

Put Off, Put On

There was a popular song some years ago, sung by Bing Crosby and others of his generation, that went like this:

*You've got to accentuate the positive,
Eliminate the negative,
Latch on to the affirmative,
And don't mess with Mr. In-between.*

That's what we are looking at together this week. Latching onto God's positives and ridding ourselves of the negatives that the world seems to turn a "blinded eye" to. It's popular today to focus exclusively on being positive. So much so, that we ignore the negative. We don't want to offend anyone so we pretend it doesn't exist. But **being positive without dealing with the negative elements of our lives, is a bad strategy for living.** It's like working in the yard all day and neglecting to take off your dirty clothes before you get ready for a dinner party. Putting nice clothes over dirty smelly clothes does not make a good impression. We must somehow, learn the art of putting off before we put on.

Monday – Put Off!

1. Please read Colossians 3:5-14. We can't fully understand this passage without verses 1-4 of Colossians 3. How do Paul's comments in the first 4 verses help prepare us for what we are about to hear in 5-14?
2. Some divide this list of things to "put off" into two categories: sex and speech. Both sex and speech are created by God but when we misuse them they can have a tremendously negative impact upon our lives and others. What are the consequences of living a sexually impure life characterized by the things we read about in verse 5?

Digging Deeper – Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. What additional insights does this passage reveal about the consequences of sexual sin?

Tuesday – Rid Yourself!

"...out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks." Jesus of Nazareth

1. Read Colossians 3:5-14. In what ways are the issues listed in verses 8-9 associated with our speech?
2. Why is it nearly impossible to change your speech habits without changing your heart? According to Paul, how do we go about developing a change of heart (see Colossians 3:1-15)?

Digging Deeper – Rick Warren writes, *"Let me be clear: If you're losing the battle against a persistent bad habit, an addiction, or a temptation, and you're stuck in a repeating cycle of good intention-failure-guilt, you will not get better on your own... Some temptations are only overcome with the help of a partner who prays for you, encourages you, and holds you accountable."* Is there something in verses 5-9 that you need help with. Ask a friend, loved one, or home group member to pray and encourage you as you seek to change.

Wednesday – Put On!

"Notice again, we are exhorted to stop doing certain things because we can stop. We are different, therefore we can act differently. That is the appeal of the grace of God. You have "taken off your old self." A change has come. You are no longer what you once were. You have "put on the new self," which is growing and increasing in knowledge. The more you learn about this new life the more you will find you are able to say no to the old." Ray Stedman – Put On the New

1. Read Colossians 3:5-14. What are we instructed to put on in verse 10? What role does "knowledge" play in all this?
2. This next question will require that we get a little creative and use our imaginations. What things can we do to learn more about this new life we have in Christ?

Digging Deeper – Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. As new creations, we are learning a new way of living. The key question is, "what can we do to learn about this new life in Christ"? Consider asking some Christian friends, whom you respect, the following question: "What has helped you grow in your relationship with Christ"? You may be surprised and encouraged by their answers.

Thursday – Bearing the Family Resemblance

"There is no more powerful motivating force in our lives than to remember that we are loved by God. He loves us deeply. Why should God love us the way he does? To be such people as we are and still be loved by him is one of the amazing wonders of all time. We are never to forget this. It is our basis for action." Ray Stedman – Put On the New

1. Read Colossians 3:12-14. What does the first part of verse 12 tell us about our "family identity"? What does it mean that you were chosen by God and dearly loved by him?
2. Think of someone you know who exemplifies the character qualities listed in verse 12. What is involved in clothing yourself in compassion, kindness, etc.? How do we practically do that? What role did God have in the process?
3. We must be convinced of the first part of verse 12 before we can put on these attractive clothes described by Paul. Why is first part of verse 12 so essential for us to be convinced?

Friday – Forgive as the Lord Forgave

1. Please read Colossians 3:12-14. What does Paul say about forgiveness and love? How did the Lord Jesus Christ forgive you? What did his forgiveness cost him?
2. Read Matthew 5:43-48. What insights does this passage give us about love and forgiveness? What role does our family identity/resemblance play in our need to forgive?

Living Beyond Myself – Is there someone you need to forgive? Ask the Lord to reveal any resentment or anger that you might be holding against another. Take time to consider the Lord's love and forgiveness towards you and then ask for his grace to forgive.

Weekend – Use the weekend to review the passages we have looked at and the insights you have written in your Spiritual Life Notebook.

The Scrolls, FBC's daily devotional guide, is designed to work in tandem with our Sunday services. The Scrolls are best used with a "Spiritual Life Notebook," which is available Sunday mornings at the Information Table in the Plaza. For more information about using the "Spiritual Life Notebook," see the insert that comes with it. The Scrolls, along with companion materials for small groups, are also available online at www.fbcdavis.org.