

# IN EVERYTHING

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## CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED

- Pieces of paper and pens for the ice breaker
- Copies of the downloadable “622 service” and “Prayers & Thanksgivings” booklets
- Copies of the lesson handout
- Copy of the leader's notes
- OPTIONAL: Bibles (ESV or similar recommended)
- OPTIONAL: A white board, easel pad, or chalk board with markers/chalk
- OPTIONAL: Have notebooks on hand for teens to take home and use as prayer journals if they wish

## ICE BREAKER: HAPPY, REJOICING, THANKFUL, BLESSED

Divide your teens into groups or pairs and ask each to choose one of these four words (happy, rejoicing, thankful, blessed) and write an acrostic poem based on that word and inspired by that theme. Allow a few minutes for this and then have all of the groups present their poems.

IF YOU HAVE ONLY ONE GROUP OR PAIR, THE GROUP MAY WISH TO WRITE AN ACROSTIC FOR MORE THAN ONE OF THE WORDS.

## 622: BEGINNING WITH PRAYER

Begin the formal part of the lesson by saying together the first part of the order of service for young people in the booklet, up to the middle of page 4.

AT THIS POINT IN THE LESSON, ASK IF THE TEENS SUCCEEDED IN DOING LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE, HOW IT WENT, AND WHETHER THEY HAVE ANYTHING TO SHARE.

## DISCUSSION: HAPPINESS IS...

As an introduction to the lesson ask the teens to discuss the following questions.

DEPENDING ON THE COMFORT LEVEL FOR SHARING IN YOUR GROUP, IT MAY BE EASIER TO HAVE THEM VOLUNTEER ANSWERS WITH ALL RESPONSES WRITTEN TOGETHER ON A BOARD.

- How can you tell if someone is happy?
- How can being happy affect a person's behaviour? For better? For worse?

*A few things worth pointing out (if they don't otherwise arise during the discussion):*

- *We often look for simple visual cues to tell us whether people are happy. We notice whether they are smiling and laughing and whether the laughter extends to their eyes. If we know them a bit better then we might be able to tell they are happy because what they say shows that they have a hopeful outlook on life and the future. A happy person is likely to enjoy time with friends as well as time spent alone, and to have healthy habits and relationships.*
- *Happiness doesn't always have the same effect on people. It depends on many factors, including whether they are grateful for the blessings in their life. Grateful people know that they are blessed themselves and they want to be a blessing to others. They are able to celebrate the successes of others instead of resenting them. But when we tell ourselves that we deserve to be happy, when we look at it as a right rather than a gift, it can cause us to have an entitled attitude, which ultimately leads to dissatisfaction. Or, we can become wrapped up in our own lives and ignore the needs of others.*

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## THE LESSON: COLOSSIANS 3

The first part of the lesson (below) can be read aloud. Then the teens are asked to read the Bible text (either silently to themselves or aloud together), followed by some additional questions for discussion.

(IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP RESPOND TO QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE RAISED DURING THIS UNIT, WE RECOMMEND "DISCOVERING THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER: A HANDS-ON APPROACH, VOLUME 3: SPECIAL OCCASIONS" BY SUE CARELESS.)

*God is so good to us. We know that our sin makes us undeserving, therefore we are grateful for each good gift that God sends. We know he is good when we consider the "common" gifts that he has given to us in the natural world. We know it when we consider the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf. We know it when we consider the blessings he has poured out on the Church, and the glorious future that he has prepared for us. For these reasons and many more, no matter what kind of day we are having, we can say, "God is so good".*

The Apostle Paul wrote several of his letters, including the ones to the Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, while he was imprisoned in Rome. Did you catch that? He was writing from prison! In spite of his circumstances, these letters are filled with calls to rejoice and give thanks. In the letter to the Philippians, he wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice" (4:4). In the letter to the Ephesian church, he instructed his readers to give thanks "always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:20). And to the Colossians he said, "whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (3:17).

Refer to Colossians 3:1-17.

(THE TEXT IS PROVIDED ON THE BACK OF THE HANDOUTS AND IN THESE LEADERS' NOTES SO THAT EVERYONE CAN MARK IT UP AND MAKE NOTES ON IT IF DESIRED. ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN READ OUT OF A BIBLE).

Read through the text. Then ask the teens to respond to what they've just read. Here are some questions to help guide the discussion.

