

Colossians 3:5-11

Announcements

- Building Update: Contract in works. Be praying. 3 churches. Viewing soon. New Facility Fund
- New food director for three services (explain) - stop by welcome desk

Please open to **Colossians chapter 3** (Need a Bible? Backs of chairs...)

- Last time: **Not of This World**: You died. Raised w/ Christ. Hidden in Him. **Set minds above**, where Christ is, not on things below.... Appear with Him in glory!
- This time: Okay then, how should we live in the meantime? **Metaphor = Wardrobe** (put off/on)
- **Fashion trends change!** Bell bottoms, skinny jeans, leather pants, Sparkle jackets anyone...?
- But there's one style that never goes out of fashion... **God's wardrobe for His people**.

Message Title: Heavenly Steez! ('Steez' is slang: 'style' and 'ease.' ...how you carry yourself...)

- **Toss out those Filthy Rags** (verses 5-9)
 - Warning: **sexual language deep dive**, step out (kids) - **Serious stuff...** (not light...)
 - **Imagine how ridiculous**: try on a new suit while still wearing the old suit? **Doesn't fit!**
- **Put on this Glorious Robe** (verses 10-11)

Next Week, Positive...

This week, negative.

- Some folks don't like the negative. Just make me feel good, pastor... But don't call out my sin. **That's a problem!** No amount of positive talk heals the ruptured appendix, broken bone, cancer or tumor. The doctor has to "get negative" and call it what it is, and then maybe even "cut away" in a painful manner, but it's all for your benefit! (healthy garden? Pull the weeds!)
- That's the heart of today's passage. Sharper than any two edged sword...

Toss out those Filthy Rags (verses 5-9)

V. 5 - Therefore

- On the basis of the first two chapters... Identity and looking above... **Practical Section**
- **Cut the umbilical cord** to those old practices that ruled your life before Christ...

V. 5 - Put to death your members which are on the earth

- **This isn't gentle language**. It's not just "tone down, bro" or "reduce it a little..." **Violent!**
- **Nekroo** = "to mortify, destroy, slay utterly" + **Melos** = "limbs, members of the human body"
- **Members on the earth** = desires, passions, and pursuits of the **old nature, physically**.
- **Opposite Greek gnostics**. Not a suggestion, but a command. **No mercy. No prisoners.**
- **Matthew 5:29-30** - "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you... and if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you: for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell."
 - Obviously not literal physical exterior surgery, but **comes from within**...
 - **Story, England pickpocket**: right hand cut off, left hand, continued with his "teeth"
- **The point**: **Deal seriously** with it. Don't leave any sin in the camp. (Prov 6: Fire in lap...)
- **OT Connection**: **Amalekites** = sin nature. Fully Destroyed. I.E. **conquest of Canaan**
- **Joshua 7 = Story of Achan**. Just "a couple things" buried in the tent. **Defeat to the nation**.

- **Tolerating a little sin?** **Pet Boa Constrictor** one day eats its owner (*Deut 7:25 - burn it all*)
- **1 Cor. 9:27** - "I discipline (pummel, batter, beat) my body and make it my slave, so that... I myself will not be disqualified." **Taking this seriously...**

So, Paul gives us **a list of dirty laundry**. Filthy old rags, the **believer should not be wearing**. He **calls them by name**, this is important. *It's easier to drift if ignorant of the current... (11 Total) - Kill them.*

Five Physical Sins: (sins of "doing" (**sexual sin**)) (no other list is more **relevant for our society**)

(1) **Fornication / Sexual Immorality (porneia)**

- o Broad term for any **sexual activity outside the covenant of marriage**.
- o Sex is **beautiful in the context of marriage**. **Fireplace and Riverbank Examples...**
- o **Porneia** = **a catch-all term**. Adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, prostitution, polygamy, premarital sex (shaking up, hooking up). **Test drives = Demolition derbies**
- o **Modern day Pornography** - "**over half of practicing Christians** (around 54-75% of men and 40% of women) **view pornography occasionally**" (Barna Group and Pure Desire Ministries). **We minimize it as "not hurting anyone" / "not doing the act" - dangerous!**
- o **In Greek culture** = **Porneia** was normal & encouraged. **Christianity brought chastity!**

