

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
Commentary by Michael Sigler
February 17, 2013

Clothe Yourselves with Christ

Read Colossians 3:5-17

Key verse: “And over all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity” (Colossians 3:14).

This Sunday is the first Sunday of Lent. During this season, we are called to prepare our hearts for the new life of Easter. We often observe Lent by giving up some old things (old habits, for example) in order to make room for the new life that Christ offers us. This spiritual dynamic is described beautifully in Colossians 3. Here the “giving up” part involves *putting to death* and *taking off* those parts of our lives that belong to our old, sinful nature.

Verse 5 calls us to “put to death” those parts of our lives that belong to the old nature. This act is not something we do in our own strength at all. Colossians 3:3 says, “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:7 speaks of the old, sinful way of life as a pre-conversion state—“when you were alive to these things.”

When we were born again by faith in Christ, we died with Christ to the old life. And we were raised to new life in Christ. This death and resurrection is an accomplished fact. Our calling now is to claim in daily experience—by surrendering to Christ and trusting in His finished work—what we *already are* positionally in Him. We have the power to “put to death” the old, sinful ways because our old, sinful nature has died already in Christ!

The other powerful “giving up” image in Colossians 3 is that of taking off old, dirty clothes and putting on new, clean clothes. This image describes our calling to take off the old clothes of our old, sinful nature and to put on the new clothes of our new life in Christ. When we dig into this passage, we can compile a list of the “old clothes” we’re to take off and the “new clothes” we’re to put on....

We are to take off (put to death, set aside) “the old human nature with its practices,” such as: sexual immorality, moral corruption, lust, evil desire, and greed (v. 5); anger, rage, malice, slander, and obscene language (v. 8); and lying (v. 9).

We are to put on “the new nature” with its practices, such as: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience (v. 12); tolerance and

forgiveness (v. 13); love—which is the perfect article of clothing (v. 14); the peace of Christ (v. 15); thankfulness (v. 15); and a whole-hearted commitment, in all we do, to the Lord Jesus (v. 17). These are representative of the “new clothes” that we’re to put on.

Golfer Tiger Woods signed a five-year contract extension with Nike for about \$100 million. The deal is thought to be the richest endorsement deal in sports history. A magazine article said of Woods: He is now “a head-to-toe Nike man. He wears Nike footwear, clothing, gloves, and hats.”

During this Lenten season, may we hear God’s call to dress “head-to-toe” in the Jesus wardrobe. “Therefore, as God’s choice, holy and loved, put on” the new clothes of your new life in Christ!

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