

Put on the New Self

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[0 : 00] Father, at this time, we invite those of us who are here and those who are entering into worship as part of our online community, we ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would do a gentle but wonderful work in our hearts and help us to do what we want to do in our best moments but can't do in and of our own self without the help of your Holy Spirit.

So, Father, we give permission, full and unreserved permission for you to rule in our hearts and speak into our hearts. And we ask that you would do that this morning, that this, your word, would be brought deep into the very center of who we are so that we might live lives that bring you great glory.

And this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, you don't want to go too far with analogies like this, but it's just like God to do certain types of things. So, I'm going to be preaching on the Colossians text, and in the Colossians text you heard about how we have to put on compassion. I shouldn't say that as if I'm making fun of it, but, well, compassion, meekness, humility, forgiveness.

And it sort of struck me, actually, yesterday, because, as my wife will very properly tell you, I can be very, very thick. But it really struck, came home to me yesterday.

[1 : 26] But it sort of came to me all week that it's just like God that in a week where every day I'm thinking about how to preach on putting on compassion, meekness, forgiveness, that every single day this week I was involved in low-level conflict.

Like, every single day. It's just like God. That it wasn't as if I'm going to preach on, you know, compassion and showing mercy. And so, this week, I don't know, I was at a cottage, just my wife. Every day was better than the day before. We were just lovey, lovey, lovey all the time. And then I'd get up to come here on Sunday, and I'd get to say, oh, we all have to put on compassion and mercy and meekness and forgiveness.

And off we go, and I'd do it without having had to really struggle with it. But actually, it's just like God. Every single day this week, I was involved in low-level conflict. Every day, I kept bringing to myself, one moment, I'm supposed to be putting on compassion while I'm dealing with this bleepity, bleepity, bleepity, bleep, which is my flesh speaking, by the way, not the way a Christian should speak.

So, it's just like God. That's what my week has been like. Anyway, so we're going to be looking at Colossians chapter 3. And it's verses, actually, we're going to begin, Andrew has from verses 10 to 14 on the screen, but we're going to begin at verse 9.

[2 : 47] And that's because verses 10 and 11, and here's the other thing about this text, by the way. Just when I said to you that all this week I had to struggle, I'm in low-level conflict in several different directions.

Every single day this week, I'm in low-level conflict. But thanks be to God, I wasn't in any conflict with my wife, but I was in conflict with other people on behalf of the church and other types of things.

But, so every week I'm in conflict with, every day I'm in conflict with people. I'm thinking about this text. And the fact of the matter is that the things that Christ is asking us to put on aren't things that we would naturally put on.

And, in fact, they're probably not, like if you went to a management expert or a success expert, they're not what they would tell you to do. There might be little bits and pieces of it, but they would warn you against this text.

They'd say, well, don't take it to extreme, it's all right to do that a little bit. But what you need to do is you need to put on your big boy pants. You need to put on your game face. You need to get your

shoulders back.

[3 : 58] You need to be strong. You need to be this. You need to be that. That would probably be the type of advice. And just even when I said I'm praying and I, you know, in my mind I'm going to bleepity bleepity bleep. I mean, that's, you know, probably a management coach would say, yeah, that's what they are.

Like, channel that. Function. Get that going. Like, use that as a way to motivate how you go. So, this text is going to be telling us to do something which is not really, I mean, parts of it are what Canadians would think of as are very good things, but probably in every case they'd say don't take it to extremes.

Like, be careful or you're going to get caught. You're going to become a doormat. So, we're going to begin reading at verse 9, and that's because verses 10 and 11 are what I sometimes scholars call a Janus text.

Janus is a person in ancient mythology that was able to look at two directions at the same time. And so, 10 and 11 is a really important verse.

It's on one hand looking back to what had just happened, and the other hand it's looking forward to what Paul is about to say. And the reason it's really important as a Janus text is that what Paul had just been talking about before, which was what we talked about in the sermon last week, is about a series of vices, things which are bad that we have to put off, that we have to take off as clothing and throw away and not use.

[5 : 23] And it's a really important thing to have a Janus text like that that summarizes the putting off before introducing the putting on, because it's very easy for people to think, it's very easy to think of non-Christians to think this way about Christians, and part of the reason non-Christians think this way about Christians is that this is often how Christians, in fact, talk.

