

Pt 2a-Covenant Symbolism-Supplement

Note: This is a supplement to [Part 2-Covenant: Exchanging of Robes](#) While there is duplication of material but there is also some unique material on this page.

SYMBOLISM of COVENANT PUTTING ON CHRIST'S ROBE

The Covenant Between Jonathan and David

PUTTING ON CHRIST'S ROBE

- The exchange of robes in the Old Testament signifies a total identification of David with Jonathan and is a picture or shadow of what is true of all who have entered the New Covenant with Christ and are now eternally, immutably identified with Him through this everlasting covenant.
- When we believed on Christ, receiving Him as Savior and Lord, we entered into the New Covenant and were identified with His death, burial and resurrection.
- Now that we are identified with Christ, we have a responsibility to make moment by moment choices that reflect the identity of our Covenant Partner. In other words when others look at us they should 'see Him' in our Christlike words and deeds.

Remember that the Hebrew noun **beriyth** [word study] refers to a contract made by passing between pieces of cut flesh and the Hebrew verb **karath** means to cut, so that together the phrase "make a covenant" (karath beriyth) means to cut a covenant by passing between halves of flesh. Remember also that in the ancient world, the concept of **covenant** was the most solemn, binding, intimate, inviolable contract into which two parties could enter. Covenant was held in high esteem by all ancient societies in contrast to our modern society which barely even has an inkling of the profound significance of that word.

The Exchange of Robes: Putting on the Other Party

One of the most famous **man to man** covenants was between King Saul's son Jonathan and David, who had been anointed to be the next king by the prophet Samuel. The reference passage 1 Samuel 18, immediately follows David's slaying of Goliath which catapulted him (at least for the moment) into the good graces of King Saul.

- 1 Samuel 18:1 Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of ("became one in spirit with" NIV) David, and Jonathan loved him as himself (literally = "as his own soul")
- 2 And Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house.
- 3 Then Jonathan **made a covenant** ("cut a covenant" Karath beriyth) David because he loved him as himself. (The Living Bible paraphrase has "Jonathan swore to be his blood brother")
- 4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.

This discussion examines the Old Testament covenant between Jonathan and David and the practical application of this Old Testament picture to the life of a New Covenant believer. New Testament passages which parallel the Old Testament picture of the events of 1 Samuel 18:1-4 can help us understand from another vantage point some of the events which transpired when we entered into the New Covenant by grace through faith.

Jonathan initiated the cutting of a Covenant with David. Jonathan's basis for initiating covenant was his love for David (Think of God's motive for cutting covenant with sinful men! John 3:16, 13:15). He loved David as his soul or as his own life.

Now, thinking back on other covenants between men, how does this covenant differ from most of those other covenants between men?

Clearly it is based not on fear as most of the other covenants but on friendship (which itself is a covenant term as we will see in later studies) and on love.

Jonathan demonstrates his commitment to this solemn, binding covenant by giving David his royal robe. In a symbolic sense, (especially as this practice was understood in ancient times), David is "putting on" Jonathan. David is taking on the identity of his covenant partner Jonathan. In essence the two have become one. Note that this new relationship heralds **an end of independent living** for both partners since they now are called to live for each other. There is to be a **surrender of self** interest for the covenant partner and we see that Jonathan willingly gave up his right to be king!

Compare these profound truths (two become one - Ge 2:24, end to independent living, surrender of self, etc) to the marriage covenant (see Covenant As It Relates to Marriage). Are you as convicted as I am, even after 42 years of marriage!

An ancient writer said that

Friendship is an entire sameness and one soul; a friend is another self. (Treasury of Scripture Knowledge)

Matthew Henry offers the apt description that...

David is seen in Jonathan's clothes that all may take notice he is Jonathan's second self.

Let's review...

What is implicit in the symbolism of two becoming one, of total identification of one with the other?

Surrender of one's separate self or rights. Yielding your rights to your covenant partner. Remember that most people today do not fully comprehend the full meaning of the word **covenant** -- but Jonathan knew that the covenant he was cutting with David was the closest, holiest, most solemn, most binding and most non dissoluble agreement that he could make with David.

What might Jonathan have surrendered? What rights did Jonathan possess (who was his father)?

Jonathan was in line to be king of Israel. When he gave David his royal robe, he in effect surrendered his right to the throne, his personal ambitions, even his family (especially his father) as subsequent studies will show.

What does this illustration have to do with our new covenant relationship with Jesus Christ? What happened when we repented and received Jesus as Lord and Savior? What was our spiritual position and our destiny before we entered the New Covenant?

Look first at 1Cor 15:22

"For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive."

So before we entered the New Covenant we were all in Adam and destined for eternal death and separation from God. There is no middle ground.

