

Put Off the Old Man and Put On the New Man

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[0:00] Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your hearts on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things.

For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature. Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways. In the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these.

Anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other since you have taken off your old self with its practices.

[1:05] And have put on the new self which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator. Here, there is no Greek or Jew. Circumcised or uncircumcised.

Barbarian, Scythian, slave or free. But Christ is all and is in all. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Bear with each other. And forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues, put on love which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Since as members of one body, you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom.

And as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do. Whether in word or deed.

[2:22] Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Giving thanks to God the Father. Through him. Well, I don't know about you.

But I can't imagine living without you guys. I love what God has given us here. I hope you're enjoying it.

Jesus was absolutely right when he said to us, I tell you the truth, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me in the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age.

So this age, right now, a hundred brothers and sisters for everyone lost. A hundred children in homes and fields.

And Jesus has done that right here, hasn't he? And it's good. It's very good. But let me give you a list and ask you, does this describe your family now or your family growing up or your work or your team that you are on or your school?

[3:34] Does this list or any of these things in this list describe your life or your day-to-day, the things that you live in and face? Is anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, lying.

Well, you're not a stranger to any of those things, are you? It's a part of your life, your team, your family growing up, your workplace, your school.

And so what is that like? What is it like living where those things are predominant and those things reign? Well, it makes for a pretty miserable experience, doesn't it?

A lot of brokenness, a lot of sadness, a lot of stunted growth, a lot of potential just flushed down the toilet because people are always at each other. And that is the wreck and the ruin of fallen humanity.

But the glorious good news is that Jesus is doing something new. He's creating something new. He's making something new. And he saved us out of that humanity.

[4:49] So right now, side by side, are two humanities. Fallen, ruined, wrecked, and then redeemed. Well, he saved us out of the old humanity, not because we were any better, were we?

Were you? Not any better. Not any less angry. Not any less slanderous. Not any less filthy mouth. It was because he had pity on you.

Mercy was just it. Mercy on you to save you out of one and put you into another. Augustine said, he pitied me when I was in a deep abyss. And that's what we were all like.

And so Jesus saves us from that fallen humanity. But that means that the old has to go and the new has to come. We have to take off the old clothes and put on the new clothes. We can't just sit here and enjoy it.

It's really a call to action. And that's what Paul is now talking about in Colossians 3. A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, we were talking about Colossians.

[5:54] I look back on my history, and it was somewhere in January that we were in Colossians. And do you remember, Paul has put Christ right at the center of everything.

And he is getting us to understand that to be a Christian is to be joined to Jesus Christ. It's a very personal thing that we have with Jesus Christ. And Paul has been now working that idea out. And so the old Jewish rules that shadowed or pictured Jesus Christ, those are done. And the world's way of dealing with sin. That's done too.

That's old hat. They're unnecessary. And then in chapter 3, verse 1, he now says, seek the things that are above. As Jesus said, seek first the kingdom.

Paul says, seek the things that are above. So live for that coming kingdom. Put to death your personal sins, your evil desires. That's verses 5 through 7.

[6:51] But now in verse 8, which is what we're going to be looking at tonight, 8 and following, he changes the subject ever so slightly. And now he's not talking about personal sins so much as interpersonal sins, relational sins, community-destroying sins, church-destroying sins.

So what are the sins that are going to destroy grace fellowship if we let it? Well, it'll be sins like this, anger and malice and slander and lying and things like that.

Those are relational, church-destroying sins. And he said, you used to walk in those ways. In the life you once lived, but now you must rid yourselves of all of these anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language and lying.

And so look at your life. Are these things a part of your life? When was the last time that you got angry?

How far do we have to turn back the time to find the last time you got angry? Three weeks ago? A week ago?

[8:06] An hour ago? Well, anger, malice, we're not strangers to any of these things. And Paul says, now you have to get rid of them.

You have to get rid of them. Just this week, my wife came to me with a handful of old t-shirts. And she said, can I throw these away? And I looked. I didn't know what she was talking about first. And so I looked, and they're my t-shirts.

And I've had a good relationship with them. I've had some good times with them. They still work, sort of. But if your wife brings you clothes and says, can I throw them away? It's best to throw them away.

It's probably time to get rid of them. Get them out of your life. Get them out of your drawers. And that's what Paul says about these old ways, these old sins. These sins that have been around for so long that we have a hard time imagining life without them.

Sins that have been around for so long and have hurt so many people. Paul now says they've got to go. But it's not easy to change, is it? It's not easy to change.