As if the things which are most important about Christians is all the sin, all the bad things, all the things you have to stop. Whether it's biblical sin or therapeutic sin or moralistic sin or religious sin, but we're often known for our don'ts.

At least that's how it's viewed on the outside. Often the more conservative the church is, the more we're prepared to talk about the things that we shouldn't be doing. But it's really important, and I have this, to summarize the don'ts by talking about the do.

Because, you see, if all of the Christian life is just about not doing things, well, that's completely impossible. It would be as if I gave you advice to only breathe out. If you only breathe out, you die. Right? You breathe out, and then you breathe in. You breathe out, and you breathe in. And so the Bible has this very, very healthy balance. There's things we need to get rid of to purge from our lives.

[6 : 41] But you don't just purge without clothing yourselves with something which is vastly and eternally better. So if you look at it, here's how it begins in verse 9, at the end of the vice list, the sin list.

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices. Now here's the beginning. You'll see it in the original language. The ESV captures it.

It's all part of the same sentence, in fact, right? But it's now beginning to move the focus, summarizing the past, moving towards the next bit. It says, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ is all in all. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved.

And there's going to be a list of eight virtues. Compassionate hearts. Kindness. Humility. Meekness. Another word to translate that is gentleness.

[7 : 52] Patience. Bearing with one another. And if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

And I'm going to unpack what these are, but the last bit is very, very important. And in the original language, it's seen to be not just the last thing in the list. You know, as if your wife has given you or your friend has given you a shopping list.

And, you know, there's all the thing. And the last thing on the list happens to be pick up the, you know, pepperoni or something. It's just one more thing. No, in the original language, it's the culmination.

It's a central point of the whole list. And the way to understand it, and it's a really beautiful image. It's part of the beauty. One of the things which people from the outside of the Christian faith don't understand often is how, once you enter into the way of Christ, how emotionally satisfying it can grow into becoming.

And you see part of the beauty of the gospel, by the way, it has these seven virtues. And then it says the love is the one that binds them all together. And what you have to try to imagine is you just imagine our solar system.

[9 : 08] And in our solar system, if there wasn't a sun at the center, which all of the planets spin around, then the planets would just be hurtling through space. They would eventually just become, I mean, they just become very big, I guess, meteors or whatever.

Like just cosmic dust hurtling through the space. But because the sun is at the center, it's holding all of the different planets in their orbit. And that's the image which the Bible is trying to communicate here about love.

That love is at the very center. That's what's helping you to understand what patience is going to be about, what forgiveness is about, all of these things. If that's not the sun that's keeping the rest of the virtues spinning in the right way, they're all just going to go in chaotic directions.

Now, you can see how this is a bit of a list that could be a bit counterintuitive. But let's go back to verse 10. Let's go back to verse 10 to verse 10 and just try to understand a little bit about why it is that the Bible would encourage us to have such a list like this.

Like, why is it that would encourage me that when I'm in conflict that I should be thinking about these things? And it's not just telling us to think about these things when we're in conflict. Why is it that these, in a sense, make sense from the Christian worldview?

[10 : 26] Well, look at it again, verse 10. And have put on the new self. And we're going to talk about it a little bit more in a moment, but put on as a clothing imagery. And that's, if you think about it, intuitively a very good image to work with.

When I come home, I have a thing about shorts. And so when I come home, as soon as I can, it depends. Sometimes I come home and we have to eat right away. But when I come home, if I have the time, you know, I put my dirty dishes, you know, I brought my food.

I put it in the sink. And I, you know, take my gym stuff and hang it up. And then I go into my room and I take off my clothes. And I put on, you know, a ratty old thing to cover myself on the top.

And I put on these shorts that aren't really decent to be worn in public. Like, I mean, they're just all ripped and everything. And they're just really old and very comfortable. And I'm home, right? If I had to be meeting the queen, I would dress the appropriate way.

If you have an important interview, you dress the right way. Going on a date, we have this understanding that clothes can contribute and fit with what it is you have to do. In fact, they can really help you.

[11 : 33] Some of you would say, how could I even go for a job interview if I'm dressed like this? You know, I don't have my power stuff on to do what we have to do. And so that's the image, the fundamental image which the Bible is using.

But it says here at verse 9, verse 10, And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. And this is a very, very important set of ideas.

The new self is the self that you get because when you give yourself to Jesus, there's several things which are going on here, and they're all really important to know.

