know needs to change but hasn’t?**

➔ **Are you doing something well that you should continue doing?**

Colossians 3:17 says, “**And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.**” Three times in this chapter, Paul brings up gratitude, and he connects thankfulness giving thanks with our identity in Christ. We are thankful people because we belong to Jesus. Thankfulness is part of the Christian experience. If God never gave you a single thing again, you are still blessed beyond measure with the riches of Christ.

➔ **How will you honor God in 2023?**

If everyone has a why (and they do), then everyone must know what it is and live it, or something in their soul will simply stay asleep.

-Jim Wiegand



➔ Where do you want to be one year from now?

Pastor Kenneth gave us some suggestions of ways to help us get there such as:

- commit to the Bible this year
- commit to spending meaningful time in prayer
- commit to reading discovering your spiritual gift and then finding a way to use it

As you consider what God may want to do in you and what God may want to do through you, start with the end and walk backward. Think about the steps that you need to get to where you want to be.

Three suggested ways to respond to this message:

1. Complete the “Begin with the End in Mind” evaluation at the end of this packet.
2. Set an alarm on your phone for each day for a month for 3:17 p.m. Pause and pray at this time.
3. Attend the 3:17 Prayer Gathering on Wednesday, January 11, at 7 p.m.

