

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
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Series: It's Complicated  
December 4, 2022

### What to Wear for Christmas

Colossians 3:4-9, 12-16

**<sup>4</sup> When Christ, who is your<sup>[a]</sup> life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.<sup>5</sup> Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup> Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>7</sup> You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. <sup>8</sup> But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices**

**<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup> And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. <sup>15</sup> Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.**

Well, it is complicated. How are we doing church (audience cheers)? Let's go. Let's go. It is the most wonderful time of the year. But for a lot of us that is met with a lot of chaos, a lot of complications. It's complicated. And I love this time of year. I mean, I sense all the things that you feel with the weather changing. I love our family's traditions. I love the different times that we get together like some of us see family more in November and December than all of the rest of the year combined. And so, we get to go home and experience those traditions that we grew up in or maybe there's some new ones that have popped up. One of my favorites is going to my in-laws and doing the gift exchange and so do you guys do this where you like, put all the numbers in a bowl and you draw the numbers it's like called Dirty Santa or white elephant or Chinese Christmas. You guys know what I'm talking about? What do y'all call that?

What never heard that one. What did y'all say? Yeah, so all the things that I said right, and none of us know what it's called. Okay, so that game, right and there's always like some dysfunction that comes around that because it's, it's like somebody always buys a gift that's too nice. And you're like "Hey, I thought the limit was this", you know, they intentionally get the gift card that's like \$10 over just as a flex, you know, and then and then there's somebody that shows up

with the homemade gift. And, you know, it's like they they're tight, and they're like, Hey, here's, you know, here you go. I made that at home and you're just kind of like really and then there's the argument around the rules. No, it's frozen after three steals. No, it's three possessions and then it's like no, and you're trying to figure out okay, well, so and then there's somebody that's like, they're really excited about their gift and like Uncle Bob, I think you'll love that one. No, that was in the bag, you know, and then somebody gets a gift that they don't really want say, Hey, did you see this? You know, and they're trying to pawn it off, or hey, before you dive into there, I think this would look really good in your home, you know, and they're trying to get so there's all of these, these different things, but one particular Christmas, there was it was a little bit more intense than normal. And it wasn't around the gift exchange. It was around my brother-in-law. So, my brother in law is my closest friend actually met my wife through him. And we were meeting at his grandmother's house, which is just down the road from where he grew up and, and he shows up and he's in athletic shorts and a tank top. Right and so that that created an intense situation he was just kind of a target of a lot of jokes like Hey, why did you dress up? You know why did you didn't you know we were gonna gather as this Christmas party. You don't want to put something nicer on like, why would you just show up in the athletic shorts in the tank top. Now I want to make myself known as this was 19 years ago, but I'm going to come out on record for the first time I'm actually team Matt on this. Okay. Because I'm like it's it is what do you wear to family Christmas, like you're going into this living room that you're in all of the time, you know, and you're not going to leave? It's not like you're leaving there to go to like a nice restaurant or something. And so like, why not just dress comfy, you know, why not just dress whatever you whatever you want, like wear whatever you feel like it. And in a strange way. That's what we're going to talk about this morning.

What do you need to wear home for Christmas? Because the Scripture speaks into this. And I think for so many of us like we envision going home for Christmas like the Hallmark movie. You know, you've seen this this scene has been played out where it's like, you know, mom and dad's house was like a cabin in the woods by a Lake and the leaves are and the trees are dropping their leaves and they've changed colors and its cool and you pull up and they greet you at the door with a cup of coffee or hot cocoa and they bring you in and you sit by the fireplace and it's all warm and cozy. And then you hear a car pull up and you run to the window and say oh it's little Timmy Little Timmy is here and everybody runs outside to greet him and hug and like out of your bed and you bring them inside and then it's just like the anticipation builds as another family member comes in another family member comes and you sit around the table and everybody you know one person shares a joke and everybody laughs and it's just so good to have you all home. And some of you that is your holiday and that's awesome. We're so glad you're here. And what you need to know is you're surrounded by people that that's not their reality.

