

Teaching of Christ

Three concluding commands of Colossians 3:15-17:

1. Continue being at peace given by the Holy Spirit.
“let the peace of Christ umpire in your hearts” (three weeks ago)
2. Continually thankful to God the Father. (completed last week)
3. To continue all your life getting to Know the teachings about Jesus Christ. (this week)

Continue all your life getting to know the teachings about Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

The verb: **let dwell**, other translations: *to live, to find a home, to reside, to be, to occupy, to fill*. These are all translations of the *Present Active Imperative* of the compound Greek verb meaning to dwell in, to inhabit. We are familiar with this verb from the phrase the “Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.” But, these two concepts: the “Indwelling of the Holy Spirit” and the “Indwelling of the Word of Christ;” are much different. First, with the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit we do not ask for it nor do we seek it to happen. The moment we believe in Jesus Christ as savior, this is one of the 34 things God graciously does for us.

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Romans 8:9...the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Romans 8:11...the Spirit...dwells in you;

Galatians 3:5...He who graciously supplies you with the Holy Spirit;

2 Timothy 1:14...through the Spirit who dwells in us.

We have the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit because Jesus Christ asked His Father to give us the Holy Spirit at salvation (John 14:16). No believer can lose the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit now or in eternity. But the indwelling of the Word of Christ, this is a whole different matter. This is up to every believer, this is up to you! And the *present tense* here in Colossians 3:16 means you do this day in and day out throughout your entire life.

Let dwell or abide the word of Christ. This begins with the definite article **The**, + *logos* + dative *christos* = **the word from Christ**. Be careful if you use a concordance here and turn to:

Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

First, there is no definite article before **word** here in Romans 10:17. Secondly, the Greek word for **word** is the Greek *rhema* while in Colossians it is *logos*. So, these are not grammatically parallel passages.

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Colossians 3:16 The Word of Christ let dwell in you. That is in your soul and human spirit. And how shall it indwell: **richly**. This is a Greek adverb *richly, abundantly*. Each one of you know what this word means: How much money do you have? Are you rich? Or could you use more? Abundant amount of money is not enough. You need, want, desire more and then more on top of that. Enough is never enough! Many desire thousands, then millions then multi-millions, then billions! This is exactly how we should think in regards to The Word from Christ. We should desire more and then more and then still more.

You will note our translation starts off with **the Word of Christ** because that is the way it is in the Greek which gives emphasis to the first words in a sentence. For example, if we start off with the verb **let dwell**, then that is where the emphasis is in the Greek. Greek syntax is not like English where we have subject, verb, object. The Greek places things in order of emphasis.

The Word of Christ let dwell in you richly

We have two major questions:

1. What does the phrase **The Word of Christ** refer to?
2. How do we let the word of Christ dwell richly in us?

But, before we can understand how, we have to know what is The Word of Christ?

The Word

- I. A study of the word **Word** will reveal that it often depends on the context. It is used five times in Colossians alone. In the Old

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Testament, the “Word of God/Word of the Lord” from the Hebrew *dabar Yahweh* has a rich usage. It is used 242 times. It is translated into the Septuagint by at least three Greek words which are also used in the New Testament. This study only addresses the New Testament usage.

Colossians 1:5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel

Here the Bible tells us exactly what this Word refers to — the gospel.

Colossians 1:25 Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of the word of God*,

Colossians 1:26 that is the mystery...which is Christ in you the hope of Glory.

Here the Bible tells us this is the Word of God. In this context, the Word of God is the *mystery of Christ in every believer*.

Colossians 3:16 (our passage) The Word of Christ...

Colossians 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father

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Context here refers to our own speaking, what comes out of our mouths.

Colossians 4:3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;

Here, the context defines '*the word*' referring to the mystery of Christ.

II. Let's note some of the descriptions given to 'The Word.'

1. Word of Christ

a. **Romans 10:17 So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by a word of Christ.**

We have *rhema* which refers to the salvation message of Jesus Christ. The absence of the definite article is to emphasize the highest quality message. And, His message leads to faith.

b. Simply 'His Word' referring to the Lord:

Rom. 9:28 for the Lord will execute His word on the earth, thoroughly and quickly."

Here it refers to the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ referring to His prophetic words of future events.

c. The word preached to you...

2 Corinthians 1:18 But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no.

2 Corinthians 1:19 For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us — by me and Silvanus and Timothy — was not yes and no, but is yes in Him.

We could classify this under the heading ‘Our Word’ but as the context clearly shows the word refers to all the teaching concerning Jesus Christ.

d. The Word of the Lord, referring to Jesus Christ

1 Thessalonians 1:8 For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.

Here in context ‘the word of the Lord’ refers to all the teaching they have received from Paul.

e. The Word of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

The context here refers to the message of the Lord and His authority.

f. The Word of the Lord

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2 Thessalonians 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as *it* did also with you;

Here it refers to all the teaching concerning Jesus Christ starting with the Gospel, where we are one in Him.

g. The Word of Christ

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

h. The Word of the Lord, The Word.

