The "Put Off – Put On" Principle

Ephesians 4:25-32
5-31-2023



INTRODUCTION: (v. 22-24)
Christian, "put off" the rags of your old life,
and "put on" the righteousness of your new life!

I. **Remove the Rag of <u>LYING</u>**
Replace it with the Righteous garment of <u>TRUTH</u> (v. 25)
God's Reason: Because "we are <u>members</u> one of another"

II. **Remove the Rag of <u>SINFUL ANGER</u>** (v. 26)
Replace it with the Righteous garment of <u>KINDNESS & FORGIVENESS</u> (v. 32)
God's Reason: Because unresolved anger gives a <u>foothold</u> for <u>Satan</u>

III. **Remove the Rag of <u>STEALING</u>**
Replace it with the Righteous garment of <u>HONEST WORK</u> (v. 28)
God's Reason: So that you can <u>give</u> rather than take

IV. **Remove the Rag of <u>ROTTEN SPEECH</u>**
Replace it with the Righteous garment of <u>GOOD WORDS</u> (v. 29)
God's Reason: So that your tongue will <u>build</u> others up, not tear them down.

CONCLUSION: V. 30-32

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6/25/06

INTRODUCTION: (v. 22-24)

ILLUS: The fictitious story of "Cinderella" - who went from shabby, tattered, old rags to a beautiful sparkling gown.

The 1991 Atlanta Braves & Minnesota Twins are said to have been two "Cinderella" clubs, who went from the bottom to the top in one year!

In Christ, we too have gone from nothing to everything; from the prospect of hell to Heaven, from sin to a Savior, from confusion to truth, from filthy rags (Is. 64:6) to righteousness (II Cor. 5:21).

Because of this transformation, it is unfitting for the righteous to be clothed in unrighteousness, for God's children to dress in the devil's rags.

God is about to contrast our old wardrobe with the new.

V. 25

"Wherefore" = In light of the general command to "put off" and "put on" (v. 22-24), God now gets specific and details some bad traits of the old man that we are to "put off" and some good traits of the new man that we are to "put on"

Cp.- the words "put off" are reiterated in verses 25-31.

Notice the flow of thought:

"Put off""Put on"

"Lying" (v. 25)"Truth" (v. 25)
"Stealing" (v. 28)"Working" (v. 28)
"Corrupt speech" (v. 29)"Good (edifying) speech" (v. 29)
"Anger & wrath" (v. 26, 31)"Kindness & forgiveness" (v. 32)

This "put off/put on" principle is also taught in Col. 3:8-9.

Whether we're in church, at home, at work, or enjoying an afternoon at the park, God wants us to reflect our new man, and to never again wear the rags of our old life.

We need to wear our "Sunday best" every day!

***Christian, "put off" the rags of your old life,**
and "put on" the righteousness of your new life!

I. Remove the Rag of <u>LYING</u>
Replace it with the Righteousness of <u>TRUTH</u> (v. 25)

God's Reason: Because *"we are <u>members</u> one of another"*

"Putting away" - middle voice You must strip <u>off of yourself</u> falsehood.

No one can make you a persons of truth. The decision is yours.

God is calling for a once-and-for-all decision to discard all deceitful, dishonest remnants of our past life.

"When a person becomes a believer, he steps out of the domain of <u>falsehood</u> into the domain of <u>truth</u> (having received the one who is Truth - Jn. 14:6), and every form of lying therefore is utterly inconsistent with his new self" (MacArthur, p. 183)

"Lying has become a way of life for millions. Children lie to their parents without conscience. Men in business tell bare-faced lies to avoid their creditors, to acquire something they want, or to make a sale. People make promises they have no intention of fulfilling" (John Phillips)

"A lie is a statement that is contrary to fact, spoken with the intention to deceive" (Wiersbe)

"If I tell you it is noon, and then discover that my watch is wrong, I did not tell a lie. But if I gave you the wrong time so you would be late to a meeting and I would benefit from it, that would be a lie" (Wiersbe, p. 111-112)

What is lying?
--White lies, black lies, gray lies
--Intentional cover-ups of truth - "A half truth is a whole lie"
--Deceitfulness of any kind
--Hypocrisy
--Exaggerations (Ex: the Christian man who embellished the story of his testimony so much that he no longer knew what was true and what was not)_
--Twisting of Scripture
--Dishonesty (cheating at school; flattery)

People are never more like the devil than when they <u>lie</u> (Jn. 8:44 - *"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he*

speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar,a nd the father of it.")

