



***Dress for Success***  
***Colossians 3 Bible Study***  
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In today's world, first impressions are so important. We see this in the workplace, in school, in community, etc. As believers, we have opportunities given to us by God to impress on others about our God whom we belong to. Not an impression that shows how great we ourselves can come off as but how great our God is. God, who we represent, is wonderful and is worthy of all efforts made to show the world how very blessed we are to be in relationship with Him and His people.

In Colossians chapter three, Paul gives instruction and encouragement to the church of Colossae on how a believer should live, and thrive, as a part of the family of God. I like to think of this chapter as the "what to wear and what not to wear" chapter. The key verse in this passage is verse 12, ***"therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, CLOTHE YOURSELVES with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."*** More about that verse later.

Let's look at how to "dress for success."

### **Read Colossians 3**

#### **I. Dress with class because Christ has given you everything (verses 1-4)**

Christ has lifted us up and asks us to look up. We are to put aside all the vintage clothing of the past. The old clothing that represented past sin, regret, despair, and hopelessness. Jesus has something brand new for us. This passage tells us because of what Christ did on the cross and defeated death through the resurrection, not only is He raised and with God, we too have been raised and can be in relationship with God. We can set our minds above all else because we have put to death the things that held us back, the confining, limiting clothing of our old life. When we lift Christ up through how we represent Him we are promised that we will be blessed with a glorious future (verse 4).

#### **Questions:**

1. *What vintage clothing of your past do you need to toss from your spiritual closet?*
2. *What benefits do you see from putting away the old and replacing it with the garments of new life given only by Christ?*
3. *What are some ways you can set your mind above all else and live for Christ?*

## II. What not to wear (verses 5-11)

We know we look good in brand new clothing when we know the creator of the garments makes only the best. Sometimes, though, we struggle to get rid of clothing from our past, even though tattered and falling apart, because it had been comfortable to us. Others might have worn the same garments and we liked to just blend in, we may have become popular by what we wore and liked the attention. We may have just held on because it was what we knew and we might not want to change.

Paul tells us not only to get rid of but to put to death the garments of sin that represented well in our past. He mentions the sins of sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, and lying. He says, ***“you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator”*** (verses 9-10).

My strange way of thinking takes me to the thought of being a representative for a line of clothing by a famous designer and one day he catches me wearing low end clothing from an inexpensive department store. He is disappointed that I have chosen not to represent him well that day. God has given us such wonderful garments to wear, the garments of forgiveness, love, holiness, and more and He offers them to everyone. Why would we want anything less?

### Questions:

1. *What garments of the past mentioned in this passage do you struggle to destroy? Why?*
2. *What are the benefits of getting rid of past garments of sin?*
3. *What does it mean to you that your new self is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator?*

## III. What to wear (verses 12-17)

I mentioned in the beginning a key verse being verse 12. ***“Clothe yourselves...”*** Here we see what to wear in place of past garments of sin. Jesus died for us so we can live as new creations meant to show compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (verse 12).

When looking at the list of sins in verses 5-11 it would be impossible to serve with compassion if still battling with evil desires and greed. How about practicing kindness when still struggling with rage, malice and slander. They would not match each other well. Verse 13 tells us to ***“bear with one another and forgive one another...forgive as the Lord forgave you.”***

What to wear, God tells us forgiveness goes well with the other garments of compassion, kindness, humility, etc. Accessorizing garments with forgiveness and love which “binds them all together in perfect unity” is a must. The definition of accessorize, according to Webster’s Dictionary, means to compliment. When we compliment what Christ has done for us through giving us life, righteousness, and forgiveness with forgiving others and showing love in the way God intended, we are dressed for successful righteous living in Christ.

Verses 15-17 concludes Colossians 3 with encouragement from Paul to, ***“let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts..., let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish each other..., and whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, give thanks to God the Father through Him.”*** We are blessed to have the Creator of all prepare garments so wonderful and rich for us that would clothe us richly and not only that, would bring us into community with others who know how to make the garments of Christ look good too. Our desire as God’s people should be to represent Him well through the new way of living only possible through the equipping of the Holy Spirit.

### **Questions:**

1. *What are some of the new garments mentioned in verse 12 that you need most and how can use them to lessen the use of earthly attributes mentioned in verse 5-9?*
2. *How can you put into practice the encouragement given by Paul in verses 15-17 in your place of worship/family?*
3. *What would you like to say to God about the garments of new living given to you at no cost to you and an extreme cost to Christ?*