

Lord of the New Self

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[0 : 00] When Harbor, good morning, how are you? Good? Sweet. It's good to see you. I've seen a lot of newer faces here, a lot of faces coming back. And man, it's awesome that you guys are here with us this morning.

And I just want to say, like, we just had that big community moment. Obviously, community is one of our big values. The month of August, we're going to start introducing the signups for small groups. We call them community groups, and it happens during the week. And one of the things that we need is actually host homes. It doesn't mean you're going to facilitate and lead that night and that discussion time.

But we do need people that if you're, man, you think, hey, I have a great home. I'm hospitable. I'm glad to open up my home and let somebody come in and lead and invite, you know, 12 to 14 adults in as well.

That would be awesome. Let me know if you're interested. You can shoot me an email. It's jessek, J-E-S-S-E, the letter K at oneharborchurch.com. If you forgot that, my email is on the website.

[0 : 59] You can find it on our website under our staff page. Just shoot me an email. So we need places in New Bern, James City, and Havelock. Yeah, that would be awesome. Thank you so much. Greetings again.

And I just want to say also if those of you who are going to be listening to this later online, you couldn't be here for a host of reasons. We appreciate our military guys that can't make it. And those of you who are sick, unfortunately, can't make it, love that you're staying tuned in.

And with us, we are continuing on in our Colossians series. We are only a few weeks left in this amazing little power-packed book, which is awesome. I'm going to miss it a ton.

It's been fun. Looking at Jesus, this book talks so much about Jesus. It points us to Jesus. And what we find out is that he's more than just this great guy. He's more than a wise teacher.

He's more than your best friend. He's Lord. He's Lord of everything. Every part of our lives, Lord over all of us. And so what this means is we need to pay close attention to what he says.

[2 : 01] And we have to realize that, man, he's given us more than good advice, man. He's given us direction, life-changing direction for us. And even if you aren't a Christian, if you're here and you're just exploring, man, we are so happy that you've been with us.

And if you're not a Christian yet, man, we trust that this also has been helpful for you. And so the first part of the letter is all about, like, who Jesus is, his attributes, his glory, all the things he has done.

And then we've kind of jumped into kind of the practicals of what it looks like to follow Jesus. In the past few weeks, that's what it's been. And last week, Donnie, we saw a video of Donnie, looked at what Christians aren't, right?

The things that we're not supposed to be doing. The things that we are putting off, the old self and its practices. And this week, we're pivoting and we're looking at who we are. This putting on of the new self.

And so we're in Colossians 3, verse 9. It's going to be up on the screens. If you're old school and you bring your Bible, you can turn there and follow along with me. So it says this. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.

[3 : 08] And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in the knowledge after the image of its creator. Now, this is more than just like this idea of this new self.

This isn't like a makeover, right? This isn't about getting hair plugs and skinny jeans and whiter teeth. This is like, this isn't what that is. Man, God is doing so much more than that, right?

He's changing us into someone new. Now, we think about that, this idea of like he's changing us into someone new. And we're like, wait, hold on a second. I kind of like who I am. I don't think I need that much change.

I don't need that much of a radical change. Now, to be honest, guys, your mom may agree with that. But I want to say like anybody, you should ask anyone else who really knows you. Like if you need to do some more changing than that. And you might be shocked what you find out.

Just saying. So we all know areas of our life that we need to do better. And we kind of realize that. There are things about ourselves that, man, we would like to change. Maybe a tick or a bad habit.

[4 : 09] I bite my fingernails. I love to like stop doing that. But it goes so much deeper than that. It's like such silly surface stuff, right? Our vision of change can be so small because of this.

We don't know what could be. But God does. God does know who our true and fullest selves really are. Which is why he isn't making us just a better version of ourselves.

He is doing a radical work of renewal. And that idea of being renewed that it talks about here is being changed into a whole new kind of person. The idea it puts forward is this idea of being a new creation.

See, when you and I are born, we get DNA from our parents. Which means that we look like them and we act like them a lot. I had this buddy, Rob Mesa. He didn't know his dad until he was like 28. And he was like, dude, Jesse, I met my dad. And you wouldn't believe it. Like all the little mannerisms I do all the time. I sit on the couch and I do this. And he's like, my dad does the same thing. It's just crazy. I never met him. And there's so many similarities there.