Lying is so serious that the Lake of Fire will be filled with people whose chronic lying will prove their guilt of unbelief (this rejecting the one who was the truth) at the Great White Throne Judgement (Rev. 21:8)

"Bishop Warren A. Chandler was preaching about the lies of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) and asked the congregation, "If God still struck people dead for lying, where would I be?" The congregation snickered a bit, but the smiles disappeared when the bishop shouted, "I'd be right here - preaching to an empty church!" (Wiersbe, Colossians, p. 107)

"Every man" - No one is justified to lie no matter who they are or what their problem, but everyone is to speak the truth.

"Speak" - to <u>continually</u> speak the truth (our loins are to be girt about with the *"<u>truth</u>"* - 6:14. Truth is to characterize the child of God.

Because our Father (in Heaven) is truth, we must be like Him.

We are to speak *"the <u>truth</u> in <u>love</u>"* (Eph. 4:15)

"With his neighbor" = the one who is close by; the one who is right next to you [not merely your "next door neighbor," but anyone you converse with, especially those who are immediately related (Ex: spouse) or associated (church members)]

The reason for truth (especially among believers) is because of our relationship to each other.

"*For [because] we are <u>members</u> one of another"*
--In <u>marriage</u> - you are one with your spouse (Eph. 5:28-29)
--In <u>Christ</u> - we are part of the same Body (Eph. 5:30)

When we lie to each other (Ex: spouse or fellow Christian), we are actually hurting ourselves, because of our oneness.

ILLUS: Our physical body parts depend on truthful signals from our brain ("Our physical bodies cannot function properly or safely if each member does not correctly communicate to the others. If our brain were suddenly to start giving false signals to our feet, we would stumble or walk in front of a moving truck, instead of stopping on the curb. If it falsely reported hot and cold, we could freeze to death because we felt too warm or be scalded in a hot shower while feeling chilly. If our eyes decided to send false signals to the brain, a dangerous curve int he highway might appear straight and safe, and we would crash. IF the nerves in our hands and feet failed to tell our brain that injury was occurring, our foot could be mangled or our fingers burned without our knowing it. That is precisely the great danger of leprosy--injuries, disease, and other afflictions devastate the body because nerves

fail to send danger signals of pain."

II.Remove the Rag of SINFUL ANGER (v. 26)
Replace it with the Righteousness of KINDNESS & FORGIVENESS (v. 32)

God's Reason: Because unresolved anger gives a foothold for Satan
"Be ye angry"

"Orge" - a settled or abiding agitation (disturbance) of the mind that gradually builds (grows).

Anger is an emotion. Emotion in itself is not sinful. God created emotion in man. God is emotional (has feelings).

Note, however: Our emotions can either be constructive or destructive.

An emotion is basically just a motivating force. Anger is one such force.

Anger can be good (Biblical). (Anger is not necessarily sinful)

1.God is angry -

(His anger is against ungodliness - Psalm 7:11; Rom. 1:18)

2.Jesus Christ was angry -

EX: when He cleansed the Temple (John 2:13-17; Mt. 21:12-16).

3.The heroes of the faith were angry -

Moses (Ex. 32:19); Jeremiah (Jer. 6:11); Nehemiah (Neh. 5:6, 13:17, 25); Paul (Acts 17:16).

4.Believers should have a holy anger (a righteous indignation) (Eph. 4:26; Prov. 16:32; 19:11; 14:29; 29:11).