In this season is a reminder of a lot of grief. The experience of some loneliness, some missed expectations, and disappointments, and sadness and hurts. And so as you move into the holiday you're going to want to know how to help people navigate that because it is complicated.

Christmas is complicated. There's a change in rhythms. There's this disruption to what you normally do. There's an increase in spending. Even out of a series on stewardship. We still have Christmas lists. And so some of you are bleeding out in the financial area. Right, there's this reality that all of our attention should be focused on this baby in a manger who came to save us God incarnate. And then there's all of the distractions everything just gets ramped up the parking lots get a little fuller right now. Everything's a little busier right now. And as the weather changes for some of you the anxiety, increases and so what are you going to wear home for Christmas dinner? And for some of you think you know, I'm going to go home, dressed like an attorney because I've got my best argument ready. I'm going to give my best defense when I sit down with Uncle Bob, I'm going to checkmate him and then others of you, you know, it's a battle. And so you're going home ready to wrestle. It's jujitsu. Okay, and so you're going there ready to you know, put someone in a chokehold, and for others of you, you just want to disappear. You want to blend in Hey, don't ask me about my relationship. Don't ask me right. I just I just want to disappear that and blend in with everyone else. And then for some of you the second that you walk into that room, you go back to when you left, and all of the bad habits come back. And you never outgrew who they shared that home with and no matter what you say. They will not see you as more than you were when you were 16, Right. And so what do we wear when we go home?

We're starting a new series. It's called it's complicated. Right? Talking about the complications today. The complications that we're dealing with is the complications of family. Right when you go home, what do you need to wear? When you see them specifically talking about your family? Some of you just came off Thanksgiving. And you're looking back and you know, it's complicated. And now you're like, oh, no, I got to do that again and just a few weeks. And that is that is our reality. I think it's not the Hallmark movie for so many of us we sit down and it's that awkward silence.

How're you doing?

Oh man, Good, good, yeah, it's been good.

Works Good?

Yeah, works good.

Family?

Families good.

How's the dog?

Dog is good.

Or its Are you still single?

Harris Creek Baptist Waco, TX

Yeah, yeah, still single. Thanks. for reminding me. I hadn't thought about in five minutes and Yeah, still there.

Yeah, that's, that's great. Who'd you vote for?

Haha Wow. We're going there okay. Right.

Did you see this in the news?

Yeah.

What do you think about that? You still a part of that cult out there in Waco?

Well, its church dad. Thanks.

Well, why don't we go watch the ballgame?

Oh, yeah. Football, that's all and everybody gets up and everybody goes to the living room because thank God we have football to kind of break the awkwardness and the tension. And for some of you, right, you wish you had a family to have awkward conversations with because right now this season just reminds you of the loneliness that you feel. Others of you just got married and you're trying to navigate the where do we go and when and this time is really stressful because hey, how do we not disappoint anyone? You will by the way. It's free advice. You're going to disappoint somebody. And for some of you, there's divorce there. So, the two Christmases or three Christmases or four Christmases, and this time of year is just really chaotic. Super busy. Others of you are navigating illness, family members who believe different things than you, you've watched a sibling kind of change in their values. Somebody's making destructive decisions and you don't know what to say or do and you're trying to go into that moment planning, your argument, your defense, or even your evangelism. How are you going to help them? Some people have different agendas, disagreements around policies, and then for some of you, you got to sit down at that table with someone who hurt you really bad. And you've not dealt with it or maybe you have been trying to deal with it. Maybe there's been counseling sessions and therapy. And now you got to share a meal. And you're just thinking, Man, how am I going to get through this. The Scripture is going to speak into these things for us and telling us what to wear for that occasion.

