The Bonds that Bind Us

Colossians 3:12-15

Sermon Outline

A. Bond Making (vs. 12-13):

1. **Chosen** – These characteristics only apply to people who are saved.
   
   a) “The elect of God” is *eklektos tou theou* (ἐκλεκτός του θεου). The adjective *eklektos* (ἐκλεκτός) is from the verb *eklegō* (ἐκλεγω), “to select out from a number.” It refers to God’s choice of certain from among mankind who were as saved individuals, to be channels through which others might learn the way of salvation, this choice having been made before the universe was created. “As” is *hós* (ὡς), “like as, even as, in the same manner as.” The word is an adverb of comparison. It does not merely identify. The idea is, “Put on therefore in the same manner as the elect of God.” That is, see that your manner of life is fitting, seemly, in accordance with that kind of life the elect of God should live.1[1]

2. **Chosen** – God in His sovereign will, just like He did with Israel, elects people who He knows will come to Him.

3. **Chosen** – God selected us with a purpose in mind.

4. **Holy** – These are the believers who are devoted to God and do not conform to the standards of the world. They live consecrated lives before God. This represents an inward holiness that is demonstrated through the person’s godly character.
   
   a) “Holy” is *hagios* (ἁγιος), from *hagizō* (ἁγιζω), “to set apart for God.” The elect are those set apart for God. The word speaks of their standing in grace as separated ones, to live a separated life. The saints are those who have been loved by God with the present result that they are the objects of His love.2[2]

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5. **Beloved** – These are believers who are completely (set state or condition) willing to put other believers interest above theirs and sacrificially serve God’s people as result of the influence of the Holy Spirit.

6. **Beloved** – God’s love towards us means He always has our backs.

7. **Put on** – Paul commands these willing consecrated, devoted believers to make a decisive decision to get into the mindset of behaving in manner described in this verse so that the church stops being dysfunctional.

   a) In the preceding paragraph the apostle had set forth the negative requirements in the admonitions "put to death" (vs. 5) and "put off" (vs. 8) here he spells out the positive exhortation which, like the injunction of verse 5 therefore follows as a direct consequence of what has previously been said. The graces with which they are to be clothed are those qualities predicated of God or Christ.

   b) Paul showed that believers should be dead to old ways and alive to the new (3:5–14). With the "so" (3:5) Paul made a transition from doctrine (1:1–3:4) to practice (3:5–4:6). (Paul made such a transition in most of his other letters as well.) The doctrine of Christ and the believers’ completeness in him provides the basis for a discussion of proper Christian conduct.3[3]

8. **Put on** – Be determined to behave as one of His children.

9. **Heart** – All the attributes that are displaced my find their direction from the heart which is the place of our affections.

   a) “Goodness,” “kindness” (so most translations), “generosity” (NJB) is a human grace also in 2 Cor. 6:6 and Gal. 5:22, but presumably seen as a reflection of God’s “goodness” (as in Rom. 2:4), the more typical thought (BAGD), and so characteristic of the new self being renewed in accordance with the image of its creator (3:10). It refers to relationship with others, as the next term refers to one’s self-estimate (Lightfoot 219). “Χρηστότης stands at the center [of the list], perhaps because it is considered the most important, a characteristic which also (at least in part) encompasses the others” (J. Zmijewski, *EDNT* 3.476; brief word studies of the terms are provided by O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon* 199–201).4[4]

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b) **Compassion** – Compassion to the Greeks was a deep seated tender affection that was graciously provided to someone who was hurting.

➢ The Greek uses the term bowels of compassion, because the Greek people located the deeper emotions in the intestinal area, while we locate them in the heart. It is a constant attitude of heart that makes us easy to live with.

c) **Kindness** - For those who are consecrated to God need to demonstrate a friendly and helpful spirit in serving the needs of others.

➢ **Kindness, the friendly and helpful spirit which meets needs through good deeds.** This is the concrete action of compassion. If the believer is to be fully dressed, other Christlike characteristics are to be worn as well.⁵

d) **Humility** - Humility is not thinking poorly of one’s self. Rather, it is having the proper estimate of one’s self in the will of God (Rom. 12:3).

➢ The person with humbleness of mind thinks of others first and not of himself (Philippians 2:1-5).

e) **Humility** - We must live with the focus of who we are in God’s sight while we trust His ability and power as we serve others. We must not depend on our ability more than we depend on God’s ability to empower and direct our lives.

f) **Humility** - We must be committed to serve others while trusting God to serve us.

