

## Col Ch 3 Vs 5-11

Put Off Adam, Put On Christ

### Vs1-11

The way a person dresses (in our society) tells us a lot about that person. From football players, to police officers, or postal carriers to paramedics, people wear the uniform of their profession. If you visit a retail store and you need direction to a certain item, you look for the individual's wearing a little red or blue vest, or sometime of article that defines them as one who can assist you, this is what they do they're employees of that store. and The things that they wear reflect that reality to us, so in reality who we are, will determine what we wear, and failing to "dress the part" can sometimes have embarrassing consequences. The story is told of a very wealthy man southern California who was found wandering around the local country club wearing shabby clothes. and As you may guess he was promptly seized by the authorities and charged with vagrancy—even though he owned the country club. He had failed to dress consistent with who he was.

This is the point that Paul is making here in Col ch 3, we've been discussing the necessary ingredients to an effective endeavor regarding our efforts in the Kingdom, how our walk needs to match our talk, the lives that we live need to correspond with the message we give. Or to understand it as our text is communicating it, Christians need to "dress themselves" spiritually in accordance with their new identity. As a believer you have died with Christ and risen into new life and so the necessary observation to make then is that as a believer, salvation has produced for us a 2-sided obligation 1 that's negative, and 1 that's positive.

Thus far we've focused on the positive, the things we are to be doing, seeking those things which are above, setting our minds on those things, pursuing holiness, righteousness, the love of God and the like, and why are we to pursue these things? Because our lives are hidden with Christ in God so we're to be seeking those things where He is and when He appears we'll appear with Him in glory. and There's more positive to come, even this morning. But 1<sup>st</sup> we're going to "turn the page" as it were to focus for a bit on the negative, what we're not to be doing if our lives are to reflect the life of Christ. and In short we're to "put off" or "cast off" the garment of the old sinful lifestyle that was passed onto us in Adam.

Now there are those who don't like to talk about negative things and there's a bit of it that makes us all uncomfortable because we've all engaged in various activities or found ourselves apart of like things in the past and so in many ways this gets personal, but it's important that we strike the balance, there's no amount of positive talk that's going to cure a ruptured appendix. The doctor is going to have to "get negative" and take it out or you'll die, no amount of lecturing on beauty is going to produce a garden, at some point you're going to have to pull weeds! So the positive and the negative go together, and one with out the other will lead to imbalance.

It's actually out of the positive doctrine and duty that Paul has given, that the negative springs from, or flows out of, he's been speaking about the risen life, but the risen life is not a cake walk. and At 1<sup>st</sup> it may seem a bit surprising to us to learn that living the resurrection life here on this earth involves putting sin to death. Especially in light of some of those other scriptures that we've touched on lately like Rom 6:6 which says, "*our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*" and That is a "positional reality", but it needs to be worked out into the believers life in ways that are practical. and This is where we left off last week speaking about the fact that as believers we've died to sins penalty, but sins power is still a force to be reckoned with in our lives.

So in the text before us, Paul begins to demonstrate how the heavenly minded person, lives their life on earth and the positional is translated into the practical.

Vs5-7

"*Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth*" because of your identification with Christ, His death, and His resurrection, because you're in pursuit of those heavenly attributes or characteristics; do away with or put to death the passions, or your members which are on the earth. You might say, (like old western movie) "there isn't room in your life for the both of you." That is your flesh nature passed onto you in Adam, and your new nature given to you in Christ, something has got to give and as a believer it's to be your old man that was crucified with Christ, and since he was put to death, then likewise so also must all of the various attributes that characterized him be as well.

Believers are to make a decisive resolution to put sin to death, now lets be clear about 1 thing. When Paul says put to death your members, he's not now advocating the very asceticism that he just condemned in ch 2; he's not speaking in a literal sense. You remember Jesus said, "*If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched-- where "Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched."* "And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire." Now was He speaking of literally dismembering your body? No, why not? Because sin doesn't proceed forth from my hand, it proceeds from my heart, it merely surfaces in my hand, or my eye or whatever, but it stems from my heart.

You can pluck out my eyes so that they're never cast onto another woman again, but the problem is that I can still entertain visions in my mind. My body is just a tool that I use to fulfill the desires of my heart, that's why Jesus said, "*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.*"

So when Paul states that we're to put to death our members which are on the earth, he's speaking in a manner like Jesus who told us to get rid of certain things that provoke us to stumble, he's calling for the elimination of everything in the believer's life that is contrary to godliness.

