

You Choose – Putting Off and Putting On

Scripture

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to ***put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*** Ephesians 4:17-24 (ESV)

Then ***God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*** And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” Genesis 1:26 (ESV)

Key Points

Why does Paul call us to put off the old self and put on the new self?

- Walking in new life is God’s intention and demand | God is God and I am not
- Men and women are image bearers of God | whether we know it or not
- We are co-laborers with God in His Kingdom
- People were not created for bondage | people were created for freedom

What hinders us from living in the new self?

- Our deceitful desires which we minimize and love
- Our propensity to live in our sinful nature – we love darkness
- We don’t believe we can ever be free | hopelessness
- We resist the suffering of saying no to sinful behaviors and the abrasion of making a choice

How do we live in the day-to-day reality of the new self?

- Walk into God’s Welcome and Presence
- You choose / by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the flesh
- We sit in the suffering and the abrasion of choice until the Holy Spirit softens and heals our heart | we move from competition to cooperation
- We give God honor and thanks for all things – we undo Rom 1:21
- We walk in our calling – comforting others with the comfort we have been given by God

Walk into God’s Welcome – into God’s Presence - into Freedom from the results of sin, guilt, and separation from God. Into the steady force of God’s powerful light and love for you. God’s love towards you is real. This must be your driver. You need this for yourself, and you need it to be safe for others.

If you don’t feel welcomed, loved, and accepted by God, then you need to be still and wait. The sense that you have no business being before the throne of God is a wall through which you must go to get to the reality of God’s love. Many believers hit that wall and give up. The wall is an illusion. It isn’t there—no matter what anybody including the devil tells you. That imaginary wall tests your tenacity and is reinforced by Satan to get you to stop seeking God.