

# Bible Studies for Life: May 16

*Live the Message • Colossians 3:1-3, 12-17*

*By Don Schuman*



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Salvation is a gift of God (Rom. 6:23). We cannot earn it or buy it. As last week's lesson explained, God saves us when we believe the message of faith, repent of sins, and trust in His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior. Trusting Jesus as Lord involves a new lifestyle that lives the message, guided by the Holy Spirit.

**Look to the Best (3:1-3).** Living the message calls for setting our sights on Christ in heaven and heavenly ways. Israelite King Solomon's extravagant lifestyle was the best this world could ever offer, yet he found no fulfillment in it. He wrote about his dissatisfaction in the book of Ecclesiastes. Jesus Christ offers much, much more than the best of this world!

– Look up to Christ and live the message for the fulfilled life.

– Look up to Christ for our satisfaction. We are complete in Christ (2:9-11). Therefore, our complete satisfaction is in Him.

– Look up to Christ for our justification. Jesus, our Redeemer, has cleansed us of all unrighteousness and has

justified us by taking up His cross.

– Look up to Christ and realize that you are saved to things in heaven if your faith and hope is in Christ.

**Look Your Best (3:12-15).** Living the message begins and continues from the inside out. Godly character will stand out in a crowd, far brighter than fine threads. God tells us through the Apostle Paul to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and, like an overcoat, godly love.

These godly characteristics are listed in Galatians chapter five as the fruit of the Spirit. They are evidence that the Spirit of Christ is working in us and bearing that fruit. There is a difference between putting on Christ-like character and just putting on (as in pretending).

The “one body” (v. 15) is the body of Christ, His church. All true believers are a part of that family of God. The Bible says, “Be thankful.” We should be thankful now and all year round for what we have. Even more, we should acknowledge with a grateful heart that God is the Supplier of our blessings.

**Live the Best (3:16-17).** Living the message is the best life God has for us. Taking in the Word of Christ (v. 16) in Sunday School, small group studies, sermons, and personal Bible study allows the Word to richly dwell within us. Memorization for our personal benefit also allows the Word to live in our hearts and minds.

Whether or not we can carry a tune in a bucket, a grateful heart has perfect pitch when singing the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to the Lord. These songs enrich our daily walk with the Lord. Reading the psalms of Israelite King David shows us how David endured and enjoyed the mountains and valleys of life with songs in his heart.

– In Jesus, even the poorest Christian barely existing today

on the streets of India can find contentment and hope far beyond a luxurious, secular American lifestyle.

– In Christ, the persecuted and tortured Christian in Africa can find peace and joy that far exceed the temporary happiness of the most peaceful place on the planet.

– In Jesus Christ, Christians under the oppressive and intolerant government today in China can experience the love of God.

Many people in America are too distracted by the world and do not see the greater life in Christ. We have set our affections on things of this earth instead of on things above. If we would spend just one week as some of the oppressed Christians around the world live, maybe we would better get our eyes off ourselves and earthly things and get them on Jesus Christ and heavenly things.

To best live the message, all that we say and do should be in the name of the Lord Jesus. American poet Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) said, “Be true to your work, your word, and your friend.” That may not be a bad philosophy for anyone or any business, but the message of Christ takes that philosophy to a grander spiritual level.

When we do all with our heart in the name of the Lord Jesus, we are true to His work in and through us, true to the His message, and true to our greatest Friend, the Lord and Savior who laid down His life so all of us can be saved and become friends and family of God. In the name of the Lord Jesus is how we live His message.

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