



Putting Off The Old Man

A Teaching Outline

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You have laid aside the old self.

Colossians 3:9-10

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—

Lying to one another disrupts unity by destroying trust. It tears down relationships and may lead to serious conflict in a church. So don't exaggerate statistics, pass on rumors and gossip, or say things to build up your own image. Be committed to telling the truth.

Jesus wants to clean your life and your church of sexual sin and verbal sin. There is no place in the Kingdom of God for hedonistic sexual experimentation or for gossip, rage, and backbiting. In their place, witness to the world like a lighthouse on a stormy night by displaying love, faith, and hope.

What does it mean to put on your new nature? It means that your conduct should match your faith. If you are a Christian, you should act like it. To be a Christian means more than just making good resolutions and having good intentions; it means taking the right actions. This is a straightforward step that is as simple as putting on your clothes. You must rid yourself of all evil practices and immorality. Then you can commit yourself to what Christ teaches. If you have made such a commitment to Christ, are you remaining true to it? What old clothes do you need to strip off?

Every Christian is in a continuing education program. The more we know of Christ and his work, the more we are being changed to be like him. Because this process is lifelong, we must never stop learning and obeying. There is no justification for drifting along, but there is an incentive to find the rich treasures of growing in him. It takes practice, ongoing review, patience, and concentration to keep in line with his will.

The likeness of God has been created in righteousness.

Ephesians 4:22-24

that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Our old way of life before we believed in Christ is completely in the past. We should put it behind us like old clothes to be thrown away. When we decide to accept Christ's gift of salvation (2:8-10), it is both a one-time decision, as well as a daily conscious commitment. We are not to be driven by desire and impulse. We must put on the new nature, head in the new direction, and have the new way of thinking that the Holy Spirit gives.

Our old self was crucified with Christ.

Romans 6:6

Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

The power of sin over us died with Christ on the cross. Our "old sinful selves," our sinful nature, died once and for all, so we are freed from its power. The "power of sin" refers to our rebellious sin-loving nature inherited from Adam. Though we often willingly cooperate with our sinful nature, it is not us but the sin in us that is evil. And it is this power of sin at work in our life that is defeated. Paul has already stated that through faith in Christ we stand righteous before God. Here Paul emphasizes that we need no longer live under sin's power. God does not take us out of the world or make us

robots—we will still feel like sinning, and sometimes we will sin. The difference is that before we were saved we were slaves to our sinful nature, but now we can choose to live for Christ.

If you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

If your desire is to have the qualities listed in 5:22, 23, then you know that the Holy Spirit is leading you. At the same time, be careful not to confuse your subjective feelings with the Spirit's leading. Being led by the Holy Spirit involves the desire to hear, the readiness to obey God's Word, and the sensitivity to discern between your feelings and his promptings. Live each day controlled and guided by the Holy Spirit. Then the words of Christ will be in your mind, the love of Christ will be behind your actions, and the power of Christ will help you control your selfish desires.

Paul describes the two forces fighting within us—the Holy Spirit and the sinful nature (our evil desires or inclinations that stem from our body; see also 5:16, 19, 24). Paul is not saying that these forces are equal—the Holy Spirit is infinitely stronger. But if we rely on our own wisdom, we will make wrong choices. If we try to follow the Spirit by our own human effort, we will fail. Our only way to freedom from our evil desires is through the empowering of the Holy Spirit

Let us live and walk in the spirit.

Galatians 5:25

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

God is interested in every part of our life, not just the spiritual part. As we live by the Holy Spirit's power, we need to submit every aspect of our life to God: emotional, physical, social, intellectual, vocational. Paul says that because we're saved, we should live like it!

The Holy Spirit is the source of your new life, so keep in step with his leading. Don't let anything or anyone else determine your values and standards in any area of your life.

Put aside all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander.