[5 : 12] Right? We pick up these, like even if we don't know, we pick up these DNA things from our parents and we carry them on. We don't get a choice. Right? I got my parents' DNA. I got my dad's DNA.

Which means I got a big nose. And these like deep inset Frankenstein eyeballs. Right? But it also means I'm fast and athletic. Right?

I was fast and athletic. Emphasis on the was there. And so the whole point is, guys, is that whether we want it or not, we get our DNA from our parents.

It's passed down. My kids, whether they want it or not, they are going to get my DNA. And so, yes, be praying for them. So what happens? What happens then when we're saved?

What happens? Well, we are reborn. Right? That's what God tells us where there's this new birth. There's this rebirth that happens. We're being renewed. We're a new creation. We have new spiritual DNA from our heavenly father.

[6 : 09] And this is a radically different thing. See, we live in a day where we can nip and tuck our way to a different outward appearance by and large. Right? I always wonder like if it's like people that do that, if their kids are kind of looking at their parents being like, how come I don't really look like you and I adopted what's going on?

Anyways. But God doesn't save us to give us a little nip and tuck surgery, to do these like small little cosmetic changes on the outside. Man, he is making us a new creation. He isn't making us just this better version of ourselves.

He is making us into something totally new. And so we're changed. And again, not in the outward sense. We are being changed at the soul level, that like soul DNA level.

And that is what is so radically different about the gospel. The change that happens to us doesn't happen from the outside in. Right? We don't behave our way into being a new creation.

We don't try to look a certain way, start looking a certain way, start dressing a certain way. Which means this, guys. It means all the outward stuff isn't that important.

[7 : 17] Which means, and it also means this. It totally changes the way we see things. Colossians 3.11 says this. Here, here, there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, I believe is the way you say that.

Slave, free, but Christ is all and in all. What this is saying is that Jesus, this new self that we're created into, gives us a new way of seeing.

I mean, think about those categories, right? Greek versus Jew, circumcised versus uncircumcised, barbarian versus Scythian, slave versus free.

These groupings were how people in Paul's day, the guy that wrote this letter, it's how they saw each other. They were ethnic categories. They were religious categories. They were economic categories.

And isn't it kind of comforting to know that, like, people really haven't changed in 2,000 years? We do the same thing today, right? We might use different category names and groupings, but we still are all about separating people and putting them into categories.

[8 : 21] We love to do that. But the same thing happens now as it happens then. When we put people into these categories, what happens is you're either an insider or an outsider.

There are the haves and the have-nots. And depending on which group you're in, you either find solace or shame. Now, it says here that in the church, in Jesus' body, those identifiers, those categories are no more.

They are eliminated. There aren't haves and have-nots in the kingdom of God. It doesn't matter what family you were born into, what ethnicity you are. It doesn't matter what gender you are. It doesn't matter what your economic position is. Man, it all is leveled out in Jesus Christ. Christ, he places us all into one single value category, right?

In verse 11, the last part, it says, man, Christ is all and in all, which means this. The single and most dominating identity for every Christian is this, in Christ.

[9 : 30] That's who we are more than anything else. I don't care what you've been told. I don't care what you think about yourself. You're a dominating category. How you understand yourself is this. I am in Christ.

I belong to him. And in Christ, we lay down every defining category except that one. That sounds great, right?

But let me say, this is a lot harder than we think if we're honest with ourselves because it means letting go of some privilege. For some, that means letting go of the privilege of power and being in control.

And let's be honest, for others, it's letting go of the privilege of outrage. James 1, 9 to 10 gets at this. Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation and the rich in his humiliation because like a flower of the grass, he will pass away.

So what it's saying here is if you're the lowly brother, if you're in that category, the lowly brother, the natural way of thinking is outrage. Man, I'm the outsider.

[10 : 38] I'm the have not. That's unfair. And Jesus is saying, wait, wait, if you're lowly by your culture's standards, by society's standards, actually rejoice, which is kind of confusing, right?

But actually, that lowliness gives you a leg up on understanding the gospel. See, the needy realize that they need Jesus. Jesus himself, he came as a lowly outsider.

And for those that are on the other side of that, those in the place of power, they are called to embrace that as weakness. Jesus said it's harder for the rich to enter God's kingdom.

