

**'Get dressed!' – Colossians 3:12-17**  
**Basil Howlett - Carey Baptist Church – 5 October 2008**

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On Sunday mornings we are looking at Colossians. Paul wrote this letter to help these Christians stand against false teaching which had come to their area. This false teaching belittled the Lord Jesus Christ, so in chapters 1-2 Paul keeps stressing his supremacy and sufficiency. At the beginning of chapter 3 he reminds us that the old, guilty, condemned people we used to be have 'died' and we have been raised to a new life in Christ. The big issue now is how should we live as those who are 'new' people? In our last study (3:8ff) we saw how Paul tells us that we should take off anger, malice, slander etc. He uses the picture of a person stripping off dirty, ragged clothes,

**A, Every Christian should be well-clothed with the virtues of Christ (3:12-14).**

Now in this passage Paul urges us to put on some attractive clothes which will suit the new people we are. What should the Christian be wearing in a spiritual sense?

- Compassion. For the physically needy (Isaiah 58:6-9). The spiritually lost (Romans 9:1-3). Those whose lives have been wrecked by sin. We should also have compassion for our fellow believers when they pass through difficult times. We should be like Jesus (Matthew 9:36).
- Kindness. The Lord has been so amazingly kind to us and we should reflect that in our dealings with others (Ephesians 4:32).
- Humility. Not an outward show but humility of mind. (1 Peter 5:5). Pride is a dirty rag and should have no place in our lives.
- Gentleness. The more humble we are, the more gracious and gentle we will be with others.
- Patience. We must be patient with people who can't understand the gospel and with Christians who disagree with us. God has been so patient with us.
- Forgiveness (v13). If someone wrongs or upsets us we must be prepared to forgive them, just as the Lord has forgiven us.
- Love (v14). There is no doubt that Paul is thinking here of the sash or belt that eastern people wore.

**B. Every Christian should be well-controlled by the peace of Christ (v15).** Paul changes his metaphor from nice clothes to a good umpire. The Greek word translated *rule* literally means '*to be an umpire*.' Just as an umpire rules a game so the peace of Christ should rule in our hearts. We must not be erratic people but calm and controlled.

**C. Every Christian should be well-versed in the word of Christ (v16).** The word of Christ means the Scriptures of which he is the author and subject. Paul urges us to make sure that the Word of Christ has a central place in our lives. Just as a landlord allows a tenant to occupy a house, so we must allow the Word of Christ to come and occupy our minds.

- This will enrich us
- Enable us to teach and help others – wisely
- Fill our hearts with gratitude, so that we are stirred to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

**D. Every Christian should be well and truly centred on Christ (verse 17).** The aim of every part of our life should be the honour of Christ. Everything we do and say should be for the glory of his name.

**WHY? (verse 12)**

- Because we are God's chosen people
- Because we are holy people – set apart from a life of sin, for God.
- Because we are dearly loved by God