

PUTTING ON THE NEW

“...since you have taken off your old self with its practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” —COLOSSIANS 3:9-10

As Christians, we struggle with an inner conflict every day. Although Christ has come to live in us and we are given new life, our old self is still there, battling against the Spirit. In Colossians 3:1, Paul says, “Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.”

The problem is that heavenly things are invisible and supernatural, while earthly things are visible and natural. Hence, the battle because we tend to live by the flesh and cannot live the Christian life purely by human effort. It is by the Holy Spirit we are united with Christ, and day by day, are being transformed into His likeness. It is a process where discipline of the mind, the will and emotions are vital, not in bringing godliness into our lives, but to allow the character of Jesus Christ to be expressed in us and through us.

Paul writes, “Be transformed by the renewing of our mind” (Romans 12:2). The temptation today, especially with so much made fast and easy, is to bypass the process of renewing our minds and opting for a ‘quick fix’. We are to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, which means we must come to know our Bibles. To know the word of Christ is to know the mind of God and to know the mind of God is to know the heart of God.

There must also be a discipline of the will. Our standing before God is that outside the walls of Jerusalem our old life was crucified with Christ. To align our new life with His, we are to rid ourselves of sinful ways. “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to our sinful nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed...” (Colossians 3:5). Because we are tempted in all these areas, our will has to be involved. We cannot live the Christian life merely by drifting along or the drift will always be away from Christ.

Thirdly, there is a discipline of emotion. “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Colossians 3:12). We have never been as widely exposed to the corruptness of this world as we are today, and we can easily become desensitized, but the Christian life is not a cold set of steps we take. It is a life where our minds and heart are connected with the things of God, and God is love. As we cast off our old selves and put on the new, the love of Christ will permeate every aspect of our lives and bring us increasingly closer to the image of our Creator.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, Thank You for your indwelling Spirit, and may He continually transform me into a closer likeness of You.

TO REFLECT UPON: In what area of my life has ‘putting on the new’ changed me the most?