

Sermon Discussion Guide - Purpose Over Pleasure-Colossians 3:1-17

View sermon here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-EK-Tbtlyg>

The sermon noted that Paul does not begin with rules, but with orientation: “Set your hearts on things above... Set your minds on things above.”

- Why do you think Paul starts with *where we are focused* rather than *what we should fix*?
- How does this challenge the way we often think about spiritual growth?

The sermon framed Colossians 3 around a larger story: death, resurrection, ascension, and future glory. “*A meaningful life happens when we live that story.*”

- What other stories compete with that one in your life?

The sermon emphasized that Paul’s critique is not an attack on sexuality, but on desires shaped by empire: “The sexuality of the empire, then and now, is a sexuality of consumption.”

- Where do you see the empire asking: *What can I take? What can I consume?*
- How is Jesus’ approach to desire—self-giving love and covenant—fundamentally different?

The sermon connected sexuality to speech and emotion:

- Why do you think Paul moves from desire to anger, rage, slander, and speech?
- The sermon said the issue isn’t manners, but *how we talk about “others.”* Who are the “others” we are most tempted to dismiss or speak about harshly?

Paul’s language of taking off the old self and putting on the new self was central to the sermon.

- Which “old clothes” named in the sermon feel hardest to take off?
- Which “new clothes” (compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience) feel most needed right now?

The sermon highlighted the radical claim of verse 11: “Here there is no Gentile or Jew... slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.”

- Why is this such a threat to empire?

The sermon emphasized that peace and forgiveness are **communal**, not just personal:

“Empire keeps score. The Kingdom releases debts.”

- How does remembering God’s forgiveness change our ability to forgive others?
- How do Scripture, song, and shared practices form us differently than rules alone?

The sermon ended with Paul’s sweeping vision:

“Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

- What would it look like for *everyday life*—speech, work, relationships—to be consciously shaped by Christ’s name?
- How does this vision challenge the idea that meaning comes from pleasure alone?