

# Colossians

## How Jesus changes you 3:5-17



University of Michigan

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### Hints and Highlights

1. This passage is really about the Spirit-filled life (or the Christ-directed life). Out of our position and eternal perspective Paul concludes we can put to death what belongs to our earthly nature (flesh) and put on the new self.
2. The earthly nature refers to the “flesh”, the sinful, fallen part of humanity that desires to follow the old sinful way of life and live independently from God. This is prevalent apart from Christ.

## Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

### Option 1:

*Have everyone share the 3 most significant people in their lives and why. How did they change who you are?*

### Option 2:

*What are the 5 inventions/discoveries that have most changed the world? Have them each write down their 5 and ask them to share why they chose those inventions.*

### Option 3:

*Try playing a game or shooting baskets or playing catch. Then blindfold the participants and have them play. Ask how changing the things you depend on affect how you play the game.*

- What are some things that change everything?
- How does life look different because of something or someone that changes everything??

Paul just doesn't talk about Jesus changing your life. He shows us how. Let's take a look.

## Diving In

*Read 3:5-11*

1. Take a moment and jot down all of the commands (imperatives). How would you describe what Paul is asking them to do? What does the “therefore” refer back to? (Look back for the context and see the positional truth—that we died and are hidden with Christ in God)
2. What are the things that we are to put to death? What does it mean to put something to death? Why do you think Paul uses such language in describing what we are to do with sin? How are these part of our earthly nature (or “flesh”)? What is the earthly nature? How would you define idolatry? How are these acts idolatry?
3. How would you describe the wrath of God? How does this relate to these sins we are to put to death? What do you notice about the verb tense in v. 7? What does it mean that we “used to walk in these ways”? How do v. 1-4 tie into this?
4. How do you rid your self of these things? How does the putting off the old self and putting on the new self fit in? How do you do this? (introduce the idea of spiritual breathing here—see sidebar).
5. What do you think it means to renewed in the knowledge in the image of its

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## Hints and Highlights

1. As mentioned this passage is about the Spirit-filled life, which is basically about confessing our sins and yielding control of our lives to God's power and control. This might be a great week to pass out the "Satisfied" booklets and set up a time to discuss them personally.
2. The analogy of Spiritual breathing is this: exhaling is confessing and inhaling is consciously asking Jesus to take control of your life. That is similar to the feel of putting off the old self and putting on the new one.
3. Notice the result of the Christ-directed life in v. 15-17. These attitudes are similar to the parallel passage in Eph. 5:18-20 that are the results of the Spirit-filled life. You cannot manufacture these attitudes, but are overflows of walking under God's control.

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Creator? What are some implications of v. 11? How does this message differ from the way the world views race, gender or class?

### *Read 3:12-14*

1. How does Paul describe believers here? What do you think it means to be God's chosen people? What does it look like to clothe yourself with compassion? With kindness? (Continue these questions for the others qualities)
2. What do you think it means to bear with each other? To forgive each other? To put on love? How does this bind them all together with unity? What do you think this means?

### *Read 3:15-17*

1. Take a moment and list out the commands again. What do you think Paul is saying? What do you think it looks like to let Christ's peace rule in your hearts? Why do you think Paul adds "be thankful"? How does thankfulness fit into the idea of letting Christ rule in your heart?
2. What do you think it looks like to have Christ's message richly dwell among you? How would you describe the relationship between letting Christ's peace and message rule and dwell and the teaching, admonishing, thankfulness and singing? How might the word of Christ relate to the rest of the commands in this section? (When the word dwells in us richly it will change the way we think and act.)
3. How would you describe Paul's challenge in v. 17? What would a life like this look like?

### *In Summary*

1. How would you summarize what God is asking us to do?
2. What are we to put off? What are we to put on? What does this look like?
3. Why do we find it difficult to put off the old self? Put on the new?
4. What are some things we learn about the Christ-directed (I.e. Spirit-filled) life here? How can an understanding of our position in Christ help us to obey these commands?
5. What are some things we learn about us as believers from this passage?

## Making Application

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Jesus is not passive. He changes you.

1. Take a moment and look over the list of sins in v. 5 and v. 8. Ask God to reveal any areas of your life where you are not giving Him control. Take a moment and silently "exhale", confessing these things to God as sin.
2. Take a moment and ask God to put on the new self, taking control of every area of your life.
3. Take a moment and thank God for all that he has done in your life. You might want to pair up the group and have them pray together.

*Let's thank Jesus for changing our lives.*