

Who will you see over the holidays that you find difficult to be around? How will you prepare to put up with and extend love to that person this time? What ideas do you find in the final verses of this passage?

What do the people nearest to you have to put up with from you? If you don't know, how can you find out?

What are some good ways you have "let the word of Christ dwell in you?" What verse do you find especially meaningful or helpful at this time of year?

REFLECT

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." What does that look like today?

RESPOND

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Sing a favorite Christmas carol in closing.

Christmas dysFUNCTION (making it right)

We sing or hear sung at this time of year that "there's no place like home for the holidays." That is true in more ways than one. Getting together with our families can be an intense and stressful time. Let's talk about how to get ready for that.

Accept the fact that every family is flawed and messy. You are not alone.

Matthew 10:36
..your enemies will be the members of your own household.

George Burns
"Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city."

Leo Tolstoy
"Happy families are all alike. Every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

Take the responsibility that's yours. Do what you can, but only what you can.

Romans 12:18
If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.



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1. Pray.

1 Peter 5:7

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Philippians 4:5-7 (page 805)

2. Get prepared.

Colossians 4:6

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Proverbs 17:27

Those who have knowledge use words with restraint, and those who have understanding are even-tempered.

3. Be proactive.

1 Thessalonians 5:15

Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

Luke 6:27-36 (page 706)

4. Exercise patience and grace.

Colossians 3:13

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

John Maxwell
"I find that many Christian people suffer from guilt in their relationships with others. Christians are often taught that we should be full of grace. Just what does that mean? ... Right relationships with difficult people can seem like an impossible standard to reach. Just what are we supposed to do?...Do the best you can to get long with everyone. Yet realize that once in a while you are going to have a relationship with a difficult person that may fall short of the ideal."

Gary Chapman
"Patience: allowing someone to be imperfect."

(making it right) life group study

RELATE

What is something you enjoy about celebrating Christmas with your family?

What causes stress when you get together with your family?

What principle, insight, idea or quote was meaningful to you from this week's sermon?

READ

Colossians 3:1-17

Where are Christians to focus our hearts and minds, to see ourselves as living? How could thinking this way change the way you look at your daily experiences (v.1- 4)?

Which old, earthly behaviors are believers to take off (v. 5-9)? Which one of these do you most want to remove from your life?

What new "clothes" are we to put on (v.12-15)? What is our responsibility and what does God do (v. 10, 13)?

The writer calls his readers "chosen, holy, and dearly loved by God." What's the connection between knowing how God sees us and putting on the beautiful virtues of Christ? How is that helpful to you?