

WHAT COAT ARE YOU WEARING?



OLD AND NEW CLOTHES

The Bible is arranged perfectly. There is a sense of balance throughout. Some parts deal with an if... then... contrast – if you do not do this, then there will be consequences. Other parts balance options – you can choose to live a life of sin, and suffer the consequences, or you can choose to live a life of obedience and reap the rewards. There is a beautiful example in the Old Testament:

¹⁹I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: – **Deuteronomy 30:19**

Here the writer shows two options: life/death, and blessing/cursing. He urges them to choose the right one. It is such a pity that many people, some saved and some not, often tend to ignore the simple message, given by a caring God, for our benefit.

Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ seems easy enough – confess that you are a sinner and cannot save yourself and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. However, while the process of regeneration (See the doctrines of the Bible, Soteriology, Regeneration: <https://www.johnchapterthree.com/en/soteriology9>) is done by God, we often tend to think that there is nothing we should do to advance our faith. The apostle Paul writes that we ourselves need to be actively involved in the process of growth as believers:

²¹If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:
²²That ye **put off** concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; ²³And **be renewed** in the spirit of your mind; ²⁴And that ye **put on** the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. – **Ephesians 4:21-24**

Note the balance. We first have to put off something and then in its place, put on something else. He explains that we should take off the old garment, the one that is dirty, corrupt, and evidence of the old nature. This old garment should be cast aside. It is no longer useful, it is dirty, and we have outgrown it. We cannot put on a new garment over the old one.

Taking off the old garment and putting on the new one is part of the process of renewing the mind. The spiritual battle is mostly fought in the mind – everything starts here and from here it leads outwards to sin, mostly in the body. James explains this very well. Do yourself a favour and read his entire epistle.

With the process of renewing the mind complete, we can now put on the new man, the new garment. This is the one that radiates holiness and righteousness. This garment is white, unblemished, and fits the new believer perfectly. It covers any blemishes the world may perceive us to have; it protects us from the onslaughts of life; it makes us appear as kings; and it is visible.

Being clothed with a new robe is often used in the context of our righteousness in Christ. See Job 29:14; Psalm 132:9; Isaiah 59:17; Revelation 19:8; and Revelation 3:4. Once we have

chosen life over death (Deuteronomy 30:19), then we should allow Christ to clothe us with the robe He knows will suit us and identify us as belonging to Him. There is another beautiful example of how God Himself clothes us:

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; **for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness**, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. – **Isaiah 61:10**

What is so striking about this verse is that the Father is actively involved in the process. Once we have chosen life, we are clothed with the garment of salvation and righteousness. The Father gives us the new robe and helps us to put it on.

Look at the subtitle of this week's discussion: old and new clothes. Then look at yourself in the mirror, which is the Word of God. Which are you wearing? Investigate your spiritual life. How do you see yourself? More importantly, how do others see you? We cannot claim to be clean and pure inside when what the world sees, the garment we wear, does not reflect outward what we are inward. This is the struggle we have to deal with each day. We have to constantly guard our minds. As said earlier, the mind is the battlefield where the devil plants the seed that eventually makes us sin. The righteousness what we wear covers our shortcomings, but we should make a constant effort to fight off all forms of sin the devil tries to plant in our minds. Do not put on the old garment again by giving in to his temptations.

The last thought we want to leave with you about the new garment that Jesus Christ gives us, and which is the requirement to be with Him in heaven, is found here:

¹¹And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: ¹²And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. ¹³Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen. – **Matthew 22:11-14**

You are either clothed in the garment God has given you as the result of your faith in Him, the garment of salvation, as well as the robe of righteousness, (the wedding garment), or you are clothed in the old garment. If the former, then you are recognised as belonging to Jesus Christ and can share in the wedding feast (Revelation 19:9). If the latter, then you do not yet belong to Jesus Christ, or you may have fallen into a life of sin and grabbed that old garment again. If you are not clothed with His righteousness, and you are in darkness (Matthew 2:13). The time for you to turn from your darkness and step into His marvellous light is now:

⁹But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. – **1 Peter 2:9**

CONCLUSION

If you are not yet saved and cleansed by the blood of the Lamb, turn to Him today. God's plan for your life is available on the main page of the website. Do not delay. Turn to Jesus today and be invited to the future wedding feast, properly prepared and clothed.