Now how does Isaiah describe our "robe" while we were in Adam?

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment (Isa 64:6a)

Our "robe", our very best works, was like a "filthy garment" in the eyes of the Holy God.

What does 2 Cor 5:21 teach about the royal robe that Christ provided for us when He cut covenant?

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

We enter the New Covenant we become one with Christ and are identified with Christ. We experience a change of garments and are no longer in Adam but are now in Christ. Our spiritual position before we entered the New Covenant was "in Adam" and our destiny was eternal death. Now that we have entered the New Covenant cut by Christ, our new position is "in Christ" and our destiny is eternal life. We are now clothed with Christ's righteousness robes (as discussed further in Galatians 3 below).

Since believers are now in covenant with Christ and are wearing His robe, do we have any responsibility? Who should others see?

As a result of entering the new covenant, and having put on Christ's robe, we have the responsibility to live in such a way that the

world sees Christ not us. We will look at NT passages that provide us the power and the motivation to put this truth into practice.

New Clothing

Galatians 3:26, 27, 28, 29

Christ the King, like Jonathan the crown prince (the "king in waiting"), cut a new covenant in His blood with fallen mankind in fulfillment of the promised gospel in Genesis 3:15 (which some theologians refer to as the "Adamic Covenant" even though the word "covenant" is not used). When a man or woman places their faith in Christ, they become a covenant partner with Christ, entering into this new covenant in His blood (Lk 22:20, Mt 26:28, 1Co 11:25).

When we enter into this new covenant with Christ, our faithful Friend (Jn 15:13, 14, 15), do we also experience an exchange of robes analogous to that which occurred between Jonathan and David?

As we have already alluded to the answer clearly is "yes" and Paul helps us understand the spiritual transaction (and transformation) that took place when we first believed in Christ (and entered the New Covenant with Him) writing to the saints at Galatia explaining that...

you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized (baptizo - word study) into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if (since = assumes this to be true) you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:26, 27, 28, 29)

In this passage Paul explains several spiritual truths that apply to every person who has entered into the New Covenant with Christ....

We have been placed into a new spiritual family - now we are all sons of God through faith in Christ based on our entry into the New Covenant (Gal 3:26, cp Jn 1:12, 13, 1Jn 3:1-note)

We have been **baptized** [word study] (past tense, accomplished fact at the moment of our regeneration) into Christ. In other words, now that we are in the New Covenant with Christ we are forever identified with Him. (Gal 3:27)

We have **clothed** (word study) ourselves with Christ (Gal 3:29) which is the NT parallel of Jonathan giving David his robe and "putting on Jonathan".

We belong to Christ - practically speaking this means that independent living should be "put off" as we live for the One to Whom we now forever belong (Gal 3:29) Paul echoes this truth in 1Co 6:19, 20 (see comments) explaining that we "are not our own" but have "been bought with a price".

We are Abraham's offspring (seed) or descendant and thus we are heirs of the promises given to him. (Gal 3:29, cp Ge 15:5)

To reiterate, now when God looks at us, what garment does He see? What does Galatians 3:26-29 teach about our new identity? What difference should this truth make in our daily practice?

God the Father now sees Christ's righteousness clothing us. This is the position ("positional truth") of every believer. This position became a reality in our life when we entered the New Covenant by grace through faith. This positional truth is everlasting, for the covenant is everlasting. Stated another way, once we have entered the New Covenant and are clothed with Christ's righteousness, we can never be "unclothed", we can never lose our salvation as some teach and as others sometimes fear. As we stated, our position as those who have entered the New Covenant is that we are no longer in Adam but in Christ, clothed in, enveloped by His perfect righteousness. As we have alluded to our goal, our desire (motivated by love for our Covenant Partner, empowered by His Spirit and His sufficient grace) is to live so that our daily practice matches or truly reflects our new position, our new identity of our Covenant Partner, Jesus Christ. As an aside Paul's frequent use of the phrase "in Christ (note)" (and "in Christ Jesus" = 86x in 83v in the NASB, and does not include his frequent use of "in Him") is a covenant term which reflects our new position in Him.

The Wycliffe Bible Commentary adds that..

Jonathan, the son of the king, gave all the material gifts. David, the poor man's son, gave but love and respect. One is reminded of the gift of God's Son to poverty-stricken humanity. ([Pfeiffer, C F: Wycliffe Bible](#))

What does the verb baptizo mean? (Used in Gal 3:27 and Ro 6:3 - note)?

James Boice points out the use of baptizo in classical Greek literature.

"Here we gain a great deal of help from classical Greek literature, for there is evidence that the Greek classical writers used the word baptizo from about 400 B.C. to the second century after Christ. In their writings baptizo always points to a change of identify [sic] by any means. Thus, to give a few quite general examples, it can refer to a change having taken place by immersing an object in a liquid, as in dying cloth; by drinking too much wine and getting drunk; by overexertion; and by other causes.

