

Garments of Grace
Colossians 3:12-14

INTRO: In Colossians 3:12-14, 23 have the principle of replacement. Spiritually, the principle of replacement means to replace a bad habit with a good habit, replace a bad song with a good song, replace depression by counting your blessings, naming them one by one. Replace gossip with encouraging words. Replace lying with truth. Replace cheating with honesty. Replace anger with loving kindness. In Colossians 3:5-9a, Paul told the Colossian believers what to put off; and now in verses 12-14, Paul gives to the Colossian believers, you, and I a list of great Christian graces with which to clothe ourselves. We are to replace our sinful behavior with godly living. We are to put off our bad attitudes and put on good attitudes. We are to replace bitterness with forgiveness.

I. VS 12a, CHOSEN OF GOD

- A. Paul addresses the Colossian Christians as “elect of God, holy, and beloved.” At one time all three words belonged to the Jews. They were the chosen people, a dedicated nation and beloved of God. Paul takes these three precious words and gives them to the Gentiles who believe. By doing so, he shows that the love of God and grace of God has reached out to the ends of the earth, to “every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (Rev 5:9).
- B. “Elect of God.” Throughout the Scriptures, we are taught the truth of divine election.
 - 1. “Elect,” the Greek word used for elect here is *eklectos* meaning “chosen of God, picked out, chosen.”
 - 2. Ephesians 1:4 says: “He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.....” Election does not depend on what we do; it is all of grace.
 - 3. II Thessalonians 2:13-14 says that Paul was confident of the election of the Thessalonians. The Thessalonians were chosen by God and called by the Gospel.
 - 4. In Deuteronomy 7:7-8a, we read the words of God to Israel. As we carefully read these words, we come to better understand salvation by grace.
 - a. In II Timothy 1:9, we see that God did not call us to salvation because of our good works.
 - b. II Timothy 2:19 tells us that the “Lord knoweth them that are his.....”

- c. The names of believers have been written in the book of life from before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8; 17:8).
- C. “Holy.” Holy is the Greek word *hagios* meaning “set apart or separate.”
 - 1. Believers are different from the world because God has called them out. He has drawn them to Himself; He has set them apart.
 - 2. Believers are not their own; believers belong completely to Christ (I Cor 6:19-20).
 - a. Believers are peculiar people; they are different from the world.
 - b. “When believers fail to act differently from the world, they violate the very purpose of their calling” (MacArthur 154).
- D. “Beloved.” Greek *agapao* meaning that believers are the objects of God’s love (Eph 1:4-5).
 - 1. “When an unbeliever sins, he is a creature breaking the laws of the holy Creator and Judge. But when a Christian sins, he is a child of God breaking the love heart of his Father” (Wiersbe 112).
 - 2. The more love we have for God, the more desire we have to obey Him. Love motivates us to obedience.

II. VSS 12b-13, GARMENTS OF GRACE

- A. Vs 12b, Paul instructs the Colossians to “put on” the qualities listed here. “Put on”– Greek *enduo* meaning “to put on clothes, to be enveloped in.” The new man is to cover himself with these qualities.
 - 1. “Bowels of mercies.”
 - a. We are to put on heartfelt compassion.
 - b. If there is one thing that the ancient world needed, it was compassion. The ancient world was hard. There was no provision for the aged or the handicapped. Christianity brought mercy to the world.
 - 2. “Kindness.” Ancient writers defined kindness as the virtue of the man whose neighbor’s good is as dear to him as his own.
 - a. We have been saved because of the kindness of God (Eph 2:7; Titus 3:4). His kindness led us to

- repentance (Rom 2:4).
 - b. Because of the kindness of God shown to us, we are to show kindness to others (Eph 4:32).
 - 3. “Humbleness of mind.” It has often been said that humility was created by Christianity. The classical Greek has no true word for humility. In Paul’s day, men did not admire humility. They admired pride and domination.
 - a. Humility is seeing that we could not save ourselves. It is seeing that salvation is all of grace. When we see the amazing grace of God, we are humbled.
 - b. The truly humble person things of others first.
 - 4. “Meekness.” This word means “mildness, gentleness.”
 - a. Meekness is a willingness to suffer injury rather than inflicting it.
 - b. Meekness is a word used to describe a soothing wind, a healing medicine, a colt that is broken.
 - 1- A wind can become a storm.
 - 2- Too much medicine can kill.
 - 3- A horse can throw its rider.
 - c. Meekness is power under control, not weakness.
 - 5. “Longsuffering.” Greek *makrothumia*– this describes a person who does not get angry at others.
 - a. This word “longsuffering” is the opposite of resentment and revenge.
 - b. Literally it means long temper.
- B. Vs. 13, Here we find a few more good garments to put on.
 - 1. Put on forbearance. This means that we are to hold each other up, to sustain each other, to help each other endure.
 - 2. “Forgiving one another.” This comes from the Greek word *charizomai*, literally meaning “to be gracious.
 - a. It is not enough to endure persecution. We must forgive the persecutors and be gracious to them.
 - b. When the church must practice tough love and discipline a member, it is to do so with sorrow of heart. When the disciplined member repents, he is to be forgiven by the local body and restored to full fellowship.
 - 3. Christ is our example of how we are to forgive.
 - a. He has forgiven us, and we don’t deserve it; so we must forgive others (Eph 4:32).

b. The Christian forbears and forgives.

III. VS 14, PUTTING ON THE GARMENT OF LOVE

- A. Nothing is more important to the Christian than love. All the other virtues will be lacking if there is no expression of love. All other Christian virtues hang on the belt of love.
- B. Love is the glue that holds the church together in unity.
 - 1. Love is a fruit of the Spirit and the other fruits flow from it.
 - 2. You can be orthodox without love, but there will be no harmony or beauty without it.

CONCLUSION: Put on the garments of grace.

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