

Spiritual Love and the Christian life

Colossians 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

Colossians 3:13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Colossians 3:14 Beyond all these things *put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.*

How do you ‘put on love?’ As a member of the human race, as a member of the body of Christ: How do you ‘put on love?’ In one sense this is the most important question for every believer in Jesus Christ. While the answer is very simple it begs an even bigger question.

The answer is that this love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit which the Holy Spirit gives to every believer who is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The most important question for the unbeliever is how to be saved?

The most important question for the believer is how to be Filled with Holy Spirit?

And the answer to both is by Faith!

By faith in Jesus Christ the unbeliever is saved.

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By faith in Holy Spirit the believer is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

The original manuscript starts off with the imperative command **put on**

Colossians 3:12 ...Put on therefore as chosen ones of God, holy and having been loved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience

After two chapters on the Pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, this is the sixth imperative that will result in making Jesus Christ pre-eminent in your life. He is not your life, because you say so or because you would like to think He is. There is something you have to consistently do where Jesus Christ does indeed become your life.

Six Imperatives of the Christ like Life

1. Verse 1: Keep seeking the things above — how do you do this?
2. Verse 2: Set your mind on things above — What am I to think?
3. Verse 5: Consider the members of your body — dead...Wow.
4. Verse 8: Put these things aside — what is to take their place?
5. Verse 9: not lie — well, I try not to
6. Verse 12: Put on a heart of ...— I try but people get in the way!

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The presence of these six imperatives demands that we correctly understand imperatives or commands in the NT.

The Imperative Mood (Greek)

The Greek Imperative Mood — the Mood of Command. There are 615 imperatives in the New Testament epistles (excluding the Gospels, Acts, and Revelation). Let's list them on a piece of paper, pass them out and tell believers: "This is what you are to do for God. First, learn the 615 plus commands and then do them because I know what an imperative is." Do you really know?!

Many preachers read, exhort and then demand that they be done for God in order to be spiritual or to be blessed by God, so that God will do for us if we will do these things for God. Several, sound like commands that one can do: Don't lie...I can do that though it doesn't mean that I always will not lie. Don't judge, be considerate, be righteous.

However, there are others that we're not too sure about and, if honest, know there are some that we cannot "do."

“Be imitators of God” this is a *Present Active Imperative* (Eph. 5:1).

OK, get to it—be an imitator of God. Or 1 Peter 1:16 **you shall be holy for I am holy.** Yes, this is an *Imperative* command.

How are you going to be God? Be holy? Imitate God? Take the New Commandment by Jesus Christ “Love one another” this is an *imperative* command.--i.e., when you don't want to -- when they've sinned against you that 7 x 70 times.

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Why all the imperatives since it sounds as though God says, "Do these and I will bless, make you spiritual..." We can make a list, try to do it only to discover that we are failures, we can't do them.

We are not unlike the generation to whom God gave the Mosaic Law. When they heard all the commands of the Mosaic Law they boasted, that they would do them all.

Exodus 24:3 Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!"

Again in

Exodus 24:7 Then he (Moses) took the book of the covenant and read *it* in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!"

Unfortunately, they couldn't even keep the big 10!

And neither can we! Not in the flesh.

1 Corinthians 2 states that we can't even understand Scriptures because it takes the power of the Holy Spirit. However, it doesn't take the Holy Spirit to figure out what an imperative is. We are on the wrong track when we see imperatives and then make a "do" list from them.

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Isaiah 28:10 is exactly what the priests did by the time of Jesus Christ: "Do and do, do and do; rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here and a little there." Change that to "an imperative here and an imperative there." Put it all together and that's "living" the Christian life.

The true gospel:

Isaiah 28:12, "He said to them, `Here is rest, give rest to the weary, Here is repose,' but they would not listen."

Why would they not listen to the call of grace? Because they can read imperatives! Do & do, instead of what is He really saying? Rest. Faith.

You are given a list of imperatives and then told not to try to do them, in fact told you cannot do them! Then why the imperatives? How can one then fulfill the plan of God? Why are all these imperatives in the letters to the Church?

Here is an illustration that will give some idea of what is going on in our study of imperatives. In Matthew 13 Jesus Christ has just spoken to the crowd in parables (verse 3). Then in verse 10, "**And the disciples came and said to Him, `Why do You speak to them in parables?'"** Why don't you make it clear? While parables sound simple, their meaning is obscure and hidden. Paraphrasing, "Why do you speak to them in imperatives?" If all I'm supposed to do is rest in your Spirit and trust Him to do them, why did You put them in the imperative mood?

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What we are about to study is why so many pastors/teachers/authors come up with lists of what one has to do; to be saved, to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, they never see "just trusting Him." Why?

1. IMPERATIVE MOOD — Where did I get the information we are about to study? From some extremely deep Greek grammar book, etc? No. This is from the most basic Greek grammar -- Dana & Mantey -- a very small book!, i.e., not advanced or deep "stuff"!