"Of all the texts that might be cited from antiquity the one that makes greatest clarity of the distinct use of the two words is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. In it he used both the word [bapto](#), which we have already seen means 'to dip,' and the word 'baptize' (baptizo). It is a recipe for making a pickle. Nicander says that the vegetable should first be dipped ([bapto](#)) into boiling water and then baptized (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Quite clearly, both operations had to do with immersing the vegetable in the solution. But the first was temporary while the other, the operation of baptizing the vegetable, produced a permanent change. We could say that the baptizing had identified the vegetable with the brine....When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism... mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with Him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle!"...What does all this mean? Does it exclude water baptism? Definitely not. Water baptism is clearly mentioned in the Word of God. The point is, Interpret the word according to its meaning and metaphorical uses in the light of its immediate context." ([Boice, The Gospel of John, Vol. 1 Baker Books, 2005](#)) (Bolding added)

Click for a longer discussion of the meaning of the Greek word baptizo.

In summary believers are "clothed" in the righteousness of Christ reflecting the "exchange of robes" that occurred when we entered the New Covenant in His blood. It follows that what the world should now see is His righteousness through us.

How can the world see Christ's righteousness through us?

Because of our new position in Christ, we now can carry out a new practice in His power. Now when others see our righteous (simply saying and doing what is "right") behavior, they are seeing behavior that corresponds to our new clothing which reflects our new identity with Christ. Now we will look at the practical outworking of our new identity.

We Possess A New Power Romans 6:1-7

How can we fulfill our responsibility to "practice our position", to live in such a way that when others see us they see our Covenant Partner Jesus Christ?

In Romans 6 although the word "covenant" is not mentioned, clearly the transactions Paul describes correspond to the moment we entered the New Covenant with Christ by grace through faith. Paul explains that because of what transpired when we entered the New Covenant, we now have a new power which enables us to fulfill our responsibility to our Covenant Partner.

Paul asks...

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin (SIN = the power of Sin, Sin as an "evil king", a harsh "master" - every use of Sin in Romans 6 refers to sin as a power, not sins that we commit. We commit sins because of the power of Sin.) that grace might increase?

2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin (the dominion of Sin) still live in it?

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into (identified with) Christ Jesus have been baptized into (identified with) His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from

the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old self (Old man - all we were **in Adam**) was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with (not annihilated but stripped of its power, made ineffective - it is still present but to carry on the analogy of a "king", it has been deposed in our lives by virtue of what happened with us when we died with Christ), that we should no longer be slaves to sin;

7 for he who has died is freed from sin. (Now when we yield to the power of Sin and commit sins it is because we are making a choice. When we were in Adam, we really had no choice. Sin was our Master. Now that we are in the New Covenant, and in Christ, Sin is no longer our Master. But we can still choose to obey Sin.)

What transpired in Romans 6:3?

We were baptized into His death. When He died, we died. The idea is that when we entered the New Covenant with Christ, we were "immersed" immediately into a state of total identification with Him. As we grow in our understanding of the new covenant we will come to understand the significance of this vital spiritual principle.

What transpired in Romans 6:4?

We were buried with Christ. When He was buried we were buried.

What transpired in Romans 6:5?

We were united with Him in His death and His resurrection

How can we now walk or conduct ourselves in this world according to Romans 6:4?

In newness of life - a brand new life.

What happened in Romans 6:6?

Our old man was crucified with Him and the result is that we no longer have to obey our old slave master Sin. The power that Sin once had over us has been broken, which is why we can walk in newness of life.

What did Paul say we cannot continually do in Romans 6:1-2?

Now that we are in the New Covenant we cannot continually commit individual sins as our habitual practice.

When we commit sins now, what does that reflect?

It's a choice. Before we entered the New Covenant, we did not have the power to choose not to commit sins. When I commit sins now, it is a choice I make.

How does Paul reiterate this truth of our new relationship to the "old man" in Romans 6:7?

Believers are now free from Sin -- not just free from the penalty of Sin (death) but from the power that Sin had over us when we were in Adam, the power to cause us to commit individual sins.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones offers a helpful illustration of the believer's relation to his old sinful disposition (Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 6). He pictures two adjoining fields, one owned by Satan and one owned by God, that are separated by a road. Before salvation, a person lives in Satan's field and is totally subject to his jurisdiction. After salvation, a person works in the other field, now subject only to God's jurisdiction. As he plows in the new field, however, the believer is often cajoled by his former master, who seeks to entice him back into the old sinful ways. Satan often succeeds in temporarily drawing the believer's attention away from his new Master and his new way of life. But he is powerless to draw the believer back into the old field of sin and death.

