



CHURCH-WIDE THIS OCTOBER

lincolnborean
OUTREACHLIFE
GROUPS

All month we've been focusing on loving our neighbors, one way to do this is to **Build Relationships**. This can look like inviting your neighbors over for dinner, a fire pit, or fall gathering. Gathering together is a great way to build relationships; try this as a way to love your neighbor!

Introduction

We move forward in Paul's message to acknowledge how our salvation offers us the opportunity to be alive in Christ because we are rooted in Him and He is sufficient for everything we need. As we learned in the first part of Colossians 3, seeking Christ in our lives often involves the shedding of sinful behaviors and patterns. Why would we continue to carry the burden of these sins if our lives are now hidden in Christ? The next step is to live as God's chosen ones, putting on the Christ-like qualities that ultimately bring glory to God.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

- 1) **What has a family member said or done for you this week that was very thoughtful?**

- 2) **If a friend were to write a letter describing who you are (not what you do), what would it say?**

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
 - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
 - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
 - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you

 - 2) Choose someone to read the passage aloud for the group.
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Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) In light of the last couple weeks of scripture, sermons, and worship, what comes to mind when you think about putting off the old self and putting on the new?

- 2) Living as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved looks a certain way. In verses 12-13, what are the seven characteristics we are to put on to rightly represent the new self in Christ? Describe or define each one and what it looks like to live it out in daily life (at home or at work).

A common thread among the seven characteristics is that they tend to take shape and form in a community setting, not in isolation. **How is *bearing with one another* a challenge for you? What are some barriers that keep you from growing in Christ with others by your side?**

- 3) It is our tendency to try and manufacture compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearance and forgiveness. We can work at each one of these things in our own strength by prescribing them to situations that need to be fixed. **Of the seven characteristics, which one is easiest for you to produce in your own strength? What does it look like to be more dependent on Christ in this area so that it is an outflow of the heart rather than disingenuous?**

Read verse 14. **What is central to the other qualities of our new self in Christ? How does love motivate your ability to be compassionate, kind, humble, meek, patient, forbearing and forgiving with others? Give an example.**

- 4) **Verses 15-17 point us to some things we can let into our lives to help us flourish. How are you encouraged by the notion to let Christ's peace rule and let Christ's word dwell? How does this help you to be discerning when you face challenges or make decisions, doing everything in the name of the Lord?**

What are some tangible ways you can make peace and God's word a priority in your thoughts and actions this week? How can your group encourage and hold you accountable in this?

- 5) **Where do you notice elements of forgiveness and gratitude in the process of putting on the new self? Which of these spiritual exercises is more of a challenge for you? Why?** Based on how you answered this question, consider focusing on this in the Personal Spiritual Exercises section.

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

Practice Forgiveness: Use the new-self characteristics (compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience) as a way to determine if forgiveness needs to occur. Ask yourself, *when am I not compassionate? Why is this?* Ask yourself these questions for any or all of the characteristics. You may discover that you need to be forgiving or ask for forgiveness as a next step. Identify and commit to a peaceful next step that is supported by scripture.

Practice Gratitude: A church focus for the month of November is giving thanks. In this next week start a gratitude log. Each day, for five days this week, take time to notice what you are grateful for throughout your day and write it down. At the end of the week read your gratitude log and perhaps share it with someone close to you (e.g., spouse, friend, or life group).

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?

Next Week: Read Colossians 3:18-4:1