The rich have to confront the fact that they won't live forever. All their possessions, all their wealth are just going to rot and rust, right? That old famous saying, like a hearse doesn't come with a trailer hitch.

You can't take it with you when you die. That's a reality. And the danger of power is that we think we have no need for Jesus or we start to believe that Jesus needs us.

[11 : 39] See, in Christ, that category in Christ, the poor and the powerful both move from their respective privilege that divides into their need for Christ that unites.

And that is the power of the new self. That is the power of the new way of seeing, of being a new creation. It brings us together. Now, while it brings us together, we have to realize it doesn't negate the possibility of friction, right?

Actually, there's tons of potential for that. If you've been in church for any time, you realize, like, hey, sometimes our fellowship is a little scratchy, a little difficult. But the new self goes beyond that. It's more just than a new way of seeing. It's a new way of being. And this helps us. It helps us with this idea of, like, man, what do we do when we hurt each other? And we, yeah, there's a little bit of division and friction among us.

And it's this. Jesus gives us a new way of being. Colossians 3 verse 12 says, put on then, right, this new self we're putting on, put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another, and if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other.

[12 : 57] As the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body, and be thankful.

See, this is a beautiful passage of what it means to be in one body. God brings us together by grace and keeps us together by grace. There is no way we live in Christ without this total transformation. There is no way. Guys, that stuff we read, man, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another. If you look at that list and you're like, check, check, yeah, me, me, oh, definitely me.

Man, again, I want to turn to your neighbor or someone who knows you and let them look at that list. They're going to probably start erasing some stuff, right? You'll get it honest. But here's the thing, guys. God isn't saying that you have to live this out perfectly all the time.

But this is how God is renewing us, what he is forming in us more and more and more. He is changing our very nature into what we long for, right?

[14:08] Whether we recognize it or not, there is something of these things that we just read that, man, we desire to be that. And we would love for others to be that as well. But we can't get there on our own.

I don't know how you think of what you think of when you think of a life of perfect harmony and peace. I know what I do. I think of being somewhere up in the mountains all by myself. Because that's the only way I'm getting perfect harmony and peace, right?

But God's idea of perfect harmony and peace isn't isolation. It's actually in his body, with his people, with him, around others.

Which is totally crazy and totally difficult and totally impossible. Because the more people you add to the mix, the more personality, the more, you know, differences we add to the mix.

It's harder to keep that harmony and peace. And that makes sense because we want things our way. I would love to be in control 100% of the time.

[15:09] I wish my wife understood that, you know? But I want things my way. And guess what? I'm wrong a lot. And that's a tough thing because we would love to be right all the time.

And we love to be in control. Here's an example of kind of what this is getting at, right? This idea of perfect harmony and peace and how this works.

I was living in a neighborhood. We were living in a neighborhood a while back. And some kids in the neighborhood started to, they just started up a band in their garage. Which was great to find out because it was good to know animals weren't being sacrificed.

Which is what it sounded like at first, right? So they had a ton of passion, these guys. I mean, they were dedicated, making lots of noise. They had a lot of passion, but no ability. They had a lot of noise, but no harmony.

Which pretty much describes us before Jesus and kind of does a pretty good job describing us even after Jesus, if we're honest. The music of our life before Jesus wasn't pretty at all.

[16:12] Now, these dudes in the garage, they got decent over time. Their timing got better and they hit the right notes more often than not. But that doesn't even come close to the radical change these verses are talking about here, right?

The body of Christ that we are brought into, the way we're called to live, isn't so much a three-piece cover band playing Nirvana songs, right? It's like this, guys.

It's more like an orchestra playing a symphony. Why don't you just think about that? See, in an orchestra, there are many instruments playing many different parts.

But all of those parts, all of those instruments are adding to one harmonious whole. One beautiful sound that's working together. Now, imagine if someone or everyone in an orchestra decided they were going to break out into their own solo, right?

It wouldn't work. The music wouldn't sound good. It would actually sound horrible to the ear. And that is exactly what our old self wants to do. Our old self wants to rise up and say, no, no, live for yourself.

[17:20] Break out into your own solo. Live life on your own terms and your own timing for your own glory. But the new way of being that God calls us into that we see here that Jesus has done for us is a way of being that isn't guitar hero.

