



12 January 2024

Bundle Up!

We have been enjoying a mild, *brown* winter here in the Okanagan (that is, all of us except the skiers and snow-boarders). But that is changing as we have received our first significant snowfall and the temperatures are plunging down to take us into the deep freeze. It's time to *bundle up!* Dig out the heavy coats, gloves and boots!

God tells us to bundle up to live as His children, to be prepared to grow and thrive in the cold world of sin. The apostle Paul wrote

- “let’s rid ourselves of the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Romans 13:12).
- “rid yourselves of the old self”... and “put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Ephesians 4:22, 24).
- “Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil” ... “take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm” (Ephesians 6:10, 13).
- “put on the new self” (Colossians 3:10).

Let’s take a brief look at nine things we are to put on that are found in Colossians 3:10-15.

A **heart of compassion**. Truly care for others from the core of your being. This goes against the grain of our natural, self-focused nature. But it is what Christ is like, and what we should be like.



Kindness. This kindness goes beyond natural human kindness. The word is used to describe God's good and gracious acts to us. It means to be as concerned about my neighbor and his or her good as I am about myself. It is possible through the work of the Holy Spirit in us.

Humility. True humility. God gives a good description of what it is like in Philippians 2:3-4. "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."

Gentleness. Gentleness is a result of self-control. It is the opposite of harsh attitudes and actions. We are to be gentle at all times, especially with others when they are not behaving as they should be.

Patience. Being *long-tempered*, long-suffering, not giving up, just as God is with us. Remember the apostle Paul's example that God gave him mercy so that in him "Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him" (1 Timothy 1:15, see 12-16).

Bearing with one another. We are to endure, to bear with, to put up with each other. Negatively, we are not to become exasperated or exhausted with each other.

Forgive each other. The word Paul uses here emphasizes forgiving as an act of grace — forgiveness offered freely, even when not deserved, just as Christ graciously has forgiven us.

Love one another. "In addition to all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity" (14). Put on, live clothed with that considered, resolute caring for each person with God's best for them in view.

Peace. "Let the peace of Christ ... rule in your hearts" (15). God has established peace with us. We are to let His peace rule, direct, control within ourselves and in all our relationships.

Read through Colossians 3:10-15 slowly. Let God speak to you about all of these things. Then *bundle up!*

Pastor Lyle