1 Peter 1:25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD (*RHEMA*) ENDURES FOREVER.” (Teaching of Jesus Christ and about Jesus Christ) **And this is the word which was preached to you.**

i. My Word

Revelation 3:8 ‘I (Jesus Christ) know your deeds. Behold, I (Jesus Christ) have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

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They have lived by faith in the Holy Spirit keeping His word in their lives.

2. Word of Faith

Romans 10:8 But what does it say? “THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART” — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,

Here we have *rhema* which emphasizes the speaking of these words. Here, Words that call for nothing but faith.

3. Word of the Cross

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Here *the word* refers to the entire scope of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His resurrection.

4. Word of Wisdom and Knowledge

1 Corinthians 12:8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

5. Word of God

a. Word of God

1 Corinthians 14:36 Was it from you that the word of God *first* went forth? Or has it come to you only?

Here it refers to the gospel.

b. Word of God

Philippians 1:14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

Primarily the gospel.

c. Word of God

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

In context, this refers primarily to the gospel.

d. Word of God

Titus 2:5 (concerning young women)... *to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being*

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subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

Whenever a wife is not subject to her husband, she dishonors the Word of God referring to all it's teaching on marriage and the relationship between husband and wife.

e. Word of God

Colossians 1:25 *Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God,*

f. Word of God

Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

g. Word of God

Heb. 6:5 *and have tasted the good word of God (*rhema*) and the powers of the age to come,*

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These are believers who started growing in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ but soon got distracted and stopped learning the Word of God.

h. Word of God

Heb. 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

Here is an excellent passage to grasp the significance of the Greek word *rhema* which refers to speaking, that which is spoken. So here, the worlds were created by just the speaking of God.

i. Word of God, close to Hebrews 11:3

2 Peter 3:5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water,

j. Word of God

1 Peter 1:23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and enduring word of God.

k. Word of God

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1 John 2:14 I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God (advanced teaching of the Word of God) abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

l. Word of God.

Revelation 1:2 who (John, writer of Revelation) testified to the word of God (all the prophecy about to be revealed in book of Revelation) and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, *even to all that he saw.*

m. Word of God

Revelation 6:9 When the Lamb (Jesus Christ) broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain (martyrs) because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;

This refers to the gospel and to all the teachings about Jesus Christ and the Plan of God. Multitudes have been martyred throughout the Church Age because they would not retract from their faith in the Word of God.

n. Referring to Jesus Christ

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Rev. 19:13 *He* (Jesus Christ) *is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His (Jesus Christ) name is called The Word of God.

6. The Word of Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Here 'the word' is clearly all the teaching concerning being reconciled with God through Jesus Christ by grace through faith.

7. Simply the Word

a. The Word

Galatians. 6:6 The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches (pastor-teacher) *him.*

Context here is the teaching of the entire Word of God: Old Testament and New Testament.

b. The Word

2 Timothy 4:2 preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

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This is exhortation to the pastor-teacher to teach the entire Word of God: Old Testament and New Testament. And to do so when people are positive to learn and when they are negative... and not there to listen and learn.

c. The Word

Col. 4:3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;

d. The Word

Heb. 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word (good news of the gospel) they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

e. The Word

James 1:21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

f. The Word

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1 Peter 1:25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER.” And this is the word (rhema) which was preached to you.

This is what every pastor-teacher should teach – the eternal word of Jesus Christ and about Jesus Christ.

8. The Sword of the Spirit

Ephesians 6:17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (rhema-speaking from God)

In context this phrase again refers to the entire scope of the Bible.

9. The Word of Truth

a. Word of Truth

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

This describes the quality of the Word of God, the Bible. We have seen The Spirit of truth, but here, The Word of Truth.

b. Word of Truth

Colossians 1:5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, – the gospel

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10. The Faithful Word

Titus 1:9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Not only does the Word of God call for faith, it is also faithful in all that it declares...faithful that it is truthful, and faithful in all that it declares as in teaching of future events.

11. The Word of Life

a. Word of Life

Phil. 2:16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

The word or the message that gives life -- eternal life by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.

b. Word of Life

1 John 1:1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life (referring to Jesus Christ and referring to the Word that gives life, the gospel)

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12. The Word of Righteousness

Hebrews 5:13 For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

Like ‘the mystery’ the word of righteousness refers to advanced teaching on understanding all the mystery of the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ, imputed Righteousness of every one who believes in Jesus Christ and living the righteous life — see Gal. 5:5. Few believers live a Righteous life primarily because few believers know how to be filled by the Holy Spirit by grace through faith and few are committed to a life of growing in the Knowledge of the Word of God.

