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Study Page: Col. 3:16-17

Whatever You Do

Reading Colossians 3:16-17

The point in becoming a Christian is not, *merely* to identify with a local group. The point is not *merely* to have previous sins forgiven. The point is not to satisfy family and friends who were urging you to become a Christian. While all of this has value – here's what cannot be omitted: **Entering such a close relationship with Christ, His word lives in you. And, not just residing there but activating your life on the richest level.**

Therefore, if the Word of Christ doesn't dwell in you, no matter how large and sound the church is, you are not engaged fully in God's purpose for your life. The Word of Christ must dwell in you richly.

This point will not have to be argued with those who love Jesus Christ and deeply appreciate the grace of God. Such people will desire that the teaching of Christ dwell in them and govern all their thoughts, words, actions and reactions.

One collective expression of this is, singing. "Teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs..."

Let me ask – when you first read this verse (Col. 3:16), do you immediately think of a stage band with drums in the background, lead singers and back-up singers pumping music through high decibel PA speakers to a swaying and dancing



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audience? Do you really think that's what the apostle Paul had in mind (or the first century equivalent of popular music to entertain an audience)?

We must guard against letting modern images drive how we read Scripture. It is an interpretative enterprise that is impulsive, though perhaps comforting. **What was Paul talking about?**

First, he wasn't talking about raw, worldly entertainment, where you listen to music you like and acknowledge the musicians. There is nothing in Colossians three or the New Testament to support such an idea.

Second, the very words used by Paul and the context strongly and directly indicate **this is worship**. It is engaged in by those who are filled with the Word of Christ. It is teaching, admonishing to share wisdom from God and it is **"to God."** It is not entertainment to an audience. It is worship to God, shared by people who are filled with the Word of Christ.

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Further, the absence of entertaining instruments leaves us with the simple presence of vocal music: **SINGING.**

Here is how simple this is: **God said sing.** Those in whom the Word dwells are satisfied with this, because it is what God said. We do this “with thankfulness” in our hearts to God.

Please, think **WORSHIP**, not **ENTERTAINMENT.**

“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.”

The simple application of verse 16 – respecting the limits of context – should characterize our understanding and use of all Scripture. So that whatever we do – as individuals, families, local churches – we do as people who belong to the Lord and uphold His name in all we do. May all we do carry the imprint of His authority.