Why, well it goes back again to vs 3, because you died, so quit seeking to function in those decaying members of the flesh, earthly passions, all those things that are in the world, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life (and he gets specific here in a moment). But you're dead to those things, so why live any longer in them? In Rom 6:13 Paul put it like this, "*do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*" and Again in Rom 8:13, "*For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*" In the book of Gal Paul said that those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh along with it's passions and desires, but you might ask, "how am I to put to death the deeds of the body?" and The key is found there in Rom 8:13 where Paul said, "*if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body.*" We crucify the flesh through feeding the Spirit, again it takes us back to those practical steps of spending time in God's Word, spending time in prayer, in fellowship with other believers and engaging in edifying activities rather than activities that simply entertain us.

Be careful to guard against seeking to utilize the flesh to prevail over the flesh, it can't be done, it's ironic it's very nature. You can't use the flesh to kill the flesh; you remember Hannah's song from Wed evening, she said, "*For by strength no man shall prevail.*" Victory over the flesh comes not by might, nor by strength, but by My Spirit says the Lord of Hosts. So through the feeding of the Spirit we're to put to death our members which are on the earth, Heb 12:1 says it like this, "*let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us.*" James said it like this, "*Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*"

Well what are some of those things that act as weight or the sin that so easily ensnares us? What is the filthiness and overflow of wickedness (those earthly members) that we're to put to death? Well he lists a number of them here (read vs 5 last 1/2).

Now this is a list (though not all inclusive) of what we might label as sensual sins, they all deal primarily with physical or sexual sins and for the most part I believe they're self-explanatory. Fornication being any sexual relationship that's pre-marital, and the bible states very plainly in 1 Thess 4:3 "*this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality.*" "Uncleanness" taking it beyond the physical act even into the thoughts and intentions of the mind, the lusts of the heart, and then "passion" and "evil desire" being very closely related to the other 2 as well.

But I want to stop for just a second and consider this last one that's mentioned here and have you notice where it says "covetousness, which is idolatry" Now this list moves from actions to motives and in vs 8 it reverses and goes from motive to actions. But covetousness is a vital part of this vs that we need to be careful not to miss because it's out of this sin that all the previous spring, it's that insatiable, unquenchable desire to have more, to have that which is forbidden, you shall not covet your neighbors wife, or husband, or boat, or home or whatever. But covetousness is that which brings out strife and wars between people, James said, in the 4<sup>th</sup> ch of his letter "*Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain.*" and Because in the midst of your coveting you place whatever your selfish desire is before the Lord, it amounts to idolatry. and I believe that if you were to narrow it down, you would find covetousness at the root of all sin. Barclay wrote, "It is, therefore, a sin with a very wide range. If it is the desire for money, it leads to theft. If it the desire for prestige, it leads to evil ambition. If it is the desire for power, it leads to sadistic tyranny. If it is the desire for a person, it leads to sexual sin."

The bottom line is that when people sin, it's when they're doing what they want instead of what God would want placing themselves and their will above God's making them in essence worshipers of themselves which again amounts to idolatry. You'll also find, "You shall not covet" as the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment, and yet it can cause you to break all the other 9. It'll cause you to dishonor the Lord, take His name in vain, steal, murder, bear false witness, dishonor your mom and dad, and place other things before the Lord. Covetousness is an incredibly dangerous snare for the believer.

The remedy for covetousness, is contentment, if you're content you won't desire to violate another person sexually, you won't desire to steal something that's not yours or whatever, and so if like Paul you've learned to be content in whatsoever state you're in, then you won't covet. Because contentment and covetousness are diametrically opposed to one another, that's why the bible says, "*Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have.*" Heb 13:5 Again 1 Tim 6:8, "*And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*" So put to death your members which are on the earth (Vs 6).

These are the sorts of things that are bringing God's wrath upon the sons of disobedience. Now lets jump around here for just a minute, turn to Eph ch 5 (Vs 1-7) Look at 1<sup>st</sup> Cor ch 6 vs9-11

Gal ch 5 19-21, these are the things that invite, not God's blessing upon your life, but God's wrath, we violate Him as we partake in these things, and even in the present tense the wrath of God abides on those who are given over to such things, how so? In Rom 1:18 Paul said, "*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*"

In vs 24 he illustrates how this takes place by saying that God gives them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves. Or to understand it another way, God's wrath is revealed by Him turning men over to that which they refuse to quit seeking after, they wanted this and they wanted that, even though it flew in the face of God and His desires for mans life, and so eventually He gave them over to it.

He gives them what they want, but along with it comes the penalty; Hophni and Phinehas were of such sort we spoke about them Wednesday evening. They were ripping off the people, sleeping with the ladies around the tabernacle and finally God gave up on them and killed them both on the same day, the wages of sin is death. The entire world was of such sort in Noah's day, and finally God just gave them over to their own vile passions, culminating ultimately in God's judgment, which at that time was revealed in the flood.