Biblical Anger:

--Never uses sinful or vain words

--Never strikes out at an individual

--Must be motivated by a love for God and righteousness (It hates sin)

(Note: Biblically motivated anger can become sin if it is not controlled by the Spirit)

--Must be controlled by the Holy Spirit (it does not sin)

--Must be used to seek and implement a solution to the problem (it seeks a correction for sin)

Anger is a motivating force which God can use to move us into Biblical action.

"Any man of character and determination who is seeking to promote the cause of Christ is going to be angered when he sees sin and corruption and injustice." (Marshall Neal)

Channel your emotional energy into doing something positively (constructive) about the problem. Make the situation an earnest matter of prayer and take steps to counter it.

[examples of sins you must respond rightly to: Laziness in your life; unfaithfulness etc. of your spouse; disobedience in your children; wrong situation on the job.]

"Anger like a good horse must be bridled" (Adams) (also steered and directed)

"and sin not"

Anger can be bad (unBiblical). (Anger can become sinful)
(Eph. 4:26-27)

Examples of sinful anger:

Cain (Gen. 4:6-8)
Simeon & Levi (Gen. 49:5-7)
Balaam toward his donkey (Num. 22:27, 29)
Saul toward Jonathan (I Sam. 20:30-34)
Ahab toward Naboth (I Ki. 21:4)
Naaman (II Ki. 5:12)
Haman toward Mordacai (Esther 3:5)
Nebuchadnezzar toward the 3 Hebrew youths (Dan. 3:13, 19)
Jonah because of a gourd withering (Jon. 4:1,2,4,9)
Jews toward Stephen (Acts 7:54-58)

How do I know when I am guilty of sinful anger?

Anger is <u>sin</u> when:
1.It is motivated by <u>wrong reasons</u> (EX: pride, selfishness, etc.)

Most anger is sinful. Why? It is not motivated by a love for God but a selfish love for <u>ourselves</u>. It is not spurred on by a hatred for <u>sin</u>, but by a selfish love for yourself.

Ex. I am not angry that _____ did wrong, I am angry that _____ did <u>me</u> wrong (emphasis on "me")

Many times the only reason we are angry at someone else...the reason we put others down is so as to lift up ourselves.

Our pride is hurt. <u>I</u> do not deserve to be treated this way. <u>I</u> am right and he/she is wrong.

Sometimes we get angry when someone does not take our Biblical advice. Ask yourself "Why are you angry?" Is it because they did not take Godly advice, or is it because they did not take <u>your</u> Godly advice? Are you angry because God's word goes unheeded, and He is offended, and His cause hurt, or are you angry because you feelings go hurt when they did not accept what you had to say?

You have sinned if you express anger for wrong <u>reasons</u>:

a.<u>Stupid</u> reasons

EX: "Who ate my donut?" "Why did you throw out the newspaper?" "Who changed the channel!?" (NOTE: These responses are generally signs of deeper problems)

b.<u>Re-occurring annoyances</u>

EX: "You are late again!" "How could you forget again?" "When will you ever learn!?"

c.<u>Pressures from other sources</u>

EX: You have had a bad day at work, and you take it out on your wife and children.

EX: Someone else gets you mad, so you vent it on the first human being that crosses your path.

d.<u>Proud, self-righteousness</u> (Luke 15:28ff)
EX: "I can't believe he/she did that!" "I would never do that!"

2.It is expressed in a <u>wrong manner</u> (bottling up or blowing up)

You have sinned if you express anger in a wrong <u>manner</u> (even if what you said was right):

Tell-tale signs of someone who has sinned in their anger:

a.The tone of your voice
b.The decibel level of your voice
c. The choice of your words

<u>Solution to Problem</u>

<u>BIBLICAL:</u>

A N G E R

<u>UNBIBLICAL:</u>

2 Extremes of Sinful Anger

<u>Bottle Up</u> **<u>Blow Up</u>**
"Clam Up" **"Hot-Headed"**
(Internalization) **(Ventilation)**

<u>BOTTLING UP</u> - destroys one's <u>own self</u>. Harmful to one's physical health. Makes a person irritable, miserable, and tense (Eph. 4:26).

