

Expanded Report: Putting Off the Old Self and Putting On the New (Colossians 3:5-17)

Prologue: The Call to Live a Transformed Life

The family gathered for another evening study, and Ryan opened the Bible to Colossians 3:5-17. In this passage, Paul urges believers to put to death their old sinful nature and to clothe themselves with the virtues that reflect the new life they have in Christ. Paul gives clear instructions on how believers are to live differently now that they have been raised with Christ, putting on godly character and living in unity with one another.

“Tonight, we’re going to look at how our new life in Christ should change how we live,” Ryan began. “Paul tells us that as Christians, we’re called to put off the old self, which is marked by sin, and to put on the new self, which reflects Christ’s character.”

Ariel, who had been thinking about what it means to live differently, asked, “So, Paul is saying that when we follow Jesus, our lives should look different?”

“Yes,” Ryan nodded. “Our actions, attitudes, and relationships should all reflect the change that has happened in our hearts through Christ. We are called to put on godly virtues like compassion, kindness, humility, and love, and to get rid of the things that reflect our old sinful nature.”

Alice, snuggling with Mr. Fluffernutter, asked, “Does that mean I have to stop being grumpy and start being nice?”

Yaya smiled. “That’s exactly it, Alice. As we follow Jesus, He helps us become more like Him, showing kindness, patience, and love to others.”

Key Teachings: Putting Off the Old Self, Putting On the New

1. Putting to Death the Earthly Sins

Colossians 3:5

“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

- **Putting Sin to Death:**

Ryan explained, “Paul starts by calling believers to ‘mortify’ or put to death the sinful behaviors that belong to the old self. These sins include sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and covetousness. These things don’t belong to a believer’s life because they pull us away from God and His holiness.”

Ariel asked, “So, when we follow Jesus, we’re supposed to stop doing the things we used to do, like lying, being selfish, or hurting others?”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Our new life in Christ means that we’re called to leave behind the things that hurt us and others, and to live in a way that reflects God’s love and holiness.”

- **Sin as Idolatry:**

Yaya added, “Paul also calls covetousness ‘idolatry.’ When we want things more than we want God, it becomes like an idol in our hearts. Jesus wants to be first in our lives, and He frees us from the slavery of wanting things more than we want Him.”

2. Getting Rid of Negative Attitudes and Actions

Colossians 3:8

“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”

- **Putting Off Negative Emotions and Words:**

Ryan explained, “Paul continues by telling believers to get rid of negative emotions and behaviors like anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language. These things are not reflective of the character of Christ and only cause harm in relationships.”

Ariel asked, “So, we shouldn’t get mad at people or say hurtful things?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “It’s natural to feel angry sometimes, but Paul teaches us that we shouldn’t let anger control us. Instead, we’re called to show patience, forgiveness, and love.”

- **The Power of Words:**

Yaya added, “The words we speak are powerful. They can either build people up or tear them down. As believers, we are called to speak words that reflect Christ’s love and truth, not to use words that hurt others.”

3. Putting on the New Self in Christ

Colossians 3:10

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”

- **Being Transformed in Christ’s Image:**

Ryan explained, “Paul tells believers to ‘put on the new man.’ This means that, as Christians, we are constantly being renewed to become more like Christ. Our minds are transformed as we grow in our knowledge of Him, and our actions begin to reflect His character.”

Ariel asked, “Does that mean we’re always becoming more like Jesus?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “It’s a process, but the more we follow Christ, the more our lives reflect His love, kindness, and holiness.”

- **Living According to Christ’s Image:**

Yaya added, “As we put on the new self, we are being conformed to the image of Jesus. This means living with humility, gentleness, patience, and love, just as He did.”

4. Clothing Ourselves with Compassion, Kindness, and Love

Colossians 3:12-14

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”

- **Clothing Ourselves with Christlike Virtues:**

Ryan explained, “Paul tells us to put on godly virtues—compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and forgiveness. These qualities are the opposite of the sinful behaviors he listed earlier. As we live out these virtues, we become more like Christ and reflect His love to others.”