Remember I said that the Christian life isn't just about not doing sin. Well, it's the same thing for what happens. Why is Jesus so important? Why is what he does on the cross so absolutely important to us?

Well, it's not just, as Paul talks about earlier in Colossians, that you can think about the idea that every single thing that you've ever done wrong, everything that anybody might accuse you of, anything that you might be ashamed of, anything that you accuse yourself of, if one of the things that you can do is just picture that when you're thinking about Jesus on the cross, just imagine that every single thing from the moment that you were able to do a wrong act until no matter how far the future is, that in all of these cases, every single item with nothing left over was nailed above Jesus' head, and he took the punishment that you deserved for every single thing on the list.

[13 : 05] And that's an important aspect of why the cross is so important. But the cross is important for another feature as well. It's not just what Christ took away, but what he clothes you with, what he gives you.

And that's why his life is so important. That's why it wouldn't be Christianity if all of a sudden, just like on Palm Sunday, God parachutes Jesus as a fully formed adult into the world, or even better, on Friday morning as a fully formed adult, Jesus just gets parachuted in by God, and God then has him nailed to the cross, and he rises from the dead.

That would only be dealing with the things which are wrong. It would be as if, well, it just would be dealing with the things that are wrong. But the other aspect of the gospel, which is so unbelievably important, is that God, the Son of God, humbles himself by taking, by setting aside his glory, his prerogatives, his divine splendor.

He, in a sense, puts aside that constant unveiled fellowship with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and remaining fully God, he takes into himself our human nature, and he doesn't, he becomes this one person, God, the Son of God.

He's also fully, fully human, and he's humbled himself even to be entering into the human story as the zygote attached to his mother's womb.

[14:35] And he lives a completely and utterly human life. It's a lower working class life as part of a conquered people under the empire of pagans, and he lives a fully human life.

And the Bible said he lives a fully human life without ever sinning, without ever having his relationship with God, the Father, ever broken or compromised. And so what happens is, when you're putting your faith and trust in Jesus, when you reach out to him and say, Jesus be my Savior, Jesus be my Lord, and Jesus reaches down, he crosses that infinite distance, so to speak, from heaven to where you are, wherever you are today or wherever you were when you put your faith and trust in Jesus or wherever you were when you realized that there'd never been a time in your life that you hadn't had your faith and trust in Jesus because you grew up in a Christian home and you just grew up as a Christian, so to speak.

That not only does God take away all of your sin, but Jesus' perfect life, his unbroken fellowship with the Father, that now becomes yours.

That now becomes yours. And God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit come and actually live within you and in a sense you now have life.

It's already now present within you. And so the Bible uses this image of the new self, the new you, so to speak. And this is where there's this, I'm not going to talk about very much, but there's this very important biblical idea called the already not yet that we need to have in our minds to understand what it is exactly that Christ has done for us.

[16:14] Because on one hand, you can almost sort of use the image of a seed as if the seed of eternal life has now been planted within who I am when I put my faith and trust in Jesus. The Holy Spirit now indwells me.

And that's the already. That's the exact same life that will blossom and flourish in the new heaven and the new earth that will allow me to spend or you to spend an unbroken eternity in the presence of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, enjoying in a sense their household, their life, breathing their air, seeing their beauty, being transformed by that.

And that is already in a sense yours in Christ, but it's like a seed. Not yet. I still do sinful things. I still do wrong things. I still have a body which is fit for this earth, not for the new heaven and the new earth, which is to come.

And that's why if you look at verse 10, it says, it says, and put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

And this is a really important and wonderful truth to understand why it is that you should be trying to put on compassion, why it is that you should be trying to put on humility, why it is that you should be trying to put all of these things on.

[17:32] You see, it's, remember I said, see, already not yet. So, I'm to put this stuff, I need to constantly be renewed because God is working in me and he is working in you to prepare you for a particular destiny.

