

In our lesson last week we talked about ways we try to become more righteous in our Christian living. Sometimes we:

- Struggle with trying by our own efforts to be perfect in all we do, and become discouraged.
- Compare ourselves to others, so as to look better in this comparison to a lowered standard, thereby deceiving ourselves.
- Only to realize that when we accepted Jesus as our Savior, His own perfect righteousness was Christ's gift to us. Given in love. Not earned/deserved.
- The awareness of and acceptance of Christ's righteousness in us is the key to wearing the breastplate that blocks the enemy from attacking our heart.

So, as you wash the dishes after dinner, deal with the difficulties on your job, struggle to keep your marriage intact, wade through troubling emotions, fight to keep yourself financially afloat, none of this can take away what the cross has given you.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18 tells us "...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come. All this is from God." This is not just a one day change of clothes but the action of "putting off" behaviors that were of the old self, those that were aligned with "darkness" instead of "light".

Let's see how Paul describes it to the Ephesians in Ephesians 4:22-24. Paul instructs us to put off certain behaviors in order to break connection with our past. How important do you think it is to break connection with our past? Why? If we continue to do things the same way we have done them in the past does it make sense to expect a different outcome? What are some examples?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Let's shine a light into what's in our pre-Christian closet of behaviors we need to "put off". Paul's going to help us. Look at these verses, what needs to go according to Paul? Write them on the line.

Which ones are difficult for you to put off? Those which are **symbolic** of your old life, those out- dated and out of character for you? Circle them.

Ephesians:

4:25 _____

4:26 _____

4:28 _____

4:29 _____

4:31 _____

5:3-5 _____

Looking at the words you circled what comfort or benefit do they give you that makes them hard to let go of? What difficulties have they brought into your life?

Putting them "off" was only part of Paul's instruction. It doesn't equal "putting on" Wearing the breastplate of righteousness means **replacing** old habits and lifestyle choices with carefully chosen virtues which align with the light of Christ. Such as Paul mentions in Ephesians: Write those virtues we are told to "put on".

4:24 _____

4:2-3 _____

4:25 _____

4:32 _____

Which of the virtues you listed above are the most difficult for you to put on? What relationships and circumstances make this most difficult to do now? This can be seen as not just a change in behavior but an **incorporation** of power from the one true God. The action of "putting off" and "putting on" IS the breastplate of righteousness. We do this by making a conscious decision and a firm **resolve** to "... put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light" (Romans 13:12). Not just a change in outward behavior (Matt. 23:25-28) or the inward struggle to do it on our own (Romans 7:15,19) but to be made new (Eph. 4:23). This is the real you at your core. And what are the results? Ephesians 5:9 tells us.

Put Off	Scriptural Insight	Put On
1. Lack of love	1 John 4:7-8, 20 John 15:12	Love
2. Judging	Matthew 7:1-2 John 8:9; 15:22	Let God search my heart
3. Bitterness	Hebrews 12:15 Ephesians 4:32	Tenderhearted and forgiving
4. Unforgiving spirit	Mark 11:26 Colossians 3:13	Forgiving spirit
5. Selfishness	Philippians 2:21 John 12:24	Self-denial
6. Pride	Proverbs 16:5 James 4:6	Humility
7. Boasting (conceit)	1 Corinthians 4:7 Philippians 2:3	Esteeming others
8. Stubbornness	1 Samuel 15:23 Romans 6:13	Brokenness
9. Disrespect for authority	Acts 23:5 Hebrews 13:17	Honor authority
10. Rebellion	1 Samuel 15:23 Hebrews 13:17	Submission
11. Disobedience	1 Samuel 12:15 Deuteronomy 11:27	Obedience
12. Impatience	James 1:2-4 Hebrews 10:36	Patience
13. Ungratefulness	Romans 1:21 Ephesians 5:20	Gratefulness
14. Covetousness	Luke 12:15 Hebrews 13:5	Contentment
15. Discontent	Hebrews 13:5 1 Timothy 6:8	Contentment
16. Muzzing/ complaining	Philippians 2:14 Hebrews 13:15	Praise
17. Irritation to others	Galatians 5:26 Philippians 2:3-4	Preferring in love
18. Jealousy	Galatians 5:26 1 Corinthians 13:4	Trust
19. Strife/contention	Proverbs 13:10 James 3:17	Peace
20. Retaliation (getting even)	Proverbs 24:29 Romans 12:19-20	Return good for evil

21. Losing tem,	Proverbs 25:28 Proverbs 16:32	Self-control
22. Anger	Proverbs 29:22 Galatians 5:22-23	Self-control
23. Wrath	James 1:19-20 Proverbs 15:1	Soft answer
24. Easily irritated	1 Corinthians 13:5 Proverbs 19:11	Not easily provoked
25. Hatred	Matthew 5:21-22 1 Corinthians 13:3	Love
26. Murder	Exodus 20:13 Romans 13:10	Love
27. Gossip	1 Timothy 5:13 Ephesians 4:29	Edifying speech
28. Evil speaking	James 4:11 Proverbs 15:30	Good report
29. Critical spirit	Galatians 5:15 Colossians 3:12	Kindness
30. Lying	Ephesians 4:25 Zechariah 8:16	Speak truth
31. Profanity	Proverbs 4:24 Proverbs 15:4	Pure speech
32. Idle words	Matthew 12:36 Proverbs 21:23	Bridle tongue
33. Wrong motives	1 Samuel 16:7 1 Corinthians 10:31	Spiritual motives
34. Evil thoughts	Matthew 15:19-20 Philippians 4:8	Pure thoughts
35. Complacency	Revelation 3:15 Revelation 3:19	Zeal
36. Laziness	Proverbs 20:4 Proverbs 6:6-11	Diligence
37. Slothfulness (not doing best)	Proverbs 18:9 Colossians 3:23	Wholeheartedness
38. Hypocrisy	Job 8:13 1 Thessalonians 2:3	Sincerity
39. Idolatry	Deuteronomy 11:16 Colossians 1:18	Worship God only
40. Left first love	Revelation 2:4 Revelation 2:5	Fervent devotion