1 Peter 2:1

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,

One characteristic all children share is that they want to grow up—to be like big brother or sister or like their parents. When we are born again, we become spiritual newborn babies. If we are healthy, we will yearn to grow. How sad it is that some people never grow up. The need for milk is a natural instinct for a baby, and it signals the desire for nourishment that will lead to growth.

Once we see our need for God's Word and begin to find nourishment in Christ, our spiritual appetite will increase, and we will start to mature. How strong is your desire for God's Word?

Do not be conformed to the former lusts.

1 Peter 1:14

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance,

Peter's words mean that all parts of our lives and character should be in the process of becoming conformed, both inwardly and outwardly, to God's

standards. After people commit their lives to Christ, they sometimes still feel a pull back to their old ways. Peter tells us to be like our heavenly Father—holy in everything we do. Holiness means being totally devoted or dedicated to God, set aside for his special use and set apart from sin and its influence.

We're to be set apart and different, not blending in with the crowd, yet not being different just for the sake of being different. God's qualities in our lives make us different. Our focus and priorities must be his. All this is in direct contrast to our old ways (1:14).

We cannot become holy on our own, but God gives us his Holy Spirit to help us obey and to give us power to overcome sin. Don't use the excuse that you can't help slipping into sin. Rely on God's power to free you from sin's grip.

By the wounds of Christ, we were healed.

1 Peter 2:24

And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

Christ died for *our* sins, in *our* place, so we would not have to suffer the punishment we deserve. This is called "substitutionary atonement."

The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 1:6-7

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Light represents what is good, pure, true, holy, and reliable. Darkness represents what is sinful and evil. The statement "God is light" means that

God is perfectly holy and true and that he alone can guide us out of the darkness of sin. Light is also related to truth in that light exposes whatever exists, whether it is good or bad. In the dark, good and evil look alike; in the light, they can be clearly distinguished. Just as darkness cannot exist in the presence of light, sin cannot exist in the presence of a holy God. If we want to have a relationship with God, we must put aside our sinful ways of living. To claim that we belong to him but then to go out and live for ourselves is hypocrisy. Christ will expose and judge such deceit.

Here John was confronting the first of three claims of the false teachers: that we can have fellowship with God and go on living in spiritual darkness. False teachers who thought that the physical body was evil or worthless taught one of two approaches to behavior:

They insisted on denying bodily desires through rigid discipline, or they approved of gratifying every physical lust because the body was going to be destroyed anyway. Obviously the second approach was more popular! Here John is saying that no one can claim to be a Christian and still live in evil and immorality. We can't love God and court sin at the same time.

How does Jesus' blood cleanse us from all sin? In Old Testament times, believers symbolically transferred their sins to an animal, which they then sacrificed (see a description of this ceremony in Leviticus 4).

The animal died in their place to pay for their sin and to allow them to continue living in God's favor. God graciously forgave them because of their faith in him and because they obeyed his commandments concerning the sacrifice. Those sacrifices anticipated the day when Christ would completely remove sin. Real cleansing from sin came with Jesus, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Sin, by its very nature, brings death—that is a fact as certain as the law of gravity.

Jesus did not die for his own sins; he had none. Instead, by a transaction that we may never fully understand, he died for the sins of the world. When we commit our life to Christ and thus identify ourselves with him, his death becomes ours. He has paid the penalty for our sins, and his blood has purified us. Just as Christ rose from the grave, we rise to a new life of fellowship with him (Romans 6:4).

The mature have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Hebrews 5:14

But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

In order to grow from infant Christians to mature Christians, we must learn discernment. We must train our conscience, our senses, our mind, and our body to distinguish good from evil. Can you recognize temptation before it traps you? Can you tell the difference between a correct use of Scripture and a mistaken one?

Our capacity to feast on deeper knowledge of God ("solid food") is determined by our spiritual growth. Too often we want God's banquet before we are spiritually capable of digesting it. As you grow in the Lord and put into practice what you have learned, your capacity to understand will also grow.

Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.