13. The Good Word

Hebrews 6:5 and have tasted the good word (rhema) of God and the powers of the age to come,

14. The Prophetic Word

2 Peter 1:19 So we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, (future events before they occur) to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

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Summary of New Testament Terms:

1. The Word of Christ
2. The Word of Faith
3. The Word of the Cross
4. The Word of Wisdom and Knowledge
5. The Word of God
6. The Word of Reconciliation
7. The Word
8. The Sword of the Spirit
9. The Word of Truth
10. The Faithful Word
11. The Word of Life
12. The Word of Righteousness
13. The Good Word
14. The Prophetic Word

The name of Jesus Christ = The Word of God

We could spend months just on this list alone!

**Colossians 3:16 The Word of Christ let dwell
in you, richly...**

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There is one more issue in the phrase “The Word of Christ.” Does this refer to just the teaching by Jesus Christ? In other words, does this refer to just the red letters in your Bibles, the words of Jesus Christ? And there are those who believe that this is all that this phrase refers to. But, it refers to all the teaching about Jesus Christ. And people, this includes the entire Bible, for the Bible is all about Jesus Christ. And if we take seriously

Rev. 19:13 *He* (Jesus Christ) *is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His* (Jesus Christ) *name is called The Word of God.*

Every book of the Bible is about Jesus Christ.

This now brings us to the second question: how do we ‘let dwell’ in us the word of Christ?

The answer is completely dependent upon three things:

1. The Word of God.
2. The Holy Spirit
3. Faith of the believer as he/she studies the Word of God.

Passages on the Teaching Ministry of Holy Spirit would require months and months of study. We shall simply note some of the more important passages of Scripture that teach the only way we can let the Word of Christ dwell richly in us is to allow the Holy Spirit to guide or teach us the Word of God.

We all need to be taught about Jesus Christ.

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Isaiah 54:13 “All your sons will be taught of the LORD; And the well-being of your sons will be great.

1. The humanity of Jesus Christ needed the Indwelling and Filling of the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 11:1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, (referring to Jesus Christ) And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, (now note six ministries of the Holy Spirit) The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

2. Then the all-important passage in John 14 where Jesus Christ tells the 11 disciples about His sending of the Holy Spirit. He is here called the Spirit of Truth 14:17; and then the all-important verse for our study.

John 14:26 “But the parakletos, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 16:13 “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for

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He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; (This is also said of Jesus Christ) and He will disclose to you what is to come.

John 16:14 “He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose *it* to you.

3. Then there is the all-important passage by Paul in:

1 Corinthians 2:10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. (Scripture is revealed through and only by the Holy Spirit.)

1 Corinthians 2:11 For who among men knows the *thoughts* of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the *thoughts* of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, (Galatians 5:5) so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

1 Corinthians 2:13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom,

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but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*.

1 Corinthians 2:14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

1 Corinthians 2:15 But he who is spiritual (filled by the Holy Spirit by faith) **appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.**

1 Corinthians 2:16 For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? **But we have the mind of Christ.**

Contextually this does not refer to Bible doctrine. This refers to what or the one being talked about, that is the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 40:13 makes this very clear that this is referring to God the Holy Spirit.

The believer empowered by the Holy Spirit now has the Holy Spirit to give him/her supernatural power into the true meaning of the supernatural Word of God. Without the Holy Spirit, the flesh cannot understand the Word of God.

This is why it is so essential for every believer to know how to be filled by the Holy Spirit so that the Holy Spirit can teach the Word of God

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when that believer is studying the Bible. We are filled by the Holy Spirit out of carnality by Grace through faith.

**Col. 3:16 The Word of Christ let dwell in you,
richly...**

This means that every one of you decide whether or not the Word of Christ will dwell in you...richly. You make this decision by consistently going where the Word of Christ is taught

John Quincy Adams (the sixth President of the United States from 1825 to 1829.) said: ‘So great is my veneration for the Bible that the earlier my children begin to read it, the more confident will be my hope that they will prove useful citizens to their country, and respectable members of society.’ But of course, our children are taught in public schools that our founding fathers were not Christians.

Patrick Henry, one of our founding fathers who shaped our freedom and liberties said this about the Bible: “There is a Book worth all other books which were ever printed.”

Thomas Jefferson on the study of the Bible said: “I have always said, and I always say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands.” Of course, today without the influence of the Bible our leaders are violently set on destroying the family structure.

What does the Word of Christ mean to you?

Do you have an insatiable desire to be indwelted by the Word of Christ?