Ariel asked, “So, we’re supposed to be kind and patient with others, even when it’s hard?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “Christ’s love and forgiveness are our example. He was patient and kind to us, even when we didn’t deserve it, and we’re called to do the same with others.”

- **Love as the Greatest Virtue:**

Yaya added, “Paul says that love is the ‘bond of perfectness.’ Love is the key that holds all the other virtues together. Without love, we can’t fully reflect Christ. Love is what makes everything else meaningful.”

5. Living Out Our New Identity in Christ

Colossians 3:15-17

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

- **Letting Peace Rule in Our Hearts:**

Ryan emphasized, “Paul calls believers to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts. This peace comes from knowing that we are forgiven, loved, and accepted in Christ. It should guide our decisions, our relationships, and our actions.”

Ariel asked, “So, when we feel upset or anxious, we should remember that Jesus gives us peace?”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “When we focus on Christ, His peace can rule in our hearts and keep us calm, no matter what’s happening around us.”

- **Living in Gratitude and Unity:**

Yaya added, “Paul also talks about being thankful and living in unity as believers. We’re part of

one body, and we should encourage and teach one another with joy and gratitude. Everything we do should bring glory to Christ.”

- **Doing Everything in Christ’s Name:**

“Lastly, Paul reminds us that everything we do—whether in word or deed—should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus,” Ryan concluded. “This means that our actions, our words, and even our attitudes should reflect Christ’s character and be done for His glory.”

6. The Key Teaching: Union with Christ Transforms Our Priorities and Perspectives

Key Teaching:

The key teaching in this passage is that our union with Christ transforms who we are and how we live. As believers, we are called to put off the old self and put on the new self, reflecting Christ’s character in all that we do. The transformation that Christ brings to our hearts and minds results in godly character, unity in the body of believers, and a life that honors God in every word and action.

Ryan summarized, “Paul is teaching us that living in Christ changes everything. Our priorities, our actions, our attitudes—everything becomes centered on Him. As we reflect His character, we show the world His love and grace.”

Practical Applications: Living the New Life in Christ

The family discussed how they could apply Paul’s teachings on putting off the old self and putting on the new:

1. **Living with Compassion and Kindness:**

Ariel suggested, “We can show compassion to others when they are struggling and be kind to everyone, even if they don’t treat us kindly.”

Alice added, “I can be patient with my little brother and help him

when he needs it.”

2. **Forgiving Others as Christ Forgave Us:**

Ryan encouraged them, “When someone hurts us, let’s remember how much Christ has forgiven us. We can forgive others with the same grace and mercy that God has shown us.”

3. **Doing Everything for God’s Glory:**

Yaya reminded the family, “Whatever we do, we should do it for God’s glory. Whether we’re at school, at work, or at home, everything we do should reflect Christ’s love and kindness.”

Takeaway: Transformation in Christ

As the family reflected, Yaya shared a story about a time when she was struggling to forgive someone, but was reminded of Christ’s forgiveness. “I remembered how much Christ had forgiven me, and it helped me forgive that person,” she said. “Jesus’ love and grace are what transform our hearts.”

Ariel smiled. “So, when we live with Christ in our hearts, we can love and forgive just like He did?”
“Yes,” Ryan said, “and when we do, we reflect His character and bring honor to His name.”

Key Points Summary

1. Put Off the Old Self:

- Believers are called to put to death sinful behaviors and attitudes that reflect the old self, such as anger, malice, and immorality.

2. Put On the New Self:

- We are called to clothe ourselves with Christlike virtues—compassion, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and love.

3. Living in Unity and Gratitude:

- As believers, we are united in Christ, and we should encourage and teach one another in love, doing everything for God’s glory and with thankfulness.

4. Christ Transforms Our Life:

- Our union with Christ produces godly character, a heart of gratitude, and a life that reflects His love to others.
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Key Verse:

“And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” (Colossians 3:14)

This passage teaches that our new life in Christ transforms our priorities, relationships, and actions. As we put on Christ’s character, we reflect His love and grace, living with compassion, humility, and forgiveness, all for the glory of God.