- What do you think is the connection between covetousness and idolatry (see verse 5)?
- What does verse 11 have to tell us about Christian unity?
- How can we put on the "new self"?
- How do you think we can live out the exhortation in verse 17?

*A few notes and reflections for reference:*

- *Covetousness means looking with resentment at the blessings of others and obsessively wanting them for yourself. A covetous spirit is the exact opposite of a thankful spirit. The thankful person recognizes the goodness of God, which a covetous person refuses to acknowledge. Those who are overtaken by covetousness will be oriented towards getting for themselves – by any means – what they want. This sin can lead them to make such an idol of what they desire, that they not only disregard God, but they are willing to commit other sins in order to gain it.*
- *Christian unity is based on Christ and on who we are in him. It is not based on any other identity marker (Greek or Jew, slave or free, etc.). Together, we must share the calling to "put off" the things of the world, and "put on" the things of Christ.*
- *Putting on the new self begins with setting our minds on heavenly things (v2), and "being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (v10). Next we must "diagnose" those things that have no place in the new life and put them aside (v5-9). The new mind and the clean life can then begin to bear the fruit of the Spirit (v12-15). This new life is sustained in the believing community, the "one body", which is rooted in the word of Christ and overflowing with thankfulness (v16-17).*

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- Verse 17 challenges us to “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus” – by word and deed – in a spirit of thankfulness. But most of our lives are made up of things that seem “non-spiritual”. Yet in everything we can give thanks. In everything we can find purpose and joy, remembering who we are in Christ, what we’ve been saved from, and what we’ve been called to. We can remember these things when we get out of bed in the morning, when we interact with the people in our families, when we work on our assignments for school or laugh with friends. We can allow these things to inspire how we choose to use the gifts that we’ve been given. Challenge your teens to come up with some specific ideas, such as taking time to thank God for each day’s blessings, befriending someone who seems lonely instead of trying to get in with the popular crowd, etc.

DURING EACH LESSON, IF THE TEENS RAISE THEOLOGICAL OR BIBLICAL QUESTIONS THAT YOU DON’T FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT ANSWERING, SAY SO, BUT LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU’LL FIND THE ANSWER AND RESPOND AT THE NEXT MEETING.

## PREVIEW: AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Take a brief moment to look at the at-home challenge together.

THE WEEKLY “AT-HOME CHALLENGE” IS TYPICALLY A SIMPLE ASSIGNMENT TO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME IN PRIVATE PRAYER. ENCOURAGE THE TEENS TO GET NOTEBOOKS THAT CAN BE USED AS PRAYER JOURNALS. ASSURE THEM THAT THEY WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO SHOW THEIR JOURNAL OR THEIR PRIVATE PRAYERS TO ANYONE.

**Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.**

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER](http://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER).)

Spend some time each day this week, perhaps more than once a day, praying with the words of Psalm 138: 1: “I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart”. Name some of the things that you are specifically thankful for. Close your time of prayer with:

*O Lord, we pray thee, sow the seed of thy word in our hearts, and send down upon us the showers of thy grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, and at the great day of harvest may be gathered by the holy angels into the heavenly garner; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (FROM HARVEST THANKSGIVING, BCP PAGE 618)

## CLOSING PRAYERS (622 AGAIN)

Close with any prayers that might be appropriate in the context of the discussion of the day.

**Take the time, as a group, to read together the words of Psalm 138:1: “I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart”. Invite the teens to name aloud some of the things for which they are thankful. Then pray together the words of the At-Home Challenge prayer.**

AT THE END OF EACH LESSON, IF YOU FIND THAT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS OF TIME REMAINING, YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO TAKE SOME TIME TO EXPLORE THE “PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS” SECTION IN THE BCP (PAGES 39-62, OR YOU CAN USE THE DOWNLOADABLE BOOKLET). AS YOUR GROUP MEMBERS COME ACROSS PRAYERS THAT THEY FIND RELEVANT, PAUSE AND PRAY THEM TOGETHER.

Then finish with the “Grace”, the final prayer in the booklet.

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## COLOSSIANS 3: **WHATEVER YOU DO**

<sup>1</sup>If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup>For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

<sup>5</sup>Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>On account of these the wrath of God is coming. <sup>7</sup>In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. <sup>8</sup>But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. <sup>11</sup>Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

<sup>12</sup>Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup>And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup>And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup>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.