

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week 6: Jesus Is Enough to Form Us

Main Idea: Because Jesus is enough to form us, our everyday lives begin to reflect our life in Christ.

Colossians 3:1-4:6

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him.” (Colossians 2:6).

## **OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES IT SAY?**

Gather in groups of three to five people and discuss the Observation and Interpretation sections.

Observation Exercise 1: A new identity

Read Colossians 3:1-4. What statements did Paul make about what had already happened to believers, and what two commands did he give in response?

*Suggested Response: Paul said believers have been raised with Christ, have died, and that their life is hidden with Christ in God. He said Christ is their life and that they will appear with Him in glory. In response, he commanded them to set their hearts and minds on things above.*

Observation Exercise 2: Taking off and putting on

Read Colossians 3:5-17. What behaviors did Paul say to put to death or rid yourselves of, and what qualities did he say to put on?

*Suggested Response: Paul listed sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, and lying and said to put those things to death. He then called believers to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and love. He also said to let the peace of Christ rule, let the word of Christ dwell richly, and to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

### Observation Exercise 3: Christ in ordinary life

Read Colossians 3:18–4:6. Who did Paul address directly, and what key instructions did he give for both the household and life among outsiders?

*Suggested Response: Paul addressed wives, husbands, children, fathers, slaves, and masters, giving instructions about submission, love, obedience, fairness, and avoiding harshness. He also told believers to devote themselves to prayer, act wisely toward outsiders, and let their speech be full of grace.*

### **INTERPRETATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**

#### Interpretation Exercise 1: Identity and orientation

In 3:1–4, Paul said believers have been raised with Christ, have died, and that their life is hidden with Him. What does it mean that Christ is not only the giver of life but is “your life”? How does that shape the command to set your hearts and minds on things above?

*Suggested Response: Paul was grounding obedience in union with Christ. Christ is not an addition to life but the defining source of it. Because believers share in His death and resurrection, their primary allegiance has shifted. Setting their hearts and minds above means allowing Christ’s reign and future to shape present priorities and desires.*

#### Interpretation Exercise 2: More than NOT doing things

In 3:5–17, Paul moved from “put to death” to “clothe yourselves.” What does this contrast reveal about how transformation happens in the Christian life?

*Suggested Response: Transformation is not merely the removal of bad behavior but the replacement of an old identity with a new one. The old self is tied to disordered desire and fractured relationships. The new self reflects the character of Christ. Paul presented change as active and intentional but rooted in a renewed identity rather than self-improvement.*

#### Interpretation Exercise 3: Everyday formation

In 3:18–4:6 Paul applied identity in Christ to marriage, parenting, work, prayer, and speech. What does this tell us about where Christ intends His rule to be visible?

*Suggested Response: Christ's lordship is meant to shape ordinary, daily life. Faith is not confined to private devotion or corporate worship. It reshapes authority, obedience, labor, communication, and engagement with outsiders. The Christian life is formed not in isolated spiritual moments but in everyday relationships and responsibilities.*

#### **APPLICATION: HOW DO I RESPOND?**

Question 1: As you read Colossians 3:1–4:6, what phrase or idea stands out to you most right now?

*Suggested Response: Some may notice the call to "set your minds on things above," others the strong language to "put to death," the image of putting on compassion and love, the instructions within the household, or the call to gracious speech toward outsiders. The goal is to reveal what the text is already pressing before moving toward a specific application.*

Question 2: In 3:5–11 Paul called believers to put to death certain desires and patterns of speech. Which of these feels most connected to your everyday environment? What might it look like to take that command seriously this week?

*Suggested Response: Participants may identify sins that feel normalized in their context such as sexual temptation in media, subtle greed in career ambition, irritability at home, sarcasm, harsh speech, or comparison. Help the group think practically about what "put to death" might involve.*

Question 3: In 3:12–17 Paul described qualities like compassion, humility, patience, forgiveness, and love. Think about one relationship that feels strained or ordinary. What would it look like for Christ's character to shape your posture there?

*Suggested Response: Guide participants to move beyond abstract virtues and into real situations. This may involve choosing to listen instead of defend, initiating reconciliation instead of waiting, speaking gently instead of sharply, or practicing gratitude instead of resentment. Emphasize that these virtues are not personality traits but clothing we intentionally put on.*

Question 4: In 3:18–4:1 Paul applied faith directly to marriage, parenting, and work. Where is it easiest for you to treat faith as separate from your responsibilities? What might change if you truly believed Christ defines how you lead, submit, obey, or serve?

*Suggested Response: Some may realize they separate Sunday faith from workplace ethics, family conflict, leadership decisions, or authority structures.*

*Encourage reflection on how Christ's lordship reframes power, service, and fairness. In marriage, that may mean sacrificial love instead of control. In parenting, discipline without discouragement. In work, integrity when unseen. The emphasis is that formation is tested most clearly in ordinary authority dynamics.*

Question 5: In 4:2-6 Paul connected prayer, speech, and witness. As a group, how can we help one another live in a way that makes Christ visible in both our words and our daily rhythms?

*Suggested Response: This could include praying for specific conversations, checking in about difficult workplace interactions, modeling gracious speech within the group, and celebrating small acts of faithfulness. A healthy group culture normalizes dependence on prayer, wise engagement with outsiders, and speech that reflects Christ rather than sarcasm or hostility.*

*Question 5: How can we, as a group, guard one another from drifting into a culture of comparison and performance?*