

## A Change of Habit: the Christian Dress Code

- I. Introduction
  - a. The first two chapters Paul's epistle to the Colossians describes the exalted position of Christ in the mind of God
  - b. Paul then goes on to describe the life of the Christian on the basis of this understanding of the importance and all-sufficiency of Christ.
- II. Exposition
  - a. A Different Focus (v. 1-4)
    - i. Vs 1:
      - 1. Have you been raised with Christ? 2:11-13
      - 2. Then we should seek Him and His interests
    - ii. v. 2
      - 1. This changes the whole conflict between the flesh and the spirit
      - 2. We don't need to fight the world and the lusts of the flesh on their own terms
      - 3. When we are seeking something so much higher
      - 4. The ultimate good, Jesus Christ
      - 5. It is a huge advantage to us in our battle against sin and the flesh
    - iii. V. 3
      - 1. You have died
        - a. Gal. 2:20
        - b. Rom. 6
        - c. Ch. 2:11-13 – When did this happen? At baptism
      - 2. Life hidden with Christ
        - a. The source of our new life is unseen
        - b. Observers do not understand how we can live that way
    - iv. V. 4
      - 1. He will be manifested in all His glory
      - 2. We will be manifested with Him
  - b. A Change of Habit
    - i. Habit has two meanings
      - 1. Customary manner or practice
      - 2. A distinctive dress or costume, especially of a religious order
      - 3. <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/habit>
    - ii. Paul describes two habits, each is signifying a very different order of life
      - 1. One is that of the old man
      - 2. The other is that of the new man
      - 3. v. 9-10
    - iii. There are many reasons to get rid of a garment or change clothes
      - 1. Typical reasons

- a. It doesn't fit
  - b. It is out of style
  - c. It is out of season
  - d. It is worn out
  - e. You need room in the closet
  - f. It got stained or damaged
  - g. Your sports team lost, again!
  - h. But these are all reasons to put them back on
    - i. Back in season/style
    - ii. Cleaned/patched/repared
    - iii. They finally won!
    - iv. They finally fit!
2. But there are some reasons that we would get rid of a garment that are such strong reasons
- a. we not only would get rid of the garment,
  - b. the thought of putting it on would disgust us,
  - c. AND we may even want to destroy it
  - d. Example: Discovering that some of your clothes have been worn by someone with active smallpox – Would you get rid of them?
  - e. Example: Discovering that you had some clothing that was produced by slave labor – You would want to get rid of it, wouldn't you?
  - f. Example: Discovering that someone you love has deceived and betrayed you – Would you put on a love-token that they had asked you to wear to show that you belonged to them?
- c. The Old Man (v. 5-9)
- i. His characteristics (v. 5)
    - 1. Immorality
    - 2. Impurity
    - 3. Passion
    - 4. Evil Desire
    - 5. Greed/Covetousness
  - ii. The problem (v. 6-7)
    - 1. Those sinful actions are provoking the judgment of God
    - 2. And we were personally involved in them
    - 3. Not just a little bit – we lived in them
      - a. So we should make ourselves dead to them now
      - b. And alive to God
  - iii. More of his characteristics (v. 8)
    - 1. So it is time to get rid of them
      - a. Focus in v. 5 was evil desires
      - b. Here it is evil toward fellow men
    - 2. The list
      - a. Anger & Wrath

- b. Malice
    - c. Slander/blasphemy
    - d. Abusive/filthy speech
  - 3. Put off –
    - a. take off and put away
    - b. No just take off to put on later
  - 4. All of them
    - a. Don't get rid of some and not the others
    - b. Get rid of every trace
- iv. One more thing (v. 9)
  - 1. To lie would not be fitting
  - 2. You have put off those things
- d. The New Self (v. 10-14)
  - i. Characteristics of this renewal (v. 10-11)
    - 1. Direction – TO true knowledge
      - a. We examined three VERY GOOD reasons to get rid of a garment.
        - i. These are not illustrations,
        - ii. It is the truth about sin
      - b. Now we know that our sinful habits were destructive, infectious and deadly. 1 Cor. 5:4-6; 2 Tim. 2:16-17; Jud 22-23
      - c. That they were the result of slave labor – Rom. 6:16-18
      - d. That to practice them at all is to wear a token that Satan asked us to put on to show that we are his – Rev. 13:11-17
      - e. If we are simply trying to stop sin because it is out of fashion, it doesn't fit our current circle of friends
        - i. We will put it back on
        - ii. We don't loathe it enough
      - f. If we have not yet discovered, or have forgotten these truths, we need to have our minds renewed so we can understand the truth that will set us free
    - 2. Ideal – ACCORDING TO the image of God
      - a. God created us Himself (Gen. 1:27)
        - i. Perfect
        - ii. In His own image
      - b. Now He is recreating us (2 Cor. 3:18; Eph 4:24; Rom. 8:29)
        - i. He wants us to become everything He knows we can be
        - ii. And for which He made us
        - iii. In the image of Christ
      - c. So our renewal has in view our ideal existence

3. Necessary Environment – WHERE human distinction are laid aside
  - a. Requires us to put our personal “claims to fame” behind us
    - i. We have a strong desire to look, appear, and be treated better than others
    - ii. Because of some human distinction
      1. Social Status
      2. Where we come from
      3. Personal accomplishments
    - iii. It was so then, also. They had even more societal distinctions than we do.
  - b. Jesus cannot perform His work of renewal while we are demanding to be treated different from others because we are special
  - c. Christ is everything in everyone
    - i. All personal distinctions are as nothing compared to the reality
      1. Who Christ is
      2. And where He is: in each of His children
    - ii. You may
      1. Give 95% of the offering every week
      2. Be the absolute dictator of the city or country in which you worship
      3. You may have just developed the cure for cancer
      4. Or be the star of the last 10 blockbuster movies
      5. But in Christ, none of that matters
      6. You are no more or less important than the virtually unknown Christian who is hated by the world and perhaps is so afflicted that he required 95% of the benevolence of the church
      7. Because over all other distinctions is the only fact that matters, Christ is in you and Christ is in him
- ii. Qualities of the New Man
  1. Chosen by God (v. 12)
    - a. Holy
    - b. Beloved
  2. Acts this way: (v. 12-13)
    - a. Compassion
    - b. Kindness

- c. Humility
- d. Gentleness
- e. Patience
- f. Forbearance
  - i. How we treat someone who has wronged us but has not repented
  - ii. Target: each other
- g. Forgiving
  - i. The reason: Christ forgave us
  - ii. Target: Yourselfes
  - iii. If we don't forgive others we are not forgiven
- h. Above all, love (v. 14)
  - i. The most important
  - ii. Or the garment that tops off all the others and makes them work together
  - iii. The perfect bond of unity

### III. Conclusion

- a. Time for inspection! What are you wearing?
  - i. The habit of the old man?
  - ii. Or the habit of the new man?
  - iii. Some of each?
    - 1. Get rid of every trace of the old man
    - 2. As you would disease-causing clothing
    - 3. Or garments produced by slave labor
    - 4. Or love-tokens of a deceiving, betraying lover
  - iv. Embrace the new life fully
    - 1. Because of whose life it is: Christ's
    - 2. And the result: A future manifestation of Him in all His glory, and our participation with Him in that
- b. INVITATION
  - i. If you want the characteristics of the new man
  - ii. And to get rid of the old
  - iii. You need Jesus Christ
  - iv. Nothing else will work
  - v. Only His power and grace
  - vi. Gospel Plan of Salvation