Mood -- in the Greek, mood is always related with a verbal idea and its relationship to reality. The verbal idea -- what exists now or will exist, or wished to exist, is mood. The verbal idea has existed (past), exists right now (present) or will exist in the future.

A quote from the grammar book: "**THE IMPERATIVE MOOD IS REALITY THAT IS THE FURTHEST REMOVED FROM POSSIBILITY.**" From another grammar--"the imperative is the last developed mood in the Greek language." To express mood (action of the verb in relationship with reality), Dana & Mantey use the following illustration: "To present the idea of a child running: It is impossible to do this without affirming either the fact that he is running (in the present), has run (in the past) or will run (in the future), or the possibility of his running." Mood--the affirmation of relationship to reality. "Whether the verbal idea is objectively a fact or not is not the point. Mood presents the way in which the matter is conceived--past, present, potential or future.

2. "IN THE IMPERATIVE MOOD, THE ACTION IS CONCEIVED AS OCCURRING IN THE FUTURE." Why moods in the Greek language? Mood represents an attitude of mind

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on the part of the speaker. Who gives the imperatives in the Christian life? God. Begin to think through this principle. The imperatives will be from God's point of view since He gave them to us. "In the strictest analysis of the verb function in the language there are but two essential moods, mood being the way in which an action is conceived with reference to reality. It presents two viewpoints: that which is actual and that which is possible."

3. **"THE IMPERATIVE IS THE FURTHEST REMOVED FROM REALITY."** What is the *indicative* (i.e., present active indicative; aorist active indicative) mood? The mood which denotes the verbal idea as actual--that is reality!

"The possible action expressed in 3 different ways. When that action is dependent upon existing or known conditions, being objectively possible, the subjunctive mood is used. If the action is possible without depending on existing condition viewed as subjective, there is the optative mood. When the mind, purpose and realization of a possible action through the exercise of the will upon the intermediate agent and conditioned upon the agent's response being volitionally possible, the imperative mood."

Even if you don't see what is mentioned above, note that it was the last developed in grammar...the furthest removed from reality. The Greeks kept working on their language and came up with the imperative idea to express it. What does all of this mean? The imperative is the mood of command or entreaty, the mood of volition. "It is the genius of the imperative to express appeal of will to will." (Think through this so you will see what is happening.) The will (desire) of God to the will (desire) of the man, basically the believer. **"THE IMPERATIVE MOOD**

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EXPRESSES NEITHER PROBABILITY NOR

POSSIBILITY...."[When God gives an imperative, it does not mean that you can or will do it. If you open the bible (Greek), find an imperative mood, and state that God says "do this", therefore, God knows if He gives a command, you can do it — you would be showing your ignorance of language — not just of the bible.] "...When God uses the imperative it **ONLY** expresses **INTENTION**. It (imperative mood) is therefore the furthest removed from reality."

An imperative mood does not mean that you will do it or even that you can do it. All it does is express the intention of the will of God to the believer — it is the furthest removed from reality of what you would or could do. When stated in the imperative, you are getting further and further away from reality--because it doesn't even mean possibility nor does it mean even probability (that you will).

What is the point of the imperative?

Why write in that fashion?

So that we would know what God desires/wills for us to do. It doesn't mean that you can do it. Why give it if I can't do it...because you don't understand language and have moved to theology. Stay with language...don't go to theology. What is the purpose of the imperative mood--**SIMPLY TO EXPRESS A WILL IN RELATIONSHIP TO REALITY THAT IS THE FURTHEST REMOVED FROM REALITY. IT DOES NOT MEAN PROBABILITY NOR POSSIBILITY--only intention.**

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Ok, knowing that we cannot fulfill these imperative moods on our own, God has supplied every believer with the power to actually do the imperative mood, God the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 3:5 "Does He God the Father who provides or supplies you WITH THE Holy Spirit, even working power (dunama) in [not among] you [plural]...."

God has provided everything that will be necessary.

The imperative does not mean it can be done or will be done but gives the desire of the one who has commanded it. We have simplified the imperative to "do it" which is not what the imperative means...but "this is God's desire/will." The imperative has nothing to do with me in that can I, will I do it?

1. The point of the imperative is to relay God's will.
2. It lets me know what God is like but that I can't be like God...can't even love like God.
3. I can't forgive 70 x 7, but I know it's the desire of God.

Where do we fit into all of the above? **Philippians 2:13, "For it is God who is at work in you (Gal 3:5) both to will (desire) and to work for His good pleasure."** Which member of the Godhead? The Holy Spirit! The verb "is" is in the *indicative* mood--REALITY! Has nothing to do with our faith.

"work" ...*present active participle* -- working.

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"both" — Two aspects. It is not simple. Here is a command. You decide if you will or will not do it. Much more is involved if you understand this verse. The whole process begins with our faith. "BOTH" 1) to will and 2) even to desire. The will/desire of God to the will/desire of man--this is where the Holy Spirit comes in. HE EVEN WORKS OUR WILL so that I will desire to do this. We CAN'T EVEN DESIRE ourselves!

