



S3 SUMMER ENCORE

Against the Current

Talk About It

The current day we live can make it hard to be a Christian. Between wanting to please your parents and wanting to please your friends, it can be challenging to stand firm and be bold in your faith through Christ-like actions. With the temptation of sin all around, it is very difficult to be the light amongst all the darkness. But here's some Good News: it is your Christ-like actions that make you stand out as a believer in Christ among your peers. It can be the difference between someone seeing Jesus or not.

To be the light among your peers, you must show them who Jesus is—you must put Him first in your life and know who He truly is.

- Take turns describing some characteristics of Jesus that will help you put Him first in your life.

Putting Jesus first is not easy. There are many temptations that the devil puts in front of us to pull us away from our relationship with the Lord. Some of these temptations include our peers and who we choose to be friends with. Whether it is from wanting to fit in or from believing lies about ourselves, temptation is all around us. By remembering **why** we need to put Jesus first in our lives, we can be better equipped to prevent ourselves from drifting away from our faith when faced with temptation.

Read Colossians 1:13-23.

¹³ For He has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of His dear Son, ¹⁴ who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.

¹⁵ Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, ¹⁶ for through Him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He existed before anything else, and He holds all creation together.

¹⁸ Christ is also the head of the church, which is His body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So He is first in everything. ¹⁹ For God in all His fullness was pleased to live in Christ, ²⁰ and through Him God reconciled everything to Himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

²¹ This includes you who were once far away from God. You were His enemies, separated from Him by your evil thoughts and actions. ²² Yet now He has reconciled you to Himself through the death of Christ in His physical body. As a result, He has brought you into His own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before Him without a single fault.

²³ But you must continue to believe this truth and **stand firmly** in it. Don't drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News. The Good News has been preached all over the world, and I, Paul, have been appointed as God's servant to proclaim it.

1. Take turns sharing what Colossians 1:13-23 means to you.

Learn

Read Colossians 3:1-4, 5-9

¹ Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. ² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. ³ For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all His glory.

2. If Paul were writing this today what "earthly things" would he refer to?

⁵ So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. ⁶ Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. ⁷ You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world. ⁸ But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. ⁹ Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds.

3. What are some temptations we face currently as students?

Read Colossians 3:10-14

¹⁰ Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him. ¹¹ In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and He lives in all of us. ¹² Since God chose you to be the holy people He loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

4. What truths can we hold on to that can keep us standing firm?

Read Colossians 3:16-17

¹⁶ Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom He gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

5. How should we respond to these sins as representatives of Jesus Christ?

Read Colossians 3:23

²³ Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

6. One great thing about the Bible is how it points out behavior that contradicts Christ's behavior AND it tells us HOW we can overcome our sin nature and LIVE a victorious Christian life. Do you agree? Share examples.

7. How do these verses encourage you to swim against the cultural current?

Live

Read Colossians 4:5-6

⁴ Live wisely among those who are not believers, ⁵ and make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.

8. What qualities of Jesus do people see when they talk to you? What changes do you need to make to your daily living to represent Christ better?

Lead

Colossians is such a great book if you are looking to not only stand firm in your faith but to share your faith with others through actions. I encourage you to come back to these verses for guidance if you are struggling with how to share the love of God.

It is truly amazing how you can impact people just through your actions. Keep that in mind as you interact with the people in your life, whether hanging out with family or with friends or meeting on Zoom!

Who do you know that needs to hear about the love of God? Practice your Christ-like actions around them and see if they notice something different about you. I challenge you to talk to them about the hope that you have and to **bring them to the next Zoom meeting!!**

Good luck walking the walk- just like Jesus did!