

Out With the Old, In with the New

(Colossians 3:5-11)

(preached 5/15/16; Sunday AM)

Introduction

A man was having chest pains so he went to the doctor...

The doctor gave him a complete physical, and concluded that he was under a life-threatening amount of stress

He gave the following advice to the man....

Have your wife help you ease some of the burdens in your life...

Ask her to get up earlier to prepare a nutritious breakfast for you

Tell her too get a part time job, so that you can work less hours in your business..

And then demand that she create a budget for the family and stick to it..

The doctor continued, "if you don't take these steps, you will be dead in a month."

When the doctor finished, the man had a simple request...

“Doc, will you call my wife and tell her these things?”

It will sound more official and serious coming from you...

The doctor agreed and called the wife while the man was driving home..

When he got home, his wife came running to him...

“Oh darling, I am so sorry. The doctor called, and I am so sorry that you have only 30 days to live.”

Needless to say, some people are resistant to change.

In fact, they will go to great lengths to not change.

However, being a Christian is all about being willing to change...

In fact, if you are the same after salvation as you were before, you aren't saved.

You are only deceiving yourself.

Because life after coming to know Christ is nothing but a series of changes.

As you come to Christ in repentance and faith, some things change in your life right away...

Others may take longer simply because you are ignorant of what the Bible teaches.

As you grow in your knowledge of the Word through faithful reading and Bible study and preaching, your life should be nothing but a series of changes...

Last week, we looked at Colossians 3:1-4 and we saw that the first thing that changes after a person gets saved is their way of thinking...

They stop concentrating on the things of the world and start concentrating on the things above in heaven where their Savior sits...

Believers then learn to train their minds to think on those things that are true and lovely and pure and right and excellent and praiseworthy according to Phil 4...

And though they must live in the world, they shift their focus from this life to the life to come...

Instead of thinking how to lay up treasure in bank accounts where moth and rust will destroy...

Then begin to think of how to lay up treasure in heavenly bank accounts...

They stop thinking of how they can gain reward in this world and start thinking of how to gain reward in the world to come...

They stop thinking about how to get more than their neighbor has....

And they start thinking of how to please their Lord.

So, first off, are minds and thoughts are constantly changing as believers as we leave the pursuit of this world behind for the pursuit of heaven...

However, Paul is not done with encouraging us to change...

Today, we come to verses 5-11 of Colossians 3 as we see more of this idea of the new man...

We have a new mind, but we also need to be new people in how we live....

I have entitled this....

Out with the Old and In with the New...

And that is a great description of how our lives should change after salvation....

So, let's read this section of Colossians 3 and then we will dig into a little deeper...

5 Therefore [b]consider the members of your earthly body as dead to [c]immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which [d]amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come [e]upon the sons of disobedience, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living [f]in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 [g]Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old [h]self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being [i]renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, [j]barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

What you see in these verses are the old man in verse 5-9 followed by the beginnings of the new man in verses 10-11...

Let's start with the old man in verses 5-9 by seeing the need to...

I. Put Away the Old Man (5-9)

Verse 5 begins with a pet word of Paul's...
“therefore..”

And it put there to take us back to the previous verses in which Paul talked about how the Christian is dead to the things of the world mentally...

A believer's mind has been deadened to the things of the world and awakened to the things of God...

And so his whole mental outlook changes and his thoughts and his perception of the world...

Therefore, since the Christian is dead mentally to the world, he should also die physically to the world as well...

I love to garden right.

Don't have enough time for it, but I still love to do it.

And though I don't know much about it, I do know this...

If you need to rid your garden of weeds, you got to deal with the root of the weed....

You can pull off the blades all day long, and they will grow back...

It is only when you kill the root that the rest of the weed turns brown and dies...

The same is true in our lives...

You can't just tear off our your sinful actions and hope they won't come back...

You need to treat the root of those actions, and the root of our actions begins in our mind....

If you treat your thought life and stop sin in your mind, the sin won't make it to your hands...

And what Paul is saying here is this...

Therefore since you are changing the way you think and setting your mind on things above, you now have the ability to change the outside....