And what is that destiny which he is preparing you for? He is preparing you for that destiny where, as I said before, you are in the presence of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. You get to actually, in a sense, begin to taste and see and experience and breathe and reflect that unending, that unending, that unending, eternal dance whereby the Father reveals himself to the Son and the Son reveals himself to the Father and the Holy Spirit reveals himself and there's this dance and you see their goodness and you see their humility, you see their self-giving, you see their other-centeredness, you see the beauty, the glory, the splendor and God is preparing ordinary

human beings like you and me to actually be able to be in the presence of that and not just to be in the presence of that, to know that we are home, to breathe it, to delight in it. And so we need to be renewed. And as, and that's, and then it goes on to say, and you put off, so you're going to be putting on the new self which we'll talk about in a moment, you take off the old self and have put on, which has been renewed in the image of its creator, which means that God is making you more and more human the way God originally intended human beings to be. He's not turning you into an angel, he's not turning you into an aardvark, he's turning you into more and more what a human being is supposed to be. And it gives you this little tiny bit of a glimpse that if in fact Adam and Eve had not fallen, it's as if God's always plan was not just that Adam and Eve would have continued to be the way they are but that they would one day be transposed, be in a sense elevated or another stage of even vaster glory and splendor and of being themselves. And so it is that we are becoming more as God intended us to be but at the same time God wants to work within us to make us more the type of person, the type of being who can dwell in the Trinitarian glory and splendor and beauty and delight and love and joy and happiness and music and movement all embodied and that's God's ultimate destiny for you and me.

[20 : 27] And in verse 11, here there is not Greek and Jew circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ is all in all. And one of the things which is so powerful about this text, I'm just going to say it now, on a couple of Sundays from now, I'm going to spend a whole service just talking about slavery because Colossians is going to talk about slaves and masters and we're going to look at it.

But one of the things which is so unbelievably significant about this text is that as this text grips you, slavery becomes unthinkable. and it becomes unthinkable in a way that is not true of secularism or of atheism or of any other religion. That as it grips you, that even the worst barbarian who's also completely and utterly enslaved, that when they hear that the words that Jesus has died for them and that his perfect life is also for them and that we are to have an obligation to tell the worst barbaric slave of the worst barbaric slave that they can hear the gospel and that when they receive the gospel, the exact same benefits that I have just described for you and me is for them, that they are being renewed in the knowledge of the Creator, that they are being prepared for eternity with the Trinity. The more that grips you, the more slavery is unthinkable, which is vastly more important, the big problem that most of our culture has with the Bible and slavery is that our culture is addicted to virtue signaling.

Complete, empty, mindless, self-righteous, self-justifying virtue signaling. And they want to see virtue signaling there and it's not there but what the Bible does instead is vastly more precious.

[22 : 26] As this grips you and slavery becomes increasingly unthinkable in a world that just took slavery as part of the natural order and the good order of things, it becomes unthinkable.

And then we become, because Christ is all in all, put on then, verse 12, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another and if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive and above all these, put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

so there's this, this is the one aspect of the six. If you could put this up, Andrew, you can just look at it. I'm not going to spend much time on it, right?

This is something that begins at the end of chapter 2 and it's going to go right until chapter 3, verse 17 and then it's going to be shown how it works itself out in certain types of fundamental relationships.

And the first, and in a sense, the Bible's asking you not just to do one but in a sense to think of all six as being part of a single act. And the first act is to ask yourself the fundamental question, am I going to grow me or is God going to grow me?

[23 : 47] And I've talked about that. I won't talk about it as much right now. And God's word wants you to say, if my destiny is to be like Jesus, then how on earth could I possibly grow me?

Only God can grow me. So Lord, grow me. The second thing is set your mind on Christ in all his, as I put it, in light of the cross, set your mind on Christ in all his risen, sovereign, Trinitarian glory.

And then last week we talked about how you have to put off your old self or put off sin, not as the world defines it but as the Bible defines it. And now we come here to this next step which is put on Christ.

Actually, I'm going to put it as given your destiny in Christ, put on the biblical virtues. Given your destiny in Christ, put on the biblical virtues. And then we're going to look at let and do which is what we're going to look at next Sunday.

But as I said, you look at these virtues and just think, I've been in a week where I've had low-level conflict all week. And Daniel got to see a little tiny bit of it and, you know, he'll know that Daniel, people who know me know that I have lots of flesh.

[25 : 04] Because you see, here's the thing about all of these six things including this put on. When we start to walk in the path of these things, it doesn't lead to success, it leads us to meet our flesh.

When we try to start to walk in the path of these things, it doesn't lead us to success, it leads us to meet our flesh. And then there is a success, by the way, after that.

But first, you constantly meet your flesh. So, for instance, okay, I have to put on Christ. It's only when you think about the fact that you need to put on Christ, I mean, set your mind, my mind on Christ in all his risen, sovereign, Trinitarian glory, that I realize how many things I already have my mind set on.

