

## Take off the Grave Clothes Colossians 3:5-14 Sufficient Series

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: **fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.** <sup>6</sup>Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, <sup>7</sup>in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

<sup>8</sup>But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, <sup>11</sup>where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ is all and in all.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, **as the elect of God, holy and beloved,** put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. <sup>14</sup>But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

There is a saying you have probably heard it – **CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN!**

A) Well Spiritually speaking – **Paul the apostle would agree with that statement!**

B) Go back with me in your mind's eye 2,000 yrs ago to a tiny village outside of the city of Jerusalem in Israel - scene recorded in John Chapter 11

C) The Village is called Bethany – Rocky desert scene – outside the Village – **a group of people standing in front of a cave – tomb - mourning**

D) Reason: A good friend of Jesus a Man named **Lazarus died four days earlier.**

1) His dead body has been wrapped up like a **mummy, and placed in an archaic tomb** that was really a cave –

E) A LARGE STONE PLACED OVER THE OPENING!

Jesus arrives at the scene and is met by Lazarus' sister Martha – who says **Lord if you would have been here – my brother would not have died!**

A) Lord where were you? You let us down –

B) Jesus and Martha have a short discussion about the afterlife and Jesus makes his Monumental statement John 11:25-26 *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die!"*

C) What Jesus does next is blows everyone's mind: **Jesus said, "Take away the stone."**

Martha protested, *"Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."*

E) Jesus looked at that tomb – Cried – **Lazarus come forth**

1) Out walked what looked like a mummy

Then Jesus said to those who were near by – **LOOSE HIM – In other words take off those smelly grave clothes**

A) They would start at the head – now what if Lazarus protested – *wait a minute Jesus I have grown accustomed to these clothes – I am comfortable in these garments*

B) Jesus would say: **But Lazarus – those are grave clothes & you are no longer dead!**

1) LAZ – *But I like them – I am used to them – they are a part of me*

C) Jesus – **But they Stink – they are unpleasant – they are repulsive**

1) Take them off and put on these new clothes

If Lazarus were to react that way over his grave clothes – we would think that – he was nuts – had some screws loose –

A) Because we know that a LIVE MAN – doesn't cruise around in DEAD MAN'S CLOTHES

B) Jesus is really good at bringing Dead things to life! – People – marriages Relationships

C) And that is exactly what Paul has been wanting us to see here in the book of Colossians -

1) You were dead in your sin – Separated from God

Jesus has made you Alive – You have been raised with Him – **United to him in His Resurrection – Delivered from Darkness!**

A) Noted last week – **Since you have been raised – seek those things which are above not the things that are on the earth!**

B) New perspective – New mindset that leads to New Pursuits

C) As we continue here in Chapter 3 Paul says – Not just a New mindset

1) **You need new Clothes – Get rid of the GRAVE CLOTHES – YOU ARE NOT DEAD ANYMORE!**

D) **BIG IDEA: Be who you are in Christ – not who you were in the Flesh!**

**How do you do that? – Paul reveals here in our text**

A) **THERE IS A Positive and a negative ASPECT TO IT!**

B) Some people really have a problem with Pastors being negative in Church – **I want a message that makes me feel good about myself.**

1) **So forget about all those negative warnings in the Bible**

C) **But the negative warnings and commands grow out of the positive truths of Christian doctrine.**

1) **Colossians 1:28 “Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”**

D) **WARNINGS ARE NECESSARY!**

**No amount of positive talk about health will cure a ruptured appendix.**

A) **The doctor will have to “get negative” and take out the appendix.**

B) **No amount of lecturing on gardening will produce a weed free garden.**

1) **The gardener has to pull weeds!**

C) **The positive and the negative go together, and one without the other leads to imbalance.**

**So How do we be who we are in Christ and not who we are in the Flesh?**

A) **You kill things! - Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth:**

B) **KJV –Mortify your members – Mortify – Video game – Put to death – the idea is this is a strong reaction. There is a finality to it!**

C) **Notice this first list of sins all have to do with sexual immorality!**

- **Fornication** (Sex outside of marriage)
- **Uncleanness** (perverted and kinky forms of sex)
- **Passion** (erotic lust –associated with visual stimulation i.e. porn and movies)
- **Evil desire** is closely associated with lust – it is a mental uncleanness.

D) It is exactly what Jesus had in mind when he said **“If a man looks after a woman to lust after her in his heart** (meaning if he mentally plays over the picture of having sex with her in his mind,) **he has already committed adultery in his heart.**

**I know some people would ARGUE– hey what does it hurt to fantasize, that doesn't do anyone any harm” Oh but you see it does,**

A) **Because sin is conceived where? In our hearts, evil thoughts turn into evil desires which turn into evil deeds.**

James 1:13-15 *13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*

B) **James reveals that there is a progressive natural to lust!**

1) **Feed it – and it grows -**

C) **The desire to experience – sexual pleasure is natural and God given**

1) **AND Satan tempts us through natural desires – Puts a image before you or a thought in your mind –**

D) If you dwell on that image or thought – conception occurs in your mind –

1) Gives birth to sin – Sin grows up it leads to death!

