

Sunday, May 23, 2021—Colossians 3:13 Forbearing & Forgiving One Another

Colossians 3:13

- **Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.**
- **Forbearing one another**—the Greek word translated “forbearing” means to hold oneself up against, i.e. (figuratively) put up with:—bear with, endure, forbear, suffer.
 - Matthew 17:17— “. . . How long shall I suffer you? . . .”
 - Colossians 3:13
 - II Thessalonians 1:4
 - II Timothy 4:3
- Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* defines “[forbearing](#)” as follows:
 - 1. Ceasing; pausing; withholding from action; exercising patience and indulgence.
 - 2. *adjective* Patient; long suffering.
 - A ceasing or restraining from action; patience; long suffering.
- Proverbs 25:15—“long forbearing”
- Ephesians 4:2—Paul is saying that believers are going to need to be patient and long suffering with one another. Notice the connection in this verse between longsuffering and forbearing. Lowliness, meekness, and longsuffering are the mindset that make the activity of “forbearing one another in love” possible.
 - Philippians 2:3
- Galatians 5:22-23—the mindset of lowliness, meekness, and longsuffering is the mind set of God the Holy Spirit. Put another way, our ability to be “forbearing” is going to come from the Spirit of God working in us to produce His own mindset within us. Our natural flesh programming is expressed in verses 19-21 and they are all about speaking and acting out for self.
 - Galatians 5:26—note how what we are talking about this morning is the opposite of what we studied in this verse.

- Colossians 3:12-13—putting on the mindset of God the Holy Spirit in verse 12 enables the believers to act like God the Holy Spirit in verse 13. Note the connection again between putting on the mindset of “longsuffering” in verse 12 with the believer’s ability to be “forebearing” in verse 13. Only the Spirit of God working in the believer is capable of accomplishing this.
- Ephesians 4:2—notice that we are instructed to be forbearing one another in love. This is not the first time that we observed the idea of “love” tied to a one-anothering statement.
 - Galatians 5:13—“by love serve one another.”
- I Corinthians 13:4, 7—one reason that “charity” is the more excellent way is because it produces and manifests the life of Christ now in our mortal flesh. Charity allows us to suffer long. Charity enables us to bear and endure all things. Charity is what allows us to be “forbearing” toward “one another in love.”
- **and forgiving one another**—this verse contains an additional one-anothering statement. Believers are instructed to be “forgiving” towards “one another.”
- The verb translated “forgiving” is a *present participle* in Greek which expresses continuous or repeated action. Thus the “ing” on the end of the verb “forgive” in English. In the present, Paul is instructing the Colossians to be “forgiving” in a continued and ongoing manner.
- Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* defines “forgiving” as:
 - Pardoning; remitting.
 - Disposed to forgive; inclined to overlook offenses; mild; merciful; compassionate; as a forgiving temper.
- The *Oxford English Dictionary* presents the following relevant meanings:
 - To give up, cease to harbor (resentment, wrath). Also, to give up one's resolve (to do something).
 - To give up resentment against, pardon (an offender); to abandon one's claim against.
- Who are we to “forgiving” towards? Who or what is the target of this continuous and repeated action of forgiveness? *One another*. As saints we are to be reciprocating towards one another in the area of forgiveness.
- Ephesians 4:32—instead of manifesting the vices of the flesh in verse 31 by walking “as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind” the renewed mind functions in accordance with verse 32.

- *Be ye kind one to another*—here is a review of a one-anothering we have already considered.
 - Romans 12:10—kindness is defined as the unselfish concerns for others welfare; desire to be helpful.
 - God the Father is kind towards us.
 - Titus 3:4—note that “kindness” is coupled with “love” in this verse.
 - Ephesians 2:7
 - We should be reflective of the kindness that God has demonstrated toward us by being “kind one to another” with in the body of Christ.
 - Acts 28:2—we should not be treading each other like foreigners. Rather we should:
 - Not be cold or indifferent to one-another.
 - Not have selective acceptance of others.
 - Prefer to see others honored rather than ourselves.
 - Help and support one-another
- *Tenderhearted*—“having a tender heart; easily moved by †fear, pity, sorrow, or love; †timid; pitiful, compassionate; loving; impressionable.” (OED)
 - To be very sensitive to one-another.
 - To have compassion for one-another.
 - I John 3:17
 - To have inward affection or tender mercies.
 - Colossians 3:12
 - God the Father is tenderhearted towards us.
 - James 5:11
 - Psalms 145:8-9

- In the context, being “tenderhearted” has to do with showing compassion when our brothers and sisters have faults.
- Note the heart of the matter. In verses 17 and 18 the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their minds because of the blindness of their hearts. Later, in verse 32 believers are instructed to be “tenderhearted” towards one another.