

# Living A Resurrected Life

**Introduction.** As the world gathers to commemorate the resurrection of Christ, we take that opportunity every Sunday. It is a solemn time for reflection every week on what the Lord did for us.

However, in practical terms, the death of Christ means nothing if you do not avail yourself of its benefits through obedience. Furthermore, those who are Christ's have to "seek those things which are above" so that we can one day "appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:1-4).

A big part of seeking what is above is learning how to live a resurrected life. A resurrected life is the "newness of life" in Romans 6:4. The comprehensive teachings in Colossians 3:5-17 tell us what to put off and what to put on so that we can live a resurrected life and experience the hope of the resurrection in the end.

## ***I. What To Put Off***

- A. The command to "mortify" the members literally means "to kill" or "put to death". Christians are to make a decisive resolution to put sin to death, bringing the flesh under subjection to the Spirit-filled new disposition (Romans 8:13).
- B. The multiple elements of the sinful life which are to be put away are listed in vv. 5-11:
  1. Fornication.
    - a) This broad word means any kind of illicit sexual activity.
    - b) In sharp contrast to the prevailing attitude in the ancient world, the Bible strictly forbids any sexual activity outside the marriage bond between a man and a woman (1 Thessalonians 4:3).
  2. Uncleanness.
    - a) This means "filthiness" or "impurity". It is a more general term than immorality, going beyond the act to the mind's evil thoughts and intents.
    - b) Evil behavior begins with evil thoughts (Matthew 5:28; Mark 7:21-22). The battle against all sin, especially sexual sin, begins in the mind.
  3. Inordinate affection.
    - a) The word indicates a drive or force which does not rest until it is satisfied.
    - b) In its other two occurrences, it indicates sexual passion set loose in the body (Romans 1:26; 1 Thessalonians 4:5).
  4. Evil concupiscence.
    - a) This word, wider in meaning than the previous word, reaches to all evil longing. It is linked with the "lusts" (or desires) of the devil in John 8:44.
    - b) The two terms appear together in 1 Thessalonians 4:5, where Paul commands Christians not to live in the "lust of concupiscence."
  5. Covetousness.
    - a) This is the evil root from which all the previous sins spring. It is an insatiable desire to have more, to have what is forbidden.
    - b) Because it places selfish desire above obedience to God, greed amounts to idolatry. If it is the desire for money, it leads to theft. If it is the desire for prestige, it leads to evil ambition. If it is the desire for power, it leads to tyranny. If it is the desire for a person, it leads to sexual sin.

6. Anger.
  - a) This is a deep, smoldering, resentful bitterness. It is the settled heart attitude of the angry person.
  - b) Provocations do not create his anger, but merely reveal that he is an angry person and give him a target for his fury (cp. Ephesians 4:31).
7. Wrath.
  - a) This is a sudden outburst of anger. The Greeks likened it to a fire in straw, which flares up briefly and is gone.
  - b) It is used to speak of those in the synagogue of Nazareth who exploded in anger at the teachings of Jesus (Luke 4:28), and of the Ephesian craftsmen's anger over Paul's preaching (Acts 19:28).
8. Malice.
  - a) This word is a general one for moral evil. In James 1:21, in the KJV, the word is translated "naughtiness".
  - b) It is a vicious nature that is bent on doing harm to others. In this context, it probably refers to the harm caused by evil speech.
9. Blasphemy.
  - a) When used in relation to God, it is translated "blasphemy". When used in relation to people, as here, it is translated "slander" (or "railings" [KJV], "abusive language" [NASB] in 1 Timothy 6:4).
  - b) In a sense, to slander people is to blaspheme God, for He created men and women (cp. James 3:9). The Christian's speech must not be marred by insults or disparaging remarks directed at others.
10. Filthy communication.
  - a) This is obscene and derogatory speech intended to hurt and wound someone. It could be translated "foul-mouthed abuse".
  - b) One cannot always prevent angry or hateful thoughts from springing into one's head, but they should be dealt with before they turn into words.
11. Lying.
  - a) Truth is often inconvenient, untidy, or embarrassing, and we are constantly tempted to bend it into a less awkward shape.
  - b) Lying characterizes Satan (John 8:44), not God (Titus 1:2). When Christians lie, they are imitating Satan, not their heavenly Father. They, of all people, should tell the truth.

