

Title: What If You Could Do It? – Colossians 3 1-17

Read:

¹⁻² So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective. ³⁻⁴Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ. ⁵⁻⁸And that means killing off everything connected with that way of death: sexual promiscuity, impurity, lust, doing whatever you feel like whenever you feel like it, and grabbing whatever attracts your fancy. That's a life shaped by things and feelings instead of by God. It's because of this kind of thing that God is about to explode in anger. It wasn't long ago that you were doing all that stuff and not knowing any better. But you know better now, so make sure it's all gone for good: bad temper, irritability, meanness, profanity, dirty talk. ⁹⁻¹¹Don't lie to one another. You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it. All the old fashions are now obsolete. Words like Jewish and non-Jewish, religious and irreligious, insider and outsider, uncivilized and uncouth, slave and free, mean nothing. From now on everyone is defined by Christ, everyone is included in Christ. ¹²⁻¹⁴So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it. ¹⁵⁻¹⁷Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.

Think:

Wow, Paul is reminding us that we are now new people because of what Jesus did for us. I don't know about you but I find it hard to live up to the expectations Paul has laid out before us. I'm not so good at not getting angry. My thoughts are not always pure. And on the odd occasions words that come out of my mouth are not the words I would want my Mum to have heard. So it seems that I can not live a Jesus like life, how about you? Can you live that way at school or college? No didn't think so. So do we just give up and go back to our old ways of living? Well you won't be surprised to hear me say no. We are right, we can't live the pure life on our own, but we can pray to God to help us. And every now and then when we are tempted we can use a very simple technique to help us. When a mate winds us up and we want to get angry, we can say to ourselves; "I know I can't stay calm by myself, but if I could stay calm what's the first thing I would do?" And then do it. It might be leave, it might be smile, but if we do it we're on our way. When we want to take a swig of the booze that our mates are passing around, we can say to ourselves; "I know I want to take a swig, but if I didn't, what's the first thing I would do?" And then do it. It might be grab a coke, it might be go home. And if we can do all these things whilst praying to Jesus, then we will be living the pure life.

Pray:

Lord the next time I am tempted would you remind me of this simple technique to help me. Amen.

Action:

Can we remind you that there is an important survey going on at the moment. IF you haven't taken the survey yet, it is really important that you go to aftershock.org.uk and fill it in today. Bye for now.