**1. Motivate**

What’s a positive example of actions speaking louder than words?

A video introduction is available. View it at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_6esnv51j> If you have no Wi-Fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/5d9pbesb>

* you are greeted with a smile
* the restaurant server brings refills without being asked
* a store will gift wrap a purchase for free
* when the teacher finds out your family has had to self-quarantine, he/she brings assignments and books to your door
* the car dealer personally contacts you when a service bulletin is issued for your car
* a neighbor clears snow for you voluntarily
* a friend volunteers to give you a ride when your car is in the shop
* Samaritan’s Purse workers help you clean up after a hurricane
* your Bible Study class brings food when your family is in need

**2. Transition**

As Christians, we claim to have the love of Jesus in our hearts.

* How we live communicates whether or not that is a reality.
* This will affect how believable is our witness to them.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Seek the Things of Christ

Listen for where to set your thoughts.

Colossians 3:1-3 (NIV) Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

What are Christians to desire (seek)?

* set your *hearts* on things above
* your focus is on Christ and His rule in your life
* set your *minds* on things above
* your thoughts and your emotions are focused on knowing Jesus better and serving Him more faithfully

What is the significance of Christ being at the right hand of God?

* Jesus is in a place of power and authority
* He can plead our cause before the Father
* as we surrender to His authority in our lives He will guide and direct our thoughts and actions

Paul says, “you died.” What are the implications of that statement in the context of these verses?

* he means when Christ died, our old sinful nature was placed in/on Him and it also died
* we no longer need to respond to the temptations of the world or the temptations of our own sinful nature
* we were also placed in Christ when He was risen from the dead … we now have a new life

How exactly do we set our heart and mind on things above? What are these “things above” that we should set our minds on?

* daily reading and contemplation of God’s Word
* applying God’s Truth to your life
* attributes of God which the Holy Spirit reproduces in our lives
* knowing what God wants us to be
* knowing the power and authority of God – learning to depend on that power
* the assurance of God’s love for us
* worship, thanksgiving, declaring your faith in God daily
* set secular pursuits aside so you can spend time with God each day

What are some challenges we may face in trying to live an authentic Christian life? What are earthly things which try to crowd out these “things above”?

* we live busy lives with our family and work responsibilities
* there are so many recreation and entertainment opportunities to distract us
* some of us find it hard to put down our phones and quit texting, viewing, etc.
* our culture is becoming more and more secular
* being more interested in material things than in spiritual
* in some situations, Christian values are not popular … may be accused of being racist or homophobic

What evidence would cause people to say someone is more focused on things above and not on what’s here on earth?

* how you spend your time – ministry, worship, investing in family
* how you spend your money – spending under control, faithful in tithing and giving beyond
* unsolicited words and actions of kindness to others
* joy and peace predominate one’s life … not anger or grumpiness

3.2 Put On the Character of Christ

Listen for what to wear.

Colossians 3:12-15 (NIV) Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

With what qualities of life should we clothe ourselves, according to this passage?

* compassion
* kindness

Note the similarity of this list with the fruit of the Spirit found in Gal. 5:22

* humility
* gentleness
* patience
* bear with, forgive each other
* love

If these are, indeed, *fruit* of the Spirit, how do we “put them on” when they are qualities that are *produced* by God’s Holy Spirit? What is the Holy Spirit’s role? What is my role?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Spirit’s Role | The Believer’s Role |
| * make me aware of choices/options of behavior
* make me sensitive to what should be done
* work to convict/convince me of the right choice
* prompt me in the right direction
* empower me to do the right thing
 | * daily submission to the Lord
* daily communication with God
* spending time with Him
* worship Him
* trust in God’s power to enable me do the right thing
 |

When Paul says “let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts” he uses a term similar to the rule of an umpire or referee in a sports competition. What kinds of rulings does an umpire or referee make?

* strike or ball

Basically the team of referees have absolute authority.