[9:09] It's not easy to get rid of these things. And so the question that really comes to mind is, why should I do that? Why should I go to the effort to get rid of these things, which is not going to be easy, is it?

Why? Why do it? I was listening to Dave Ramsey this week, the financial guy, and he was interviewing a couple.

And if you've ever heard his show, he has people call in and they get to yell their, I'm debt free, scream, when they paid off all their debt. And he always asks the people, whenever he talks to

these people, he asks, what made you decide or why did you decide to do this four years ago? Or why did you decide to do this 20 months ago? And the couple that he was interviewing here, and that why question is a very important question, because no one does anything without a reason why.

And this couple said, it took us a few years to find out a big enough why to do this. But then we had two daughters, and that big enough why kicked in.

[10:18] We saw them running around, and we said, we have to get our act together. So they paid off all their debt. They paid off their house, and they finally had a big enough why. And that big enough why made all the difference in their financial life.

A big enough why makes all the difference in our lives. It makes all the difference in deciding what we are willing to do. What lengths are we willing to go?

The bigger the why, the farther we will go. Well, some ROTC cadets or soldiers were sent to survival and escape school.

And as they stood at attention, a tall, six-foot, muscular captain stood in front of them. And this captain had been captured by the Viet Cong in Vietnam in the 70s and had escaped capture and out of prison.

Now listen, boys, if you're a boy, listen to what he did to get their attention. He killed a chicken right there in front of him with his teeth.

[11:34] And they watched him do that. They're stunned. And he said, if I had to, I would pull all the feathers off this chicken and eat it raw. And then someone brought him a snake, and he did the same thing.

And he said, if I had to, I would eat the snake raw. And then he told them about the time he was in prison and how he escaped, why he escaped.

And he said, you want to know why I did whatever I had to do? You want to know why I did it? Does anyone know? And all the cadets, of course, they want to know, but no one has any idea.

No one raised their hand. And finally, in a barely audible tone, he said, I had my woman to get home to. I couldn't stay here when she was there, so I had to get home to her.

And that was a big enough why for him to do all sorts of things that he never thought he would have to do. Now, a big enough why makes all the difference. And so what's the big enough why that's going to make you and give you the ability to get rid of anger and malice?

[12:44] And slander and those words that are rotten. And it's not just filthy words and bad language. He's talking about words that rot people, that hurt people, that spoil people.

And lying. What's a big enough why for you? Well, verse 9 tells us, Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices.

And you have put on the new self, which is being renewed in the knowledge of the image of its creator. Literally, it says, you have taken off the old man with its practices and have put on the new man.

Now, what Paul here is essentially telling us is, You have taken off, you have taken off who you were in Adam. And you have now put on Christ.

And so, remember, we have these two humanities side by side. The Adam humanity and the Christ humanity. And he says, you are not a part of that Adam humanity anymore. You've put it off.

[13:51] And now you've put on Jesus Christ. And so, you have to get rid of the things that belong to that humanity. You have to get rid of lying and anger and malice and so forth.

And so, I want to show you what this means. And I want to prove this to you. Because this is the big why. This is what is going to be able to get you to actually get rid of the anger and so forth.

Because if you don't get this, then you're going to read, I need to get rid of anger and rage and malice. And you can read that all day long and you won't do anything about it. If you don't have a big enough reason to exercise and diet, no matter how much of a good idea you think it is and you know it is, if you don't have a big enough reason to do it, you won't do anything about it, will you?

So, you have to get this. Because getting it will actually help us. As a congregation, to do something about relationship-killing sins.

These things that are so poisonous and could damage what we have here. And getting it will actually help us to do something to make Grace Fellowship a happier, a healthier, a more holy, a better place than it is now.

[15:10] And so, we want to walk through Paul's letters and where he brings this up. And show you what he's talking about. And what he's talking about when he's talking about this old man, new man.

Unfortunately, the NIV doesn't generally translate it literally. And so, sadly, you lose something when it just reads self. Because we end up thinking, naturally we end up thinking when we hear self, that he's primarily talking about me.

Something about me individually. But Paul has, well, it's not excluding me. It's something broader than that. He has something broader in mind.

It includes me, but it's more than that. Now, you can see that if you look at verse 11. Right here, in verse 11. What does verse 11 say? It says, Here, there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, sythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and is in all.

So, here. Here. That's where there's no Greek or Jew, etc. Where's the here? What is he talking about? Where's here? Well, it's in this new man that we have put on.

[16:22] In this new man. It's in Christ. It's within this new humanity where Christ is all and is in all, that there is neither Greek nor Jew nor circumcised or uncircumcised, slave or free.

