**Colossians 3.14-17**

Above all, clothe yourselves with 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 the one body**. And be thankful**. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and **with gratitude** in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs 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.

**Matt 25.14-23**

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

**Saint Paul enters pulpit begins writing, sighs, and sets his head down.**

Holy Spirit Paul? Saint Paul? Hellooo!

St Paul Hello, what? Who’s there?

Holy Spirit It’s me again.

St Paul Oh. Right. Say, I was just working on this last bit you gave me.

Holy Spirit Easy! Easy! Relax, Paul, it’s okay, just breathe for a minute, it’s fine,

there’s no rush!...

St Paul Oh. Okay. Um, what do you need, then?

Holy Spirit I just wanted to talk to you. I like you, Paul, you’re fun to be with.

S Paul Really? That’s weird. Most people say I’m a pain in the butt. Loud,

Uncompromising, demanding…

Holy Spirit Well, I like you, Paul. I can’t imagine a better writing partner. Your little

mind is just a factory of great metaphors and images. People are going to be reading this stuff we write for generations. Centuries! Millennia!

S Paul (looks over what he’s written) Wow. Really, because I was beginning to

wonder…some of this stuff might need some editing, you know?

Holy Spirit (taken aback) I’m sorry, did you say editing? What do you mean? I, I, I’m

feeling grieved!

S Paul ACK! No, No it’s fine FINE FINE! Great stuff here, really. It’s just,

well, you know, great writers need great editors, right? I mean, how

many editors worked on the Torah, the Writings? Even the prophets

needed a bit of editing, right?

Holy Spirit Well, I suppose. That was a long time ago. Oh, but that was a wonderful

time, too. Oh, I loved young Amos. He was so sweet and gentle,

but he had a fiery side!

S Paul Amos. Someone edited for him, right? Someone put together his words

so they flow like poetry, right?

Holy Spirit Well, sure, I employed a couple of really gifted poets to arrange dear

Amos’ words. I’m still impressed with their work! So spare and yet so

deep. It’s really made an impact.

S Paul Ha. You couldn’t find anyone to work with Ezekiel, I guess?

People think he was smoking something when he wrote some

Of that crazy stuff of his!

Holy Spirit He was NOT! He was heartbroken, in pain, and he sang my songs

as an exile. In a foreign land. ….He may have gotten a bit ahead of

himself on occasion, but I like how it turned out.

St Paul So he wasn’t abducted by aliens?

Holy Spirit No, Paul, he was overcome by the power of the Spirit, thank you very

much. We spent a LOT of time together. It’s not his fault I couldn’t

find any decent editors in Babylon to reign him in. It helped him to write. It eased his pain. I couldn’t make myself stop im.

S Paul Wow. Okay But I usually quote Isaiah when I’m with you.

He had an editor, right?

Holy Spirit Oh, sure. I had some priests in the temple work his stuff. But working

with Isaiah was like, I don’t know, playing a Les Paul guitar with a

Marshall Stack, you know? Big, bold sound, the signal was clean and

crisp, built for the stadiums, not the club! Everything I said to him came

out clear as a bell!

S Paul Wow. What’s a Marshall stack?

Holy Spirit An amplifier, a magic box, Paul, a magic box and beauty comes out of it.

St Paul Right. And a Les Paul is?

Holy Spirit It’s a guitar. A lyre, a magic lyre, an instrument of heaven.

St Paul Wow. Can I see one sometime? Or hear one?

Holy Spirit I’ll show you when you get upstairs. But as for now.

Let’s look at what we’ve got!

St Paul (turns to what he’s writing) Okay, I’ve got this letter here, about halfway

through. Say, this has been bothering me. This one’s supposed to go to

those Colonials, colonoscopies, who are these guys?

Holy Spirit Colossians! The Church in Colossae!

St Paul Oh, right. I’ve never been there. Everything you have me write,

I send to people I know. It’s just different. That’s all.

Holy Spirit That’s okay. Lots of people you don’t know will read our stuff.

St Paul Our stuff, huh? Say, as I was looking over this, this one looks a lot that

letter we wrote to the Ephesians, doesn’t it? You know, same sort of

layout, same ideas. Maybe someday people are going to think we’ve run

out of ideas, out of inspiriation, what do you think?

Holy Spirit I think folks will find PLENTY of inspiration in BOTH these letters,

Paul. Don’t you worry about that. Now, what do we have so far?