E) You NEED to know that- PORN puts images in your mind – destroys the intimacy in your marriage and often leads to sinful and destructive actions

When it comes to the subject of sexuality intimacy and romantic pleasure the world has been screaming at the top of it's lungs for centuries

A) Their message: Movies – TV shows – Most exciting sex is forbidden sex – kinky sex –

B) The world has been screaming their message for centuries and the Church has been silent – we don't want to talk about that.

C) The world exploits the topic of sex – and the Church isn't sure how to react

If we are Honest - the Church in the past has reacted to the exploitation of sex in the extreme

A) Wonderful Church fathers who loved the Bible – loved Jesus – have had a warped view of Sexuality and intimacy

➤ Examples: **Tertullian and Ambrose** – two early Church fathers **avored the extinction** of the human race over continued sexual intimacy.

- So they would Rather see the human race become extinct than to know that married people are engaging in and enjoying Sex.

➤ **Origen**: Was so convinced of the evil's of sexual intercourse and pleasure that he not only allegorized the Song of Solomon – **but he had himself castrated**

➤ **Augustine**: Sex between a Husband and a wife was ok – but **if they enjoyed it or derived any form of pleasure** from it – That pleasure was a sin.

That really led to the concept promoted by **Thomas Aquinas** that Sex is only for the purpose of Procreation

A) What is interesting to me about that idea – is in the Book Song of Solomon – inspired scripture

B) In it God has a lot to say about sexual pleasure in a marriage relationship and in the whole book it never mentions kids once

C) Now it is true that God created sex for pro- Creation – but he also created it for pleasure.

D) The devil has perverted – what God created to be a blessing to man

1) Church we need to redeem it –

E) I believe that the Church should be the leaders for the rest of the world on what **Passionate intimacy and Romance is supposed to look like.**

1) Awesome between a Husband and wife – madly in love with Jesus and madly in Love with each other!

Back to our text: **Put to death these things** –

I also think it is interesting that – Paul links the term **Covetousness with sexual immorality in this list.**

A) It makes perfect sense - Being covetous is wanting something that doesn't rightfully belong to you!

B) Sexual immorality = (sex outside of marriage) starts with **wanting something that doesn't belong to you and then taking it!**

C) **That girls body doesn't belong to you** – She has been made in the image of God –

1) That picture your looking at fantasizing over is someone's daughter

D) As a Christian your body belongs to Christ – temple of the Holy Spirit

1) Not yours to give away as you see fit!

E) When you get married – God instructs you to give your body to your spouse and one purpose is for sexual pleasure

**So lust and sexual immorality totally involves covetousness – wanting something that is not yours**

Aa) Notice the last thing Paul says here - **and covetousness, which is idolatry.**

A) Idolatry is having other gods in your life other than Jesus!

B) At the core of all sexual sin and covetousness desire is the desire to GRATIFY AND SERVE MY FLESH

1) **RATHER THAN TO GLORIFY AND SERVE GOD!**

C) Paul says to the Church in Colossae v.7 – that is how you used to live

1) That was your modus operandi – as an unbeliever – that is how you once walked –

D) You lived to please yourself! – NO MORE – PUT THAT MENTALITY AND THOSE ACTIONS TO DEATH!

1) New person in Christ – New Pursuits

E) No longer should your life be about – gratifying and serving the flesh

1) But it is to be about – Glorifying and serving God in everything that you do!

Paul gives us some tremendous insight into how this works in Romans Chapter 6

<sup>6</sup> knowing this, that 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. <sup>7</sup> For he who has died has been freed from sin.

A) Know this: New status – Old man has been crucified with Christ and the body of sin might be done away with

B) Done away with is Katargeo – rendered inactive – So Consider him dead – paralyzed

V.11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

C) Reckon is not a hillbilly expression of a country bumpkin – “Well I reckon so”

1) It is actually an accounting term that means to add up the facts and respond accordingly

D) So I am adding up the facts – I am alive in Christ – my old man – rendered inactive - -

1) Here is how we are to respond accordingly V.12

<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

<sup>13</sup> And 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.

Think of it this way: You are barely scrapping by financially – month to month – in debt/ bills are piling up

A) Someone deposits 10 million dollars into your account – Does that change the way you approach things?

B) Pay off all your debts – Living different! After you tithe of course

C) That is Paul’s whole point here: You have been raised – you are a new person in Christ – Live that way – not the way you used to live

D) Put to death the old way of life!

Now Paul is hitting on a very important truth about the Christian life that many miss – it is this – We have a role to play in the Sanctification process

A) Justification is the miracle of a moment Sanctification is the process of a lifetime.