1 Timothy 4:7

But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;

Are you in shape both physically and spiritually? In our society, much emphasis is placed on physical fitness, but spiritual health is even more important.

Our physical health is susceptible to disease and injury, but faith can sustain us through any tragedy. To train ourselves to be godly, we must develop our faith by using our God-given abilities in the service of the church (see 4:14-16). Are you developing your spiritual muscles?

In your faith apply moral excellence and self-control.

2 Peter 1:5-9

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

Faith must be more than belief in certain facts; it must result in action, growth in Christian character, and the practice of moral discipline, or it will die away (James 2:14-17).

Peter lists several of faith's actions: learning to know God better, developing perseverance, doing God's will, loving others. These actions do not come automatically; they require hard work. They are not optional; all of them must be a continual part of the Christian life. We don't finish one and start on the next, but we work on them all together. God empowers and enables us, but he also gives us the responsibility to learn and to grow.

False teachers were saying that self-control was not needed because deeds do not help the believer anyway (2:19). It is true that deeds cannot save us, but it is absolutely false to think they are unimportant. We are saved so that we can grow to resemble Christ and serve others. God wants to produce his character in us. But to do this, he demands our discipline and effort. As we obey Christ, who guides us by his Spirit, we will develop self-control not only with respect to food and drink but also with respect to our emotions.

Our faith must go beyond what we believe; it must become a dynamic part of all we do, resulting in good fruit and spiritual maturity. Salvation does not depend on good deeds, but it results in good deeds. A person who claims to be saved while remaining unchanged does not understand faith or what God has done for him or her.

Baptized unto the death of Christ.

Romans 6:3

Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

In the church of Paul's day, immersion was the usual form of baptism; that is, new Christians were completely "buried" in water. They understood baptism to symbolize the death and burial of the old way of life. Coming up out of the water symbolized resurrection to new life with Christ. If we think of our old, sinful life as dead and buried, we have a powerful motive to resist sin. We can consciously choose to treat the desires and temptations of the old nature as if they were dead. Then we can continue to enjoy our wonderful new life with Jesus.

By the spirit, you put to death the deeds of the body.

Romans 8:12-13

So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

When we turn away from sin's appeal in the Holy Spirit's power, regarding sin as dead, we can ignore temptation when it comes.

When baptized, you clothed yourselves with Christ.

Galatians 3:27

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Some Jewish males greeted each new day by praying, "Lord, I thank you that I am not a Gentile, a slave, or a woman." The role of women was enhanced by Christianity.

Faith in Christ transcends these differences and makes all believers one in Christ. Make sure you do not impose distinctions that Christ has removed. Because all believers are his heirs, no one is more privileged than or superior to anyone else.

By denying ungodliness, you live sensibly, righteously and godly.

Titus 2:12-13

instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

Paul brings out two aspects of Christian living that must be stressed today. "We should live in this evil world... while we look forward with hope." Both aspects of *living and looking forward* are essential to our Christian sanity in this present evil age. The living is made bearable because we live for God—seeking to build his Kingdom with whatever gifts he has given us. And it is that very Kingdom to which we are looking forward.

As we live and look forward, we anticipate three great benefits of Christ's return: (1) Christ's personal presence—we look forward to being with him. (2) Redemption from our sinful nature—we long for the end of the battle with sin and our perfection in Christ. (3) Restoration of creation—we anticipate the complete rule of grace when the image of God will be fully realized in people and when the created order will be restored.

Christ's freeing us from sin opens the way for him to "cleanse" us. He freed us from sin (redeemed us) by purchasing our release from the captivity of sin with a ransom (see Mark 10:45 for more on Christ as our ransom). We are not only free from the sentence of death for our sin, but we are also purified from sin's influence as we grow in Christ.

