

THE WORD FOR TODAY

RULES FOR LIVING AS GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE, HOLY AND DEARLY LOVED (Paul's Letter to the Colossians Chapter 3, 12-17)



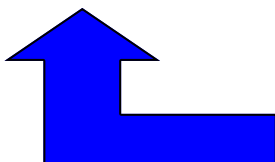
Paul was writing to the young church in Colossae, an inland town in modern-day Turkey. The church had been founded by Epaphras, who had been converted to Christianity by Paul in Ephesus, and was probably mainly made up of Gentiles. Epaphras was concerned that false teachers were leading this young church astray.

Paul was keen to show them that Jesus Christ was all they needed. The teachings they were getting from elsewhere could never satisfy them—they were empty words. This passage is towards the end of the letter and reminded the Colossians that through Christ's death and rising again they are forgiven and brought into God's family—chosen to be his children.

His words speak to us today, surrounded by secular temptations, none of which can fully satisfy us. Jesus Christ is still the answer!

Follow the words of this passage round the church, beginning on the north wall of this little building. We use the New International Version of the Bible, which you can find on the internet under Bible Gateway. Use the benches to pause and think.

The whole "Word for Today" can be found on the church website, www.libertonkirk.net. You can also find there previous "Words for Today", meditations and prayers on other Bible passages.



Turn immediately left to find the first Bible extract on the bench

*“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and
dearly loved”*

1

We have so much to be thankful for! To have a God who loves us dearly, wipes away our sins, and chooses to adopt us into his family—a God who is always there, always willing to listen and guide—is beyond belief. But it is real, as those who trust and believe in him know.

This is something which is with us always—this knowledge of a being beyond ourselves who cares about us every minute of every day, whether we are thinking about him or not. It is reassurance that we cannot have from anywhere else. Cherish it with all your heart and mind and soul!



*Lord, thank you
for drawing me into your
family
as a forgiven and loved
child of God.*

*Let me never forget what I
owe to you and your
grace.*

(No. 2 is on the bench just round the corner of the church building you are looking at)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

***“ . . . Clothe yourselves with compassion,
kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”***

2

Paul is not just encouraging us to try to live a better life—he is asking us to take on these virtues almost as a second skin—to *clothe* ourselves with them. We all know that our compassion and kindness are stretched to the limit in some circumstances, our pride gets the better of us sometimes, we can be anything but gentle, and our patience wears thin. We end up apologising to God for our behaviour at the end of the day. But being chosen, forgiven and loved does give us some responsibility to behave well, doesn't it?



***Lord, it's not easy to be kind and gentle all the time;
it's not easy to be humble.***

***We know, nevertheless, that it is the best way to live.
Help us to be better at it every day.***

(Continue along this side of the church to find No. 3)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

3

I’m sure I’m not alone when I complain about nations continuing to wage age-old feuds and bringing up things which took place years ago as justification for their actions. Jesus told a story once about needing to clear any obstruction from our own eyes before helping somebody else. We need to sort out our own grievances and bitterness before we complain about others. Jesus also said that if we did not forgive others we could not expect God to forgive us—and that prompts some thought!

If you’ve got a grievance against someone from long ago, go and sort it out with them—they will feel better, and so will you. As far as the complaints go, try praying about the situation—God could be the only one who can sort things out.



Lord, give me the strength to forgive those people who have hurt me in the past, and to move forward. Keep me constant in prayer for the ongoing disputes and conflicts in the world.

(Walk along the back of the church and turn right to find No. 4 on the Prayer Bench)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

4

The Beatles sang a song which ties in with Paul's sentiments: "All you need is love". Jesus said that the two most important commandments were to love God and love our neighbour. He didn't say we had to *like* our neighbour but loving somebody means that we want the best for them even though we may not find them appealing. Love helps us to be kind, patient and forgiving, and it's rewarding. If you are not convinced, then give it a try!



***Lord, show me how to love my neighbour
with no judgement or harsh criticism.
Let me learn from Jesus, who cared for everybody.***

(Turn left to find No. 5 on the bench at the side of the church)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

***“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
since as members of one body you were
called to peace. And be thankful.”***

5

There's a song that goes "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me." There is so much unrest and conflict in this world, not just far away in other countries but here on our streets, and sometimes in our own families. If we know Jesus, we know his promise "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives." We can know his peace in the midst of argument and be able to spread that peace to others. This deep peace within us is such a blessing, and we should indeed be thankful for it.



***Lord, thank you for the peace of knowing you
as my Saviour and my Friend.
Let me not be afraid to let others know of it.
Let me be a peacemaker wherever I find discord.***

(Walk towards the front of the church and find No. 6 on the bench beside the cairn.)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

***“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly
as you teach and admonish one another with
all wisdom, and as you sing psalms,
hymns and spiritual songs
with gratitude in your hearts to God.”***

6

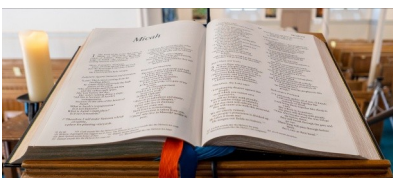
There is something special about worshipping together with other like-minded people. It is good to be alone with God, but it is good to be together with him—you get not just companionship but feedback, new insights. That’s why we encourage people at Liberton Kirk not just to join in our worship in church, but to join a small group where they can read the bible, discuss what it is saying to them, and find mutual support for daily life. We don’t always sing—we save that for the larger groups where most of us can sing without being heard!

***Lord, help me to realise
the riches of your Word
in the Bible, and draw on
the fellowship of other
Christians for
understanding.***

***Let me always worship
you with all my heart.***



(Walk round the corner of the church to find No. 7 on one of the benches)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

7

It is so important that if we are doing anything in Jesus' name, it is something worthy of him. It's no good expecting him somehow to make behaviour acceptable because it's in his name, when it clearly isn't. We want to give glory to God in everything we do.

It's good to go back to the message on the bracelets which used to be in fashion for young people saying “What would Jesus do?” The guidance will come if we seek it, and we have a perfect example set before us.



***Lord, I pray that I
would honour you in
everything I say
and do.
Let my thanks be
wholehearted.***

***Guide me along the
right paths, always in
the steps of Jesus,
I pray.***



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