John Piper adds

Picture your flesh -- that old ego with the mentality of merit and craving for power and reputation and self-reliance -- picture it as a dragon living in some cave of your soul. Then you hear the gospel, and in it Jesus Christ comes to you and says, "I will make you mine and take possession of the cave and slay the dragon. Will you yield to My possession? It will mean a whole new way of thinking and feeling and acting." You say: "But that dragon is me. I will die." He says, "And you will rise to newness of life, for I will take its plan; I will make My mind and My will and My heart your own." (Ed: Can you see the idea of "covenant" in Piper's words) You say,

"What must I do?" He answers, "Trust Me and do as I say. As long as you trust Me we cannot lose." Overcome by the beauty and power of Christ you bow and swear eternal loyalty and trust. And as you rise He puts a great sword in your hand and says, "Follow me." He leads you to the mouth of the cave and says, "Go in, slay the dragon." But you look at him bewildered, "I cannot. Not without You." He smiles. **"Well said. You learn quickly. Never forget: My commands for you to do something are never commands to do it alone."**

Then you enter the cave together. A horrible battle follows and you feel Christ's hand on yours. At last the dragon lies limp. You ask, "Is it dead?" His answer is this: "I have come to give you new life. This you received when you yielded to my possession and swore faith and loyalty to me. And now with My Sword and My hand you have felled the dragon of the flesh. It is a mortal wound. It will die. That is certain. But it has not yet bled to death and it may yet revive with violent convulsions and do much harm. So you must treat it as dead and seal the cave as a tomb. The lord of darkness may cause earthquakes in your soul to shake the stones loose but you build them up again. And have this confidence: with My sword and My hand on yours this dragon's doom is sure, he is finished, and your new life is secure." [Amen].

Christ has taken possession of our soul. Our old self has been dealt a mortal wound and stripped of its power to have dominion. The Christian life, the fruit of the Spirit, is a contrast reckoning of the flesh as dead (piling stones on its tomb - see Ro 6:11 which is a command calling for continual obedience) and a constant relying on the present Spirit of Christ (See Gal 5:16, Gal 5:22, Gal 5:23) to produce love, joy and peace within. The difference between the Christian life and popular American morality is that Christians will not take one step unless the hand of Christ holds the hand that wields the sword of righteousness.

Let's summarize the spiritual transactions that took place when we entered the New Covenant...

- (1) We have died (past tense, completed action = aorist tense) to SIN (the power of Sin, Sin as our "master")
Now we have a choice to not obey the power of Sin. (Ro 6:2-note)
- (2) We were [baptized](#) (see word study) into His death (Identified with His death on Calvary) (Ro 6:3-note)
- (3) Now we can walk in [newness](#) of life - we have access to "Resurrection power" (Ro 6:4-note)
- (4) Our [old self](#) has been crucified with Christ = Our body of SIN has done away with ([see note on old self](#)) (Ro 6:6-note)
- (5) We no longer need to be slaves to our old master SIN (Ro 6:6-note)
- (6) We have been freed from the power and rule of SIN (Ro 6:7-note)

The question we each need to ask ourselves is are we choosing to yield to our New Master Christ or are we choosing to yield to our old "Master" Sin? We now have a choice. Which begs the question "Who do others see now?" Do they see Christ in me the hope (certainty) of (future) glory or do they just see me?

New Motivation to Lay Aside the Old and Put on the New Clothes Romans 13:12-14

In Romans 13:12, 13, 14 Paul gives us a new motive to carry out our new responsibility? What motive do you see in this passage?

Ro 13:11 And this do (love - Ro 13:9, 10), knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. 12 The night (spiritual darkness that enshrouds this present world) is almost over. (see [note](#)) The day is at hand (the day when the "Light of the World" returns to dispel all darkness = Second Coming of our Lord and King, Jesus Christ) Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. (Ro 13:12-note)

What does Paul say about our motive? What truth should cause us to seek to practice our position to live like Christ so that others see Him?

In this context Paul refers to the day of Christ's return, a truth that should motivate a sense of urgency in all of us.

What is the responsibility in this passage in Ro 13:12-note, Ro 13:13-note?