(2) **Uncleanness / Impurity (akatharsia)**

- o The term refers to **waste or refuse** dealing with **moral impurity in thought or deed**.
- o **Wider than the first term of physicality**; it includes a **wild imagination of the filthy mind**.
 - Thought life, fantasies... not just what we consume but the appetite itself...
- o **Matthew 23:27** - "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, **but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness (akatharsia).**" - Hard news? **This is us.**
 - "Create in me a clean heart, O God!" (Ps. 51:10)

(3) **Passion / Lust (pathos)**

- o When **desire becomes demand** and **does not rest until satisfied leading to sexual excesses**. (this is how people end up in **strange sexual cravings, pedophilia and worse**).

(4) **Evil desire (epithumia kake)**

- o **Epithumia** is used in **a good sense** referring to God given desires
- o **Kakia** is **moral wickedness**. **Craving for what God has forbidden**. "**I want what I want**" when I want it" "**Create in me a clean heart, O God**" (Ps. 51:10)

(5) **Covetousness / Greed (pleonexia)**

- o A **strong desire to acquire more and more**... **material, pleasure, etc...** (especially that which is **forbidden** or **belongs to someone else**)
- o **This is idolatry** - making the **person or the object** your main craving, **instead of God**.

V. 6 - **Because of these things the wrath of God is coming**

- **What things?** **All the things** we just discussed... **the corruption of this fallen world...**
- The **judgment of God** will fall one day. **Flood, Sodom/Gomorrah. (2 Peter) Return of Christ.**
- **Is coming** = **will come**. = **certainty of this future judgment**.
- **Don't be deceived** thinking you can **habitually live that way and get away with it**.
- The **wrath of God** is **not a fun or popular subject**. It's as important as **mercy, love, and grace**.
- A God who **does not exorcize wrath against corruption and injustice** is **not a moral God**.
- **Romans 1:18,24-31, ESV** - "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all **ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth...**

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error ...though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them." - we're seeing this. Those who practice & approve.

V. 7 - in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

- In them = the ways of the old nature
- That's not who you are any more, but it is who you used to be...
- Peripeteo - "to walk around, a course of life, one's way of conduct"
- Sure, the Christian may occasionally struggle with sin, but that's not our identity or way of life anymore. Once walked = past tense. I repeat, past tense!
- 1 Cor. 6:9-11 - "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."
- Good news = In the greatest act of mercy the wrath of God was placed upon his own Son.
- 2 Cor. 5:17 - "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

Pause, speak pastorally for a moment:

- Struggling with sexual sin? A few things things:
- (1) God's grace is bigger than your sin. Take that as a comfort, but not an excuse...
- (2) Do not carry that yourself. Corrupting and crippling. And the devil loves it that way. Eating you up in hidden shame. James 5 = confess sins for healing! (ask for help = how? Method?)
- 1 Cor. 10:12-13, CSB - "So, whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall. No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it."

V. 8 - But now you yourselves are to put off all these:

- The Colossian Church received a second exhortation. Similar to the first...
- Apotithemi - "to put away, separate, depart, cast off" + Panta = "all, the whole of it"
- All means all. Even the ones that seem less significant or impactful... (get rid of them)
- Hebrews 12:1 - "...let us lay aside (apotithemi) every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us..." (olympic runners)

One more list of dirty laundry.

