

# Dress the Part

## Colossians 3:5-17

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you; sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. **6** On account of these the wrath of God is coming. **7** In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. **8** But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. **9** Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices **10** and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. **11** Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised, and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. **12** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, **13** 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. **14** And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body, and be thankful. **16** 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. **17** 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.

Our identity as believers should line up with our behavior.

### I. **Take off Self-Centered Behavior (vv. 5-11)**

We battle against the sin that is within us. We are commanded to put these fleshy, inner desires to death. Sin isn't victorious. It doesn't rule, but we must still fight against it. Stop putting on the old clothes of the old way of your life. Don't put on the clothes of anger and wrath and obscene talk. Those clothes don't fit you anymore! Our new identity has a new behavior. Our identity is not connected to ethnicity or your former religion or your socio-economic status. Our identity is solely found in the Lord Jesus.

### II. **Put on Gospel-Centered Character (vv. 12-14)**

We are chosen by God. God in His love pursued you. Because you are chosen by God, you are set apart for Him. You are holy. You are loved. Because of this great love and that we are His chosen ones, we are able to put on new clothes (behaviors). We are to put on:

*Compassionate hearts* – the same kind of compassionate heart Jesus had as He wept over Jerusalem

*Kindness* – Spirit-imparted goodness of heart. Do not think the worst; think the best of others. Do not assume the worst thing; assume the best.

*Humility* – The biblical idea of humility is linked to serving. (1 Cor. 4; Phil 2)

*Meekness* – Strength under God's control – Meekness can best be described as the man who knows how to be angry in the right moment and how not to be angry in the wrong moment and knows how not to get those mixed up.

*Patience* – Endurance – Wait for the Lord – trust His timing (1:11)

*Bearing and forgiving* – If we are careful to put on compassionate hearts, kindness, humility and meekness, it will make us able to bear with one another and forgive one another.

*Love* – Love is what binds all these qualities together and binds all of us together.

**III. Live out a Christ-Centered Community (vv. 15-17)**

A Christ-centered community is one where the peace of Christ is the controlling factor. Even in conflict the peace of Christ becomes the deciding factor to help us when we do not agree with one another. A Christ-centered community is where the Word of Christ is at the center of our activities and worship. The word that proclaims Christ needs to be the center of all we do. A Christ-centered community is where the glory of Christ is the greatest motivation. It is not about us. It is about Him and His glory.

It is important to understand the difference between going to church and being the Church. When we *go* to church we think about what we are going to wear. When we understand that we *are* the Church we concern ourselves with how we will clothe our inner beings. We seek to put on the new self. We reject any identity that is wrapped up in ethnicity or socio-economic distinctions. Christ is all and in all.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What is a key belief that enables us to put off old behaviors and put on new ones?
2. Why is it important to put off the old behaviors?
3. What is our motivation to bear with and forgive others? (v. 13; 17)
4. Describe Gospel-centered character. What does that look like in everyday life?
5. What does it mean to have Christ-centered activities and worship? What would those look like?

**Going Deeper**

1. What have you found to be your greatest help in putting off old behaviors and putting on new ones?
2. How can you encourage and help the believers around you in this effort?
3. What is the hardest piece of clothing for you to put on? How can you enlist the help of others in being victorious in this endeavor?