



[New Year 2019 What about You?]

New Year's Resolutions:

Some have made them, some have broken them. Two of my resolutions: more patience and not getting aggravated in traffic. I lasted until January 2nd. Obviously my goal of patience lacked true commitment.

In his book [*A Journey to Bethlehem*](#), Jason Soroski offers the following definitions of a resolution:

Resolution = marked by firm determination

To the musician, a "resolution" is a harmony line moving from a dissonant tone (one that does not fit the melody) to a consonant tone (one that fits). Harmonies can dance and amaze us with varied complexities for a while, but they must eventually resolve.

To the writer, a resolution is the end of a story, the final element of a twisting plot wrought with conflict, finally resolved to an ending where all is well.

To the chemist, it is the separation of a chemical compound back into its constituents, or simplest parts.

To the statesman, it is an expression of the determined will of an elected body.

To the graphic artist, it is the sharpness of the pixel count on a screen, and the quality of the image produced.

By any definition, a Resolution is characterized by a return to simplicity, a focus on sharp definition and determination. Without resolution, art, science, government, and life in general all fall into chaos. Without resolution, there is no foundation on which to stand.

What would your faith look like if you returned to simplicity? To know and live out nothing but Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2). And what if this Christ like focus had a sharp determination.

For the next week weeks, we will focus our lives, looking back on God's faithfulness and looking to the future. . A series entitled: misdirection. **Because not having a plan is planning to fail.** This week we will look at ME and next week we will see how the Word addresses WE.

Read [Eph 4:20-24]

What will you put off?

If you heard and trusted Jesus as the truth, your life is forever changed. There is no such thing as an unchanged carnal Christian. You have been redeemed or you have not. If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation and the old has passed away. **How can we live as new people this new year?**

The expression, “**put off,**” is a figure taken from the putting off garments. **Recently, I worked on a project in the mud that left me filthy from head to toe. I came home late and the kids ran to meet me. I announced: no one touch me! I immediately took off my filthy shoes and clothes and threw them in the wash.** This is the picture and posture we should take to our former way of life and current sins. An immediate gut reaction that we need to get clean. **Putting off is an accomplished fact and an ongoing process.**

Conversation. If you have put your faith in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation, you are righteous. Righteousness is declared not earned. Paul is saying: you are not what you once were! **Although the ability for righteousness is God’s alone, the responsibility to pursue righteousness is ours.** The Bible never commands, “let go and let God.” We are called to Put off and put on! It is the beautiful picture of Zechariah 2: 4 So the angel of the LORD spoke to those standing before him, **“Take off his filthy clothes!” Then he said to him, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with festive robes.”** Rest in this eternal truth, Jesus has already removed your iniquity. Righteous clothes are not earned little by little, they are given by Christ. But often the filthy old garments remain.

Once you have become a Christian, you are to leave behind the attitudes, habits, values, and actions that you had **before being born again**. The earthly desires, or lusts, which we have are **deceitful. They promise one thing but deliver another.** **Its that old comfortable pair of socks or jeans with holes in them. You don’t go back because it’s fashionable but comfortable. It is like wearing crocks with shorts and dress socks.**

What do you need to put off this year? What do you need to sharply focus on? Is it anger? Apathy? Do you consume the social media drama? Are you one that has a consistent need to be involved in the “stories” of others and stir the pot. Is it lust? Lust will always let you down. Are you guilty of wasting time? Of not using your resources to glorify Christ? **Although sin no longer reigns because of Christ, it remains.** Is it the deceitful desire for more- that has left you in massive debt? **What one thing if you were to take it off and set it aside would radically change your life?**

May this year be the year where you have a sharp focus to put off all that dishonors the Messiah and grieves the Holy Spirit. *Without a sharp focus on Jesus, everyone falls into chaos.*

The Christ life is not only about what we take off. Some Christians are only known by what they are against. If we only take off our sin we are still in need. **Listen, God does not want you to be naked.** When Adam and Eve recognized their sin, they hid from the Lord and found leaves, which were inadequate coverings. **And the Lord saw there need and made garments and clothed them (the first sacrifice).**

What will you put on?