Don't be deceived, you can not live after the flesh and inherit the Kingdom of God, and the very fact that you've received Jesus Christ; the whole concept there is that you've renounced the life lived after the flesh, you've died to the flesh that you might now be alive to God in Christ living after the Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit. and (Now listen this is important) If these are the types of things that characterize your life and yet you claim to be a Christian, then the only person you're deceiving is yourself, John said in 1 John 2:6, "*He who says he abides in Him (that is Christ) ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*"

In other words in pursuit of those things above, walking in humility, servitude, kindness, love, contentment, purity by the power and working of the Holy Spirit in your life, these are the types of things that characterized the life of Christ. So if you say you abide in Him and yet things like fornication, uncleanness and evil desire characterizes you, then those things completely annul anything you might "say." Again 1 John 2:4 "*He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*"

You would do well not to presume upon the grace of God, the children of Israel made that mistake. Thinking that since they were God's chosen people they could live like the nations around them and still inherit the promises of God, they were sadly mistaken. So our faith in Christ is demonstrated in how we live our lives, and these are the things that invite the wrath of God upon us.

Vs7

These things may've once patterned your life, but in Christ they're to do so no more, now even as believers we all occasionally stumble, James said we all stumble in many things, but if these things pattern your life, then don't be deceived you will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Vs8

Now in vs 5 we characterized that list as “sensual sins” and this is a list of what we might call “social sins” demonstrated in the things we say. and The words “put off” are used as in the changing of a garment, these are the types of things that once “clothed” us but now we’re to “put off” or “cast off” these things, these are the types of things that cloth the dead, but once we’re resurrected in Christ we put off the old deeds, the old desires that once clothed us.

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead the command was to “loose him” and let him go, get him out of those grave clothes and let him put on garments that reflect life and not death. and We’re to do likewise We’re to put off all these: “anger” which in this case he’s referring to that slow burn, that festering and smoldering feeling, “wrath” the explosive temperament. “Malice” that’s that emotion that gives you some amount of twisted gratification when some misfortune befalls someone you don’t like, Paul says get rid of it, Jesus said pray for your enemies, those who spitefully use you. Prov 24:17 *“Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles.”* That’s malice, “blasphemy” can apply to God or man, which is speaking evil or slandering, you get a phone call and someone starts railing in your ear or speaking out in opposition against so as to hurt someone’s name or character, that’s what this is speaking of. Speech which is hostile towards God or man and filthy language is self explanatory, anything ugly or crude, cursing and things of that nature.

Vs9

Why, because lying is Satanic at it’s roots, Satan is the father of all lies, and so when we’re lying we’re not being imitators of God, but of Satan. So don’t cooperate with Satan in lying, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, speak the truth in love. Now this includes exaggerating, or saying the truth technically but by your inflection or body language you deceived someone.

Put off all of these things, but we’re not to stand there unclothed (even as it says in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor in regards to these bodies, this shell that we live in) one day we’ll shed it, but we won’t be unembodied Spirits. In 2 Cor 5:2-4 Paul said, *“For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.”* Well in a similar way once we take off these things, we’re not to be found unclothed, there’s something else we’re to put on.

Vs10

So put off Adam, or your old characteristics that were passed on to you in the fallen nature of Adam, and put on the new man, put on Christ, the new man. and God will renew you making you more and more like Jesus, How is this new man renewed? In knowledge, he’s renewed through the study of the Word of God, and this word “renewed” is a present participle, speaking of constantly being renewed, it’s the process of sanctification, that takes place by knowledge according to the image of Him.

In other words we're marred by sin but by the knowledge of God through the study of His word He's renewing us by His Spirit into the image of His Son. You know that feeling that's like a breath of fresh air, or that "new" like sensation that you feel after a bible study or time that you've spent in the Word just hanging out with the Lord? That's your inner man being renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him (that is Jesus Christ) who created him.

Vs11

In Christ there is neither male nor female, slave or free, black or white, Greek or Jew, there's no ethnicity, or any segregation whatsoever. Because there's only 1 man, the man Christ Jesus, we're the body of Christ, and Christ isn't segregated against Himself, He's not divided up into race or gender, He is all and in all, it's all about Jesus.

If you don't know Jesus, today I want to invite you to shed the old man, and receive new life in Christ. To be raised into the newness of life, if anyone be in Christ he's a new creation, old things pass away and all things are made new, Jesus died to set you free from the law of sin and death and to bring you up out of the wrath of God and place you under the blessing of God. But it'll only happen in Christ, there is no other way to the Father, and so if God called you here today to give you new life, don't reject Him, I urge you, accept Him now.