St Paul Okay, here we go… Above all, clothe yourselves with love,

which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Holy Spirit Nice. I like that.

St Paul And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were

called in the one body**.**

Holy Spirit Good. And add: And be thankful.

St Paul Right. And be thankful. …um, okay.

Holy Spirit Go on…

St Paul Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one

another in all wisdom; and sing psalms, hymns,

and spiritual songs to God.

Holy Spirit Yeah, there’s something … missing.. let me think…

OH! It’s “With gratitude in your hearts sing…” How’d I miss that? We’re you paying attention?

St Paul Yes I was paying attention, but you already said be thankful.

I don’t want to repeat myself!

Holy Spirit You let me worry about that. Write it down like I said.

St Paul and with gratitude in your hearts, ya da ya da yada…

Holy Spirit Hey! No yada yada. Who you think you’re talking to here?

St Paul Sorry, sorry. Now, here’s the big finish:  And whatever you do, in word

or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving glory to

God the Father through him.

Holy Spirit Good good. …….no, wait a minute, that sounds funny. Read it again.

St Paul  And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of

the Lord Jesus, **giving glory** to God …

Holy Spirit STOP right there, go back…in the name of the Lord Jesus, …..

St Paul Giving glory to God….

Holy Spirit I think I said giving THANKS to God, Paul.

St Paul Giving thanks? Again? You said that already! We haven’t mentioned

‘glory’ since verse four!

Holy Spirit ……I said give THANKS, Paul.

St Paul Well, what’ so important about thanksgiving that I have to spoil this

great paragraph by repeating myself three times?

Holy Spirit What’ so important about thanksgiving?

St Paul Well, yeah, I’m sure it’s you know, kind of important, but compared to

the Glory of God, well, you know, do we have to say it three times?

Holy Spirit Paul, can you choose to be happy?

St Paul Choose to be happy?

Holy Spirit Can you choose to be happy? Or can you choose to be sad? Or angry? Or afraid?

St Paul I don’t think you can generally choose to feel an emotion, no.

Holy Spirit Because emotions are urges that drive us, right? We don’t create

emotions, we FEEL emotions! Emotions are like the sea, sometimes calm, sometimes stormy, but always powerful, always there, right?

St Paul Right. And our words and thoughts channel our emotions so others know what we’re feeling. That’s what I love about that letter to the Galatians we did: we really channeled some anger there, didn’t we?

That letter was epic!

Holy Spirit Right. Now, is thankfulness, is that an emotion?

St Paul Well, it’s an attitude. – An attitude of gratitude! Hey can we put that in here somewhere?

Holy Spirit No, no, listen. ‘Thankfulness’ IS an attitude. But it also has an emotional quality, right? I mean, you’ve FELT thankful before, not just thought it, it can be almost visceral, can’t it? Sometimes?

St Paul Sure it can. I mean, the way you feel after you’ve found your keys, or when someone returns your wallet, oh, the feeling can overwhelm you!

Holy Spirit RIGHT! Thanksgiving is an emotion you CAN control! You can DECIDE to be thankful, even in difficult situations! And that choice can make a huge difference.

St Paul Why is that?

Holy Spirit Because grateful people are generous. Grateful people are courageous. Grateful people are kind, and welcoming, and gracious. You know, the kind of people YOU want everyone to BECOME!

St Paul Right, because when they’re grateful, they’ll listen to what we say to them.

Holy Spirit Yes, I suppose that too, Paul, but is that the important thing?

St Paul I guess not, the important thing is that they give glory to God! SO why don’t we write that?

Holy Spirit Because it’s a lot easier to write that than to do it. You can SAY “Glory to God” all day long, can’t you, without ever really meaning it.

St Paul Well, yeah, I suppose.

Holy Spirit But if you CHOOSE to be thankful, then that attitude infects everything you do, so that you live a life that glorifies God, even if you don’t know it! It’s automatic!

St Paul I guess that’s true. Wow. That’s powerful. We should write about that.

Holy Spirit We should. So let me hear it from the top.

St Paul Above all, clothe yourselves with 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 the one body**. And be thankful**.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and **with gratitude** in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs 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.

Holy Spirit Nailed it!

St Paul Boo yah!

Holy Spirit Those Colossians won’t know what hit ‘em!

St Paul This is going to be EPIC!