Note: We are to hold back anger. Remember however that "holding back" anger does not mean <u>holding it in</u>.

Anger when turned inward can lead to <u>depression</u>. Internal anger is <u>paralyzing</u>. It zaps you of strength; It eats out your insides like cancer. It is a cause for illnesses - such as ulcers, migraine head aches etc. It may keep you from work, sleep, relating to others.

As long as anger is inside a person the Holy Spirit cannot control. Therefore the <u>flesh</u> is in control. Some people thrive on being angry. If you feed the flesh (anger) enough and you increase your appetite for it like anything else.

Remember: Anger turned inward will build up pressure and eventually blow outward! Internal anger is life a tank filled with oxygen or a flammable gas just waiting

for a spark to ignite it.

BLOWING UP - aims to hurt others. It also hurts the one who blew up. Results in loss of friendships. Destroys significant relationships.

EX: It is wrong to "let out frustrations." (ill. secular psychologists who recommend letting out your frustrations on a pillow etc. is wrong. The person is learning that it is OK to vent anger in an uncontrolled violent manner.)

Anger is unBiblical when it is not controlled (out of the Spirit's control)

When anger is an emotional condition that bypasses a Spirit controlled mind, it is violent and destructive. (It is irrational. One cannot see the real picture. One sees a distorted view of things when angry.

You must call your anger what it is - sin.

As long as you:

Re-define your sinful anger, God can't help you ("I'm just a little aggravated").

Justify your sinful anger, God can't help you ("Well, _____ deserves it"; "I can't talk to him in a calm manner")

Anyone who says, "I can't control my anger" either:

1)Is not saved

2)Is not Spirit-controlled

Many have learned to control their anger at work, at school, at church, or in other public places. The reason we control our anger on the job is because we are fearful we might lose the job.

However, anger goes uncontrolled in many homes because of a "security" that this relationship will not end so easily.

One can become angry with their spouse or with God because of being deceived into thinking he/she can get away with it because they love us.

The Spirit must control you so that you can control your anger at home and it your private life with God also! After all, what are your priorities? Where should it be controlled the most?

Ex. Husbands and wives put up with anger and a revengeful spirit on the one hand, and yet want their marriage to work out. "Go ahead and keep stabbing your mate in the back; turn the blade until they cringe with pain; get your "pound of flesh". But remember, you will never have a wonderful marriage. You can have a loving relationship or you can get your "pound of flesh" but you cannot have both" (Pastor Tim Jordan)

"let not the sun go down upon your wrath" - Don't go to bed angry. Don't let anger remain in your heart past sun set.

Get the conflict resolved. Seek to settle your differences, even if the other person was in the wrong. Even if they do not even know that they offended you, go to them (Mt.18) If the other party is not willing to reconcile, at least you can have a clear conscience that you did your part.

If you did not handle your anger Biblically. Confess it to God and to the one to whom you expressed it.

"Confess" = say the same thing about your sinful anger as God says about it.

"It's murder!" (Mt. 5:22)

"Wrath" is in the same list as adultery, idolatry, witchcraft, murder, drunkenness, etc. (Ga. 5:20).

"Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous..." (Prov. 27:4).

"Neither give place to the devil" - Don't give the Devil a place in your life. Don't give him a foothold. Don't give him a wedge. Don't give him an open door. No other sin is said to give place to the devil like this one of sinful anger. When you allow anger to brew in your heart you <u>open yourself up to Demonic oppression</u>.

When you go to bed angry you become vulnerable to Satanic attacks to your subconscious mind.

All it takes is a "root of bitterness" to give Satan an open door (Heb.12:15). Most marriage problems occur because the door was left open for Satan to come into your home; Most Church problems & splits occur because the door was left open!