I have my mind set on rivalry. I have my mind set on being able to boast. I have my mind set on the fact that I think I'm right all the time. I have my mind set on wanting to win.

I have my mind set on revenge. I have my mind set on things, maybe that are connected to wounds that I've never forgiven. I have my mind set on all sorts of things. And that if I want to set my mind on Christ, there's all that flesh that I have to deal with.

[26 : 16] It's the same thing with put on. Under Paul, I'm putting on Christ. Well, the fact is, I have all sorts of things I'm wanting to put on. I'm going to have this phone call and I'm going to have this phone call and I can just feel myself putting stuff on.

I'm putting on the things I want to say. I'm putting on that I'm not going to back down. I'm putting on that I'm always right. I'm putting on that I'm going to be a guy and assertive. I'm putting on all this stuff and maybe I'm putting on a fear that I can't do all those guy things that guys are supposed to do.

That's what I'm putting on. And so this text leads me to confront my flesh. That part of me is a human being which is in rebellion against God.

That's what I come face to face with. And that leads I have to be that leads to an analogy for us to understand this particular text.

These things that we are to put on. Means of grace there's many things in the Bible which are means of grace and these are some of them. And in all cases of means of grace remember I can't I can't turn myself into a person so that when I see Jesus I'm going to be like him.

[27 : 24] I can't do that. I only God can do that. By definition I see Christ and he turns me into someone like him. That's something that only he can do. But the means of grace is a posture of obedience to God's word so God can do what only he can do.

All of the means of grace are an invitation to take a posture of obedience to do what only he can do. even if that is not not only not intuitive it's it's it's not even counterintuitive it's just nonsense.

So here's an Old Testament story which is maybe helpful for us to get our mind around this. There's a story in 1 Kings 8 it's not as well known as it should be but it's a very very wonderful story.

And the nation of Israel has come to one of its darkest lowest times and God has called Elijah to be a lone witness against a culture which is completely and utterly abandoning God.

And to our secular friends and to Christians this might sound like I'm complaining like for many Canadians it says George it's as if you're complaining about pluralism when you say that. But when you go back and you read the stories in the Old Testament what our Jewish friends what my Jewish friends call the Tanakh you have to realize what's going on when they leave the worship of Yahweh the Lord and they start to take up with other gods because it's not just a neutral matter it's not just that one of you like to I don't know sing praise songs another one of you like to sing hymns no no it matters why does it matter?

[29 : 06] One of the things which is completely and utterly unique about the Christian faith about the book of Genesis is like all of those other religions that the Jewish people are tempted to go after and have started to go after and by the time Elijah has come basically everybody in the country from the religious elite to the political elite to the cultural elite down to the average the poorest the poorest person in the culture all of the other religions at the very heart of them why did they create human beings?

in all cases they created human beings because the gods wanted more slaves human beings were created to be the slaves of the gods we already know what it's like in a culture right now there's a very major world religion which understands that it's part of the very fundamental sense of what it means for God to have created how on earth can you what does it mean if you have a view that the gods that you go to worship that they only created human beings to be slaves what does it mean when you go to start to worship these gods and goddesses it's going to mean that you go to the temple to sacrifice your child to kill your child to appease the wrath of God it's going to mean that you sell your excess daughters to the temple so they can become prostitutes so that when you want to go worship you go have sex with these women what does it mean in terms of how you view children and family and how does it view the whole thing in many of those religions it's all about the particular power of the man including being able to exercise sexual power there's a massive in that particular culture the ruler is either a god himself or the specific agent of the god and so when they're going after these things it's not just about well they happen to like

I don't know wearing these types of robes and you like having no there's a whole worldview there's a whole way of ordering culture there's a whole way of understanding politics which is involved anyway so Elijah has this contest he's got the attention of the people and the king because he's declared that there would be no rain and there was no rain and then God tells them it's time now that you've got their attention go and challenge the gods and goddesses of the world of the nation and go and challenge them to a contest and here's the contest you can have your hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of priests and you make a simple make whatever altar you want put wood on the altar put a sacrifice on the altar I all by my little lonesome I'm going to be over here I'm going to make an altar and I'm going to put wood on it and I'm going to put a sacrifice on it and the contest is very simple whichever god or gods sends the fire that's the real one and they agree to it and there's hundreds and hundreds of prophets this is in 1 Kings chapter 8 and they make their elaborate altar they put their sacrifice they put their wood they do their whole spectacle it would be the sort of thing you know listen the YouTube video would be on theirs not Elijah just by himself unless he did at the end it would all be on Elijah they'd been wishing they'd film it but you know they have and then