* in bounds or out of bounds
* safe or out
* foul or no foul
* legal or illegal action

How would this apply to the “peace of Christ” making the calls, making the rulings in our relationship with others?

* Christ has forgiven us
* His Holy Spirit guides our decisions to forgive others
* where humanly we are not inclined to forgive, God would make the ruling that we will forgive
* we need to surrender to that absolute authority of God’s Spirit within us

Paul says, “and be thankful”… what does this have to do with living out the message of the Gospel?

* a thankful attitude is counter to that of grumping and complaining
* shows praise and worship of God
* demonstrates a life of faith and trust in God

3.3 Your Life Should Point to Christ

Listen for music.

Colossians 3:16-17 (NIV) 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. 17 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.

What does it mean to have the “word of Christ dwell in you richly”?

* you read and carefully consider what Christ said and did
* you read and study what the whole Bible says … the Old Testament repeatedly points to the coming Savior
* you apply God’s Truth to your life, obey it
* you have a desire to read and fill your heart and mind with God’s Truth
* you are hungry for it, just like you hunger daily for your meals

What actions demonstrate that believers treasure the word of Christ?

* we sing and enjoy songs about what God tells us
* we live lives of gratitude … not anger, not dissatisfaction, not passivity about God’s blessings
* our actions our daily tasks are done in the Name of Jesus … with His authority and His blessing

How has music helped shape your knowledge and understanding of God?

* children’s choruses still echo in our minds
* when we listen to Christian music, those are the lyrics that we fill our minds with
* in contrast to either the secular passion or anger in the world’s music
* there is powerful theology in traditional hymns (which we are missing out on IMHO)
* there are worshipful thoughts in contemporary Christian music

What are some signs that show when our lives *don’t* match the message we share?

* excessive anger, fear, doubt
* promise things then don’t carry through
* cheating on income tax
* dabble in pornography
* not a good steward of finances – overspend, max out credit cards, do not tithe
* flirtatious relationships, even though you are married
* various types of substance abuse (including chocolate!)
* shady jokes or stories we tell

How would acting “in the Name of Jesus” help us avoid some of these un-Christlike attitudes and actions?

* when Christ’s authority is guiding our choices, we won’t choose to do these things
* God’s power at work in our lives steers us away from such actions
* pretty hard to tell a dirty joke or view porn “in the Name of Jesus”
* we think twice about overindulging in any substance “in the Name of Jesus”

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Confess.

* Are there any areas of your life that don’t align with the message of Christ?
* Pray and ask God to reveal any sins or habits.
* Confess those and repent.

Accept correction.

* Give a trusted friend permission to point out times when you are thinking more like the world or when you are thinking not like Christ.

Share.

* As God gives you opportunities to share your faith, be willing to admit your own sin and failure.
* It’s important to be transparent but keep the focus on Christ who has forgiven and transformed you.

ALLOWANCE
BINDS
BODY
CALLED
CHOSE
CHRIST
CLOTHE
COUNSEL
DIED
EARTH
FAULTS
FILL
FORGIVE
GENTLENESS
HARMONY
HEARTS
HEAVEN
HIDDEN
HOLY
HONOR
HUMILITY
HYMNS
KINDNESS
LOVE

Word Search Puzzle

That’s a lot of words that got lost on the page. Humph! Somebody is responsible for this mix up, that’s for sure. You and your class better find them. You’ll also want to remind yourselves of the context where the words came from … that Bible passage from today’s lesson. Probably that person beside you needs to study it. Humph! If you wimp out, go to <https://tinyurl.com/5d9pbesb> for help or for more Family Activities

MEMBERS
MERCY
MESSAGE
OFFENDS
PATIENCE
PEACE
PEOPLE
PERFECT
PSALMS
RAISED
REALITIES
REPRESENTATIVE
RICHNESS
RULE
SIGHTS
SING
SONGS
SPIRITUAL
TEACH
TENDERHEARTED
THANKFUL
TOGETHER
WISDOM
YOURSELVES