And so in verse 5, we get a list of things that need to change in the life of a believer...

The list is a list of what I call the sins of self...

And these must go in the life of a Christian...

The first on the list is immorality...

If you have a King James, this is called fornication...

The sins that Paul is talking about here is sexual immorality...

This is any sexual activity that happens outside the marriage relationship designed by God of one man and one woman.

It would include sex outside of marriage, sex before marriage, adultery, homosexuality, and whole list of other sexual sins that don't need to be mentioned here...

Simply put, if the sexual activity doesn't occur in the marriage of one man and one woman, it is immoral and against the law of God.

In the OT, these acts were punishable by death...

Today, the world doesn't react to sexual immorality in the same way...

Instead, the world embraces people in sexual sin like never before..

However, the culture does not change the law of God...

These sins are serious before the Lord and the Christian must put them off...

The second on the list is impurity...

Your translation may say uncleanness, but this is the idea of inappropriate thoughts...

It is a reference to thoughts that lead to sexual immorality...

And to be clear, this is not just a sermon to the men here today...

Woman who are pulled into affairs come in mentally before they come in physically...

Guys, you need to take control of impure thoughts, but the ladies must do the same.

Next is evil desire..

Your Bible may say inordinate affection or lust, but the sin here is wanting something you can't have...

That is what lust is...

And the root of desire or lust is greed or covetousness, which is next on the list...

And the root of covetousness is idolatry.....

What you see here in this list in how these sins happen in reverse order...

People who struggle with sexual sin often say....

“I can’t help it. I can’t stop thinking about it.”

Their problem is this....

They are trying to pull off the leaves of the weed instead of killing the root...

And here is what I mean...

The root of sexual sin is idolatry....

And what is idolatry?

It is the practice of putting anything about the Lord in our life...

And most of the time, the thing that we put above the Lord in our lives is us...

What we want is more important to us than what God wants...

And when we seek to please ourself instead of God,
we are practicing idolatry...

When it comes to sexual sins, we are seeking our
own desires rather than what God desires for us.

Now once we become idolatrous, we are filled with
covetousness...

We want to do this even though we know it isn't
right...

So we covet and we are filled with desire for
something that is forbidden....

That desire gives way to passionate and impure
thoughts, and the final stop is the sexually immoral
act...

You can follow the train right up the tracks from the
end of verse 5 back up the middle of verse 5....

And what God is saying through Paul is this...

You have to put off those sins of the old man...

Now, let me give you a little help....

How do you succeed in putting them off?

Well, you treat the root.

You deal with idolatry by placing the Lord as the priority of your life instead of your own pleasure.

Then you treat the covetousness root of immorality by finding contentment in what you have...

When you covet someone or something, you are saying that you are not satisfied with what you have...

Being content with what you have is the secret to killing unhealthy desires...

And this moves beyond just sexual sin...

When you are discontent with your house, you covet what others have, and that is sin..

That eventually leads to bitterness against the people who have what you want...

When you are discontent with your status in life, you covet the popularity of others and you are filled with jealousy toward them...

When you are discontent with your spouse, you covet someone else and you are filled with lust toward them..

Being content with where the Lord has you is key to walking in obedience and living a life pleasing to the Lord.

Contentment kills covetousness...

And so, put on contentment to put off these sins of verse 5...

That leads us to verses 6-7, where we find two reason to put off the old man...

The first reason is found in verse 6...

These sins call for the wrath of God.

I have said it before but it bears repeating....

Why would any Christian find pleasure in the sins that Jesus died to forgive?

Obviously, for those who are saved, we are hidden in Christ and God's wrath is no longer on us....

But why in the world would we want to engage in sins that caused the death of our Savior?

One time I ate some bad hamburger and go real sick from it as a kid...

And even months later even though the sickness was long gone, I couldn't even stand to smell a hamburger frying much less eat it...

I avoided hamburger for months...

That should be true for these sins in the life of a believer....

Jesus died for the sins of sexual immorality, passion, desire and covetousness...

If they made our Savior ill, they should turn our stomach as well...

The second reason to avoid these sins is found in verse 7....

You are not living in that life any longer...

