

## Colossians Series - #18 - "Dressed in HIS Righteousness!" Colossians 3: 12-14

**Introduction: IL-** In 1975 John Molloy developed what came to be a very popular business technique that he called "Dress for Success". His main goal was to get employees to "always dress like your boss!" The Apostle Paul, led by the Holy Spirit, has a better approach for brothers and sisters in Christ- "Dress in HIS righteousness". We can and must dress like the new man or woman whose life has been changed eternally by the love and grace of the Savior.

How can we "put on" the holy attire of the new man, according to the Apostle Paul? We will examine three ways in these three verses- the inspired words are unmistakable!!

### 1. By showing real, practical concern for brothers and sisters in the church! - verse 12

**"Put on then: as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved:** "the wardrobe of the consecrated soul! Chosen- Ephesians 1: 4- "...even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him, in love..." If chosen- not on the basis of God foreknowing any merit in us but solely by His amazing grace- then we should live accordingly! What a thrill it should be to know, without doubt, that we are God's 'called out ones'- His beloved children if we have put our faith and trust in Him for salvation! In 2 Timothy 2: 19 we're instructed clearly that "God knows those who are His!" IF we are chosen, holy (set apart for His purposes) and well loved- then these qualities should be on display, part of the wardrobe of the godly brother or sister in God's eternal family:

**compassionate hearts-** We can show real compassion in everyday, practical ways but most of all by words of concern and deeds that show we care!

**kindness-** doing what is profitable or helpful to my church family members. Kindness is others-minded rather than looking out for number 1! Kindness is the opposite of harshness. Others-mindedness is how I respond to the needy people around me!

**humility-** In Romans 12: 3 Paul urges us "not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to" and in 1 Corinthians 6: 19 and 20 we note: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own for you were bought with a price." It involves recognizing where we fit in the Body!

**meekness-** The Bible is emphatic that, no matter what the world says, meekness is NOT weakness! Moses was the most meek man on earth in his day, according to Numbers 12: 3. And Jesus reveals in Matthew 11: 28-30 that He is the epitome of meekness. "Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

**patience-** We all need to realize or be reminded again that we in the church are always in close fellowship with people who are often very different than us, and we must work side by side with them, worship with them, serve with them. It involves a desire to please God and serve my brothers and sisters in ways that best benefit them, not me, and sometimes that takes great patience and flexibility until we see the right moment to help in some very practical way!

**2. By saying, “I forgive you!” when needed and honestly meaning it! - verse 13**

**“bearing with one another, and...** Bearing with each other reminds us that the dividing walls of hostility have been torn down- Ephesians 2: 14.

**if one has a complaint against another...** Complaining in the church DOES occur and we DO have issues with each other from time to time, but the godly believer is committed to working out any differences so that God-honoring unity will prevail!

**forgiving each other...**the humble Christian never gives way to revenge. He or she operates under God’s control and that positively effects self-control. The Holy Spirit has given us the fruit of self-control, according to Galatians 5: 22, and under the Spirit’s control all those fruits can be nurtured in each of us!

**as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”** Our example of forgiveness is the Lord Jesus who forgave us all our sins and who forgave those who maliciously nailed Him to the Cross. Luke 23: 24- “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” It really does work to follow Christ’s example of forgiveness. Stephen in Acts 7: 60 said- while being struck with stones- “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!”

**3. By supporting my godly clothing with the tight belt of love! - verse 14**

The Jews in the first century wore a wide belt to tie all their clothing together on the outside. It is a picture here of love as a binding together of those who live for Jesus and love for Jesus!

**“And above all put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.**

The phrase “perfect harmony” is not a perfection in the belt itself, since we cannot love in perfection, but is a word picture of the harmony, togetherness, unity of the qualities in this whole passage in verses 12-14. Living a life of love is a perfect way to glorify the God of love who enables US to love! Followers of Christ are identified by their love for one another. The love chapter, 1 Corinthians 13, is well worth studying time and time

again! The new man or new woman in Christ takes to heart this challenge from Paul in Romans 12: 18- "So far as it depends on you live in peace with all men."

**Conclusion: IL-** Some of you "seasoned saints" may remember a song that came out in 1969 by Jackie DeShannon. The title was, "Put a Little Love in Your Heart." The Apostle Paul was not a song writer but he would put it this way- "Give a lot of love from your heart!"

If I live out these qualities I will have Christ's love working in and through me! And I will illustrate the truth that the new man or woman is in constant change to match God's plan for each of us!

**Love unites God's children in unexpected and beautiful ways, to be sure!**