

## Sermon Study Questions

### Dressing for the Occasion

*Colossians 3:12-17*

*Preached by James Beck  
Little Trinity Church  
30 December 2018*

While the reading was verses 12 to 17 the sermon focused on only verses 12 to 14.

1. Do you have memories of playing dress up with your parents' clothes when you were small? If so, what was the most vivid memory?
2. Why do you think the compulsion to play dress up is so common? James mentioned three reasons in the sermon; what are they? And are there any other reasons you can think of?
3. Paul uses the word Ἐνδύσασθε "[you all] put on" in a special way in his writings. While the common meaning of the word is to put on a garment, Paul uses the word in a spiritual sense. Read Eph 6:11; Rom 13:12-14; 1 Thess 5:8; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10; Gal 3:27. What does Paul tell the reader to "put on" in these verses?
4. In our reading Paul tells the reader to "put on" compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience and love. But Galatians 5:22-23 reads *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*. The lists are very similar yet in Galatians Paul identifies the list as the "fruit of the Spirit" - the inevitable result of the presence of the Spirit of God in the life of the believer - but here he says to put on very similar attributes like a shirt or a coat. One is largely passive and the other active. Could both be right? If so, how? Does the image of oversized clothes help?
5. How and when do we "put on" these attributes? (see notes)
6. How useful is the distinction between forbearance and forgiveness? And how important is forgiveness to the Christian life? Why?
7. According to James what is the best description of God's agape love? And what is the best verbal description of that love? Read 1 Cor 13:4-7.
8. Why did James suggest that nobody ever felt the kind of love described in 1 Cor 13?
9. Based on 1 Cor 13, what does love as a series of choices look like? (see notes)
10. How would you describe the relationship between the spiritual discipline of putting on the attributes of Christ and the fruit of the Spirit?

There were two lists of choices in the sermon. Because they were fairly lengthy I will provide those lists for you here. The 1st list is the choice to put on the attributes of Christ exactly when we are tempted to the opposite:

- When we are tempted to indifference or insensitivity, we are called to put on compassion;
- when we are tempted to cruelty, we are called to put on kindness;
- when we are tempted to arrogance and pride, we are called to put on humility;
- when we are tempted to lash out at one who has caused harm or offence, we are called to put on meekness;
- when we are tempted to give up on and write someone off, we are called to put on patience.

The second list was the the choices to love from 1 Cor 13:

- When we are tempted to be impatient, we choose patience;
- when we are tempted to be unkind, we choose kindness;
- when we are tempted to envy, we choose admiration;
- when we are tempted to boast, we choose praise;
- when we are tempted to deceit and bad behaviour, we choose the truth;
- and when we are tempted to give up, we choose to endure.