



# CAPITOL COMMISSION

## What Not to Wear

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*I hope as your calendars get busier during this session that you are still finding some time for yourselves, as hard as that may be. Even in the hectic times, priorities remain priorities even though the quantity of time given to them may decrease a little. Family, rest, exercise and, may I say, church, prayer and Bible study, can all take a back seat when a session heats up and the tyranny of the urgent commands your time. My encouragement to you is to make time for the more important things as well as the urgent things.*

*I would also ask for your prayers for me from March 2-7 when I will be at The Shepherd's Conference at Grace Community Church in Los Angeles. All of the Capitol Commission state directors will be there for a week of meetings with several hundred pastors from around the world. I'm looking forward to seeing my colleagues again for a few days of fellowship and training. Due to the conference, though, we will not meet for our General Assembly Bible study on Friday, March 5. We will begin meeting again on Friday, March 12.*

In last week's study, our verses spoke of the importance of dealing with sin in the life of a follower of Christ. The picture Paul gave was warfare or literally killing the sinful desires and temptations that attack. Putting something to death is strenuous, intentional and definitive. We talked about whether this militaristic illustration fits the attitude and posture of most Christians today. Sadly, it doesn't as far too many believers do not feel the urgency to guard against or actively fight sin aggressively.

Our text this week also refers to dealing with sin, but with a much different mental object lesson. In contrast to the concept of the bloody battle of putting sin to death, Paul reaches now for a common illustration we experience every day. In these verses, we are called to put off sin in the same way we would take off clothes.

**Colossians 3:8-11** <sup>8</sup> *But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, since you laid*

*aside the old self with its evil practices,<sup>10</sup> 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 –<sup>11</sup> a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and is in all.*

### I. UNDESIRABLE LIST (3:8)

When Paul tells us to “put them all aside”, he is using a word that carries the idea of removing old, dirty clothes. What a great picture of the change made in the heart of one who believes and trusts in Christ! But we need something to wear, so Christ provides a new way to think and behave, referred to in verse ten as putting “on the new self”.

Look at this list. *Anger* is an inward simmering, but *wrath* is an outburst based on that underlying bitterness. *Malice* is ill will toward someone, while *slander* is malicious gossip. *Abusive speech* takes many forms, but refers to coarse, filthy language. These are social sins directed toward other people and can happen inside or outside the church. We should all take the warning to put these aside, just as we would a dirty, smelly shirt.

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**IN THE POLITICAL ARENA, WITH SO MANY WORDS THAT ARE REQUIRED TO COMMUNICATE, THERE ARE SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO OFFEND A HOLY GOD BY WHAT YOU SAY. TAKE CARE WITH YOUR WORDS.**

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### II. UNDERLINING LYING (3:9a)

Paul seems to emphasize the problems lying can cause in relationships. He starts a new sentence with the new implied subject “you”. Scripture is full of warnings about the damage lying does, from the ninth commandment to verses like this:

**Proverbs 12:22** *Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal faithfully are His delight.*

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### BIBLE STUDY

LEGISLATORS: FRIDAYS @ 12:00PM, HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING (ROOM 153)

# Maryland

## What Not to Wear

Please take a moment and think about the implications in your sphere of influence. Lying is any kind of misdirection of the truth. Knowing and speaking the truth is required to truly please God. In the political world, especially in an election year, take care and take seriously how you handle and communicate to colleagues, to staff, to constituents and to the press. Why does Paul put such an emphasis on our words?

**James 3: 8** *But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

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**IN YOUR HOME, YOUR OFFICE, YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR CAMPAIGN – APPLY THIS PRINCIPLE OF TELLING THE TRUTH. DECEPTIVE WORDS HAVE BEEN THE DOWNFALL OF MANY.**

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### III. UNIQUE LIKENESS (3:9b, 10)

The reason a Christian must speak and treat others differently than the world around him is that he has a different identity than he had before. Keeping with his clothes illustration, Paul says the old way of life has been put off, laid aside. The new life is the new suit of clothes and the life-long journey of being renewed begins.

**1 Corinthians 3:18** *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

According to our text, this is done through the mind, or by what knowledge we have gained. When a baby is born, he is a complete person, but has a lifetime of development ahead. When a person repents and trusts in Christ, a journey has begun (called sanctification) in which that person gradually becomes more like Christ. Positionally, he cannot become “more saved”, but experientially, spiritual growth will be normal.

We were *formed* in God’s image, and *deformed* from God’s image by sin. But through Jesus Christ, we can be *transformed* into God’s image! We must be renewed in the

spirit of our minds. As we grow in knowledge of the Word of God, we will be transformed by the Spirit of God to share in the glorious image of God. God transforms us by the renewing of our minds, and this involves the study of God’s Word. It is the truth that sets us free from the old life. <sup>1</sup>

### IV. UNIFYING LORD (3:11)

Verse eleven describes the encouraging outcome of Christians who are moving toward the goal of becoming more like Christ. This creates great unity among believers who are from widely separate backgrounds and perspectives.

Within this new humanity there is no inferiority of one class to another. Men and women of completely different origins are gathered together in unity in Christ, sharing a common allegiance to their Lord. Christ is all that matters; he lives in all members of his body, regardless of race, class or background, giving them life and power. <sup>2</sup>

### CONCLUSION: THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL

**Acts 9:22** *But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.*

Paul (here, Saul) was well-known as a persecutor of Christians. In Acts 7, he supervised the stoning of Stephen, but in Acts 9 was miraculously converted and immediately began preaching the gospel of Christ. What better example of a person who took off the old suit, spiritually speaking, and put on a new one?

May we all grow more in our understanding of putting off sin while putting on the new man to please God more.

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<sup>1</sup>Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1989). *The Bible exposition commentary*. "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. (Col 3:10). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

<sup>2</sup>Carson, D. A. (1994). *New Bible commentary : 21st century edition*. Rev. ed. of: The new Bible commentary. 3rd ed. / edited by D. Guthrie, J.A. Motyer. 1970. (4th ed.) (Col 3:5). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press.