

11-27-22

Colossians 3:12-17.

This section completes Paul's exhortation to the Christian to live a holy life. It continues the illustration of garments: **"Put off ... put on" (Col. 3:8–10)**. He exhorted his readers to put off the graveclothes of sin and the old life, and to put on the "graceclothes" of holiness and the new life in Christ.

The emphasis in this section is on motives. Why should we put off the old deeds and put on the qualities of the new life? Paul explained what ought to encourage us to walk in newness of life (**Rom. 6:4**).

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Read verse 12a. "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved..."

The word elect means "chosen of God." God's words to Israel through Moses help us to understand the meaning of salvation by grace:

"The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you ... hath the Lord brought you out [of Egypt] with a mighty hand" (Deut. 7:7–8).

This miracle of divine election did not depend on anything that we are or that we have done; for God chose us in Christ **"before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4)**. If God saved a sinner based on merit or works, nobody would be saved. It is all done through God's grace that it might all bring glory to God.

Election is a "sacred secret" that belongs to God's children. It is not a doctrine that believers explain to the unbelievers (unsaved). **"The Lord knows them that are His" (2 Tim. 2:19)**, so we must leave the working out of His eternal purposes with Him. Our task is to share the Good News of the Gospel with a lost world.

Remembering: It is not our job to decide or try to decide who will trust in the gospel or not. Our job is to share the gospel with everyone remembering God's heart with salvation.

"Who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2:4

"The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" Matthew 23:37

"And he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." 2 Cor. 5:15

God's chosen are not called, separated by God so that we just exist, or survive. God has chosen, called us, and equipped us to thrive! To change the climate, make a difference, to bring hope where there is hopelessness and despair.

Paul contrast's what we are to take off and put on. Christians should not be taking off all the character issues and conduct problems found in **verses 5, 8 & 9**. He goes on to tell believers what they should be putting on.

Put On:

1. Tender Mercy (Compassion)

- **Read verse 12-14.**

2. Kindness

- Kindness that extends to those that don't deserve it.

3. Humility

- The pagan world of Paul's day did not admire humility. Instead, they admired pride and domination. Jesus Christ is the greatest example of humbleness of mind (**Phil. 2:1**).
- Humility is not thinking poorly of oneself. Rather, it is having the proper estimate of oneself in the will of God (**Rom. 12:3**). The person with humbleness of mind thinks of others first and not of himself.
- All too often humility is seen as weakness in the world today.

4. Meekness

- Meekness is not weakness; it is power under control. This word was used to describe a soothing wind, a healing medicine, and a colt that had been broken.
- The entirety of Christ's life was meekness. From being born in a feeding trough, to dying naked on a cross. It was His meekness that saved us!

5. Longsuffering (Patience)

- This word is literally "long-temper." The short-tempered person speaks and acts impulsively and lacks self-control.
- When a person is long-suffering, he can put up with provoking people or circumstances without retaliating. It is good to be able to get angry, for this is a sign of holy character. But it is wrong to get angry quickly at the wrong things and for the wrong reasons.

6. Forbearance

- This word literally means "to hold up" or "to hold back." God is forbearing toward sinners in that He holds back His judgment (**Rom. 2:4; 3:25**). Meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance go together.
- We are to bear with one another, despite how bad we irritate each other.

7. Forgiving

- It is not enough that the Christian must endure grief and provocation and refuse to retaliate; he must also forgive the troublemaker. If he does not, then feelings of malice will develop in the heart; and these can lead to greater sins.
- If we have been offended by another believer, they are part of the family of God, we should go to them with an attitude of forgiveness and reconciliation.
- How many issues in our life is because of unforgiveness?

8. Love

- This is the most important of the Christian virtues, and it acts like a “girdle” that ties all the other virtues together. All the spiritual qualities Paul has named are aspects of true Christian love.
- Love is the first of the fruit of the Spirit and the other virtues follow—joy (**Col. 3:16**), peace (**Col. 3:15**), long-suffering, gentleness, kindness, and meekness (**Col. 3:12**).
- When love rules in our lives, it unites all these spiritual virtues so that there is beauty and harmony, indicating spiritual maturity. This harmony and maturity keep the life balanced and growing. The world’s system could never do this. Just listen to the news.

Starting in **verse 15** Paul moves from character to conduct. **Read verse 15-17.**

I. “...let the Peace of God rule in your hearts...”

- Let God control your thinking. When a believer loses their inner peace, they know that in some way they disobeyed God.
- Beware of false peace in the heart. Jonah deliberately disobeyed God, yet he was able to go to sleep in the ship during a storm. We must pray, submit to God’s will, seek God’s guidance in the Bible.
- Something else is involved: if we have peace in our hearts, we will be at peace with others in the church. We are called to one body, and our relationship in that body must be one of harmony and peace. If we are out of the will of God, we are certain to bring discord and disharmony to the church. Jonah thought he was at peace when his sins created a storm!
- When a Christian loses the peace of God, he begins to go off in directions that are out of the will of God. He turns to the things of the world and the flesh to compensate for his lack of peace within

II. “Be thankful”

- We have so much to be thankful for.
- Here is the 4th reference to thanksgiving (Col. 1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:15, 17; 4:2)

III. “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you...”

- The word dwell means “to feel at home.” If we have experienced the grace and the peace of Christ, then the Word of Christ will feel at home in our hearts.
- Depend on Christ’s wisdom
- Christ’s teachings

- Admonishing (counsel one another) with His word. Through scripture, songs, and praise.

IV. “...whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

- All that we say and do should be associated with the name of Jesus Christ. By our words and our works, we should glorify His name. If we permit anything into our lives that cannot be associated with the name of Jesus, then we are sinning. We must do and say everything on the authority of His name and for the honor of His name.
- Paul again mentioned thanksgiving (5th reference) in this Colossian letter. Whatever we do in the name of Christ ought to be joined with thanksgiving. If we cannot give thanks, then we had better not do it or say it!
- As we review these four spiritual motivations for godly living, we are impressed with the centrality of Jesus Christ. We forgive because Christ forgave us (**Col. 3:13**). It is the peace of Christ that should rule in our hearts (**Col. 3:15**). The Word of Christ should dwell in us richly (**Col. 3:16**). **The** name of Christ should be our identification and our authority. “Christ is all, and in all” (**Col. 3:11**).
- Since we are united with Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit, we have all the resources we need for holy living. But we must be spiritually motivated. Because we have experienced the grace of Christ, we want to live for Him. Because we have enjoyed the peace of Christ, we want to obey Him. We have been enriched by the Word of Christ, and ennobled by the name of Christ; therefore, we want to honor and glorify Him.
- Can we desire any higher motivation?

Conclusion

What are you putting on each day? Verse 5, 8 and 9?

Or Mercy, Kindness, Humility, Meekness, Longsuffering, Forbearance, Forgiveness, Love

Are we conducting ourselves in a way that the peace of God rules in our hearts?

Are we living thankful lives? Or ungrateful, complaining lives?

Is Christ’s Words dwelling in us? Depending on Christ’s wisdom, teachings, His songs?

Is everything we actively do each day done in the name of Jesus? Is it worthy of His name? And are we giving thanks, again?!