

"ROBUST CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP" GCF Sermon Series on the Letter to the Colossians  
**#8 "Growth through Group Discipleship"**  
Colossians 3:12-17

Although discipleship begins with an individual act of faith in Christ, no disciple can reach full potential apart from fellowship with others in a group. Whether through involvement in the Body of Christ or in small groups within the body, group discipleship is indispensable for spiritual growth. Resolve right now to become part of a Growth Group and commit yourself to a one-on-one as well as to a group approach to discipleship. This is the essence of Paul's threefold appeal in our Bible text today.

## 1. He speaks in the plural, vv. 12-13, 15-16.

- a. "Chosen people," "yourselves" and "one another" are words that indicate plural subjects.
  - b. "Members of one body" and "in your hearts" depict appeal for ministry within a group.
- From the hundreds of disciples, Jesus chose to work with a group of twelve (including Judas who betrayed him) and within the Twelve, a circle of three—Peter, James and John. Yet individually he disciplined "doubting Thomas", restored a discouraged Peter, and related to John as "the disciple whom Jesus loved".

## 2. He specifies the prescriptions, vv. 12-14.

- a. Clothe yourselves with relational virtues of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, v. 12
  - b. Be patient with other's weaknesses; forgive cases of personal grievances, v. 13.
  - c. Love makes all Christian virtues work consistently and mutually beneficial, v. 14.
- "Clothe" and "put on" as metaphors assume a continuing fresh changes or constant renewal of these virtues because they will constantly be challenged. Add the thought of "fashion" to adjust these virtues to new challenges of application.

## 3. He states the provisions, vv. 15-17.

- a. The peace of Christ—where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is peace, v. 15.
  - b. The word of Christ—apply the word of Christ primarily as you "teach and admonish" each other as well as when you fellowship and when you resolve conflicts in Christian relationships, v. 16.
  - c. The authority of Christ—doing all "in the name of the Lord" means that when we say that "Jesus is Lord" all our actions are affected by and done under his Lordship.
- God does not expect anything from us that He himself does not provide the strength and resources for us to do what He expects. I can do all things in Christ's name, through Christ's strength and for Christ's glory.