



08 November 2024

## All seasons

We are into November. Daylight Savings Time has ended, the temperatures and leaves are dropping, some places have had their first snow. It's time to get outfitted for winter with winter coats, boots and gloves. It's time to bundle up!

There are some things that are good and important for all seasons. The Bible gives some things we are to put on and keep on for all seasons. One listing is in Colossians chapter 3, verses 12 through 17. Let's look at a handful of them today in verse 12.

“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”

We start with putting on a heart of *compassion*. Truly care about and for others sincerely, from the core of your being. This goes against the grain of our natural, self-focused nature and can be difficult with people who don't care about us, who don't do what is right or wise. Remember that God, king David reminds us, is “a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abundant in mercy and truth” (Psalm 86:15). As God has compassion on us, with all our weaknesses and faults, we then are to have compassion on others.

The next layer is to have a *kind* heart. This kindness goes beyond our natural kindness, as admirable as that can be. The word is used in the Bible to describe God's good and gracious acts to us, including leading us to repentance. The apostle Paul tells us in Romans chapter 2 that God in the riches of His kindness, restraint and patience led us to repentance. Kindness means to be as concerned about my neighbor and his good as I am about myself. It is possible! It is part of the fruit the Holy Spirit produces in us as we faithfully rely on and follow God (Galatians 5:22).

The middle layer is *humility*. True humility. Christ is our example. Paul gives a good description of what it is like in Philippians chapter 2.

“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.” (3-4)



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The fourth layer is *gentleness*. Gentleness is the result of self-control. It is the opposite of sharp, harsh attitudes and actions. We are to be gentle at all times, including when others are not behaving as they should. For example, we are to restore fellow-believers who are caught in sin “in a spirit of gentleness”, as Paul writes in Galatians chapter 6 verse 1. And then, we are to give a defense of the faith and to correct those who oppose us with gentleness (2 Timothy 2:25; 1 Peter 3:15).

The last layer in this verse is *patience*. Being *long-tempered* rather than *short tempered*, being *long-suffering* rather than *giving up*. We are to *hang in there* with difficult situations and people. God is patient, so patient with us. Recall that Paul testified about God’s patience with him. God was merciful to him so that “Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life” (1 Timothy 1:16). You and I also have been graced with God’s perfect patience. Then too, we want people to be patient with us. We know the phrase, and may count on it, “Please be patient, God is not finished with me yet.” So, put on a heart of *patience*.

These five qualities are not just intentions, nor just actions. They are part of a godly character. You may be familiar with a few descriptions of character:

“Character is what you are in the dark.”

“Character is what you are like when no one is looking.”

*Bundle Up!* Not just for a season, but for all seasons, for a lifetime.

Pastor Lyle