This new man that Paul is talking about is big enough to include Greek and Jew. It's big enough to include circumcised and uncircumcised. It's big enough to include slave and free.

It includes all of them and brings them together in one in Jesus Christ. So, Jesus Christ becomes the new unifying factor of these groups that were once so far apart from each other.

So, in the old man. So, think about this. In the old man, in the old way of thinking about things, these distinctions mean everything, don't they?

They decide who's good and who's bad. They decide who's important and who's not important.

Who's blessed and who's cursed? Who's right and who's wrong?

[17:21] Who's on my side and who's against me? But in Christ, everything changes, doesn't it? Those distinctions, they still exist, don't they?

But they aren't determinative. They don't decide. They're not going to decide how we judge each other. And they're not going to decide how we evaluate one another. And they're not going to decide how we organize each other.

They aren't the all-important way that we relate to each other. Not anymore. So, in the old man, in the old humanity, and you don't have to look back in time, just look out in the world.

That's where the old humanity is. The old man under Adam is. It's, I'm white. You're black. And we'll fight and hate each other and put each other down and ridicule and slight and slander and lie because at all costs, I have to defend myself and my religion and my righteousness and my person and essential to my goodness, essential to my identity as a person, essential to who I am as I'm, as a person who is right and good and decent, as I'm a white person or I'm a black person.

Or I'm rich. You're poor. And so, we can't get along. So, we fight and we hate and we put each other down and we ridicule and slight and slander and lie.

[18:48] Why? Because essential to my goodness, in my own mind, when I think of the things that are for me, the things that are on my side, the things that make me a decent person, essential to those things is how much money I have or how little money I have.

And so, it's worth getting angry about. And it's worth slandering. It's worth getting malicious about when those things are touched and when we have a conflict.

You can think of Paul's situation. What were the things that he put in his categories of, these are the things that are going for me.

I'm a Jew. Hebrew of Hebrews. I know my tribe. I'm a Pharisee. Those things are for me. So, I'm a Jew.

You're a Greek. So, I'm right and you're wrong. I'm blessed and you're cursed. I've got the law. I'm a part of God's people and you're not.

[19:50] So, we fight and we hate and we ridicule and we slander and slight. But do you see what Paul is saying?

In this new man that we have put on, this new humanity that we are a part of, where Christ is all, that's not the way it is. We aren't blessed and we aren't righteous and we aren't good because of any of those things anymore.

We are blessed because of Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone. And I'm not good and right and either are you if we come and realize I'm the sinner.

And so, together we've seen that we're sinners. That all those things that we once counted as our game, now they're just loss. So, together we're sinners and Jesus has saved us and Jesus has filled us.

And so, now there's not room for judgment and division and looking down because together, together we are experiencing the grace of God, aren't we? He had mercy on us.

[21:01] He didn't just have mercy on me. He had mercy on you. So, together we are experiencing the grace of God. So, what is the answer to racism?

The world has all sorts of things that they'd like to say and is their answer. What is the answer to racism? Not education. Christ.

What's the answer to classism and elitism? It's not socialism. It's Christ.

And what's the answer to the cultural divides? The ethnic divides, etc. It's not trips abroad while you're in college. As good as those things may be, it's Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is God's answer to society's fractures. And so, how do you look at yourself? How do you look at your brothers and sisters here?

[22:08] Is it still by the old standards? The old distinctions? The how much money you have? And what's their spiritual background?

We can't say, I'm poor and they're rich. Or, I didn't grow up in a godly home and they did.

And so, we can't relate. We can't really understand each other. We're too different. Paul says, that way of thinking is gone. It's over.

It's done. For us. So, I can't slander you and your people because Jesus has had mercy on you. He's had mercy on you.

Jesus could have spoken a cruel but true word to you. He could have condemned you. Rightfully so. He could have spoken judgment. But he didn't.

[23:06] He said, Come and be cleansed. He said, Come and everything will be all forgiven. And so, how could I curse you? How can I slander you?

How could I look down my nose at you? When Jesus has blessed us together by putting us into this new humanity with Christ at the head. Now, it's not just here that Paul talks about these things.

Turn over. We do want to see what Paul has to say in other places. Turn over a few pages to the left to Ephesians 2 in verse 11. And I want to read just this portion of scriptures and I want to show you or I hope you're listening and you can hear the same themes.

The same themes being played out in Ephesians as were played out in Colossians. Ephesians 2 verse 11. Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called uncircumcised by those who call themselves the circumcision, that done in the body by the hands of men, remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of promise without hope and without God in the world.

But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.

[24:50] His purpose was to create in himself one new man. Same word, new man out of the two, thus making peace.