Man, it's in God's symphony that he's conducting. Now, this is a difficult prospect because it seems to devalue our uniqueness as individuals, right?

We like the idea of the guitar solo that makes us stand out. People can see us. Oh, man, that was amazing. We get all the accolades and praise of men.

And it seems like just to be in God's symphony, just amongst a whole plethora of other instrument players, it seems like, man, we lose that. But actually, that isn't the case.

God is for our individualness, but he is against our individualism. Let me explain it this way.

Individualness values our uniqueness as it fits within the greater whole.

[18 : 26] See, the violinist, man, they have a unique piece to play in the orchestra and in a symphony. And yes, on its own, it can sound very beautiful.

But when it joins in with the rest of the orchestra, oh, my goodness, it adds to the beauty of the whole, right? Right? Individualism, on the other hand, values uniqueness with no regard to the whole.

Think the saxophonist who decides to just do an impromptu solo during Mozart, right? It wouldn't sound good. We'd be saying, sit down, Kenny G, okay? It's bad timing.

It may have been an impressive individual effort, but in the end, it ruined the music. And guys, here's the thing. The way of Jesus is a life where we are valued for our God-given uniqueness, and we submit to play our part that adds to his greater symphony.

We are both God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, right? That's what it says. And we are called in one body. So think of it this way.

[19 : 38] Every time we forgive, and when we are compassionate to others, when we speak and act in kindness, when we are patient with each other, when we're encouraging each other, admonishing one another, we are putting down the guitar hero solo, and we are picking up our piece in God's symphony.

That's what this is talking about. And when that happens, we experience perfect harmony and peace. We realize that. I was counseling with the guy, and this is an amazing story.

It's like, awesome, God's grace. And their spouse had told them that they were just being too harsh verbally with their kids, which could have resulted in a lot of arguing and conflict. But here's the thing.

Instead, this person didn't get mad. They listened. They humbled themselves. Instead of defending themselves, they sought forgiveness.

They sought repentance. They put on kindness and compassion. They chose to jump into the symphony. I remember listening and thinking to myself, man, no way that happens without God.

[20 : 50] No way that happens without the Holy Spirit working in that person's heart. Guys, God gives us a radically different way of being.

And that leads to a radically different way of living. Jesus gives us a new way of living. Verse 16 of Colossians 3. Sorry, guys, I actually have it wrong on there.

I have Colossians 2. It's Colossians 3. Let the word of God, let the word of Christ to dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your heart to God.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. What this is saying is that our lives are to be filled by things that build our worship.

Our lives are to be filled with things that build our worship. And when I say worship, I'm not talking about a way of singing or a genre of music. It's a way of living.

[21 : 56] Right? Worship isn't so much a song lifted up as it is a life laid down. Do everything, it says. Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. Man, this idea is living before the audience of one.

Worship is surrendering all I am in response to the revelation of all God is. And this way of worship, this life that we live in the new self, man, it isn't easy.

Because it involves surrendering our will, surrendering our freedom and our autonomy. And that's never an easy thing to do. And why is that? Why is that so hard for us? It's because of sin.

Man, we still have this like residue of sin. Even if you're a Christian, residue of sin that fights against that all the time. Sin blocks worship. Sin says don't surrender.

You could never be happy that way. Or it says, man, just surrender as little as possible. Whatever you can get away with. Just give away just tiny bits. Surely God will be happy with that.

[23 : 02] But he's not. Think of it this way. When you think about worship, worship is a pathway that keeps our vision and hearts heavenward while we're firmly fixed in this life.

See, sin in society, it comes and it attempts to detour us off this pathway by offering up a variety of distractions, off-ramps, dead-end paths. That's what sin does.

So what can we do to avoid those snares and stay walking in the path of worship? Like it says, here's a couple of things it gives us. First, let the word of Jesus dwell richly within you.

And so the Bible, the gospel, that's meant to saturate us. That's meant to fill us. We're meant to be filled with that. And this is what that means. Wisdom keeps us on the path of worship.

And wisdom is the gospel. Guys, we need to be filled with that. We need to let it teach us. We need to let it guide us. We need to let it admonish us and correct us. The Bible says this about itself.

[24 : 02] It's a lamp to the feet and a light to our path. Wisdom is like walking with a flashlight on a dark night. We need the wisdom of God's word to dwell in us richly to guide our worship.

