

Clothe Yourself with Christ

By Cindy Buntin

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Colossians 3:12

Do you struggle to live a life that is pleasing to God? Do you desire to be compassionate, kind, humble, gentle and patient, yet find these qualities difficult to attain? Sometimes it seems the more I try to exhibit these qualities, the more I fail. In our verse this week, the apostle Paul says we are to clothe ourselves with these qualities. So how is this possible?

The definition of *clothe* is “to put on clothes.” Used figuratively, it means to endow with a particular quality. *Endow* means “to give as a gift.” To use these definitions, our verse means “to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, which have been given to you as a gift.”

Jesus Christ is the full embodiment of all these qualities. He is the creator of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Through His life lived on Earth as fully God and fully man, and through His sacrificial death on the cross for our sins, He demonstrated each of these qualities perfectly. Jesus, the creator of all, came to Earth and willingly gave up His life to bridge the gap between a lost world and God so that those who surrender their lives to Him will be reunited with God. It is the greatest demonstration of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience ever shown to man.

When we surrender our lives to Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us, freely giving us these qualities. But this doesn't mean we automatically exhibit these qualities. It is not in our nature to be compassionate, kind, humble, gentle, and patient. We have to call on the source of these qualities in order to exhibit them.

To clothe ourselves, or “put on” these qualities, requires action on our part. First, we need to have a desire to exhibit these qualities, which will come through the Holy Spirit working within us. Then when He presents us with the opportunity to exhibit these qualities we must deny our own flesh, which always goes against God's way of doing things, and rely on the Holy Spirit's wisdom and strength to help us to be compassionate, kind, humble, gentle, and patient. It is through His strength, not our own, that we are able to exhibit these qualities.

We can wear ourselves out trying to exhibit these qualities through our own effort. I have done this many times out of my own determination to be patient. Instead of asking the Holy Spirit to help me be patient, I try to be patient in my own strength, which always ends up unsuccessful. However, when I rely on the source of patience to give me patience, it suddenly becomes effortless, because it is the Holy Spirit working through me. As children of God, we have been given these gifts so that we may glorify Christ. I pray that you will clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience so that Christ will be glorified through you.

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved,
clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility,
gentleness, and patience. Colossians 3:12*

©Hope in the Lord Ministries. www.hopeintheLord.org Materials may be reproduced with permission.