You have been rescued from your former life, so why would you return to the sins that characterized it...

That is like a man who comes in from work and his clothes, head, shoes and face are covered in dirt...

He goes in and takes a shower and then comes out and put his nasty work clothes back on...

It doesn't make sense to pick up old sins....

Leave them to the unbeliever to commit, but not the Christian...

As we are command to put off the sins of self in verses 5-7, we find another list of sins to put off in verses 8-9....

I call this the sins of speech...

And in this case, the sins move in the normal direction...

We go from the root cause of the sins of speech to the final outward sins of slander, abusive speech and lying...

The sins of speech find their root in a deep seated anger...

Anger is nothing but a growing bitterness...

Now, why are people filled with anger, and I actually would offer you the same reason that I did earlier...

Most people are angry because they can't find contentment in this world...

For the unbeliever, he longs for something that can only be found in Christ...

He has these sins that trouble him and his
conscience screams at him,

And when he tries to silence his conscience with
money, or sex, or power, he finds nothing but
frustration and more discontentment.

That causes the frustration to build and the anger to
brew under the surface...

If you watch the news and listen to the people, you
are going to find a lot of angry people in this
world...

And I would submit to you that their anger is rooted
in trying to find contentment in something or
someone besides Christ...

Now, that is not to say that Christians have all their
anger taken away at salvation...

No, we still battle discontentment and anger even
after we are saved....

And when this anger takes hold of us, we are filled
with wrath...

You know how this happens, the fact turns red...

The veins in your neck pop out....

Your eyes gets bigger and your forehead wrinkles...

The next is malice, which simply means evil speech...

Followed by slander and abusive or filthy speech...

Slander is an attack on the character of another person with your mouth...

Abusive speech is obscene language or gestures...

Now, we don't have time to get into all of these, but I do want to point out two things about slander...

#1 - Our culture is numb to slander and Christians often engage in it and never realize it...

Let me tell you why the sin of slander is so bad...

Everyone in this world, believer or unbeliever, was created by God...

If I walk into your house and talk about the ugly color you painted your living room....

I'm not insulting the living room; I am insulting you who either chose the color or painted it yourself.

Every time we slander someone, we blaspheme the God who made them in his image...

Listen to James 3:8-10...

8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way

Do you understand what this means?

At every church service, here is what happens on a routine basis....

“Yes, we praise the Lord. Amen. Amen.”

Get to the car....

“Can you believe what she was wearing?”

“I can’t believe he said that in Sunday School. He’s an idiot.”

What James is saying is this....

We praise the Lord with our mouth and then turn around and curse men who who made by that same Lord.

Slander is sinful, and it needs not be practiced by those who call themselves believers...

Do you remember what Jesus said about slander?

Matt 5:21-22...

***21 “You have heard that [k]the ancients were told, ‘You shall not commit murder’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be [l]liable to the court.’
22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be [m]guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘[n]You good-for-nothing,’ shall be [o]guilty before [p]the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be [q]guilty enough to go into the [r]fiery hell.***

God does take lightly those who slander others whom He created.

And neither should we.

This final list of sins of speech is a reminder to us all that we not only think different once we are saved...

And act different once we are saved....

We also talk different once we are saved...

And the final sin of speech to put off is the sin of lying in verse 9...

This goes without saying, but lying is all around us.

We should expect that from the world but not from those who are now dead to the world in Christ.

If we can't expect Christians to tell the truth, who can we expect to do it?

Yet, many in the church routinely lie in their daily life and think nothing of it.

When you lie, here is what you are saying...

I do not trust God enough to tell the truth, so I must lie.

Lying stands on the opposite side of the field as God, who speaks nothing but truth all the time...

And so, there are two lists of sins that must be put off as believers...

They must be laid aside like dirty clothes never to be picked up again...

And so verses 5-9 are Out with the Old, but let up quickly with how to Come In with the New...

II. Put On the New Man (10-11)

For really the rest of the book of Colossians, we are going to deal with what the new man or woman looks like...

Because the rest of chapter 3 and the first part of chapter 4 deal with the new clothes that the Christian is supposed to wear...