Elijah had Elijah was ornery so by the end of the day the gods and goddesses aren't setting the fire he sort of said ah you know maybe your gods and goddesses are all off in the bathroom and you just need to be a bit louder or something they're having a snooze come on wake them up maybe they'll come and send the fire nothing happens nothing happens nothing happens here's the point of the analogy so what does Elijah do he says okay now it's my turn he takes a very very simple set of rocks he takes the wood he has them dig a big trench around it he puts the sacrifice on top of it and then he starts saying pour water on the wood and then pour more water on the wood and pour more water on the wood and then he calls out to God God I know you hear me and God sends fire and consumes the wood and the sacrifice now here's the point of this analogy if you go camping later on next spring or maybe even now and if you maybe have it that you know your wife says I'm going to get this set up you know hubby why don't you get the fire going and you know get the meat cooking or the tofu frying or whatever and I always want to be sensitive to my vegetarian friends and then you know the wife turns around and you put the wood you know you made a nice big pile of wood oh it's going really well and then the next thing she sees is you pouring water on the wood she'd say time out hubby you really are clueless maybe she'd say something stronger that's not how you make a fire pouring wood on it that's the wrong way to do it okay so what it is in other words God giving this story in 1 Kings 8 of something which doesn't make any natural sense and in some ways all means of grace are like this okay God okay God you're telling me that if I go into these types of conflicts I've got to put on patience meekness compassion humility and forgiveness we laugh that we wouldn't even think about it because we just plunge in right you know we plunge in

[34 : 23] Bible down fists up that's how we live literally our flesh says George our flesh without even thinking about it Bible's down Bible's closed fists up and we need to understand that at the heart of all the means of grace is this sense that we are to put ourselves in a posture of humility and obedience before God to do what only God so that God can do what only God can do always remembering that he does on one level care about what goes on in the earth but he doesn't have to just he can work on lots of levels at the same time in fact not only can he that's what he does we'll go to heaven and the new heaven and the new earth we will just one of the things I think he'll maybe do is he'll show the whole of human history and we can hardly keep more than one or two

things going at the same time but he can keep billions of things going on the same time and he can at one level be working in such a way that George will turn into a being that can be fit for heaven at the same time he can be working in a way that cares for the earth and cares for the politics cares for the economy cares for others and so in this particular thing given your destiny in Christ put on the biblical virtues that's verse 12 put on then as God's chosen one holy and beloved compassionate hearts and if you're at all visual