## **II. What To Put On**

- A. "Put on" means "to put on clothes" or "envelope in". Christians are called to be "holy and beloved," and when Christians fail to act differently from the world, they violate the very purpose of their calling.
- B. For this reason, the critical elements of the righteous life which are to be put on are listed in vv. 12-17:
  1. Bowels of mercies.
    - a) This figurative expression refers to the seat of the emotions. It is a deep "inward affection" (2 Corinthians 7:15).
    - b) The word means "pity," "mercy," "sympathy," or "compassion". We are not indifferent; we are concerned to meet people's needs (1 John 3:17).

2. Kindness.
  - a) This is closely related to compassion. The Greek term refers to the grace that pervades the whole person, mellowing all that might be harsh.
  - b) Jesus used the word when He said, "My yoke is easy" (Matthew 11:30), not harsh or hard to bear. The kind person is as concerned about his neighbor's good as he is about his own.
3. Humbleness.
  - a) It was the gospel that elevated humility to a virtue. It is the antidote for the self-love that poisons relationships.
  - b) Paul advocates genuine humility, in contrast to the false humility of the false teachers (cp. 2:18, 23). Humility is the most cherished Christian virtue (Ephesians 4:2; 1 Peter 5:5).
4. Meekness.
  - a) Meekness is not weakness or spinelessness, but rather the willingness to suffer injury instead of inflicting it.
  - b) The gentle person knows he is a sinner among sinners and is willing to suffer the burdens others' sin may impose on him (Numbers 12:1-3).
5. Longsuffering.
  - a) It is a long holding out of the mind before it gives room to action or passion. The longsuffering person does not get angry at others.
  - b) It indicates the patient longsuffering in bearing injustices or unpleasant circumstances without revenge or retaliation (indeed, it is its opposite) but with a view or hope to a final goal or betterment.
6. Forbearing one another.
  - a) This means "to endure, to hold out in spite of persecution, threats, injury, indifference, or complaints and not retaliate."
  - b) The concept was characterized by Paul (1 Corinthians 4:12) and the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 1:4).
7. Forgiving one another.
  - a) The Greek means "to be gracious". The church as a whole is to be a gracious, mutually forgiving group.
  - b) Paul makes Christ the model of forgiveness. Because He has forgiven us, so also must we forgive others.
8. Charity.
  - a) Love is the most important moral quality in the Christian's life, for it is the very glue that produces unity in the church.
  - b) Christians will never enjoy mutual fellowship through compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, or patience; they will not bear with one another or forgive each other unless they love one another.
9. Dwelling in the peace of Christ.
  - a) "Peace" includes both the concept of an agreement, pact, treaty, or bond, and that of an attitude of rest or security.
  - b) Objectively, Christians are at peace with God by being justified by faith (Romans 5:1). Because of this, Christians are at rest and secure.

10. Thankfulness.
  - a) This is the obligation of being thankful to someone for a favor done. The thankfulness arises out of the grace of God and that which He has done.
  - b) The idea of being thankful is added not as an afterthought but because gratitude is intimately associated with love and peace. Thankfulness for this love and peace becomes an incentive for preserving it.
11. Embracing the message of Christ.
  - a) Paul calls on Christians to let the Word take up residence and be at home in their hearts.
  - b) The truths of Scripture should permeate every aspect of your life and govern every thought, word, and deed. This is identical to being filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).
12. Teaching and admonishing one another.
  - a) "Teaching" is the impartation of positive truth. "Admonishing" is the negative side of teaching. It means to warn people of the consequences of their behavior.
  - b) The church is to be stocked with good teaching as a palace is filled with treasures. The teaching is to be with all wisdom: the "word" concerns Christ, Wisdom Himself (2:3), and will be characterized by wisdom in the teachers.
13. Sovereignty of Jesus in word or deed.
  - a) To do everything in the name of Jesus is to act consistently with who He is and what He wants (1 Corinthians 10:31).
  - b) Paul reminds them that it is always to be done without reluctance or despair or duty, but with thanksgiving.

**Conclusion.** To put on the new lifestyle is to put on Christ. That is the obligation of every Christian. The goal of the Christian life is Christlikeness. Christians should so clothe themselves with Jesus Christ that when people look at them, they see Christ.