I'm going to be in Colossians chapter three if you want to turn there. As I move through Colossians three specifically, verses 12 through 15. I'll start earlier just to set it up. But I'll camp in verses 12 through 15. We're going to look at what to wear, what to bear and how to share this Christmas and outline directly from the text, what to wear, what to bear and how to share. I'll tell you that Paul wrote this letter to a church in Colossae, which was actually a city that he had never been to, and the prompting of him writing this letter is because a heresy had crept in the church and spread like wildfire. The heresy is Gnosticism. Now you probably don't know a

Gnostic. So, you're like, Okay, how is that relevant to me? Because what Gnosticism did at this time is made little of Jesus, hey, he's not supreme God, he's not the Almighty. He's not the Son of God, not God incarnate. And this is why in Colossians, he says things like he all things were created by Him and for Him and over all things he holds the supremacy in the fullness of the Deity dwelled fully in him these things he's showing you, hey, this is who Jesus is. He wants you to know and that's super relevant at a time where the entire world is distracted from what they should be focused on. So, he says this to set it up. I'm going to start in verse four. He says,

**<sup>4</sup> When Christ, who is your<sup>[a]</sup> life, appears,** (and I love that) he says Christ is everything. You have to understand Harris Creek/Colossians. Christ is everything. When he appears, **then you also will appear with him in glory.**<sup>5</sup> **Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.** <sup>6</sup> **Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.**<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>7</sup> **You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.** <sup>8</sup> **But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.** <sup>9</sup> **Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices.** He says, Jesus comes into your life, His Holy Spirit comes into your life. And there's this taking off, there's this undoing. There are these things that you don't want to bring to the table because it's not who you are anymore. Those are the clothes that you got rid of they, they went to the salvation, Army, things like greed. That's not who you are. That's who you were. It's not who you are anymore. We'll give that away. That's not yours. Things like anger. Don't bring that to the table. That's not who you are. Rage. Absolutely not. It's not who you are. It's not what you do anymore. Right. Slander. Hey, let me tell you do you hear about, no, it's not you. Give that away. Filthy language it says that's not who you are. We'll do away with that. So, he starts out the gate, remember these things have been taken off of you. That's not the things that mark you anymore. So let me just dialogue with you for a minute.

What are virtues that you want to bring to the Christmas table? What would you say? Peace, love, joy, understanding, grace, self-control, humility, forgiveness, hope, peace, patience (is a good one), gentleness, honesty, kindness (Absolutely), thankfulness, generosity. You guys know that we're going to bring in all these to the dinner table. Might add compassion. Let's see how we did. Verse 12. <sup>12</sup> **Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.** This same list shows up in Ephesians chapter four verse two, same list shows up in Galatians chapter five, verses 22 and 23. Some variances, some words are swapped out, but essentially, you're looking at the same list. These are the things that Christians wear. These are the virtues that marked the Christian. How do we know if someone's a Christian? They're marked by these virtues that the Holy Spirit produces in our lives so all the world can see that's who they are. Oh, that person is so compassionate. You wouldn't believe how patient they are. Always so thankful. Always so

kind. These are the things that mark the followers of Jesus. The Scripture couldn't be more clear. Not anger, not slander, not greed. He says you have been chosen by God. He chose you. You are holy which means you're set apart, you're different. Don't go to that kitchen table thinking that you're going to be like your best friend. You're different. God chose you to play a different role. And he says you are your dearly loved, which means you don't go in there with all the insecurities of I just need my siblings to esteem me. I just need my parents to love me. No, you're perfectly loved by God, the Father in heaven. And so wear the virtues given to us by Jesus. That's my first point.