I meant to do this and I forgot I mean it might literally be because remember you begin with who's going to grow me where do I set my mind put off put on let and do and here we're just focusing on the put on part because all six of those aspects are very very important and it might be how we begin the day it might be that you you ask the Lord to help you to remember before that phone call that you just pause and pray through these types of things and realize okay Lord I got to take off this rivalry shirt I've got to keep off this that I always have to win I have to take off this layer of clothing that's connected to anger I need to take off this layer of clothing which is composed of being able to use my tongue to abuse and to win I need to take that off and now I need to put some of these things on and the first thing I need to put on is compassion and it might even just help you if you even just imagine that those are clothing and if you are very good at visuals and some of you are you can just imagine how rank it is it looks shiny but it's in fact filthy and foul and you're taking it off and you just dump it and then you're reaching over maybe imagine your Bible on a table like this and you put on compassion and you put on kindness and you put on humility I think we all have a pretty good idea about what kindness and compassion are by the way compassion and kindness you're not kind towards evil you're kind towards people you're not compassionate towards evil you're compassionate towards people if you start to become kind to evil you are moving in a demonic direction if you show compassion to evil you are moving in a demonic direction but you show compassion and kindness to people and humility very briefly you see all of these things you could do a whole sermon on each one of them but humility is fundamentally several types of things if you think of the natural tendency of every human being is to become like a black hole to suck in everything into themselves and humility is that ability that virtue where you start to look to the other and we all know that in many ways we are most ourselves and we don't look within but look without if you've ever if some of you who dance when you lose yourself in the dance in some ways you become most yourself for those of you who are really brilliant at art in some ways when you lose yourself to the writing or the creativity you become most yourself in friendship when you're most enjoying your friend in some ways you're most yourself in love when you are in most completely and utterly enamored with the other in many ways you are most yourself and that is the heart of humility and the next one is meekness or sometimes gentleness and if we think about this meekness is not weakness now I know there's a whole range of superhero things that are going on in the world right now but if you think about it at the traditional superheroes at the best all of them are meek because in all of them whether you think of somebody like spider-man or batman or whatever it might be spider-man the child is falling from a ledge and what is the meekness of spider-man not saying well it sucks to be you or making a really hard landing that actually does almost as much damage to the child as if he just let him fall no how does television present it that in a sense spider-man or whatever catches the child in such a way as it is as if gentle hands slowly stop the child from falling so there's absolutely no harm done to the child and that's the spirit of meekness it goes with strength it's using your strength to not needlessly hurt the person in fact the more we grow in humility and meekness and all of these are fitting us to be with God from all eternity the easier it is to stand to tyrants and refuse their claims because it's all part of a all part of a process by which we set our minds on Christ and understand Christ is the hope of glory forgiving each other I've talked bearing with one another that actually is one that if you understood the image you'd see it as a good thing in a sense the underlying image of bearing up we've all been in situations where everything seems to be falling apart maybe it's an office your whole office seems to be in conflict and in crisis or your family's all in conflict and crisis and there's one person bearing up under it in a sense it's the one person who's a bit of a voice of sanity and balance while everything seems to be falling up that's the image there to bear up under the conflict which is going on so that there's in a sense some type of hope for something to be rebuilt and then when it says

I think we understand a bit patience and forgiving forgiving doesn't mean forgetting it doesn't mean that you give a past evil but it's one of those things unless you learn to forgive the wrong that's been

done to you will continue to eat away at you and eat away at you and eat away at you and eat away with you and destroy you and then all of these things love is the center of all of these things a word which was basically popularized by Christians it was popular in Greek literature but not popular it was present as a word in Greek but basically unused it's that complete and utter self-giving for the benefit of the other it's in a sense a passion for self-giving for the benefit of the other and in all of these cases there's never a compromise with evil there's never a compromise with injustice there's never a compromise with hatred but it's a very very different way of entering into relationships and trying to deal with it for the good of the person because and here we'll end

[42 : 46] God takes no delight in the death of a sinner but rather that they will turn from their wickedness and live said three times basically the same way in the book of Ezekiel it's one of the heart of Anglican spirituality is found in the book of common prayer for morning prayer and evening prayer that God takes no delight in the death of a sinner but rather that they will turn from their wickedness and live it's not so much that we win arguments but that we win people and it's not so much that we win people for ourselves but we win people for Christ that is the Father's heart for you and for me let's stand Father we we know that many of the things which your word tells us to do are viewed as foolishness or even evil in the eyes of the world our commitment to life our commitment to love our commitment to your word our commitment to Christ

Father many of these things are seen as foolishness that we are to learn to try to be committed to humility rather than pride Father these are mysteries and they're mysteries to our flesh and often mysteries to us and we ask Father that you would grip us grip us grip us with the gospel that that the gospel might be the narrative by which we begin to understand ourselves in the world that you are a God that does exist that you are real and that you are true and that you are sovereign and will bring all things to their proper order and conclusion and that you know why we were made and how we were made and how we are to thrive and that we would trust your word and your wisdom we would ask questions and that we would come together and pray together and weep together and rejoice together and question together as we study your word not doing this by ourselves but doing it with others but we ask

Father that you would grip us with the gospel and grip us with your word and grip us with such a deep confidence in Jesus and who he did who he is and what he did for us on the cross that we can look at your word and be willing to say Father I know it goes against my flesh but help me to take a posture of obedience trusting in your word so that you will bring the fire Father from my flesh it looks like you're asking me to pour water on the wood but grant me Father that deep confidence that you know what you're doing that you are faithful and true to your word and that as we take postures of obedience to your word trusting in you that you will do that great and mighty work that you Father will bring the fire as you change us from one degree of glory day by day so that one day we will see Jesus face to face and we will be like him and we will hear you say welcome welcome welcome welcome my beloved and chosen one welcome and all these things we ask in the name of Jesus your son and our savior amen