41. Lack of rejoicing Rejoice
always Philippians 4:4 1 Thessalonians 5:18

42. Worry/fear Trust
Matthew 6:25-32 1 Peter 5:7

43. Unbelief Faith
Hebrews 3:12 Hebrews 11:1, 6

44. Unfaithfulness Faithfulness
Proverbs 25:19 Luke 16:10-12

45. Neglect of Bible study Bible study/
meditation
2 Timothy 3:14-17 Psalm 1:2

46. Prayerlessness Praying
Luke 18:1 Matthew 26:41

47. No burden for the lost Compassion/witnessing
Matthew 9:36-38 Acts 1:8

48. Burying talents Developing abilities
Luke 12:48 1 Corinthians 4:2

49. Irresponsibility (family/work) Responsibility
Luke 16:12 Luke 16:10

50. Procrastination Diligence
Proverbs 10:5 Proverbs 27:1

51. Irreverence in church Reverence
Ecclesiastes 5:1 Psalm 89:7

52. Inhospitable Hospitable
1 Peter 4:9 Romans 12:13

53. Cheating Honesty
2 Corinthians 4:2 2 Corinthians 8:21

54. Stealing Working/giving
Proverbs 29:24 Ephesians 4:28

55. Lack of moderation Temperance
Proverbs 11:1 1 Corinthians 9:25

56. Gluttony Discipline
Proverbs 23:21 1 Corinthians 9:27

57. Wrong friends Godly friends
Psalm 1:1 Proverbs 13:20

58. Temporal values Eternal values
Matthew 6:19-21 2 Corinthians 4:18

59. Love of money/greed Love of God
1 Timothy 6:9-10 Matthew 6:33

60. Stinginess Generosity
1 John 3:17 Proverbs 11:24-25

61. Moral impurity Moral purity
1 Thessalonians 4:7 1 Thessalonians 4:4

62. Fornication Abstinence
1 Corinthians 6:18 1 Thessalonians 4:3

63. Lust Pure desires
1 Peter 2:11 Titus 2:12

64. Adultery Marital fidelity
Matthew 5:27-28 Proverbs 5:14-19

65. Homosexuality Moral purity
Leviticus 18:22 1 Thessalonians 4:4-5

66. Incest Moral purity
Leviticus 18:6 1 Corinthians 7:2, 5

67. Pornography Pure thoughts
Psalm 101:3 Philippians 4:8

68. Immodest dress Modesty
Proverbs 7:10 1 Timothy 2:9

69. Flirtation Gentle, quiet spirit
Proverbs 7:21 1 Peter 3:4

70. Worldly entertainment Spiritual pursuits
Proverbs 21:17 Galatians 5:16

71. Fleshly music Edifying music
Ephesians 4:29-30 Ephesians 5:19

72. Bodily harm Glorify God
1 Corinthians 3:16-17 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
in body

73. Alcoholism Abstinence
Proverbs 20:1 Proverbs 23:30

74. Following the crowd God-fearing
Proverbs 1:10 Proverbs 3:7

75. Witchcraft/astrology/horoscopes Worship of God
Deuteronomy 18:10-11 Deuteronomy 6:5

76. Gambling Good stewardship
Proverbs 28:20, 22 Luke 16:11

77. Preferential treatment Love neighbor as self
James 2:1-9 Luke 6:31

78. Presumption on the future Trust God's will
Proverbs 27:1 James 4:14-16

Memory Verse: James 1:21-22 "Therefore get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so **deceive** yourselves. Do what it says."

IS THERE A COMMAND TO OBEY? Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

What did God show us today?

- 1) The awareness and acceptance of Christ's righteousness in you is the key to wearing the breastplate that blocks the enemy from attacking your heart.
- 2) No circumstance in your life can take away what the cross has given you.
- 3) The action of putting off and putting on is not just a change of behavior but the incorporation of power from the one true God.

James 1:22 tells us to not just listen to the Word but to do what it says. Why?

Word Study:

- 1) deceive: to mislead or trick someone by false statements or appearance. He deceived himself because he didn't want to face the truth of the situation.
- 2) incorporation: the adoption or uniting of the characteristics of another that happens as part of learning and maturing. It's important to incorporate the power of God into our lives as maturing Christians.
- 3) replacing: to substitute for a person or thing. It is important to replace old habits with new healthier ways to live.
- 4) resolve: to determine to do something; come to a definite decision. It takes a firm resolve to make life changes.
- 5) symbolic: something that stands for or represents something else; such as a flag that is a symbol for a country. Some of our behaviors are symbolic of our life before Christ.