*1. Wear the virtues given to us by Jesus.*

Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and he's going to add love, peace, and thankfulness. So, I think that we were about five for five or even eight for eight. Paul's writing this, the background he's about to move into instructions for the Christian household. And so, before he says, Husbands, wives, children, fathers, he says, Hey, listen, believers. As you go out into the world, you got to put these things on. You got to get dressed. It's really challenging to get dressed in Texas right about now. Have you noticed that? I spend a lot of time just kind of standing my closet looking like what am I going to wear because right about now in Texas you know, you leave and it's winter. But about 11 am it's spring, and then we move towards summer in the early afternoon and as the sun begins to set it's fall. Right? So you leave right and it's so cold so you turn your heater way on, and then you get in your truck or your car in the afternoon like why am I so hot? Oh, you know, because my heats on blast and it's 90 degrees outside. Right? So we're experiencing that kind of that changing so to get dressed right now you have to wear what? You've got to wear layers. You've got to layer up, it's the only way. And this is what Paul's saying to you. To get dressed right now if you're going to go out there in the world you got to put on layers. You have to first clothe yourself with compassion, right? This is the only way. You want to make sure that you put on compassion, but not just compassion. You're going to want to wear humility, okay? So, make sure if you're getting dressed, that you put some humility on too. But not just humility, you're going to want to make sure that you also put on what? Yeah, kindness. Nailed it. Not just kindness but as you go into that place, you're going to want to make sure you put on gentleness. Not just gentleness, but as you get dressed, you're going to want to make sure that you put on a lot of patience. The more the dysfunction, the deeper the hurt, the greater the need for patience. So, as you go to that table, you're going to want to make sure you layer up. That you got layers and layers on. As my friend from Minnesota says, "there's no bad weather, just bad clothing". What I would say to you is there's no bad conversations around the dinner table, just bad clothing. So, the greater the temptation, or the expectation that the conversation might turn south, better suit up. Better get dressed. Put the clothes on. He's telling us what to wear.

I told you this before, but I've got a friend. So, every morning he goes in his closet. He gets out his calendar and he looks at his day and his meetings. He says, "Okay, what am I going to need

to wear today for the meetings that I have today?” But he's not just thinking, “Oh, that meeting requires a suit or that meetings business casual”. He's saying, “that meeting, that's going to require a lot of humility. Oh, and that meeting with that person. I'm going to really have to bring a lot of humility to that”. Let me work to make this practical.

There is an aspect of the Christian sanctification process that is you becoming holy/being made holy by God's Holy Spirit in you. There is work that you do that is contemplative in nature. What do I mean by that? There is a stopping to go. Like before you can jump into the world you got to get dressed and to get dressed, you've got to sit still and reflect and renew your mind. Set your mind on the things above. Consider the work that the Spirit of God is doing. Be still and think about, what is he taken off of me and what is he putting on me. You can't live the Christian life and go go go go go go go without ever sitting still which Jesus modeled for us all the time throughout the scriptures. That we sit still, that we just reflect, that we think. We contemplate these realities of God and set our minds on them. Verse 13 says <sup>13</sup> **Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.**

In that word, in that short verse, it says, Forgive three times. Forgive, forgive, forgive. But it starts with another word, bear with one another. It's the Greek word *anechó*. *Anechó*, which it's for bear and if I was to translate this word, into a phrase in English that I think most captures what he's saying, he's saying put up with. That's the word there. Put up with and forgive. But let me just start out the gate and say, you're going to sit down with people who are different than you and you're called to endure it with thankfulness. It's going to tell us to endure, to put up with, or to bear, or forbear. My second point:

2. *Bear the brokenness of others around you.*

Bear the brokenness of others around you. That means carry the weight of or endure. Like give the benefit of the doubt. The more you can practice extreme patience where you're able. Like offer understanding instead of replacing it with frustration, and the more dysfunction there is that is present, the more necessary patience is. I'm 42 years old, my early 40s so far, has been one of the richest, greatest seasons of learning in my life. Let me back up and just kind of share a journey with you.

