

Weekly Devotional
May 27, 2020

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. (Colossians 3:12 ESV)

Have you noticed how easy it is to become argumentative over matters of opinion? If you've ever been on social media, you've probably seen it. People will argue over just about anything, whether it's something silly like Marvel versus D.C., or something more serious like the coronavirus pandemic.

And these kinds of arguments aren't limited to social media. I've seen close friends fighting over whether or not fans should continue supporting the Chargers after they moved from San Diego to Los Angeles. I've seen family members disputing over politicians and differing political viewpoints. I've even seen fellow Christians in heated debate over matters of personal conviction.

We all have different opinions, and if we're not careful, we could fall to the temptation to judge others harshly—we could even fall into divisive conflict. And yet, we know we're called by the Lord to "live peaceably with all" (Romans 12:18). So how could we pursue peace within such a variety of opposing beliefs?

This week's verse gives us one solution: *Be gracious towards others.*

The truth is, we're never going to agree on everything with others in this life. Of course, as Christians, we agree with one another on the essential matters of our faith. But even as Christians, we're going to disagree on nonessential matters. We're especially going to disagree on many things related to the world. So, Paul tells us to put away our old, sinful responses (Colossians 3:5-11), and he encourages us to put on Christlike love (Colossians (3:12-15). As we turn to Jesus and remember the generous love and grace that has been extended to us through his death, burial, and resurrection, we are empowered by the gospel and the Spirit of God to bury any malicious and unhelpful judgment and impatience towards others, and we are equipped to respond with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, and love.

My dear Christian: When tempted to judge or argue with others over a differing opinion—especially now that we prepare to return to church gatherings, where we will find new ways to be tempted to judge others harshly over issues surrounding the ongoing pandemic—*remember to be gracious*. Turn to the Lord; remember his generous grace towards you; then, extend that same grace to others. "Keep loving one another earnestly" (1 Peter 4:8).

Questions:

- What are some of the different views you've heard regarding the pandemic and the return to "normalcy" in phases? Is there anything you agree with? Anything you don't agree with?
- How does today's verse encourage you to pursue peace with others, even if they disagree with your personal views?
- Spend some time in prayer thanking God for the generous grace he has extended to you. Ask him to give you generous grace for others.