And in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross by which he put to death their hostility. He came and he preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

For through him we both have access to the Father by one spirit. Did you see some of the same themes? Verse 15, his purpose was to create one new man out of the two thus making peace in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross.

A new man out of two, one new body, a new humanity out of the broken remnants of the old humanity where the old hostilities that separated people are nailed to the cross, they're done away with, they're put to death at the cross.

Now look over Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 22. Ephesians 4 verse 22. Now again, we have very similar language here and listen to what Paul says.

[26:11] You were taught with regard to your former way of life to put off, and again, literally it says the old man, not your old self, the old man, you were taught to put off the old man which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires to be made new in the attitude of your minds and to put on the new man created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

So he's saying this is what you were taught and this is what you embraced and so you have put on the new man and what is interesting right after he gets done talking about that, he says, he starts talking about how they treat each other.

verse 25, therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor for we are all members of one body. Now it's interesting when he talks about the new man he usually ends up talking about the body of Christ.

In Colossians he does it, in Ephesians chapter 2 he does it, in Ephesians chapter 4 he does it, and so there are these parallel ideas. And so then in your anger do not sin, quit stealing, he says.

Start sharing. So how do you relate? Do you steal from each other? No, you can't do that anymore. Now you have to work in order to have something to share with those. And then how do you use your words?

[27 : 30] Verse 29, it talks about do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs. And so instead of using my words to run people down and to hurt people and to slander people and to put people in their place, now you build them up.

So when Paul is talking about this old man, new man, he's thinking not just in personal terms.

Obviously there is definite personal, the reality to it.

But it's who we are together, a new humanity and a new way of relating and the old is gone and the new has come. Now we want to look at one other passage, Romans chapter 5.

And so please turn over there to Romans chapter 5. And beginning in verse 12, we're not going to take the time to read this, but beginning in verse 12, he starts talking about these two men.

And they're clearly two heads of two humanities and one is Adam and the other is Christ. And they stand as these heads of these two humanities.

[28 : 46] One is first, one is natural, one fell into sin and was condemned and brought condemnation and death to all men and one man made all men sinners.

That's who we were in Adam. That's our old man. Who I was in Adam. But Christ came and he undid the work of the first Adam.

And so Paul says, well, now you have to understand since Jesus came and he died and he rose again, things are different now. That is put away. So look at Romans chapter 6 and then verse 6. Romans 6.6 For we know that our old man was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

Now why can I put to death anger and rage and malice and lying and so forth? It's because I'm not a slave anymore.

[29 : 57] I'm not stuck perpetually in the old way of doing things. The old man is dead. Who I was in Adam is dead and gone and now I'm not a slave to sin anymore.

And that that's exciting. That's so exciting. That is so full of potential and possibility. So children, you can stop if you're a Christian, you can stop lying to your parents because you're not a slave to sin anymore.

And you can stop pouting when you don't get your way because you aren't a slave anymore. You're a part of the people of God if you're a Christian.

And if you're a part of the people of God, you have to realize that's not how God's people act. Not people who are filled with Jesus Christ. And that's why we can stop using filthy language, rotten words, words that spoil and ruin people.

And again, this is more, it includes, but it includes more than just cuss words. It's complaining words. It's slandering words.

[31 : 13] It's mean words. It's hurtful words. It's thoughtless words. This Proverbs talks about just the reckless words of men can cut like a knife. It's that kind of words that hurt people.

It's those kind of words that are like a rotten apple and it just sort of festers and ruins all the other apples around it. You can get rid of all of that because something fundamentally has changed.

The old man is gone and you have put on the new man and you are a new creation and if you are a new creation, you have to act like a new creation.

It doesn't match to act like an old creation when you are a new creation. And so Jesus lived and he died and he rose again to create a humanity who is like him, who's taking on his image, who didn't treat people with mean words and lying words and who didn't hurt people by his words, but instead blessed them and did them good.

And so he's creating this humanity who's becoming like he is. So they're like him and they serve each other and instead of making war, they make peace.

[32:30] Make peace. Who say kind words to each other. Who affirm each other and build each other up. Who don't whisper behind each other's backs but instead whisper peace to people who are broken hearted.

So Jesus saved us from that dog-eat-dog world. And so I beg you as your pastor to not act that way anymore.

Not that you are, but don't ever go back. Get rid of those things. So let's take a few, let's just apply it in a couple more ways.

Husbands and wives, are you heirs together of the grace of life? Do you see yourselves that way? Do you see your spouse this way?