When I was in college. I was talking to my best friend Matt, tank top and athletic shorts guy. We were talking about “what do you want to do when you grow up?” You know, we're having that conversation, right? And I said, Man, my dream job would be to just give people advice. And he was like, what do you mean? I was like, you know, like a hotline. Like I just basically like sit in a room and people come in and just say, hey, what do I do about this relationship? Or what do I do about this problem at home? Or what do I do about this situation? My job would be I just give them advice, right? Because as a 22-year-old, you know everything right? All wisdom is yours and you can fix everybody's problems. So, this is what I'm telling him is my dream job. Well,

what's ironic about that is when I graduate from college, I have a little journey in and through corporate America that leads me to ministry. Then in my 30s I find myself in a place where I have essentially my dream job. Like I have an office and people just come in all day long and say, “hey, help me with this problem. Help me with this parenting situation. Help me with this marriage situation. Help me with this job situation. Help me with this with this financial situation. Help me with this relationship.” All day long I’m just giving advice. People are even reaching out from all over the place. I'm like, “this is amazing. This is my dream job”. Well, as I get older, I realized that every day of my life, I'm giving advice to people who are asking for it. I learned that I don't know how to cut that off. So if I'm in a room full of people, or I'm in a situation or I'm at a dining room table I don't know what to do if people aren't asking me for my advice. So, I just start giving it you know. Just looking at a scenario, “let me help you with that. That parenting thing, you know, oh, yeah, I don't know how to do that. Now that's not going to go well, here's what you need to do. Oh, and your marriage. Okay, well, here's the situation. Well, hold on”. Then I just start asking questions that I'm comfortable asking because I ask people these questions all day every day, but it's people who aren't asking me to ask those questions. And if someone's not asking me to ask those questions, I realized that it can be really off putting, if I'm just sitting there like “so how's your marriage? How's your marriage really?” And they're like, Wait, hold on. And to fix people's problems, you have to identify their problems. I realized that I've systematically been trained for years and years and years to look at someone and to quickly and effectively identify the problem. I've gotten pretty good at it and it hasn't served me well at the dining table. Because what happens is you're driving down the road thinking about someone and thinking about their problem. And then you're feeding that loop in your mind. Where that person is just identified with as that problem. And then you think about them, and then they are that problem, and then you see them, and they are that problem, and that's what you've done. And maybe you've done that. Maybe there's something you can learn from my journey because I'm telling you, it starts with your thought life. It starts with the things that you're feeding your brain. That when you think of someone you have a choice. Here's why I tell you that because you have a choice to put up with their imperfections. Because every human being has things about them that are good and bad. Every human being. And if when you think about a person you focus on what is bad about them, then all of a sudden you attach feelings to that person. And then you get in a room with them, and you realize that you hate them but you don't know why and you don't act like you hate them, at least not out here. But inwardly you have really distasteful feelings for them, because you fed those feelings and those feelings have grown. And that's how it works. That is what we do. I tell you that to say this, under the put up with or bear with one another, endure, when you look at someone, you have a choice to identify what is broken with them, or what is great about them. You can celebrate the good in them instead of highlighting the bad about them. I'm just giving you like how to win friends and influence people advice. If you become that person that always highlights and celebrates the good in someone. The dinner table conversation changes. Because you don't like someone that's



always telling you what's wrong with you. That's not your favorite thing. And so, bearing their brokenness looks like celebrating the good in them.