Six Social Sins: (emotions leading to "speech") (somewhat progressive in the list)

- Anger / Smolder (orge)

- Simmering grudges. Resentful bitterness. *Settled attitude of an angry (inner) heart*
- **Wrath / Rage (thumos)**
 - *Volcanic explosive outbursts*; uncontrolled fits of rage. Intense fury. *A violent temper.*
- **Malice / Vicious (Kakia)**
 - The *desire to harm someone* or see them fail/suffer. *Mean-spirited or vicious attitudes* \
 - *Haman's Gallows for Moredcai (Esther 5)* - **Spirit of Social Media these days**
- **Blasphemy / Slander (blasphemia)**
 - *Character assassination; using words* to destroy someone's reputation. Defamation.
- **Filthy language / Obscene talk (aischrologia)**
 - *Shameful speech*. Cussing. Coarse jesting. *Degrading and dehumanizing words.*
 - We've **convinced ourselves** that it's okay to be harsh, sarcastic, rude or mocking...
 - **HA Ironside**: "no ladies present, tell you... the *Holy Ghost is present*. story fit for Him?"
- **Do not lie to one another (pseudomai)**
 - **Dishonesty in all its forms**. Bearing false witness. Misleading. For personal gain.
 - The way it reads is as if *it was happening in Colossae* - "**Bob Newhart - Stop it!**"
 - **Acts 5: Ananias and Sapharia** - Tried to *appear more spiritual than reality*. *Hypocrisy!*
 - *Jesus is the way, the TRUTH, and the life. And His Spirit leads us into ALL TRUTH.*
 - But, **Satan is a liar**. Listen to and speak that of the **Holy Spirit not the Satanic Spirit.**

Psalm 141:3 - "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips."

Like signs on a ski slope: Danger! Out of Bounds! Sadly, buried by an avalanche...

- Again, all of this is **more about the heart** than it is the outward action...
- **Matthew 15:18-20** - "What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person..."
- **But you are no longer defiled IN NATURE!**

V. 9 - **You have put off the old man** with his deeds

- **Ancient clothes determined status**: Roman toga, military uniform, slave rags, etc...
- **I think of the grave clothes!** Jesus Christ left the **graveclothes behind** (John 20:1-10). But when **Lazarus** died, Jesus instructed the disciples to **remove his grave clothes** (John 11)
 - **You're alive, no more need for those old clothes!**
- The "**old man**" is *like those grave clothes* and refers to **who you were before Christ**—your *former identity in ADAM*. You have **past tense put him off**. (*old drawer with the old life?*)
 - **Those are not your clothes anymore!** (*power over the old nature is here!*)

Put on this Glorious Robe (verses 10-11)

Brief this week, more detailed on "**putting on**" next week...

- **Fixer Upper:**
 - **Make a mess first...** *rip out drywall, old carpet, etc...*
 - **What have I done!?** (*but you don't stop there...*)
 - **You rebuild...** *New walls, new flooring, etc* = **PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION**
 - *Removing more of the old nature, being conformed into the image of Christ*
 - **We're all still under construction**, but **the finished product is glorious!**

V. 10 - And [you] have put on the new man

- Enduo - "To put on, to clothe one's self" + Neos = "new person, recently born"
- Aorist tense means this has already happened to these Colossian believers. At conversion!
 - You put on the **glorious robe of the new man (or woman) in Christ! Hallelujah!**
 - Who said this message was negative?

V. 10 - who is renewed in knowledge

- But while the past tense conversion is true, so is the **present tense call to sanctification...**
- Aanakainoo = "to cause to grow, to give new strength and vigour, to change into a new kind" + Epignosis = "precise, correct, experienced knowledge" - opposite of the ignorant heathen...
- This renewal of correct knowledge is **ongoing and passive**. Meaning it is **something that GOD continues to pour into your life** as you follow Him. **The Spirit sanctifies us...**
- So it's not just "try harder" - how many have done that and fell stuck...?
- The idea really is not "try harder" but "surrender more" to this **sanctifying work of God!**

