

# THE NEW SELF AND ITS ATTIRE

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Colossians 3:9b-15 (ESV) ...seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices<sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.<sup>11</sup> Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.<sup>12</sup> Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,<sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.<sup>14</sup> And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

**The old self** (Paul contrasts the new self with the old self) What is the old self?

Although we are as the bible describes in 2 Cor 5:17 a new creation, where old things are passed away and everything has become new, we still possess an old way of thinking. This is referred to as the old self or the flesh.

The flesh is the part of us that contends with the new us. The flesh includes all the sinful desires, passion and cravings that go against the will of God.

Verses 5-9a speaks about putting to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within us. The amplified bible refers to these things as the sensual, self-centered instincts and habits that we developed throughout our life.

The reason as believers we wrestle with sin is because we are a new self, living in an old body that is attached to the things of this world. The old self, prior to Christ, was governed by the dictates of our selfish desires, under the influence of the prince of darkness.

Ephesians 2:1-3 (NLT) Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins.<sup>2</sup> You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil, the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.<sup>3</sup> All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature.

This is who we were but not who we are in Christ!

We are a new self, a new creation a new person in Christ. We can never be the same again. What was normal in the old life is now abnormal in the new life. What we were in the fallen Adam, by the grace of God, has now changed in the Risen Christ.

Ephesians 2:4-6 (NLT) But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much,<sup>5</sup> that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)<sup>6</sup> For he raised us

from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.

### **A new self**

Colossians 3:9a-10 (ESV) ...seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices<sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (GW) Whoever is a believer in Christ is a new creation. The old way of living has disappeared. A new way of living has come into existence.

The new self walks differently from the old self. It walks differently from the world because it is now focused on the things of heaven or that which has eternal value. It seeks to love what God loves and hate what God hates.

Colossians 3:1-3 (NLT) Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand.<sup>2</sup> Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.<sup>3</sup> For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.

The new self isn't simply focused on not doing bad things, it is focused on doing things that honor and please God.

Colossians 3:17 (ESV) And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

(MSG) Let every detail in your lives, words, actions, whatever be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.

You may be asking; how do I get to this place of living the new life with victory over the old self?

One step at a time.

### **Progressive growth**

Colossians 3:9b-10 (ESV) ...seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices<sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Just because we are a new self doesn't mean that we have instant maturity. Most people forget that becoming like Jesus involves progressive growth.

The key word being progressive which means gradual, steady and continual.

Colossians 1:9-10 (NLT) So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding.<sup>10</sup> Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.

2 Corinthians 4:16 (AMP) Therefore we do not become discouraged [spiritless, disappointed, or afraid]. Though our outer self is [progressively] wasting away, yet our inner *self* is being [progressively] renewed day by day.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (AMP) And we all, with unveiled face, *continually* seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are *progressively* being transformed into His image from [one degree of] glory to [even more] glory, which comes from the Lord, [who is] the Spirit.

Romans 12:2 (AMP) And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed *and* progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].

The new self is complete in Christ, yet, like a newborn child has the capacity for growth. Unlike the outward man which Paul wrote is decaying every day, the new self is being renewed day by day.

From these passages it is evident that the believer's new self resembles a growing child who requires nourishment (the spiritual milk of the word)

1 Peter 2:2-3 (AMP) like newborn babies [you should] long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may be nurtured *and* grow in respect to salvation [its ultimate fulfillment]

Colossians 3:10 (AMP) ...and have put on the new [spiritual] self who is being *continually* renewed in true knowledge in the image of Him who created the new self

There is no growth in the Christian's life apart from the knowledge of the word of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT) All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. <sup>17</sup> God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

The word of God is to our new self what good healthy food is to our body. As we grow in the knowledge of who Christ is and what he asks of us the more like Him we become. The more we put into practice what we learn from scripture the more like Jesus we become.

To put into practice is to put on.

### **The motive**

The motive to put on or practice Christ-like attire (character) is an understanding of the love of God for us.

Colossians 3:12a (NLT) Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved...

We have been chosen by God in Christ, set apart for His glory and made objects of His love. He did this not because we deserved it or earned it but simply because He chose to.

### **The new self's attire**

Colossians 3:12-14 (NLT) Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord

forgave you, so you must forgive others. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

Paul uses the term 'put on' or 'get dressed'.

The believer's attire has more to do with the inner life than the outer. Of course, just as we can see the clothes a person is wearing, so can the character of person be seen in their actions.

Our life as children of God should stand out from those who have no relationship with God.

Getting dressed is not something God does for us. Just as you went to your closet this morning and picked out the outfit you were going to wear to church so to, you must choose every day how you live out this new life.

Will we put on a compassionate heart, kindness, humility, meekness and patience or will we instead put on impatience, meanness, pride and indifference?

Will we make allowance for each other's faults and forgive, or will we amplify the faults of people and chose to practice unforgiveness and live with bitterness?

Will we cloth ourselves with love and pursue unity and harmony or will we envelop ourselves in hate and seek to destroy those we are called to love?

A heart that truly understands the depth of God's love for and the length He went to provide the means of forgiveness through Christ His Son has no room for grudges or bitterness, only for forgiveness and mercy.

As believers we must co-operate with the Holy Spirit by putting on the new man. Practicing a Spirit-led, Christ centered life.

Galatians 5:22-26 (NLT) But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! <sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. <sup>25</sup> Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.