Lay Aside the deeds of darkness (note) =

Put on (clothe ourselves with) the armor of light (note)

You may be thinking "*I thought we were clothed with Christ when we entered into the New Covenant by faith*". The answer is, yes, we have already "put on" Christ at the time of salvation. This "putting on" however represents a one time event and signifies our new, eternally secure position before God. Our position in union with Christ, identified with Christ, clothed with Christ, baptized into Christ occurred at a moment in time past and can never be altered. This doctrine is true forever. However, doctrine always demands "duty". In other words, believers now have a responsibility to practice a lifestyle and behaviors which are concordant or in keeping with our new position. In Ro 13:12, 13, 14 Paul is speaking to those who have already "put on" Christ in salvation and now he is calling for each believer to moment by moment "put on" the attitudes and actions associated with and made possible by our new life in Christ our covenant partner. The Bible uses other terms such as justification ("past tense salvation") to describe our position in Christ and sanctification ("present tense salvation") to describe our practice in Christ. (Click for several tables summarizing past, present and future tense salvation).

What will this new behavior look like according to Paul?

Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. (Romans 13:13-note)

We won't continue to partake of things like carousing (riotous conduct, especially nocturnal riotous festivities), drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, sensuality, strife, jealousy (Romans 13:13-note)

According to Paul in Romans 13:14, what "clothes" do believers now need to put on daily and moment by moment throughout the day as the "opportunity" arises?

But **put on** the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make** no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts (see *epithumia* = a drive or passion directed toward the object desired). (Ro 13:14-note)

William Barclay translates Romans 13:14 this way...

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a man puts on a garment, and stop living a life in which your first thought is to gratify the desires of Christless human nature. ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press](#))

And so we note that Paul gives 2 commands as covenant partners with Christ which we are to obey in order show His identity to others. Remember that what God commands, He always enables (see Romans 6 above for part of that enablement. The enablement also includes His indwelling Spirit and His empowering grace).

(1) **Put on** (tense = aorist imperative = do it now, it's urgent) the Lord Jesus Christ (note "Lord" = kurios = master, owner, possessor - we are no longer to live as if we were our own) Note: To put on Christ is to daily and moment by moment adopt His whole lifestyle and live as He lived

(2) **Make** no provision for the flesh (the corrupt nature inherited from Adam which is centered upon self, prone to sin, and opposed to God) in regard to its lusts (Ro 13:14-note)

Notice that the tense of "**make**" is present imperative which with the Greek negative means "*Stop doing this!*" "*Stop continually making provision!*" implying that they were making plans for the strong desires latent in their old flesh nature, a fallen which, although "dethroned" is still present in believers. The difference now is that believers are "strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2Ti 2:1-note); cp the role of "grace" as our instructor in Titus 2:11-note, Titus 2:12-note, "teaches" in Titus 2:12NIV) and enabled by Spirit (Ro 8:13-note) to say "yes" to Jesus (Spirit gives us the "want to") and "no" to the flesh (Spirit gives us the "don't want to") (see our responsibility to **work out** your salvation while God is working in us to enable that working out - Php 2:12-note, Php 2:13-note, cp Ezekiel 36:26, 27).

The word provision is *pronoia* (from *pró* = before + *noíeo* = think, so literally "think before"). We think about the sin that "pleases" us and make plans for it. The point is that most sinful behavior results from wrong ideas and lustful desires we allow to linger in our minds for as James teaches "each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death." (James 1:14,15-notes) Paul commands us to put provision aside as if it were dirty, filthy clothes.

New Self = New Man

Our Responsibility

Ephesians 4:21-32

In [Ephesians 4](#) Paul describes what happened to our "filthy rags" when we entered into covenant the Lord Jesus and He gave us His robe explaining that...

21 If (or since = following is assumed true) indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, **SPEAK TRUTH**, EACH ONE of you, WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. 26 **BE ANGRY**, AND yet **DO NOT SIN**; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity. 28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. 29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. (see notes Ephesians 4:21-32) (**Red** = commands)

Summing up the truths as related to the new covenant we see that...

- (1) We Laid aside **OLD SELF** (**Old Self** = all I was in the filthy garment of Adam before I put on Christ's robe of righteousness at salvation) (Ephesians 4:22 - see note)
- (2) WE ARE BEING Renewed in spirit of your mind (This process began the moment we entered the new covenant and is occurring continually in our lives as the Holy Spirit takes the truth of the Word and renews our thinking at the core level, transforming us from glory to glory) (Ephesians 4:23 - see note)
- (3) WE have Put on the **NEW SELF**... (**See note**) (Ephesians 4:24 -see notes)

Note that some commentators feel Ephesians 4:22, 23, 24 represents instructions to be followed. Others, feel these describe past tense events that took place the moment we entered the new covenant and thus equate with our new position in Christ.

Notice that in Ephesians 4:25 Paul begins with "therefore" (term of conclusion). The idea is that since at the time of salvation we have put off the old self and put on the new self, now empowered by the Spirit Who energizes the new person we are in Christ, we have a responsibility to daily put this new life into practice by putting off and putting on the following specific attitudes and actions, as described in Eph 4:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. The chart below summarizes the "filthy rags" we need to take off and fling aside so that our practice corresponds to our new position and identity as those clothed in robes of Christ's righteousness...dear Christian, covenant partner of Christ, beloved of the Father, how are you doing in each of these areas?

