

OUR PERTINENT RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

“THE PERSONALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN”

[Message 4, Spiritual Growth]

Date: 6-22-08

Text: Colossians 3:12-14

Purpose: I desire that we all see the exciting results of our regeneration in our individual lives and lifestyles.

Introduction: There is a TV commercial about men’s suits saying “*You will like the way you look!*” I am sure that we men want to “*like the way we look*” because we have the proper suit that also says much concerning our personal tastes.

How can “I” as a Christian dress properly spiritually? The Christian must “mortify the flesh” and “put off the old man’ lifestyle.”

Our *regeneration* involved a “putting off” and a “putting on.” This “putting off and putting on” is accomplished as we helplessly depend upon the Holy Spirit enablement. Our text, Colossians 3: 12-14, presents *what we are to wear* as Believers/Christians. We need to be *dressed properly* in order to glorify our Lord and edify other believers.

We shall be considering:

1. Our Characterization [3:12,13]
2. Our Perfection [3:14]

1. Our Characterization [3: ¹² Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.] ⁱ

A. God’s People -- Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved,

1. “Therefore, as God’s chosen people - ενδυσασθε ουν ω□ εκλεκτοι του θεου”

- a. εκλεκτοι -- Adjective, nominative, plural, masculine
- b. This was a term used with reference to those belonging to

God and Christ.

c. 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 on the basis of merit or works, nobody would be saved. It is all done through God’s grace that it might all bring glory to God.

Of course, *election* is a “sacred secret” that belongs to God’s children. It is not a doctrine that we believers explain to the 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.

2. “**holy – αγιοι**” – Adjective, nominative, plural, masculine -- pure; separated unto God. That is the meaning of the word holy. Because we have trusted Christ, we have been set apart from the world unto the Lord. We are not our own; we belong completely to Him (1 Cor. 6:19–20). Just as the marriage ceremony sets apart a man and a woman for each other exclusively, so salvation sets the believer apart exclusively for Jesus Christ. Would it not be a horrible thing, at the end of a wedding, to see the groom run off with the maid of honor? It is just as horrible to contemplate the Christian living for the world and the flesh.²

3. “**dearly beloved – αγαπημενοι**” -- Verb, participle, nominative, plural, masculine, perfect, passive.

a. The perfect tense used by the writer to describe a completed verbal action that occurred in the past but which produced a state of being or a result that exists in the present (in relation to the writer). The emphasis of the perfect is not the past action so much as it is as such but the present ‘state of affairs’ resulting from the past action³

b. The passive voice - the grammatical voice that signifies that the subject is being acted upon; i.e., the subject is the receiver of the verbal action. A verb in the passive voice with God as the stated or implied agent is often referred to as the “divine passive.”⁴

c. When an unbeliever sins, he is a creature breaking the laws of the holy Creator and Judge. But when a Christian sins, he is a child of God breaking the loving heart of his Father. Love is the strongest motivating power in the world. As the believer grows in his love for God, he will grow in his desire to obey Him and walk in the newness of life that he has in Christ.⁵

B. God’s People’s Clothing – “**clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.**”

¹Weirs, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12

²Weirs, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12

³Heiser, Michael S.: *Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology*. Logos Bible Software, 2005; 2005, perfect

⁴Heiser, Michael S.: *Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology*. Logos Bible Software, 2005; 2005, passive

⁵Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12

Chosen by God, set apart for God, loved by God, and forgiven by God. They all add up to GRACE! Now, because of these gracious blessings, the Christian has some solemn responsibilities before God. He must put on the beautiful graces of the Christian life. Paul named eight graces.⁶

1. “**clothe yourselves – ενδυσασθε**” Verb, finite, second person, plural, aorist, imperative, middle voice – at a point in time, you yourself are commanded to put on this clothing. (Mt 6:25; Mk 1:6; Lk 8:27; 24:49; Ac 12:21; Ro 13:12; 1Co 15:53; Gal 3:27; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10; 1Th 5:8; Rev 1:13; 2Co 5:3)

2. “**compassion – οικτιρμων**” - Noun, genitive, singular, masculine. “tender sympathy of heartfelt compassion”—an unusually touching expression;⁷ this continual attitude makes one easy to live with on a moment by moment basis.

3. “**kindness – χρηστοτητα**” - Noun, accusative, singular, feminine; benevolence in action. We have been saved because of God’s kindness toward us through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:7; Titus 3:4). We, in turn, ought to show kindness toward others. “Be ye kind one to another” (Eph. 4:32) is God’s command.⁸

4. “**humility – ταπεινοφροσυνην**” - Noun, accusative, singular, feminine. a lowly attitude toward God; cf. Phil. 2:1-11

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. 2:1ff). 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.⁹

5. “**gentleness – πραοτητα**” - Noun, accusative, singular, feminine. meekness, a lowly attitude toward others. Meekness is not weakness; it is power under control. We are being confronted with the unleashing of power in wind, rain and fire globally. These are being demonstrated as *power out of control* in the wild fires in California, the floods in Iowa, and the tornados near home in the outskirts Suffolk. These elements under control are beneficial to all.