It is the will of God to abstain from sexual immorality.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

It is God's will for you to be holy, but how can you go about doing that? The Bible teaches that holiness is not a state of being that you must manufacture on your own with hard work and good deeds and constant fear of failure. Instead, being made holy occurs in the process of living the Christian life. If you have accepted Christ's sacrifice on your behalf, then you are considered holy and complete in God's eyes. Yet you must continue to learn and grow during your time on earth. The Holy Spirit works in you, conforming you to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

Consider your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desired and greed.

Colossians 3:5-9

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

We should consider ourselves dead and unresponsive to sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. The warning in this verse is not against sex, but against sexual perversion. Where is the line between the two?

The Bible everywhere celebrates heterosexual, monogamous marriage as the proper situation for sexual fulfillment. Christian men and women should be open to true love—and to sexual intimacy—within the commitment to lifelong fidelity. That is God's way. The rest is dangerous and futile. Stay away. Sexual sin and perversion will drain your energies and turn your heart away from God.

"The anger of God" refers to God's judgment on these kinds of behavior, culminating with future and final punishment of evil. When tempted to sin, remember that you must one day stand before God.

We must rid ourselves of all evil practices and immorality. Then we can commit ourselves to what Christ teaches. Paul was urging the believers to remain true to their confession of faith. They were to rid themselves of the old life and put on the new nature given by Christ. If you have made such a commitment to Christ, are you remaining true to it?

Lying to one another disrupts unity by destroying trust. It tears down relationships and may lead to serious conflict in a church. So don't exaggerate statistics, pass on rumors and gossip, or say things to build up your own image. Be committed to telling the truth.

Jesus wants to clean your life and your church of sexual sin and verbal sin. There is no place in the Kingdom of God for hedonistic sexual experimentation or for gossip, rage, and backbiting. In their place, witness to the world like a lighthouse on a stormy night by displaying love, faith, and hope.

1 Corinthians 6:18

Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

Christians are free to be all they can be for God, but they are not free *from* God. God created sex to be a beautiful and essential ingredient of marriage, but sexual sin—sex outside the marriage relationship—*always*

hurts someone. It hurts God because it shows that we prefer following our own desires instead of the leading of the Holy Spirit. It hurts others because it violates the commitment so necessary to a relationship. It often brings disease to our bodies. And it deeply affects our personality, which responds in anguish when we harm ourselves physically and spiritually.

Don't let greed, immorality, or impurity be named among you.

Ephesians 5:3

But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints;

Obscene stories and coarse jokes are so common that we begin to take them for granted. Paul cautions, however, that improper language should have no place in the Christian's conversation because it does not reflect God's gracious presence in us. How can we praise God and remind others of his goodness when we are speaking coarsely?

Let all bitterness, wrath and anger be put away from you.

Ephesians 4:31

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

This is Christ's law of forgiveness as taught in the Gospels (Matthew 6:14, 15; 18:35; Mark 11:25). We also see it in the Lord's Prayer—"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us" (Luke 11:4). God forgives us, not because we forgive others, but solely because of his great mercy. As we come to understand his mercy, however, we will want to be like him. Having received forgiveness, we will pass it on to others. Those who are unwilling to forgive have not become one with Christ, who was willing to forgive even those who crucified him (Luke 23:34).
Life Application Study Bible.

Put new wine into fresh wine skins.

Matthew 9:17

"Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

In Bible times wine was not kept in glass bottles but in goatskins sewn around the edges to form watertight bags. New wine expanded as it fermented, stretching its wineskin. After the wine had aged, the stretched skin would burst if more new wine was poured into it. New wine, therefore, was always put into new wineskins.

Jesus used this description to explain that he had not come to patch up the old religious system of Judaism with its rules and traditions. His purpose was to bring in something new, though it had been prophesied for centuries. This new message, the Good News, said that Jesus Christ, God's Son, came to earth to offer all people forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God.

The Good News did not fit into the old rigid legalistic system of religion. It needed a fresh start. The message will always remain "new" because it must be accepted and applied in every generation. When we follow Christ, we must be prepared for new ways to live, new ways to look at people, and new ways to serve.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print