

Colossians 2:16 - 3:11

Title: Week 3

Leader note: This Message Guide is intended to help you facilitate discussion with your group. You can use the guide exactly as it is, ignore some of it, or add to it. We hope you view this guide as a flexible teaching tool, and not a rigid teaching task.

Welcome & Icebreaker

If you had the opportunity to live one year of your life over again, which year would you choose?

Biblical Context

It is important, that as you study Paul's letter to the Colossians over a period of several weeks, that you remember the main purpose for Paul to write it in the first place - false teachings. When Paul mentions something that may seem out of place, more than likely he is mentioning a specific teaching that the Colossians has heard. Another false teaching of the first century was Asceticism - a severe self-discipline and avoidance of all forms of avoidance. An extreme level of asceticism was abasement - self humiliation and punishment, like flogging. The practice of asceticism, they taught, would draw you closer to spiritual enlightenment totally separate from Christ.

Initial Question

What do you believe your best qualities are? Why do you think that?

Looking at the Text

1. Read Colossians 2:16-23 and notice how Paul is describing another false teaching that has been going through the church. What characteristics are being highlighted?
2. What does Paul mean by "why...do you submit to [the world's] rules"? Are Christians above the "rules of the world"? (Hint: "they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence")
3. Read Colossians 3:1-11. Paul is now transitioning from the false teachings that the Colossians may have been compelled to believe to how they should be living. What is the main focus Paul points the Colossian church toward? (Hint, that your life is now hidden with Christ.)

Life Application

4. Verse 5 is a direct contrast to vs 2:21. Paul says, rather than living by a rule "Do not handle! Do not taste! ..." put to death anything that is in our earthly nature and he lists several. What is the difference between following a rule such as "do not commit adultery" and dying to "sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed..."?

5. How do we “put to death” these things? Isn’t putting something to death the same as following a rule to “Don’t do it”?

Action Step

There is a list of six things in Colossians 3:8-9 of which Paul tells the people of Colossae to rid themselves. Identify two things from the list you have the most trouble with. Now, put them to death in your own life.