B) Justified – Forgiven – Cleansed – New – Holy

1) Today

C) Sanctification – Practical – Process ... becoming more like Jesus

D) We have a role to play in the Sanctification process

Paul gives us a further analogy of what that is suppose to look like – back at our text – pick up in v. 8

<sup>8</sup> But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, <sup>10</sup> and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, <sup>11</sup> where there is neither Greek nor Jew, (no racial distinctions) circumcised nor uncircumcised, (no religious

distinctions) **barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free,** (no social class distinctions) **but Christ is all and in all.**

**Interesting analogy – picture is one of putting off the old man – and putting on the new – Like taking off an old coat and putting on a new coat**

A) Putting off **Anger** – (festering emotion – bitterness)

B) **Wrath** – rage Volcanic eruptions – Hothead – **Malice** – Revengeful attitudes

B) Anger, wrath and malice – bad attitudes and actions toward others

C) Also Putting away Blasphemy – (slander or speaking evil) –

- **Filthy language** – dirty talk –
- and lying -

**Take that stuff off!**

**That is the OLD MAN – OLD DUDE – OR DUDETTE – Put on the new man –**

A) We have all seen **those radical transformation** pictures where someone has gone through an extreme weight loss

B) Once weighed – 450lbs now weigh – 200 – What is one of the first things they do when the lbs drop? – NEW CLOTHES

C) WHAT DO THEY DO WITH THE OLD CLOTHES? Burn them

1) **Finality to it - never going back**

D) Most people don't save – Big clothes – Don't want to go back –

1) I have some stuff in my closet – from when I was skinnier – always hope

E) Nothing from when I was bigger

**And When that type of radical transformation occurs – Here is what you don't see**

A) Never seen the guy or gal wear those big pants – synched at the waists

B) Or huge shirts – tied to the side – doesn't fit

C) NO THEY GET NEW CLOTHES – **matches the transformation**

**Paul's point here: <sup>12</sup> Therefore, as *the* elect of**

**God, (Chosen) holy (Set apart) and beloved, (greatly loved)**

A) **That is you Now!** – Chosen by God, set apart unto God – Marked and greatly loved by God.

B) Let me ask you this: Does **anger, wrath, malice, evil speaking, filthy language and lying** – go with the Picture of Chosen by God, set apart unto God – Marked and greatly loved by God?

C) So Because you are Chosen by God, set apart unto God – Marked and greatly loved by God. **put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But they don't deserve to be forgiven – Did You?**

<sup>14</sup> **But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.**

**Essentially What Paul is saying is to put on Christ**

A) Not only do we have a role to play in the Sanctification process but - **Sanctification involves our daily choices**

Romans 13:14 **Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.**

B) **Clothe yourself with the presence of Jesus Christ – 1) Not only is Jesus with me – but Jesus is in me by His Spirit - I am going to WEAR Him today**

C) Instead of making excuses for my flesh – we like to say “Accept me the way I am. I'm grumpy before I have my morning coffee, and that's just the way it's gonna be.”

D) Or I am hot headed – part of my Irish/Italian heritage and culture

E) News Flash – **Jesus did not save you to keep you the way that you are – He saved you to do a work of transformation in your life.**

**Put on Jesus everyday**

A) Jason's story - Treat them the way Jesus would

B) At that time there was a guy who had left our church – **making life miserable for me**

1) Saying things about me – not true – but people were believing

C) To be honest I was really struggling with anger – malice –

1) Make matters worse – It seemed like I was running into him all around town.

D) Tried to talk – didn't work – I was really battling – Heard Jason teach that

**I am going to do that – I would see this guy – Engage him – “Hey how doing – how is work – how is your family – Completely threw him for a loop”**

A) Really interesting – Rarely saw him again – Like a whole year passed

B) Lesson Rob – you need to learn – Put on Christ

C) Put off the old man – put on the New

1) Clothe ourselves in the Presence of Jesus

D) How do we do Daily - that?

### **Very practical**

#1 Confess you can't

- To be an authentic Christian really means to **run from SELF-RELIANCE.**
- **To confess I am Perpetually needy**
- I need someone **greater than myself to deliver me from myself** and my circumstances

#2 Pray for problem people (**Guy at work**)

#3 Ask the Lord give me your eyes and heart

#4 Hang out with Jesus

2 Corinthians 3:18

<sup>18</sup> But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

**Could tell Disciples had been with Jesus**

**Jesus said: Know you are my disciples by your love**

**NOT KNOWLEDGE – Knowledge puffs up – Proud**

➤ **Love builds up**

**Hang with Jesus in the Word – Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ Dwell in you Richly**

**Romans 12:1-2** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.* <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**Attractive: Grace looks good on you! – Being Alive looks great on you**

**Lazarus attractive - John 12**

*V.9 Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.*

**Best evangelism tool**

**Precious Church**

**The Clothes make the man – the woman  
Clothe yourself in the presence of Christ**