But then there's this other word, forgiveness. And some of you know that there's deep hurts there and that I think as Christians, we play games. I hear this all the time, "I forgiven them". And I'm like, "Great. Let me ask you a few questions to find out if that's true". Because here's what forgiveness is. Forgiveness is taking a true account into the hurts that they've caused you and forfeiting the right to revenge. And so, somebody will say "no, I don't want revenge", but here's what revenge looks like. Revenge looks like privately celebrating when something bad happens to them. It's not necessarily that you're seeking revenge. You can be privately celebrating revenge and that is what unforgiveness looks like. So that'll help you kind of identify, have I forgiven them? Have I taken a true account for the hurts that they caused me and forfeit the right to revenge? Now, let me say this very important thing. Forgiveness is not the absence of boundaries. Forgiveness doesn't mean that I'm going to continue to let them hurt me. You can forgive someone and say no, I'm no longer going to put myself in that situation. Or if I am in a situation similar to that, that I'm going to bring someone with me or I am going to set the rules and say, "Hey, we're not going to talk about that". You can have boundaries around forgiveness. But forgiveness is absolutely completely and totally necessary for every follower of Jesus. And that's what he says. Forgive as the Lord forgives you. And in fact, one of the truest ways to determine if someone understands how they've been forgiven is that they forgive others. And here's what the Scripture says about that. In Matthew six, verse 14, he says, **14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.** Mark 11 Verse 25 says, **25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.** Ephesians four verse 32 says, **32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.** So it is not an option for you to go through life with a grudge and I'm not just sending you out there saying, "Hey, you got to do this grin and bear it, you know. Bootstraps let's go". No, we'll help you. We'd love to help you. We could come around you and talk with you through some of these things and what forgiveness could look like. Verse 14, **14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.** This verse here, 14 and 15, it's speaking to your motive, your why. He said he makes sure that your motive is love from a heart full of peace and thankfulness. That this is why you're doing this. That your motive is not to win. My third and final point:

### *3. Share from the right heart.*

And by right heart, I mean motive. Share from the correct motive. Share from the right heart is what the scripture says. And so if your motive is to win, you've already lost. If you're planning your defense, your apology, you know your argument "I can't wait to sit with Uncle Bob and tell

him I read this article in The Atlantic its going to be amazing and he's going to be stuck. He's not going to know what to say". Stop. Take a deep breath. And know, nobody likes that person. They're going to need a lot of patience to deal with you. I hope they hear the sermon because they're going to need it to put up with you. If you're like, "Man, I wonder why my kids are you know, I just don't understand and nobody calls". It's because you always have the right thing to say that nobody wants to hear. This different than what he's saying here. It's different than the call of this Scripture. If your motive is anything other than love, you've already lost. The motive of love is the only path to victory. Like let me just say it like this man I've seen radical change in my own family and in in just say hundreds of families I think that's true. I mean, like radical idea, like the person that was like worshipping Satan with the Ouija boards and seances and sacrificing goats and drinking blood. Now as a missionary, you know, like that kind of stuff like radical to impossible. Like God's never going to save them. And then he does, right? Like I'm talking crazy change. And it's never happened by an argument. Ever. It's like I'm thinking about no one has ever like, "you know, I'm a decent debater. You know, and I'm not showing I'm like, No, that was that Greek word. What that actually means is, you know, in here, let me and they're like, oh, man, you got me. Okay, so what I need to do, just ask them into my heart right now. Is that how that works?" That's never happened? No, it has happened with lots of prayer. It has happened with lots of love. You have to show them something different. Because what happens when we get home? What happens when we get home? I get home and I like instantly revert back to who I was when I left. I go back 25 years where I walk in that place 20 I'm little JB. I know not JP but my middle name is Bob and so they call me John Bob. Everybody can laugh at that real quick. So I go home and I'm JB and in my insecurities I want to tell them "hey, man, did you know with this, and yes, you want to tell them here's? Yeah, here's what's happening. And here's you know, hey, look at that. Wow. Have you read this book? Look at that. Actually I wrote about that". I want to tell them and when I get home around the kitchen, too, "So I hear your pastor. Listen, I wrote down 17 pieces of advice I was wanting from you. You know, I was really hoping you'd speak into these things".

No, it doesn't it doesn't matter if I tell him "Hey, you know a lot of other people actually want my advice on this problem that you have". They don't care. You have to show them something different. You have to show them something different. And I just go back my brother-in-law.

My sister's husband was here for Thanksgiving. We're driving around. And we stopped at a light over there by the Richland Mall. And he goes "What's that?"

"That's the mall"

He goes, "You must go there all the time".

"Not really, you know, I mean, what? Why do you ask?"

"Because your sister just said you love them all."

“I did when I was 15”. Like, oh man, I'm 42 now you know. I'm only at the mall like every other day. And so it's like you change and you want to tell them that you change. You've got to show them that you changed.