Example: I desire to drive a large crane to build a road. I can desire that all I want but I simply can't do it as all that takes much training. I desire to be a great brain surgeon ...can desire all I want but it doesn't mean I can do it. Probability/possibility are not there. Therefore when we put our faith in the Holy Spirit, He gives us the desire to desire. Does the flesh desire to do God's will? No! Our flesh nature (Inherited Sin Nature) never desires to please God. If the *imperative* mood is the will of God to the will of man, forget it because man is not going to do what God wills. God graced us out — He gave us the Holy Spirit to both:

1. Will/desire and
2. To work, i.e., to do it! God the Father has provided us the Holy Spirit — the working power in us. In difficult times a bona fide prayer is: Father, I don't want to forgive this person; give me the desire to desire to forgive (or love or whatever it may be) because frankly, I want to "walk away".

Again, why stated in imperatives?

1. So that we will know what God wills;

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2. Know that we cannot do them.
Get it out of your mind that it's stated in the imperative and would be possible to even desire to do or be possible that we could do it. Don't state that it's not fair that God gave a command that one can't even desire.

In fact, the flesh doesn't even/can't desire to please God. Why can the new man do this? Because of the work of the Holy Spirit: God working in us. Don't try to take credit for desiring to do the will of God. You can't do that. This is why it is by FAITH. Anything that is by faith is non-meritorious. God gets all the glory, BUT we just want to have a part of it. "I desire to do what God wants." No you don't; that came from the Holy Spirit when you trusted Him.

Example: When one says the above is wrong: Peter told the Lord "I love you, and I will die for you" What did he learn? That he did not and could not but he certainly thought he did. Many Christians think they desire to do the will of God and are very self-righteous about doing it as did Peter. "I will die for you." But with three opportunities to die for Jesus Christ, three times he showed he did not love Him and in the flesh was not ready to die for Him.

Summary:

1. The imperative mood is in Scripture.
2. The imperative mood is the furthest from reality of what might occur.
3. The imperative mood expresses neither probability or possibility.

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4. Since we cannot do the imperative mood commands, why are they given to us? Why all these commands in the imperative mood?
5. The imperative mood is given to convey to us the will or desire of God. What God desires us to do or be. The imperative mood is God stating that 'this is my will for you' but God does not plan nor mean for us to do them in the flesh, He knows we cannot.
6. OK, we know what God desires us to do by these imperatives. And God knows we cannot do them in the flesh, so **what** are we to do? Can we actually do what the will of God is?
7. God gave to every believer the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And when we are filled, empowered by the Holy Spirit, now we both desire and actually do the will of God.
8. God, in giving us the Holy Spirit, has given *the possibility and probability to do the desired imperatives*. All we have to do is to decide to trust the Holy Spirit. This is not a response to the command, but a response to the Holy Spirit as we now know that it is the Holy Spirit who gives both the desire/working. Every time we see one of these imperatives, we must decide if we are going to trust His Spirit? When we do that, His Spirit gives us the desire and He causes us to fulfill the imperative. *Now the imperative mood becomes the mood of reality in our lives, the indicative mood*, because "you love as Christ loved...." How? Not because you did it but by the grace of God! All that you did was to trust the Holy Spirit!

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So every time we see an *imperative* mood, we have to make a decision not about the imperative mood but about the Holy Spirit.

9. We tap into the power of the Holy Spirit by faith in the Holy Spirit: We walk by faith in the Holy Spirit; We are led by the Holy Spirit by faith in Holy Spirit; We live by the Holy Spirit by faith and we keep in step with the Holy Spirit by faith. Gal. 5:16,18 & 25
10. The Holy Spirit supernaturally, spiritually, graciously, gives us the desire to do the imperatives. He works in us.
11. Then, the Holy Spirit does it!

God the Holy Spirit fulfills the imperatives!

He works through us. What is our part? FAITH. God does the work. God gives us the desire. God does the work and God gets the glory. Now get ready for true grace. **YOU GET THE REWARDS** at the **THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST**.

12. Love one another as Jesus Christ loves. I can't produce this love; I know I can't. I trust the Holy Spirit who gives me the desire to love one another and then the Holy Spirit pours into us His Spiritual gift of Spiritual love. There will be nothing to make greater demands on your life than to love as Jesus Christ loved. That love will take you where you don't want to go. However, now the Holy Spirit has given you the desire to go there.

Now we are really ready for the first six imperatives of Col. 3...

verse 1: keep seeking the things above

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verse 2: set your mind on things above

verse 5: consider the members of your earthly body dead to overt sins

verse 8: put aside mental attitude sins

verse 9: do not lie to one another

verse 12: put on...a Christ like love

Now in the power of the Holy Spirit we can fulfill everyone of these impossible imperatives!!!

God's Plan

God's Grace

God's Provision