Just like we take off the dirty clothes, get a shower and slip into our clean PJs, the Christian spend the rest of his life putting on the new man...

Today, we are just going to see 2 practices of the new man...

We will find a lit more next week and the following weeks...

But for today, let's just deal with two qualities of the new man...

The first is found in verse 10...

The new man sees value in knowledge...

Think of the Christian life in terms of a baby...

A baby looks like an adult...

He has eyes and ears and legs...

They just all need to grow...

But physical growth is not the only growth a baby experiences....

He also experiences mental growth as well, as he learns about the world around him...

The same is true of the believer...

When he is saved, he gets the same benefit that comes to someone who has been saved for years...

His sins are forgiven.

He is going to heaven..

But he lacks the knowledge of the one who has been saved for some time...

So, he starts to grow....

And the first way, he needs to grow is in knowledge...

It is hard to imagine in our culture, but some people get saved while they are living with someone else unmarried...

So, they get saved and another Christian goes to them and shares the knowledge that God desires them to move out until they are married...

Some people get saved and have no idea that something in their life is displeasing to God...

So they first need knowledge to know what does and doesn't please God...

And the point of verse 10 is this....

The new man sees the value of knowledge about God.

The begin to see the value of Bible study and reading and teaching in their life...

I know this is a soap box for me, but I am so sick and tired of southern Christians who place no value on knowledge in the Christian faith...

They say things like...

“Well, I’ll leave that to the preacher to think about.”

or “That kind of Bible study is for those religious fanatics who want to know everything.”

“Just give me enough to get me to heaven and I am fine.”

Can knowledge be dangerous?

Yes, it can.

But can it be helpful?

You better believe it, and people and pastors who despise knowledge are acting contrary to the word of God which says that seeking the knowledge of God is a primary quality of the Christian...

And the greatest access you have to the knowledge of the One who created you is the Scriptures...

That is why the Bible questions the salvation of someone who claims to be saved but who rarely cracks open a Bible....

So one quality that you need to put on as a new man or woman in Christ is you need to value the knowledge of who God is...

And you need to seek that knowledge at every opportunity...

The second quality of the new man is found in verse 11...

The new man has been reborn and renewed to see the equality of believers....

Paul writes that putting on the new man means that you no longer see barriers between groups of people..

Here he mentions the equality between Jews and Greeks or Gentiles...

Between barbarians like the Scythian and the civilized person..

Or between the slave and the owner of the slave...

One thing that the Christian is called to put now when he is made new are eyes that see everyone through God's eyes..

If there is one sin that should not exist in the church, it is the sin of discrimination or prejudice or racism.

Like we said before, let's leave those sins to the unbeliever who looks at everyone through his own eyes and not the eyes of the Lord...

The new man and woman is called to put on eyes of equality...

And the reason for this is found in the final words of verse 11...

Because Christ is all to us and in all of us...

In a sense, when I look at another believer, I need to only see Christ...

Not skin color or gender or popularity or power or culture or class differences...

I need to see Christ because He erases all those barriers when he indwells the believer....

And we need to put on the new man who is blind to all those man made barriers that separate us from people who aren't like us...

That is not pleasing to God, and it has place in the church and in the lives of Christians who make up the church...

The New man has a new mind, new heart, and new eyes...

And he should live like it when he sees others different from himself...

Conclusion

We are not done with out total makeover as Christians just yet...

We have 20 or so more verses to see what other clothes we need to put on as believers...

But for now, we need to see the value of knowledge and the equality for the believer...

In some ways, change is not always good.

However, when it comes to living the Christian life, change is a great thing...

In fact, it is commanded...

Yet, it is a life long pursuit...

Unfortunately, the more you take off, the more you realize how much more you need to take off...

And the more you put on, the more you will want to put on...

Charles Spurgeon often preached on the need to put on the new man....

His famous quote about the importance and necessity of putting on the new man is the one that I will use to close us out tonight....

Surgeon said that the aim of the Christian life is to become unrecognizable to those who knew us before we were saved...

Surgeon even said this....

Our goal is this life is be so consumed with the putting on of the new self that we should not even recognize our old self if they passed one another in the street....

Let us pray.