6. “**patience – μακροθυμιαν**” - Noun, accusative, singular, feminine. self-restraint, a steady response in the face of provocation; long-tempered; self under control. cf. Gal. 5:22, 23; Col. 1:11¹⁰ 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.¹¹

⁶Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12

⁷Walvoord, John F. ; Zuck, Roy B. ; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1983-c1985, S. 2:682

⁸Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12
cf. *confer*, compare

⁹Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12
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¹⁰Walvoord, John F. ; Zuck, Roy B. ; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1983-c1985, S. 2:682

¹¹Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12

C. God's People's Love-action -¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you

1. "Bear with each other"

a. "Bear – ανεχομενοι" -Verb, participle, nominative, plural, and masculine, present, deponent — 1 to hold up. 2 to hold one's self erect and firm. 3 to sustain, to bear, to endure.¹² The participle, "bear" -- a word that has characteristics of both a verb and an adjective — a "verbal adjective" (cf. the word "shining"). As such, the Greek participle has gender, number and case (the adjectival side), as well as tense and voice (the verbal side). Participles do not have mood, but can function in an imperative sense. In general, a participle's tense is similar to a verb's tense in the indicative mood. The aspect of a participle cannot be simply equated with that of verbs.¹³ It means to put up with each other. **Make allowance for each other's faults** [New Living Translation]

b. "each other –αλληλων" reciprocal — A pronoun that denotes reciprocity; that is, it indicates an interchange between two or more *groups*. It is therefore always plural. A reciprocal pronoun is distinguished from a reflexive pronoun, which is a pronoun that refers to mutual participation in an act on the part of the subject (singular or plural) of the clause.¹⁴

2. "forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another"

a. "forgive – χαριζομενοι" – is a verb, participle, nominative, plural, masculine, present, deponent.

1) to do something pleasant or agreeable (to one), to do a favor to, gratify.

2) to show one's self gracious, kind, benevolent.

a) to grant forgiveness, to pardon.

b) to give graciously, give freely, bestow; to forgive; graciously to restore one to another; to preserve for one a person in peril.¹⁵ forgive, give grace (2Co 12:13)

3) The root word is "grace – χαρις"

a) that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech.

b) good will, loving-kindness, favor; of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues. 3 what is due to grace.¹⁶

¹²Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. G430

¹³Heiser, Michael S.: *Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology*. Logos Bible Software, 2005; 2005, participle

¹⁴Heiser, Michael S.: *Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology*. Logos Bible Software, 2005; 2005, reciprocal

¹⁵Heiser, Michael S.: *Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology*. Logos Bible Software, 2005; 2005, reciprocal

¹⁶Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. G5485

4) This is the logical result of all that Paul has written so far in this section. 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.

It is Christ like to forgive (Eph. 4:32), and forgiveness opens the heart to the fullness of the love of God. The very instant we have a complaint against another person, we should forgive him in our hearts. (“Family forgiveness” is another matter. We should go to the offender and seek to help him in love. See Matt. 18:15–35.)¹⁷

b. “grievances – μωμην” or complaint, finding fault with.

3. “Forgive as the Lord forgave you” – “forgive –εχαρισατο” is a Verb, finite, third person, singular, aorist, indicative, deponent. The aorist tense indicates that a point in time, the Lord forgave you. That point in time would be one’s salvation, regeneration, justification indicating that one has been declared legally justified. We are focusing up the complete salvation that is our in Christ. On that basis, forgive, extend grace to all men!

2. Our Perfection [3: ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.]ⁱⁱ

A. The Greatest Virtue - “And over all these virtues put on love”

1. “over all – επι” indicating that the virtue of love exceeds all of the other virtues mentioned.

2. “put on – is not in the original text. These two words “put on” are an ellipsis or redundancy. the omission of one or more words that are obviously understood but that must be supplied to make a construction grammatically complete¹⁸ using more words than necessary [Merriam – Webster’s on line dictionary]

3. “love – αγαπην” – involves intimacy, that *self-sacrificing otherism* as portrayed in Christ. Philippians 2: 5-11:

- ⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
- ⁶ Who, being in very nature^a God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
- ⁷ but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature^b of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
- ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!
- ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

¹⁷Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12

¹⁸Merriam-Webster, Inc: *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Eleventh ed. Springfield, Mass. : Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003

^a Or in the form of

^b Or the form

10 and gave him the name that is above every name,
 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
 in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
 to the glory of God the Father.¹⁹

B. The Greatest Action - “which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

1. “is –εστιν” – is a verb, finite, third person, singular, present, indicative, active

2. “binds – συνδεσμο□” – the “bond” -- is a noun, nominative, singular, masculine. Love is the bond!

3. “perfect unity –τελειοτητα□” is a noun, genitive, singular, feminine. Specifies completeness. Love is the bond of perfection, completeness.

4. This is the most important of the Christian virtues, and it acts like a “girdle” that ties all the other virtues together. All of the spiritual qualities Paul has named are aspects of true Christian love, as a reading of 1 Corinthians 13 will reveal. 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 Gnostic system could never do this.²⁰

What should be “my” response to this message?

1. Praise the Lord for the *clothing* that He has supplied for us!
2. Christ and the Holy Spirit *guarantees* that you will *like the way you look!*
3. *Love! Love! Love!*

¹⁹ *The Holy Bible : New International Version*. electronic ed. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 1996, c1984, S. Php 2:5-11

²⁰ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Col 3:12

ⁱ *The Holy Bible : New International Version*. electronic ed. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 1996, c1984, S. Col 3:12-13

ⁱⁱ *The Holy Bible : New International Version*. electronic ed. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 1996, c1984, S. Col 3:14