➢ **Humility is not a self-debasing attitude (like the “false humility” of 2:18 and 2:23) but an attitude that is free from pride and self-assertion.**⁶

g) **Gentleness/Meekness** – When we have a right to be angry but we choose to still do what is right. This allows our actions to be free from malice and revenge

➢ Gentleness has been described as “power under control”; the picture of a powerful horse under the control of its master is a helpful image. The attitude behind gentleness is an attitude of refusing to demand one’s rights.⁷

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h) **Gentleness** – Dealing with difficult situations with no desire to create strife.

i) **Patience/long-suffering** – We must remain steadfast in our faith in the midst of a siege of trials depending on God for strength.

   ➢ **Put on ... long-suffering (Col. 3:12).** This word is literally “long-temper.” The short-tempered person speaks and acts impulsively and lacks self-control. When a person is long-suffering, he can put up with provoking people or circumstances without retaliating. It is good to be able to get angry, for this is a sign of holy character. But it is wrong to get angry quickly at the wrong things and for the wrong reasons.\(^8\)

10. **Bearing** – Continuously holding up under difficulties, and differences that may come up relationships.

   **Forbearance (Col. 3:13).** This word literally means “to hold up” or “to hold back.” God is forbearing toward sinners in that He holds back His judgment (Rom. 2:4; 3:25). Meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance go together.\(^9\)

11. **Bearing with one another** – Must commit to hold up under difficulties rather than run or shut down.

12. **Forgive; forget** – We must be open to continuously extending grace to those who offended us.

13. **Has a complaint** – Complaining causes us to continuously hold on to blaming someone for something they have done that offended us.

14. **Just as the Lord** – Just as the Lord who has all power and authority to bring issues against us but does not so when we have the authority to bring issues against each other we must extend the same grace (Matthew 6:14-15).

15. **Forgive; forget** – God extends grace so we must once and for all extend grace to others.

   a) "Put on .... forgiveness" -- It is not enough that the Christian must endure grief and provocation, and refuse to retaliate; he must also forgive the trouble maker. If he does not, then feelings of malice will develop in the heart; and these can lead to greater sins.

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b) **Forgiveness heals the person who forgives and blesses the person who is forgiven.**

**B. The Seal (vs. 14):**

1. **Beyond** – Above all the attributes just listed.

2. **Beyond** – This attribute is above everything listed above.

3. **Put on love** – Make a decision to be purposeful about obeying God towards others.

4. **Put on love** – Live unselfishly (Philippians 2:1-5).

5. **Put on** – Putting on love is a decisive act; a determined effort.

6. **Love** – This a deliberate act to obey God, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, with an ‘unselfish compassionate commitment’ to serve the needs of others (1 John 3:16-18).

   a) When love rules in our lives, it unites all these spiritual virtues so that there is beauty and harmony, indicating spiritual maturity. This harmony and maturity keep the life balanced and growing.

7. **Is the perfect bond** – Love completely ties together everyone no matter the cultural differences or economical backgrounds.

8. **Is the perfect bond** – Love is the perfect strand that binds everyone together.

   a) “Perfection” is *teleiotēs* (τελειοτής). The word *teleios* (τελειος) means “completeness, full growth, maturity, in good working order.” All these describe the Christian in whose life the virtues of verses 12–14 are present as the result of the fullness of the Spirit.\(^{10}\)

9. **Perfect bond** – Love creates the strength needed to forgive.


11. **Unity** – Love is the band that joins two opposites even opposing persons together. “It is also used for the “cable” which holds two ships together (13,100) or the “halter” which ties the horse to the stall.”

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c. Its Unbreakable (vs. 15):

1. Let the peace of Christ – Christ is the only one who can provide peace. Christ does so through His Helper the Holy Spirit (John 14:26). He can do so because He established for us peace between God and us through His death and resurrection (Ephesians 2:14-18).

2. Let the peace of Christ – When we live under the influence of the Spirit God rules us.

3. Let the peace of Christ – The Spirit is our unfailing strength.

4. Rule – The Holy Spirit controls our actions like a referee on a football field keeping everyone focused on playing by the rules. He does this through the illumination of the scriptures, conviction and guidance by way of wisdom.

   a) Rule literally means “to act as umpire.” The Colossians were told earlier not to allow false teachers to “act as umpire against” them (2:18). However, when disputes arise, the believer is to let the peace of Christ make the call.\textsuperscript{11}\textsuperscript{11}

5. Rule – The Spirit must be allowed to override our mind when it conflicts with God’s Word.

6. Rule – The Word is the authority and it never fails.

7. Rule – The Spirit’s power can override our emotions.

8. Rule – The Spirit’s power can preserve our hearts and minds.

9. Heart – The Holy Spirit’s rule is from the heart so that He can control our will and the spectrum of all our emotions.

10. We were called to one body – God has given us a divine call (John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:1-7) to seek to live as one just as the Godhead is one.

11. Be thankful – Trust that God is in control and be thankful (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

12. Be thankful – We must create in ourselves a thankful heart.