

Colossians

The Old

Colossians 3:5-11

October 2, 2022

HDBC

You can tell a lot about a person by how they are dressed.

Profession: Policeman, Doctor, Soldier, Painter

Economic condition: Dressed in rags is probably poor

Moral perspective: Dress immodestly

Religious groups: Amish can often be identified by clothing

We tend to make assessments about people by the way they are dressed. And in many cases those assessments are correct. But not always. Sometimes a person's may fool you. A person may wear the garments of a doctor, but not be one. A wealthy person may dress in rags.

In our text Paul is writing about our actions. But he uses terminology that pictures our actions, as if they were like the clothes we wear. For example,

Rather than simply saying *stop doing this or that* he says *lay it aside*.

The picture Paul has in mind is of taking off a jacket and setting it aside.

Rather than saying *start doing this or that* he says to *put on* this or that.

The picture is of taking off an old set of clothes and exchanging them for a new set. If you do, you will look differently than you did. In reality he is writing of laying aside our old attitudes and actions and exchanging them for new attitudes and actions.

The actions of the a believer should be different from those of unbelievers and different from their own actions before they were saved.

1. Foundation (5a)

The old has died and a new life has been given.

The section begins with a word that seems insignificant. **Therefore**. Really is important. It points the reader to the truth previously stated. Paul has explained that we have died and risen with Christ and have been given a

new life in Him. The old has died and new life has come. It makes sense, then that the old attitudes and actions would be replaced with new attitudes and actions.

2. Application (5b-8)

Old clothes don't belong on a new life.

Paul then moves on to the practical application. If we are to wear a different wardrobe (meaning live a different kind of life) what are we do to with the old? Should we continue to wear outdated clothes? I don't think so.

Leisure suits anyone? Just look at a **high school annual that is at least 15 years old** and you will know what I'm talking about.

But what do you do with them? Some people keep them. Most throw them away or sell them. But what about our old life? Let's consider it.

A. The fate of the old

Therefore, we are to consider the members of our bodies as dead to the old life, the old way of living. As we get rid of old, outdated clothing, so we need to completely rid ourselves of old outdated actions. In fact Paul says we are to consider ourselves dead to those things.

NASB says *consider as dead*, but the actual Greek says *put to death* your earthly members in terms of their relationship to the old way of living. Believers are to make a decisive resolution to put sin to death, bringing the flesh under subjection to the Spirit who lives within. This is a call to do away with everything in the believer's life that is contrary to a life of holiness.

So, what do we do with old, unfit clothes? Get rid of them.

What do we do with the actions of our former life? Die to them.

There can be no holiness or maturity in a life where sin runs unchecked. We have died to sin's penalty. That penalty cannot touch us. But we must continually die to sins power. We do that on a moment by moment basis as we yield to the prompts of the Holy Spirit and say "no" to temptations.

B. A description of the old

Paul offers a list of 11 old habits that we are to die to . . . old garments that we are put off and retire forever. It might be helpful to think of them as being in three categories.

Sexual Sins

Immorality - *Pornein* –Refers to sexual sin.

Originally referred to prostitution, but in the New Testament it refers to any form of sexual sin. Include adultery, homosexuality, and every other kind of sexual sins. Pornography comes from this word.

We live in a sex-crazed culture. From ads for blue jeans and under garments to magazine covers at the grocery check-out stand to TV programs that continue to push the limits, to pornography on Internet, in movies, and in print.

It is bad in our culture. It was bad in Paul's day. Christianity's call for sexual purity was a radical switch from the pagan religions of that day. It is considered radical in today's culture, as well. **Be radical.**

Impurity - *Akatharsia* - Our word *Catharsis* comes from this word.

Refers to a cleansing. This word has the alpha privative added, which means it has the opposite meaning. Any moral impurity.

Passion - *Pathos*. Depraved passion.

Sexual passion that is uncontrolled.

Evil Desire - Evil, wicked cravings.

Materialism

Greed - *Pleonexia*. Desire to have more, more, and more.

It is the insatiable desire to have more or to have that which is forbidden. It leads to idolatry because it places personal desires above obedience to God.

Attitudes and Speech

Anger - *Orge*. Deep, smoldering bitterness.

Habitual anger that includes the idea of revenge. A settled attitude of anger that has taken root.

Wrath - *Thumos*. Sudden violent temper.

The Greeks likened it to fire in straw. Flares up quickly, gets very hot, fast, but does not last long.

Malice - *Kakia*. Desire to injure another person.

Slander - *Blasphemia*. Speech designed to hurt.

Abusive Speech - Foul, obscene language.

Lying - Deliberately saying that which is untrue.

C. The judgment on the old

Look back in verses 6. It is because of these things that the wrath of God comes. Sin brings God's judgment. God has an eternal hatred for sin. His holiness cannot tolerate it, and He judges it.

One pastor was preaching on the sins of Ananias and Sapphira and asked the congregation, "If God still struck people dead for lying, where would I be?" Some began to snicker. But he recovered quickly. "I'd be right here, preaching to an empty church!"

God takes sin seriously . . . so seriously that He allowed our sin to kill His son. Therefore we need to take it seriously as well. It is a big deal.

3. Explanation (9-11)

Paul then offers an explanation for why we should die to sinful desires, putting off the old.

First, it is because in the act of being saved, we spiritually and positionally laid those things aside. We died to the old and were resurrected to the new.

Because he have embraced a **new life on the inside** we should reflect that with a **new walk on the outside**.

Second, Paul points out that every believer is a work in progress that God is doing. God is changing us moment by moment and day by day to make us more like Jesus. That's what he means in verse 10. God is at work to make us more like Jesus and to be like Jesus we must put off the old sinful ways. The moment of your salvation is the beginning of a new project that God has to make you more like His Son. It is a project He relishes.

You are either participating in becoming more like Jesus or you are resisting it. To resist it is to ignore not only what God has already done in you but what He is doing in you. The man or women who is truly saved and who is resisting the work of God in his life can have no peace with God and very little joy in the deep recesses of the heart.

Third, our salvation brings us into new relationships with other believers. The artificial barriers that separate us because of sin have been broken down. That is Paul's point in verse 11. We are brought into new relationships with other believers. When we live according to the old standards, doing the old things, we are rejecting those new relationships.

We called upon to be victorious over sin in our lives. Someone said it like this.

Sin is like a deposed monarch that no longer reigns, nor has the ability to condemn, but works hard to debilitate and devastate all his former subjects. Sin is still potent and success against it depends on the Spirit's power. This requires daily dying to self, to ambition, to ego and to pride.

Dying to sin, starts with **dying to self**. Dying to self involves recognizing the insidious power of sin to creep in, to ooze in, to seep in. What Randy Alcorn wrote of immorality is true of all sin. It is . . .

. . . the cumulative product of small indulgences and minuscule compromises, the immediate consequences of which were, at the time, indiscernible.

Like a dead snake can still bite it's victim, sin, even after we deem it dead, can reach out to infect us. It requires moment-by-moment dying to self.