See, natural eyes sees only the differences that we have. The differences in our background, the differences in our gender, the differences in her family and my family and her way and my way and those differences cause no end to the conflict.

[33:48] And if she only knew what I knew and if she only did everything the way I did it, then there would be peace. But that's not Christ. That's just the old way.

That's the old, that's the world's way of thinking. So husbands and wives, see each other with the eyes of faith that says Christ is in her.

If she is a Christian, Christ is in her and Christ is in him and we are together, we are on the same side. We are already, in a way, living as new, in the new creation, as new creatures and together we are tasting of the powers of the age to come.

So how should you live with someone like that? You should love them and care for them. Be careful with them. If your spouse isn't a Christian, what then?

Well, how much more of a motivation to live a different kind of life? I don't, living unequally yoked is a very difficult thing.

[34:56] But I do know one thing, that anger, rage, malice, slander, and lying isn't going to win anyone to Christ. So how much more of a motivation it is than to live a different life, to live as you really are a part of this new humanity, this new man.

So really getting rid of these sins that Paul is talking about here is going to make someone sit up and pay attention and notice and say, wow, they were so angry before.

Their words were so hurtful before, but now their words are different. Well, if you are unequally yoked, I know it's hard for you, and it's harder than I could ever imagine.

But Christ is in you. And what you can't do and what I can't do, he can do. So take heart and press on.

Well, Paul was writing to a church. So what unites us? Well, it's not common background, is it?

[36:06] And it's not common paycheck, and it's not common family history, and it's not common worldly status. What unites us is Jesus Christ. And so if we are going to continue to have peace and have peace in a greater and more abundant way than ever before, then we need to pay attention and have all of our eyes on Jesus Christ.

So what unites us is Jesus Christ. He didn't save us He didn't just save me individually. He saved me to be a part of something bigger.

And what is wonderful is the something bigger is the person over there. It's one of you. The person over there who hunts and fishes and who drives a big truck and who likes all that kind of thing, that is the something bigger.

Or the person who reads highfalutin books and watches weird movies, that's the something bigger. Someone different than me, that's the something bigger. And the person who grew up in a wonderful Christian family is the something bigger.

And the person who was plucked as a brand from the fire and now they're all alone and they don't have a Christian in their life, but yet here they are. That is the person that I was called to, to live with and to enjoy the Christian life with.

[37:22] And so all together we are a part of this new thing that Jesus Christ is creating. And so love each other. Love each other for Jesus' sake because he has loved that other person.

And don't let the little worldly differences divide us. Instead, love each other fiercely. Fiercely love each other.

If you're afraid of leaving the world because you don't know if you'll be able to survive it. So if you're lost and you have your friends and you're, you are afraid of leaving them and you know if that you come to Christ those relationships are going to change and you don't know if you'll be able to survive that.

And if you're afraid to leave your friends behind to join Jesus, you wonder will it be worth it? Listen again to Jesus' words. I tell you the truth and he usually says that when he has something that's going to be kind of hard to hear.

So if you're having a hard time hearing it, Jesus knows that. I tell you the truth, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me in the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age.

[38:44] And in the age to come, eternal life. There's nothing to lose. There's nothing to lose.

There's everything to gain. Jesus is more than able to make up any losses that you suffer coming to him. And you don't even know what good friends are yet.

And you don't even know what it's like to have a hundred brothers and sisters and a hundred homes and a hundred fields, people that love you. Not yet, but if you come to Jesus, you will begin to experience those things.

And you walk away from your sin and you give yourself to him, it will be the best decision you ever made. And I'm not just talking about the life to come. Jesus says this life.

And in the life to come, or in the age to come, eternal life. So not only in the life to come, but in this age, Jesus is the best friend, and his people are the best people that you could ever do life with.

[39:52] So I would encourage you to come. There's nothing to lose, there's everything to gain.

Let's pray. Our Lord Jesus, we do thank you that you are doing this new thing and that you have begun to create a people for yourself.

Thank you, God, that we are your people, your chosen people, holy and dearly loved. help us to remember those things. And as those kinds of people, help us to put on love, humility, gentleness, kindness, and to put off anger and rage and malice and slander and lying and words that are just so rotten and filthy and dirty.

Will you please help us to live then as your children, as your people. Help us to love each other as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

And I pray that the way that we love each other would let people know that Jesus Christ has come and that he is saving and that there is an alternative, there is a better way than what the world has.

And it's all in Jesus Christ. I pray that you would open our eyes, encourage our hearts, and bless your people, that through our love for each other we might bear witness to the world that is watching us.

[41:23] I pray this in Jesus' name, amen.