

Colossians 3:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Analysis

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (ho logos tou Christou enoikeitō en hymin plousiōs, ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικείτω ἐν ὑμῖν πλουσίως) commands making Scripture central to Christian life. "Dwell richly" indicates abundant, saturating presence—not occasional Scripture reading but continuous engagement transforming mind and life.

This Scripture-saturation produces community effects: "teaching and admonishing one another" (didaskontes kai nouthetountes heautous, διδάσκοντες καὶ νουθετοῦντες ἑαυτούς)—mutual instruction and correction. The medium: "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" encompassing various musical forms. "Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (en tē chariti adontes en tais kardiais hymōn tō theō, ἐν τῇ χάριτι ᾠδοῦντες ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν τῷ Θεῷ) indicates music's dual direction: vertical (to God) and horizontal (mutual edification).

Historical Context

Early Christianity was singing movement—hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs featured prominently in worship and daily life. Some NT portions may be early hymns (Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-20). Music embedded theology in memory, making truth accessible to illiterate believers and creating corporate worship experience. Pagan critics noted Christian singing even noted by pagan critics. This singing culture sustained believers through persecution and transmitted faith across generations.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How richly does Christ's word dwell in you—occasional interaction or saturating abundance?
2. How do you use music for mutual teaching and admonition versus mere entertainment?
3. What practical steps would fill your mind and heart more richly with Scripture?

Interlinear Text

ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικείτω ἐν ὑμῖν πλουσίως
G3588 the word G3588 of Christ Let in you richly
G3056 G5547 G1774 G1722 G5213 G4146

ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ διδάσκοντες καὶ νουθετοῦντες ἐαυτοὺς
in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another
G1722 G3956 G4678 G1321 G2532 G3560 G1438

ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ὡδαῖς πνευματικαῖς ἐν χάριτι
psalms and hymns and songs spiritual in grace
G5568 G2532 G5215 G2532 G5603 G4152 G1722 G5485

ἀδοντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ Κυρίῳ
singing in G3588 hearts your to the Lord
G103 G1722 G2588 G5216 G3588 G2962

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:11 (Word): Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Ephesians 5:19 (Spirit): Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

John 15:7 (Word): If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Romans 10:17 (Word): So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

1 John 2:24 (Parallel theme): Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

Jeremiah 15:16 (Word): Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

EpheSIANS 1:17 (Spirit): That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Job 23:12 (Word): Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

James 3:17 (Grace): But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

2 John 1:2 (Parallel theme): For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

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