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS PARTAKERS OF THE NEW COVENANT	
PUT OFF	PUT ON
Eph 4:25 falsehood (lying)	Eph 4:25 speak truth
Eph 4:26 sinful anger	Eph 4:26 righteous anger
Eph 4:28 stealing	Eph 4:28 work for living
Eph 4:29 rotten words	Eph 4:29 Word that build up
Eph 4:31 bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, malice	Eph 4:32 be kind, tender hearted, forgiving

Related Resources:

- Ephesians 4:22 Commentary notes: Lay off old, Old Man, New Man
- Ephesians 4:24 Commentary notes: Put on New Self
- Ephesians 4:20-24 Sermon: A Brand New Way of Life - 2
- Ephesians 4:22-27 Sermon: A Brand New Way of Life - 3
- Ephesians 4:17-27, 4:28-32

Spiritual Reupholstering - When we moved into our home 5 years ago, we discovered that the former owner had left us six dining room chairs. They were covered with fabric of beautiful African art—tasteful zebra stripes. We appreciated the unexpected gifts and used them frequently when entertaining guests.

When we recently moved again, those chairs needed a makeover to match our new decor. So I called an upholsterer and asked, "Shouldn't we just put the new material over the existing fabric?" He responded, "No, you'll ruin the shape of the chair if you just put new material over the old."

The work of God in our lives is similar. He's not interested in merely changing our spiritual appearance. Instead, He intends to replace our character with what is called "the new man," made in the image of Christ (Ephesians 4:24). The flesh has a tendency to perform religious activity, but this is not the work of the Holy Spirit. He will completely transform us on the inside.

But the process is a partnership (Philippians 2:12, 13). As we daily lay aside our old behaviors and replace them with godly ones, the God of grace works in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

God wants to reupholster us. —Dennis Fisher ([Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Dear Lord, You've given new life to me—
A great and full salvation;
And may the life that others see
Display the transformation. —Hess

When you receive Christ, God's work in you has just begun.

New Position Calls for New Practice Colossians 3:1-17

After spending two chapters explaining the truth about the believer's position in Christ, in Colossians 3 Paul turns to the believer's practice. He first reminds us about our new "robe" or our new position and new power.

- 1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
- 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Observe that the truth in Col 3:1 (note) assures us that we can now walk in newness of life, for if we have been raised up the implication is that we have "resurrection power" to live the Christ life. Knowing however that how we think always determines how we behave, Paul gives two commands we are to continually strive to obey....

- (1) **Seek** (command to make this the habit of your live) the things above
- (2) **Set** your mind (command to make this the habit of your live) on things above, not on things on the earth (as we think so we will act) (Col 3:1-note; Col 3:2-note)

In Col 3:3 (note) Paul reaffirms the truth that a supernatural transaction has taken place in us at the moment we entered the New Covenant -- we died (i.e., our old self was crucified with Christ) and this immutable covenant is secured by the fact that we are now

permanently (perfect tense = happened at a point in time with continuing effect -- speaks of permanent effect) hidden with Christ in God. Dearly beloved, remember that nothing, absolutely nothing can negate or reverse this grand truth. You are secure with your faithful Friend and covenant Partner Christ Jesus...forever!

And in Col 3;4 (note) Paul explains how it is possible to fulfill our responsibility to live in a manner worthy of our Covenant Partner. How? Christ...our life! There is no verb (no "is" in the original Greek) so direct and complete is this relationship. Paul summarizes this same life changing, mysterious truth in Galatians 2:20 declaring...

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me." (Galatians 2:20 - see notes)

And as if this truth were not enough, Paul reminds us that (1) Christ will return and (2) we will be revealed with Him. These truth serve to motivate us to diligently seek to purify ourselves just as He is pure, to live for our Bridegroom Whose "clothes" we now wear, and as His bride daily performing righteous acts [put off's and put on's] which Revelation 19:8 (see [note](#)) describes as the "fine linen, bright and clean" we will one day soon wear at the marriage supper of the Lamb) (see notes Colossians 3:3; Colossians 3:4). Note that it has been estimated that roughly one in twenty verses in the NT speak directly or indirectly about the Second Coming of our Lord. Living in the light of His imminent return should motivate us to walk accordingly. John echoes this sentiment in his first epistle writing...

And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming....2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1John 2:28, 3:2, 3)

In Col 3:12-note Paul reminds us of our new identity in Christ's "garment of salvation" explaining that we are "chosen of God, holy (eternally set apart from this temporal world by God and for God) and beloved (which should motivate us to please the One Who "clothed" us)

Based on the truths Paul has summarized in Colossians 3:1, 2, 3, 4, what are some of the "filthy rags" we need to take off and fling aside so that our practice corresponds to our new identity as those clothed in robes of Christ's righteousness?