Finally, we are to **put on the new self**. This means, we are to allow the new self to govern our activities. We are to *begin living the lifestyle that corresponds to who we have become* in Christ. This new holy self shows

we are maturing, growing in unity with the body, and doing our part of the body's work. The word "new" is *kainos* (καινος), not new in point of time, but new in point of quality, new in quality as opposed to the old

This is the clothing metaphor which emphasizes the continuing decision to be in Christ (cf. Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27; Col. 3:8, 10, 12, 14; James 1:21; 1 Pet. 2:1). This terminology of putting on Christ may have even been connected to the ordinance of baptism in the early church, where new converts put on clean, white clothing after baptism.

Baptism? Do you need to finally boldly trust and follow the one who is your Rescuer. If anyone loves me He will obey my commands. Baptism is the picture of newness and putting on the righteous robe of the Savior.

What do you need to put on?

Do you Belong? In Christ, we don't go to church we belong to a new community. Do you belong to the body of Christ? Do you belong to this body of Christ? Church is not something you go to. The Church of Christ is who you are. And when we gather we stir one another. **Who have you stirred up today?** Towards love. Toward Good works?

Are you growing? This is what Paul refers to when he says put on. You will never **grow up unless you grow deep**. Will you commit to read the Word of God this year? The #1 indicator of spiritual growth is daily interaction with the truth of Jesus Christ. How much? How long? Daily interaction. And watch the Lord grip your heart. Prayer? Virtues? Don't be a naked Christian.

Husbands and wives, what righteousness do you need to put on?

Fathers and Mothers? Are you constantly watering your family with the truth of Christ? Are you praying, reading, and sharing?

High School students, what do you need to put on to show your classmates that Jesus is what you treasure the most?

Are you going? "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, This is not the great suggestion but the great commandment. **Are you willing to say yes and let God place you on the map?**

Far too long, many have sat on the sidelines and watched. I don't want to be a watcher. I want to be in the middle of God working. Put on and Go! Your job, your home, your neighborhood, is the greatest mission field that you will have. Go and make disciples. Share the good news!

The call to go is not a profession call, it is a personal call for everyone who follows Jesus Christ. **Here is the power of Holy Spirit. Jesus tells you to go before he tells you where. Will you commit to share the Gospel with 12 people this year? What would our community look like if we are all going, loving, and sharing.**

Mis-Direction = going in the wrong direction. This year may the Holy Spirit sharpen your focus and give new direction. Take off the things which hinder and entangle and put on the righteousness of Jesus.

Conclusion

There is an old hymn that speaks about putting on new clothes.

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne

So what about you? In 2019 one day when I see the Lord Jesus face to face. May we hear: when you put off _____ you did it for me. And when you sharply focused to put on _____ you did it for me.

Today, maybe for the first time you need to be made new, a transformation that only Jesus Christ can bring. The Simple Gospel. 16 For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him

Notes

2019 How will we accomplish the mission of bringing the whole gospel to the whole person to the whole world?

Belong

Over and over again the NT uses the language “saved” to refer to what you are saved from and to. Never does it say we are saved to heaven.

We are saved from our sin and we are saved into Christ.

Grow

Go

Eph. 4:20 But that is not how you came to know Christ, **21** assuming you heard about him and were taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, **22** to take off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, **23** to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,

4:22. Living a proper Christian life involved two concepts. They must **put off their old self**. This old self was the self that was corrupted by the deceits of lust. When we were born, we were born with a sinful bent. We were separated from God. David wrote in Psalm 51:5, “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (see Eph. 2:1–3 and commentary there).

This old self is separated from God. While it is capable of doing good in the eyes of other people, it is incapable of doing anything but evil in the eyes of God. We are born that way, and we remain that way if we do not allow God to intervene. It is who we are by nature. We are children of Adam. We possess a fallen nature as Adam did, and we are separated from God as a result. That is the old self.

To put off the old self can mean merely to accept Christ as in Colossians 3:9, where it is treated as an accomplished fact. It can mean that, once you have become a Christian, you are to leave behind the attitudes, habits, values, and actions that you had before being born again—similar to taking off an old work coat and putting on a new coat to go out for the evening. This is more in keeping with the context, since Paul goes on in verses 25–32 to describe the specifics of a changing lifestyle.

The earthly desires, or lusts, which we have are **deceitful**. They promise one thing but deliver another. Therefore, we are to be smarter than our earthly desires, recognize their deceitfulness, and as a result, turn from them.

. The expression, “put off,” is a figure taken from the putting off of garments. Paul, in Romans 6:6 says: “Knowing this, that our old man (that person we were before we were saved) was crucified with Him in order that the physical body which before salvation was dominated by the totally depraved nature, might be rendered inoperative in that respect, to the end that no longer are we rendering an habitual slave’s obedience

to sin” (translation plus paraphrase). It was in our identification with Christ in His crucifixion that potentially we put off the old man, and we did so actually at the moment we were saved.