The wisdom of the gospel, what it does, it shines a light on where we should go and where we shouldn't go. To avoid sin's trip-ups and detours. So we see at one point, like, man, wisdom is key to this, man.

Building a life of worship. Living that life of worship. Wisdom is key. But there's this other side to the coin of worship as well. And that's thankfulness. Now, while wisdom keeps us on the path of worship, thankfulness is the posture of worship.

But Jesus, he once warned a church in the book of Revelation. He once warns the church that, man, they had all their doctrine right, right? So their wisdom high beams were on.

They were like, boom. They were seeing it. They were seeing the right path to go. They were walking it. They didn't misstep at all. Nothing was taking them down. But he says, you know what? I still got a big problem with you guys. Their love for Jesus had grown cold.

[25 : 08] See, worship without thankfulness is a lot like a movie without the music and the soundtrack behind it, right? You get all the information. You get the plot points. But, man, nothing is stirring your soul, really.

There's nothing there that's really moving you. Thankfulness is this. It's this appetite in our soul. We can feed it or we can starve it by our habits.

So the songs that we sing, the Bible we read privately and together, these are habits that build thankfulness. And we practice those things because they cause us to behold God.

They cause us to behold Jesus. And when we behold him, our thankfulness rises. It grows. It increases. It fills our hearts. And our worship is built.

And here's the thing, guys. When we're full of wisdom and thankfulness, the music of God's symphony becomes the song of our soul. This new way of living, this new way of being, this new way of seeing, it isn't a do better, try harder thing.

[26 : 13] And it's actually a message of just surrendering to God's grace. That's all it is. It's putting on the new self. And putting on the new self is just that.

It is a daily habit of surrender. If you're here and you're not a Christian, I want to invite you today. Jesus is calling you to surrender it all.

He is calling you into something greater. When we break out of the smallness of the prison of ourselves and walk in the fullness of a God who is infinite, a God without measure, incomparable, we experience, you experience a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I want to invite you today, man. If you're sitting there and you're just like, man, Jesse, I'm tracking with this. Jesus has made himself real to me today. I want to invite you, man, respond.

Respond this way. You just admit, man, Jesus, I am a sinner. I am a guy or a gal whose worship has been blocked by my sin. I have not wanted to surrender, but today I'm going to.

[27 : 21] I'm going to surrender all to you today. I'm going to trust you as my Savior and as my Lord. And join us, man. Join us in God's symphony of grace.

If you're here and you follow Jesus, I want to ask you this. How is Jesus calling you into further surrender today? What is he calling you into surrender today?

I want you to think about this. We have community groups starting at the beginning of September. It's a practical way of giving up the Guitar Hero solo. In community groups is where so much of our discipleship happens.

And what we're saying is, you know what? I'm not going to do this in isolation. I'm going to do this in the body. It's not easy. It's not convenient. It doesn't mean it's going to be perfect.

But, man, I know that it's so necessary to build my worship and to help others build their worship.

And we're going to have opportunities in the next few weeks to sign up for those.

[28 : 25] And so, man, when that comes around, jump in. Take advantage of that. And finally, as we respond as Christians, as believers in Jesus, we finish with communion.

We're going to take a moment to respond with this meal of Thanksgiving. Literally, that's what it's been called for thousands of years. Some of you have heard the Eucharist.

That's all good. He sounds a lot better than me, actually. It's all good. That word Eucharist just simply means giving thanks.

It's this idea of, like, we're coming to give thanks in response to what Jesus has done. And we look at his body that was broken, his blood that was shed. And we're saying, Lord, man, thank you.

Thank you that you paid it all. Thank you for your grace. Thank you for the power that we see in this, that you may have died for our sins, but you rose again, that we get to walk in newness of life, that we get to walk free from bondage to sin and death, to live in the fullness and the freedom that Christ has for us.

[29 : 34] And we get to live in that. We get to join in his symphony of grace, this new self, this new creation that we are and that he is renewing in us day by day. And so as we dwell on those things, I want you to just take a minute before we come just to bow your head, think about your response and how God is calling you to respond, and then come and eat with thanksgiving.

And I just pray that, Lord, as we come and as we take communion, that we may be filled with thankfulness towards you. Thank you.