

Colossians 3:8-15

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

The Passing of Prejudice

In a day when racial violence throws whole countries into butchery while the rest of the world turns its back, and when world organizations meet to discuss equal rights in a country that by law will cause the abortion of a percentage of female unborns, it is good to be reminded that God is no respecter of persons. In other words, God is not prejudice, nor does He sanction discrimination on the basis of sex, creed, colour, intelligence, or race.

As a matter of fact, as God looks upon mankind prior to personal salvation, He sees them all alike: "There is no-one righteous, not even one; there is no-one who understands, no-one who seeks God. (Romans 3:10-11 NIV). Without apology the scriptures declare man incapable of finding approval before God by birth or by deeds: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23 NIV)

What's more important is that upon salvation (new life in Christ by faith - see John 3), any manner of prejudice is incompatible with the Christian walk. In Romans, Paul not only denounced pride, but also denounced prejudice: "Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith." (Romans 3:29-30 NIV). Here Paul states that racial bias and religious bias are excluded from the gift of salvation, they are incompatible with God's grace.

This scripture teaches that justification (being declared righteous before God by faith) is a great equalizer. In coming to Christ for eternal life, there are no "betters", in growing in Christ, there are no "betters". In practical terms, Christians should ask of themselves: "Is there any believer that I would not share a meal with? Is there any person that I would not reach out a helping hand to in time of need? Placing people on any scale of response ("too good" or "not good enough") reduces relationships to the philosophy of the cults which teach "progressive steps of perfection." Such a view is incompatible with Christ!

This is not to say that Christians should embrace any and every lifestyle, Paul also said "I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people." (Romans 16:17-18 NIV).

Nevertheless, prejudice is always incompatible with God's gift of salvation and must not be a part of the believer's life: "My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favouritism" (James 2:1 NIV).

What is my response:
