

## Updates are Ready

I love gadgets. Particularly computer or electronic gadgets. I love Sharper Image, I love the latest gadgets in spy movies. I love my android, surface pro, and laptop. I particularly love the applications.

**PHOTO 1** They often have these really cool icons....they are colorful....and just so cool. When I hear there is an app for that...My heart leaps I do almost everything electronically if I can.

I don't really deal with paper...never if it is available electronically. I have over 200 books on my kindle.....over 75 books on audio books and my theology library has almost 3700 resources. Not one of them on paper.....every one available to me on my laptop, my surface pad, and my phone.....is that cool? I love this stuff.

The only books I have on paper are the ones out in the lobby....old Bibles. I love that applications get automatically updated....I don't have to do anything....well I have to give permission...but once that is done every day...sometimes while I am sleeping...my apps all get updated. **PHOTO 2** Old versions removed...new ones loaded and some updated. Some are replaced by things that are completely new. I love that...I don't have to do anything.

All I have to do is to make sure that I have a solid connection and give my permission.....whola....everything is new and up to date. I can even give permission ahead of time and it all happens....it just happens...how cool is that? Man I love this stuff.

If only I could be that cool....if only that could happen to me....You know...things in my life....things about me...just get updated every day. I just make sure I have a solid connection....I give my permission ahead of time....I allow myself to be scanned....and everything in me...everything about me...is brought up to date....renewed....fixed...restored. Some parts of me are completely replaced with new functions...others tweaked...some deleted....whatever needs to be done...It just happens.

Every time I wait for an app to be updated....I think about the Holy Spirit....How He is constantly updating me. I just find a hot spot....a solid connection...and everything gets renewed every day. I don't know how it happens...it just does. Each day all of my faults, failures, mistakes, sins, can get a complete update...It never goes backwards..always improving.

I want to be like that. I want to position myself Get updated and each day be renewed. I am guessing that we all want to be like that. To put ourselves in a position to hear from God....To know His desires and His heart....To find His Hot Spot....connect to His network...download His apps.....update them.....and be renewed every day.

I have friends who use their phones.....never update any apps...and wonder why things don't work well...**PHOTO 3** No matter how enthusiastic I become about the changes that happen on my phone....I can't get them to put down their palm pilots....turn in their blackberry's....and trust a completely new operating system full of wonderful changes...they just don't see it. Eventually the operating system they have been trusting in for....I don't know...30 years....fails....everything crashes...their trusted antiquated "smart phone" dies...

I once had a friend that was trying to use a brand new updated computer....but kept trying to use it like he did his old one. He kept trying to make this new computer...act like the old one. He wanted to bring all of his old familiar and comfortable programs and all of his old stuff into the new operating system...but nothing would load...and nothing worked. I told him that eventually you have to put down the Commodore 64 and move ahead. You have to step out in faith into the new operating system. This exact thing was happening in Colossae.

It turns out that the believers at Colossae were bringing their context to their walk with Christ. Just like it is difficult to read the Bible when you have a skewed view, they were having a hard time because of their view. They were trying to blend part of their old nature and desires- the things that were comfortable for them...and mix in Jesus' teachings.

They were holding on to a lifestyle that did not honor Him....all at the same time trying to follow Him. Does that sound familiar to anyone?

To many of us are trying to live our new lives in Christ....wanting all that Office 365 offers....but refusing to let go of Windows 95. We refuse to allow a new operating system to function and change us. **PHOTO 4**

Almost all of our familiar apps need to be deleted....a new operating system needs to be installed....and then only the programs we truly need...get installed and updated every day. Then and only then do we experience the full potential of being free....

Last week we learned what the believers at Colossae had been freed FROM...they were freed from the opinions, rules, and regulations of men. They were new beings with a new operating system and false teachers were telling them that they needed to hold on to old things that they had trusted in.

But God....through Paul...and to the Colossians and us...reminds them that they had been set free FROM the expectations of others....they had an audience of One....Now Paul is going to tell them what they had been set free FOR. Paul is going to shift focus here....

Thus far he has been warning us...it has been kind of negative...a series of negative warnings....Don't forget who He is ...Don't forget who you were....Don't forget what He has done...Don't forget what you have been freed from...Don't go backwards trying to please man....Paul shifts right here in the text..He begins to tell us we have been set free FOR a life above moral reproach...a life lived in Christ. A life of daily renewal in Him....

The tone in this passage shifts from a series of negative warnings to a series of positive encouragements. This passage outlines some vices that need to be addressed. The passage next week will outline some virtues to be adopted. Paul is transitioning from what we are to avoid to Who and What we are to embrace

**Colossians 3:1–11 (ESV)** 1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

Colossians 3:8–11 (ESV) 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Walk through the sheet. The transition in this verse **starts in verse 9** and that is where I want to focus our attention this morning.

**Notice the verb tenses here.**

Paul tells us that those who have died and risen with Christ..Christ followers.... have changed and yet are being renewed. Notice that WE HAVE taken off our old self and WE HAVE put on our new self. Those are both past tense. They have been done. They are completed. Notice who did those things. WE Did We became new people through our decision to follow Jesus We put on a new self

Also Note though that our new self is being renewed ...that is present tense....It is ongoing present tense.We are constantly being renewed...We have put on our new self but we are not complete yet.

But we are not the ones doing it. Notice that it is a passive verb We are not renewing ourselves. We are BEING renewed.....GOD is renewing us.

Also notice HOW we are being renewed We are being renewed..in knowledge Knowledge in the image of our Creator As we draw closer to God, He reveals Himself to us...Shows us who He is....Reveals His heart Connects us to Him..

In doing so...HE renews us by revealing more of Himself to us. Renewal changes our desires. We no longer desire what use to define us. Paul tells us to put them to death

So how does this renewal happen?

We know this because almost all of us have smart phones. Imagine that you phone could not be updated by cellular and had to be done through hot spots.

**PHOTO 5** You could walk around all day....in desperate need of change...trying to fix everything yourself....getting frustrated that your apps aren't working. Or they are working but not helping you. You walk around all day complaining that nothing is changing....If God really loved you...He would fix all of this.

All throughout the day...you are passing by places where you can connect...hot spots...the answer to your problem is everywhere...but you never....CONNECT.

There are three requirements for your life to change....First you must have the latest and best operating system...You have to surrender to Jesus...Second, you have to decide to connect to Him...and third you have to give Him permission to change everything.

Many of us get stuck after the first step. We get the new operating system...the eternal one...that never needs an update...Our operating system is perfect...We are operating in Christ. But some of the programs we carry..the apps we are still using...need to be changed.

The change needs to be specific to us....in an order determined by the Holy Spirit and at a speed He determines for us. An entirely new life...full of God sized experiences....steps of incredible faith...are ours to be had...if we would just stop complaining...stop trying to fix it ourselves...find a place...a hot spot...connect to God...and then give Him the permission He requests to change everything.

Paul tells us that many of us have downloaded apps that we must delete....He gave us a list.....that looks like this Anger, Lust, Obscene Talk, Immorality, passion, idolatry, evil desire. These are apps, Paul says, that cannot remain in the new operating system. In fact, if these apps are operating....if they are functioning well...if they are frequent.....you may not have the new operating system at all.

Paul tells us in this passage that we must kill them...Because we have died and risen with Christ...We have the eternal operating system...Our operating system is in Christ and is perfect....but our apps and programs still have faults. As God changes us we no longer desire our old apps...Each update removes the old And installs the new....Each day as we are renewed God changes the apps we use to use and replaces them with the ones we need. The new apps are installed by God and ready to be updated daily. Importantly, He chooses the new apps that we need.

So as a believer in Christ...I have a perfect operating system...I am surrounded by Hot Spots..**PHOTO 6**...opportunities to open the Word of God. Throughout my day, the Holy Spirit prompts us to slow down...and stay...stay in His Word....The Hot Spot that surrounds us...inviting us to connect...is God's Word. I have to make a decision to find a place to connect. A spiritual coffee shop if you will....A place where me...The Holy Spirit and God's Word can spend a few moments...updating and changing.

But entering into the Hot Spot is not enough. The supernatural happens when I abide...When I decide to find the hot spot....i.e. open the Word...and then send out a signal that I am ready to connect....Prayer is God's wifi. It is through the Word that He reveals what needs to be updated...In the Word the Holy Spirit prompts us to recognize the problems...to see the need to change...

Then the incredible continues....we connect to the throne of God through prayer. **PHOTO 7**  
We are being invited into the presence of God. In Christ, we experience Him.

Abiding in the Hot Spot...in the Word...we connect through the Wifi....prayer. Have you ever noticed that when you look for wifi, there are usually many choices...but only one is for you? The one for which you have the password....Our password is the blood of Jesus. We come to the connection in His name....He is the only way we can make a connection that works with our operating system....

Others may give us the latest secret to connect to something or some one else...but those connections never work....Lots of people use them....but they always seem to be searching for something else. But we are IN CHRIST....and once the connection is solid....we allow the Holy Spirit to examine us...we give permission for Him to determine what needs to happen...and we allow it to happen when we abide In Him.

I said last week, that abiding is all about connecting not learning. Abiding is about experiencing the relationship....Knowing not that you are reading...but that you are experiencing Him in the process.

Many Bible Scholars have never connected to God's Wifi because they have a different operating system. They read the Word...act like they are experts...but have never experienced God in the pages. They try to convince you that there are many wifi choices that work....That is what Paul is warning them about.

In our passage today I want to highlight 5 ways God wants to grow us 5 New apps if you will 5 Lessons to learn 5 Truths to embrace and grow in

### The First Application is that we have a New Master

Paul has been teaching us that Jesus is Preeminent He is above all things. Everything was created by Him, through Him and for Him. We see that in everything else...in creation, in others. But it can be hard to see in ourselves. Surrendering to Jesus means that you have finally realized that He is preeminent over YOU.

That you were created by Him, through Him and For Him He is your Master...You have died....He now lives in you Your life is hidden in Him. So the first thing Paul wants to remind those at Colossae and us is that we have a new Master. Without that realization there is no change. Our newness is based on Knowledge and it starts by knowing whose we are

The Lesson is not just that we have a Master But everyday that we spend in His Word and with Him in prayer We learn in new ways that Jesus is not only our Master But that He is Masterful Knowing our Master renews us

### The Second Application is that we have a New Perspective

As we begin to learn about our New Master Our focus turns to Him. Paul tells us in this passage that we need to look up ....that Jesus is risen, reigning, renewing and returning. Those realizations change us. Because we have been raised with Christ Our hearts and minds should be focused where He is...On things above....Since we are no longer of this world....Our attention should be toward home Our minds are to be renewed with His thoughts and His ideas

Have you ever heard the term that someone is so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good. Paul argues that if you are not heavenly focused you can't really be earthly good

The lessons that we learn each day is to find the balance We are not to escape from the world and disengage Our lives should have a divine destiny But we have been placed on earth for a mission. Jesus is risen, reigning, renewing and returning...thus defining our mission. Knowing our new perspective renews us

### The Third Application is that we have a New Future

Because we have a New Master and New Perspective we see our future differently. Our future is not one that we create for ourselves here on earth, but rather we will share in the future with Christ. Paul reminds us that we will appear with Him in glory Our future is secure in Christ

Each day we learn more about the future that God has planned for us. Knowing that our future is secure. Knowing that we are victorious...Changes everything....Each day as we are renewed we become less fearful of our future...More trusting of God's ability to manage whatever comes Knowing our new future renews us

### The Fourth Application is that we have New Values

Because we have a New Master, New Perspective and New Future We develop new values The more we understand about Jesus The more we embrace His values As He lives in us....His Spirit begins to transform us

Romans 8:13–15 (ESV) 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

In this passage Paul gives us two lists The First List includes things that we are to Kill. Not avoid. Put to Death They seem to be sexual sins The last one Greed or Idolatry implies greed for someone else. Desiring others Paul says the wrath of God is coming because of these sins These are serious sins that are to be eliminated. Not avoided.

The Second List are things that we are rid ourselves of They seem to involve issues related to anger. Paul says you must rid yourself of these things

Renewal involves letting go. Not through will power and self effort But rather being changed by God. Remember that we are BEING renewed. It is happening to us. We are not renewing ourselves. Each daily update of this app changes who we are And that changes what we value. Knowing our new values renews us

#### The Fifth lesson is that we have a New Self

With a New Master, New Perspective, New Future, and New Values We become New People Shaped by a growing knowledge of who Jesus really is It is important to understand that our old self has died. It exists no more. We have died to that old self with Christ We have been born again as new people-followers of Christ. People who are not yet complete but being renewed daily.

Our New Self does not come as the result of a successful battle with temptation Paul does not urge the Colossians to change their lives for the better He does not tell them to reform their ways or to make modifications to be better people.

We are not told to have some cosmic makeover of our personalities Our need to get rid of sin is not to be accomplished with a series of minor repairs We are being renewed to become a new creation. It is not just giving up a few vices and accepting a few virtues Our whole nature must be exchanged. This is not a makeover. It is a demolition and excavation. The whole foundation must be replaced We are completely demolished and rebuilt. And we allow God to rebuild us.

The passive verb means the renewal is not from our own efforts Our renewal is the creative handiwork of God Our new nature comes as God's Gift Not our self-will, will power, determination, or self actualization

The renewal comes from being joined to Christ We have been created in the image of immortal God He is renewing us into His image No system of "dos and don'ts" can create the image of God in humans. Only a relationship with Jesus does that. Knowing our New Self renews us

So just like my phone...everyday we are being renewed through our knowledge and time with Christ. Paul reminds those at Colossae that we must position ourselves into the hot spot that is God's Word. We must select the only connection that works. We must have the password, faith through the blood of Jesus....We must have a solid connection in prayer...Then we must give permission and allow the Holy Spirit to delete, update and install what He determines that we need.

A total makeover. Not improved. Not cleaned up. Not some minor modifications....But rather completely rebuilt A new creation in Christ. Daily lessons learned...all apps up to date

But you know..... you can miss it. The information is available and ready for you But you never position yourself to be renewed Maybe you refuse to delete the apps that have kept you from God....Or maybe you rarely open this book...rarely pray. Paul repeats over and over in this passage that our renewal comes from our knowledge of Christ

So...What about you? Do you know He is your Master? Have you experienced His love? Maybe you need to do a hard reset and embrace Jesus for the first time. The first step to being renewed each day is to accept Jesus as your Master. To admit you are a sinner. That you need a Savior. And that you are willing to receive the gift that Jesus offers. Jesus paid for your sins on the cross and His resurrection conquered death for you. Make this day the day that you turn to Him.

Some here are following Christ but you know That you have some apps that have to be dealt with You have been carrying around sexual immorality, lust, evil desires, slander, malice and others. Maybe you realize today that you can't keep those apps You must put them to death in order to position yourself...To receive what God has planned for you.

But you have been trying to manage those apps with YOUR willpower and YOUR self control. You realize you have been trying to renew yourself And it doesn't seem to be going well...Those apps just don't seem to go away. But let me tell you what you also know....You know that the apps God desires for you are NOT up to date Because you know it has been a long time since you plugged in and you wonder why it is so hard to change....Those who position themselves ARE being renewed....It happens TO them. They submit to God and HE changes them....SO....If you are not changing....you are likely not connecting to HIM. Instead of focusing on changing yourself ....focus on the One who CAN change you....

I want to encourage you to commit to meeting God every day In this book and in prayer You will be amazed at how much He transforms you Over time those old apps become easier to delete Not through your will power, Your strength and Your efforts But rather through humility, surrender and submission. To the One who is above all things...including you.

That is why I am so passionate about this series The key to our walk with Christ is to meet Him in His Word To kneel under it To submit to it To be changed by it So each day we come to Jesus... Humbly submitted Heart connected Ready to learn Each day He tells us how much He loves us, how special we are, how beautiful we are..... We say...."No...no.. stop" .....but He just keeps going....Pouring out His love on us...renewing us. Putting everything in context. Let's Pray.