WHAT BELIEVERS MUST PRACTICE SO THAT OTHERS SEE OUR NEW POSITION IN CHRIST	
PUT OFF	PUT ON
Col 3:5 immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, greed = idolatry Col 3:8, 9 anger, wrath, malice, slander, abusive speech, lying	Col 3:12, 13, 14 heart of compassion, kindness humility gentleness patience bearing with one another forgiving one another put on love Col 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you (Ephesians 5:18 parallel = filled with the Spirit) Col 3:17 Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus

(see commentary Colossians 3:5, 3:6; 3:7; 3:8; Colossians 3:9, 3:10, 3:11, 3:12; 3:13; 3:14; 3:15; 3:16)

Our Daily Bread has the following devotional related to this passage...

No Lie (based on "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds. — Col 3:9-note) - A college football coach resigns after admitting he falsified his academic and athletic credentials. A career military officer confesses to wearing combat decorations he did not earn. A job applicant acknowledges that her stated experience in "food and beverage oversight" was actually making coffee each morning at the office.

Within each of us is a tendency to embellish the truth in order to impress others. Whether on a job résumé or in casual conversation, exaggeration comes naturally—but we pay a price. Small lies usually grow larger as we try to avoid discovery. Then we wonder how we ever got ourselves into such a predicament.

The Bible says, "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (Col 3:9, 10-note). In other words, if we've placed our faith in Jesus as our Savior, lying is inconsistent with what God expects us to be. The antidote to the poison of self-promotion is a growing Christlikeness—a spirit of mercy, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and love (Col 3:12, 13, 14-see notes Col 3:12; 13; 14).

If we genuinely care about people, we won't need to try to impress them at any cost. —David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, help me to please You by telling the truth,
Being honest in words and in deeds;
And help me to conquer my selfish desires,
To love others and care for their needs. —Fitzhugh
Honesty means never having to look over your shoulder.

IN ORDER TO CUT COVENANT JESUS TOOK ON THE ROBE OF HUMANITY Philippians 2:6-8

In Philippians Paul explains how Jesus took man's "robe" writing that Christ Jesus...

although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Php 2:6, 7, 8-note)

For all eternity Jesus wore the "robe of Divinity" as co-equal with God (Php 2:5, 6, 7-note). In order to take on the "robe" of humanity He stepped down from His exalted position as the only begotten Son of God as Paul carefully outlined...

(1) He chose not to demand or cling to His rights as God. He continued to fully exist as God but during His incarnation refused to hold on to His divine rights and privileges. (Note that equality refers to exact equivalence!)

(2) He emptied Himself. Although He remained fully God He emptied Himself completely of certain aspects of His prerogatives as God. (Note that in the gospels He still was able to perform miracles, forgive sins and know the hearts of people.)

(3) He took the form of a bond-servant (see *doulos*). Form is the Greek word *morphe* which stresses essence of one's nature. Thus Jesus existed in the form (*morphe*) of God and now in the form (*morphe*) of a bond-servant. In other words, He did not just put on the external raiment of a slave but actually became a slave in the fullest sense. (Note that bond-servant is *doulos* [see word study] was one who owned absolutely nothing. Literally everything he was belonged to his master)

(4) He was made in the likeness of men. Likeness means that which is made to be like something else, not just in appearance but in reality. Jesus possessed all the attributes of men and was not simply a reasonable facsimile of a man, not like Adam before the Fall but with all the frailties, limitations, and suffering that were the result of the Fall. All except that He was without sin. He 2:14 [see note] is a good "commentary" stating that

Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same

(5) Being found in appearance as a man. This phrase teaches that Jesus was recognized as a man by those who observed Him during His time on earth. The word appearance is schema which contrasts with form (morphe) and likeness (homoioima) which both refer to the very essence and basic nature. Schema on the other hand refers to outward shape or form. Here Paul describes Jesus' whole outward appearance which bore no difference to that of other men. Note that Paul's use of schema is not meant to suggest that Christ's humanity was only apparent and not real for that point is addressed in both #3 and #4 above.

(6) He humbled Himself. The word humbled (tapeinoo) has the root idea of that which lies low and thus means to be brought low, referring especially to one's attitude. Greeks saw humility as shameful, but Jesus took the attitude of lowering Himself relative to God and to other men! This is an astounding, unfathomable truth. Believers need to remember this great truth when the slightest impulse arises to become self-assertive and self-seeking (or anything else focused on "self").