This act of putting off this old man had to do with the “former conversation.” The word “conversation” is obsolete English for “manner of life.” This old man is described as “corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” “Is corrupt” is a present participle. The idea is, “which is being corrupted.” It speaks of the progressive condition of corruption which characterized the old man. The unsaved person is thus subject to a continuous process of corruption which grows worse as time goes on. This process of corruption is “according to the deceitful lusts.” “Lusts” is *epithumia* (ἐπιθυμία), “a craving, a passionate desire,” good or evil according to the context. Here it is evil cravings. This process of corruption is dominated or controlled by the passionate desires of deceit, deceit being personified. All this, the believing sinner put off when he was saved.

The second point in the teaching they received was that in their Christian experience they are being renewed in the spirit of their mind. “Renewed” is *ananeoō* (ἀνανεοῶ), “to be renewed, to be renovated by inward reformation.” “And” is *de* (δε), a particle which here is transitional or continuative. They have put off the old man. Moreover, they are being renewed in the spirit of their minds. And they have put on the new man. Upon the basis of these three facts, Paul commences his exhortations in 4:25 will “wherefore, speak every man truth etc.” The renewal is, of course, accomplished by the Holy Spirit.

24 and to put on the new self, the one created according to God’s likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

The third fact in the teaching is that they “put on the new man.” The word “new” is *kainos* (καινός), not new in point of time, which would be *neos* (νέος), but new in point of quality, new in quality as opposed to the old in the sense of outworn, marred through age, which latter designations refer to the old man. “Man” is again *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος), the individual. Since the old man refers to the unsaved person dominated by the totally depraved nature, the new man refers to the saved person dominated by the divine nature. This new man “after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” This is what Paul has reference to when he says, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation” (II Cor. 5:17). “After God” is *kata theon* (κατὰ θεόν), “according to what God is in Himself,” that is, created after the pattern of what God is. The expression “true holiness” could better be rendered, “holiness of truth,” “truth” being personified and being opposed to the “deceit” of verse 22 which was also personified.

4:20–24. The “new self” (v. 24) is literally “the new person,” who is (literally) “created according to God,” which means according to his image or likeness. Paul probably alludes to the way God originally made Adam and Eve in his image, and says that the new person that a Christian has become is equipped with moral purity because he or she is made like God morally. Thus, he points out, one should live like it—as blamelessly as Adam and Eve did before they disobeyed. “Clothing” and “unclothing” provide a natural image, used in the Old Testament and Greek literature, for “putting on” and “putting off” or “removing” some kinds of behavior (Job 29:14; Ps 109:18; especially Is 61:3, 10; see comment on Rom 13:12), other

attributes (2 Chron 6:41; Ps 93:1) and so forth.

Jewish wisdom writers and Greek philosophers could have agreed with Paul's emphasis on "renewing the mind"; they understood that one's attitudes and values affected one's lifestyle. But Paul's basis for renewal differs from theirs; he bases it on the new kind of life available in Christ, a kind of life that most Jewish people expected only in the world to come (after the resurrection of the dead).

4:23. In contrast, we are **to be made new in the attitude of our minds**. How? You are what you think. You move in the direction of what you put into your mind and what you allow your mind to dwell on. So if you are not what you want to be, then you must begin to think differently. If you are to think differently, you must put into your mind that which you want to become. If you do, the Holy Spirit will use it to change you to become what you want to be. If you don't, you will never be what you want to be. It all depends on what you put into your mind. This is what it means to be made new in the attitude of your mind.

4:24. Finally, we are **to put on the new self**. This means, we are to allow the new self to govern our activities. We are to begin living the lifestyle that corresponds to who we have become in Christ. This new holy self shows we are maturing, growing in unity with the body, and doing our part of the body's work.

4:24 "put on" This is an AORIST MIDDLE INFINITIVE. This is the clothing metaphor which emphasizes the continuing decision to be in Christ (cf. Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27; Col. 3:8, 10, 12, 14; James 1:21; 1 Pet. 2:1). This terminology of putting on Christ may have even been connected to the ordinance of baptism in the early church, where new converts put on clean, white clothing after baptism.

Application

The presence of Jesus Christ does not prevent His own from suffering. Even more, His presence prepares us