Young adults will ask me “Hey, how do I share the gospel my family when I go home for the holidays?” And I say do the dishes. Take out the trash. Feed the dog. Mow the grass. And this is not “share the gospel everywhere you go and when necessary use words”. Don't get me wrong. You have to use words at some point. You're going to want to transition into Jesus Christ loves you so much that He died for your sins and He raised from the dead. But if you show them the same bad habits. You're pulling out these shirts, you know and putting them on there then they don't care about your Jesus. They're not interested in your Jesus.

You want to show them kindness, humility, compassion, gentleness, patience. Show them those things. And as you go there, like your motive. You got to bind it all up you want to make sure that's all wrapped up in “Hey, this is my motive”. This is why I'm doing this. I genuinely from a correct heart filled with peace and gratitude I just love you. I just love you so much. I want you to know how you can live forever. I love you and I want to be with you forever and ever. And the problem is so many of us we sit at the table like I don't I don't feel that right. And if God operated in the flesh, he wouldn't feel that toward us. But he does by his own grace, and we've received that through his son Jesus. I think you're trying to get them to ask “Hey, what got into you. You're different. Something changed”. Let me tell you who it is. It's the Holy Spirit. In summary, wear the virtues given us by Jesus, bear the brokenness of those around you and share from the right heart. Family's challenging even Jesus says in Luke for no prophet is accepted in his hometown. It's hard and I want you to know and do read this out the gate, you know up top. Jesus was born into this difficult family. Like Matthew one, he goes out of his way to just show you the dysfunction that's sitting at the kitchen dinner table. I mean, the Christmas dinner table, you know. I mean, it's like you're reading and you're like, oh, this began this bigger Tamar, who was Tamar? Oh, she dressed up. She put on the clothes of a prostitute to trick her father-in-law into sleeping with her and got pregnant with twins. Hmm. And you read just a few more words and you get to Rahab. Who was Rahab? Oh, she wasn't dressing up like a prostitute for Halloween or on that one occasion. Every single day she put on those clothes. That was her job. She was a professional. This is Jesus's family. And you keep reading. You get to verse five, Ruth. Ruth dressed like a servant like a peasant. She worked in the field. She's a Moabites. Who was Moab? Moab - did you think Lot's daughters got lots of drunk and slept with their father. These things I'm not even comfortable saying because who's in the audience right now. Incest. It's real dysfunction and you go to verse five and six and you get to King David. David dressed up like a king. He had the finest clothes and was an adulterer on the inside, murderer on the inside, he took Bathsheba to himself had Uriah killed on the front lines. This is Jesus's family. Jesus who was born into the dysfunction of Joseph when a privately divorcing his mom because she's pregnant but it's not by Joseph. Dysfunction. He came into this world naked, so they wrapped him in blue cloth and as they wrapped him in swaddling clothes, seamless clothes. He

lived a perfect life 33 years and they took him to the side of the road and they stripped him of his clothes.

The Romans to maximize humiliation would crucify you naked. So, it says the soldiers in fulfillment of the prophecy argued over his seamless garment there on the side of the road and there he was stripped and placed on a cross to close to you. Do you hear me? He was too stripped of what he's wearing to put something on you. Compassion, humility, kindness, gentleness, patience bound up in love. You go home dressed like this. You're going to look different. That's the point. You're different. You're wearing different clothes. You got a different style than when you last left. You're different. That's what the Spirit of God does. We pray that you would.

Father, would you create in us that difference I know that Jesus was born into tremendous dysfunction. And He clothes us in everything we need to navigate the tremendous dysfunction that exists here on the earth and even in our families. Lord by the power of your Holy Spirit, would you help us to respond with humility and kindness and compassion and patience and thanksgiving with a heart full of peace all bound up in love. That there would be a gentleness that marks us and that it would be contagious. That it would spread around the tables that we're at and people would come to know you, in a greater way for generations and generations and generations. In Jesus name, Amen.