(7) He became obedient to the point of death. Jesus in taking on man's robe, died in man's place, in perfect submission to His Father, so that fallen men could put on His robe of righteousness. What an incredible exchange of robes! This is a foundational truth of the New Covenant in His blood. "While we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro 5:6-note).

In summary, we observe that Jesus exchanged His robe of Divinity for the clothes of humanity. He fulfilled His destiny as a Man by becoming obedient to the point of death on a cross thus becoming our Substitute for sin. Jesus like Jonathan did this for us because He loved us (Jn 15:13). He became a man in order to cut a New Covenant in His blood. May what He did for us in cutting the new covenant motivate us to live a life that reflects His robe of righteousness.

IN ORDER TO CUT COVENANT JESUS TOOK ON THE ROBE OF HUMANITY Hebrews 2:9-18 Notes

How does Hebrews describe Jesus' taking on a "robe" in the likeness of man? [Hebrews 2](#) teaches that ...

we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God (grace prompted by unbounded love moved Jesus to suffer in our place.) He might taste ("taste" is a Hebrew metaphor that does not mean "to sample" but to partake fully, to taste with the mouth and yielding the metaphorical sense "come to know", the idea being that Jesus died, with all that that entails = conveys the truth that Jesus was our Substitute) death (ultimate curse of man's lost destiny) for everyone (the cross conquering the curse and opening the way for man to receive a the crown again, having originally been given dominion over the earth)... 14 Since then the children share (koinonia = have fellowship, communion = having something in common with others, in this case flesh and blood) in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook (means to take hold of something that is not naturally one's own kind = Jesus was not by nature flesh and blood, but willingly took hold of it out of love for us in order to die in our place and allow us to take hold of the divine nature which was not naturally ours, see 2Pe 1:4-note) of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil (Sin gives Satan power over fallen man and the wages of sin is death, thus he had the power of death and sought to keep unregenerate men in sin so that when they died they would go into eternal death) 15 and might deliver (with the "weapon" of eternal life testified to by His resurrection) those who through fear of death (the "king of terrors", see 1Cor 15:55 "O death where is your sting?") were subject to slavery all their lives (Death was like a cruel dictator who we feared because of the finality of his "decree" - believers have by faith placed themselves into the arms of their new Master and King Who conquered death and He will carry us safely through to the other side of the grave!). 16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels (they do not experience redemption as does man), but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham (as described above, "Abraham's offspring" Gal 3:29). 17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things (speaking again of Jesus taking on fallen man's "robe" in order that He might cut covenant and), that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest (He came not only to save us but to sympathize with us) in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For since He Himself was tempted (Jesus identified with man and experienced what we experienced that He might sympathize with our weakness and

yet without sin) in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. (He 2:9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-See notes He 2:9, 14; 15; 16; 17; 18)

Jesus was made for a little while lower than angels so that by the grace of God He might taste death for fallen men but first He had to partake of the "garment" of flesh and blood (our humanity). The Son of God died as a Man that he might

- (1) Render powerless the Devil who had the power of death
- (2) Deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives
- (3) Give help to those who are spiritual descendants of Abraham

Jesus' identification with fallen man accomplished and specifically His suffering when He was tempted made Him ever able (the inherent power) to come to aid of (click boetheo = from boe = cry out + theo = run so means to run to aid of one who cries out for help) those with whom He is in covenant when they are being tempted. (See expansion of this thought in discussion of the exchange of armor and belt) (see related study - The LORD my Helper)

Application: Live Like a New Man!

Has there been a time in your life when you in effect cast off the filthy rags of unrighteousness (Isa 64:6) which we all inherited from Adam (Ro 5:12-note) and put on Christ's new "garment of salvation" (Gal 3:27) by grace through faith (Ep 2:8, 9note)?

Now that you have a new "garment of salvation" and "robe of righteousness" are you fulfilling your responsibility to your Covenant partner by living accordingly?

Are you daily and moment by moment putting off the filthy rags of the old self life and putting on the attitudes and behaviors of the [new self](#), keeping your clothes "unstained by the world" (Jas 1:27-note) so that "so that when He appears, you may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming." (1Jn 2:28)?:

Who does the world see when they see you? Whose "clothes" do they see?

We see a similar picture in 2 Corinthians where Paul says that now believers have been "scented" with "Eau de Jesus" so to speak (not meaning to be [sacrilegious](#) but this is really what has mystically and supernaturally transpired in the life of every believer!)

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? (2 Corinthians 2:14-16)

So the question is does your presence in the office, at the school, in your family, in your neighborhood, in your bridge club, in your golf match, etc, etc, give off a "sweet aroma of the knowledge of Jesus in every" one of these situations? You should! You can, because God has made you adequate! But you must still chose to put off the old man and put on the new man.