

## INTRODUCTION

As we enter into yet another year in this age, we need vision for what's ahead of us. Vision for the immediate natural things is important, but we need long-term eternal vision from God to rightly guide our day-to-day lives in the earth.

*<sup>18</sup> Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law. (Proverbs 29:18)*

*<sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

*<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! <sup>13</sup> But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:9-13, emphasis added)*

### Peter reminds us:

- God wants all people to come to repentance (v.9).
- We are called to lives of holiness and godliness now (v.11).
- We should eagerly look forward towards, and speed up the day that Jesus returns (v.12).

Jesus is patiently awaiting a bride from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (*Matt. 28:19, Rev. 5:9*), who has made herself ready for him to come, clothed in righteousness (*Rev. 19:7-9*). We speed up the day of His coming by walking out repentance ourselves, being clothed in God's righteousness, and inviting others to join and discipling them to do the same from the overflow in our own lives. What if we made and kept "New Years' Resolutions" this year with this reality in mind?

*<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these (The promises of God and the new heavens and new earth), be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. <sup>15</sup> And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, <sup>16</sup> as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. <sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. <sup>18</sup> But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:14-18, emphasis added)*

We are called to a lifestyle of holiness and godliness now in this life as we await the age to come.

## I. THE APOSTLE (OUR BELOVED BROTHER) PAUL ON REPENTANCE

*<sup>17</sup> Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles (nations/the world) do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup> They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. <sup>20</sup> But that is not the way you learned Christ!— <sup>21</sup> assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:17-24, emphasis added)*

- A. Repent (Hebrew: šûb, Greek: metanoeō): “to turn back”, “to change your thinking”
- B. Paul teaches us that to be in Christ is to repent and turn away from the old way of living we were used to, and to turn towards Jesus and follow Him in a lifestyle of righteousness and holiness. He calls us to change the way we think about life and to take off the old way of living and put on the new way of living as one might change a garment.

*<sup>7</sup> Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; <sup>8</sup> it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. (Revelation 19:7-8, emphasis added)*

- C. The righteousness of God in Christ is not just merely an intangible ethereal reality that we get when we become followers of Jesus, but it is also a tangible reality that we receive as a gift from God and decide to put on and live in during this age. God provides it, but we must make the decision to repent and put it on and wear it. Paul lays out what this “putting off” and “putting on” looks like practically in our day-to-day lives.

## II. WHAT IS THE OLD AND WHAT IS THE NEW?

- A. Paul breaks down these day-to-day practical examples in a “put off” and “put on” cadence with additional revelation sprinkled in-between. The old things we put off are of the sin nature, and the things we put on are of the character and likeness of God (Eph. 4:24).

*<sup>25</sup> Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. (Ephesians 4:25, emphasis added)*

- i. **Put Off:** Falsehood - lying, “stretching the truth”, deceiving others/hiding reality  
**Put On:** Speaking truth - about ourselves, others, situations, and the Truth of God

***<sup>26</sup> Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and give no opportunity to the devil. (Ephesians 4:26-27, emphasis added)***

- ii. **Put Off:** Unrighteous acts of anger - selfish anger, “flying off the handle”, unrelenting wrath  
**Put On:** Righteous anger that releases and entrusts the situation to God - be angry at wrongdoing, extend forgiveness & mercy to others daily, daily let go of any anger to God knowing that he will righteously judge wrongdoing
- iii. **Revelation:** Continuing to walk in the old self gives space to Satan in your life, but putting on the new self shuts him out!

***<sup>28</sup> Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. (Ephesians 4:28, emphasis added)***

- iv. **Put Off:** Stealing/theft – taking things that aren’t yours without permission  
**Put On:** Good work – work that produces something of benefit you can give generously to those who are in need of it

***<sup>29</sup> Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:29-30, emphasis added)***

- v. **Put Off:** Corrupting talk/conversation – profanity, tearing others down/trash talk, inappropriate joking, “venting” unrighteous thoughts  
**Put On:** Edifying talk/good conversation – words that build others up in Christ, words spoken at just the right time and in the right way, words that when people hear it they can receive the grace of God for their life
- vi. **Revelation:** Continuing to walk in the old self makes God within us sad/grieve, but choosing to put on the new brings Him pleasure and delight!

***<sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:29-30, emphasis added)***

- v. **Put Off:** Bitterness, wrath/anger, clamor, slander, malice – hatred/desiring evil/grudge against another, unbridled unrighteous anger, noisiness against others, injurious speech towards others (literally: “blasphemy”), ill-will/desire to hurt/evil towards another  
**Put On:** Kindness, tender-heartedness, forgiveness – good/pleasant/gracious towards others, compassion and “hurting for” others, expressing the same mercy & grace you received from Christ to those who don’t deserve it

## CONCLUSION

<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:1-2, emphasis added)

The Apostles continually remind us in all of their exhortations to a holy and righteous life that we are beloved of God!

<sup>11</sup> And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living... <sup>17</sup> “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘...<sup>18</sup> I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’ <sup>20</sup> And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. <sup>23</sup> And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. (Luke 15:11-13, 17-23, emphasis added)

In order to walk out righteousness in Christ, we must receive the fact that in Him we are beloved children of God, not hired workers for God. It is out of the overflow of this reality that we are beloved that we are able to receive the righteous works he has for us and walk in them.

<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10, emphasis added)

When we confess our sin and forsake it to turn towards God in Christ, He compassionately forgives and embraces us, granting us the beautiful clothing of His righteousness and the grace that gives all we need to walk in a holy lifestyle fueled by His love.