V. 10 - According to the image of Him who created him

- This part is cool! This takes us all the way back to the beginning...
- Genesis 1:27, ESV - "God created man in his own image, **in the image of God he created him**: male and female he created them." - Naked and unashamed (**no clothing needed!**)
- But then entered sin and curse at the fall. We became twisted (avon). The image of God in humanity wasn't completely destroyed, but it was marred (back to the potter's wheel (Jer. 18))
- And we tried to cover ourselves in itchy fig leaves, but it wasn't sufficient. Filthy rags (Is 64:6)
- So a SACRIFICE was made and given to us for a covering. Picture of **God's Righteousness**.
- Grace based GOSPEL in the Garden! Protoevangelium (seed, woman, serpent. - Gen. 3:15)
- Isaiah 61:10 - "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness." - **G.O.S.P.E.L.** (the righteousness of Christ Himself - His Image!)
- 1 Cor. 15:47-49, NIV - "The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man." - **Past and ongoing sanctification...**
- 2 Cor. 3:16-18, NLT - "Whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image."
 - God does all that work for us and in us, but it still requires our participation...
- Eph 4:22-24, CSB - "so take off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth."

Well, with all that comes **one final exhortation for today**. Since we all bear the same heavenly image, we should put off all the earthly distinctions that separate us...

V. 11 - Where there is neither

- Where/In which = in the **image of the new man**

- There is = 3rd person present indicative = stating not only a fact, but an impossibility...
- Neither/No = absolute negation.
- The following things absolutely do not continue to exist in the new image...

Old Nature Classifications (barriers of separation among humanity)

- Greek nor Jew (racial/national barriers)
 - Jews looked down on Greeks with disdain (would not enter homes or eat with them...)
 - The American Christian is no better than Chinese, vice versa (every tribe/tongue) **Now!**
- Circumcised nor uncircumcised (religious barriers)
 - Similar to above but with religious nuance.
 - Grew up in the church vs late arrival, atheism, islam, hinduism is not better, vice versa
- Barbarian nor Scythian (cultural barriers)
 - The Greeks looked down on all “lesser” cultures. “Bar-bar-bar” foreign people...
 - To Greeks, Scythians were the lowest of them all... (nomadic warlike savages)
 - The Greeks thought themselves to be the civilized, noble aristocrats of the world.
 - The rich, with a college degree, is not a better Christian than the blue collar, vice versa.
 - Nor is there a better Christian in the Gen Z, millennial, or baby boomer. Urban or rural.
- Slave nor free (socioeconomic barriers)
 - This was a big social barrier in the greco roman world. Lesser value, lesser humans.
 - A Christian in jail is not of lesser value than the one outside. Self employed or w2.
- Male nor Female (gender barriers) ***Gal. 3:28***
 - Notice there are only two? This was another area of barrier in the ancient world.
 - Though men and women may be called to serve in different areas of the church... neither is of more value than the other in the Kingdom of God.

All of the labels and classifications mentioned belong to the old image of humanity, not the new image of Christ. Are you still labeling people according to the old nature? **Stop it!**

- The Greek gnostic super apostles were doing this in the early church. So we're the Judaizers.

V. 11 - But Christ is all and in all.

- In Christ all distinctions - racial, cultural, social - are abolished. **We are one in Christ.**
- This doesn't mean that distinctions don't exist... News flash: some people are men, some are women. Some are rich, some are poor. And ethnically, you don't stop being African, or Mexican, or Caucasian when you come to Christ... But, those things no longer determine your primary identity or create hierarchy of value in the church. **Christ is all and in all.**
 - We all worship the same saviour and bear the same heavenly image!

Closing

We all struggle with various things found in the Scriptures today. All have fallen short. No one is righteous. But a man or woman living in the new image of Christ must not continue to habitually live in those ways. That's not who you are anymore! Name it, repent. Wear the right clothes.

Good news church, you don't have to clean yourself up to come to Christ. Keep Surrendering, He will clean you up... - The Father ran out and put the robe on the prodigal when the prodigal ran home.

A call for all? Plead with the souls of men...

PRAY