How was the door left open? You failed to lock it with the key of forgiveness. Or you gave Satan they keys of your life by allowing anger to go unresolved.

You see, sinful anger "grieves the Holy Spirit" (v.30); The Holy Spirit then is sorry for you, but He can't help you!

Like taking off filthy clothes, God wants us to "put off" anger!

--Col. 3:8 - "But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."

--Eph. 4:31 - "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."

III.Remove the Rag of <u>STEALING</u>
Replace it with the Righteousness of <u>HONEST WORK</u> (v. 28)

God's Reason: So that you can <u>give</u> rather than take

"Stealing" -is a violation of the 8th commandment - *"Thou shalt not steal" (Exod. 20:15; cp. Lev. 19:11)*

It is a violation of the right to <u>personal property</u>. If it does not <u>belong</u> to us, we have no right to take it.

Examples of stealing:
1.Ripping off someone's wallet, purse, personal items (household property or vehicle)

2.Borrowing with no intention of returning (borrowing without asking)

3.Taking from the work place (extra long breaks, etc.)

4.Padding expense accounts, reporting more hours worked than we worked, deceiving the IRS

5.Fornication and adultery (I Thes. 4:6)

6.Finding something that you know belongs to someone else

7.Pocketing what a store clerk overpays in change

8.Not paying agreed upon, fair wages

Everything from stealing money off of your dad's dress to grand larceny or big business embezzlement is the same sin: stealing.

Stealing is stealing no matter the size of the amount.

Many justify stealing with the thought: "They are so wealthy, they won't miss it"; or "They can easily replace it. I need it more than they do."

Stealing is wrong because:

1.It is dishonest
(We are to be truthful)

2.It is selfish
(It stems from greed and lust and a desperate attempt to gratify self at the expense of someone else; it is not loving your neighbor as yourself)

"Labour" -God's way to prosperity is good old-fashioned hard work!

"Working" -This word describes the word *"labor"*. It is be working that we are to labor.

[Note: Many thieves labor (exert great effort and strategy) but they don't honestly work. If they put as much thought and energy into a job as they do into how to rip someone off, they would be millionaires.]

"By working diligently, the individual removes some of the temptation to steal, and by assisting others in need, he helps remove the temptation from them also." (Kent, p. 84)

"With his hands" -God gave us our hands to work with. When God created man, he gave him incredible hands to produce marvelous work.

"The thing which is good" -Our business must be good, honest, what we produce must be God-honoring. Don't use your skill to produce filth (If you are a printer, don't for a pornography publisher).

"His own hands" -Also shows that every able-bodied person is responsible for his own provision.

Husbands must provide for their own families (I Tim. 5:8) and not live on welfare or habitual unemployment income.

SEE: I Thes. 4:11-12 - The Benefits of Work:

1)You uphold a good testimony (v. 12a)

2)You provide for your needs (v. 12b)

SEE: II Thes. 3:6-15

The purpose of working is to not merely have our needs met, but to give to others in need! Wealth is not to be selfishly horded, but wisely invested into the lives of others and into the ministry of our Lord - I Tim. 6:17-18 - *"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate."*

IV.Remove the Rag of ROTTEN SPEECH
Replace it with the Righteousness of GOOD WORDS (v. 29)

God's Reason: So that your tongue will build others up, not tear them down.

"Corrupt" - rank, foul, putrid, stinking, rotten, worthless

"Communication" -word

No rotten word is to ever come out of our mouths!

"Corrupt" -the Greek word (sapros) referred to rotten vegetables or fruit

"Rotten speech" is not only vulgarity, but any words that will not build someone up!

EX:--foolish jesting--gossip
--harsh language--lies
--derogatory speech

There is a connection between the mouth and the heart, for *"out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh"* (Mt. 12:34)

See James 3 - for the influence of the tongue

David, knowing the potential evil of his tongue, prayed: *"Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips"* (Ps. 141:3)

"Good" speech is:1.kind (gracious)
2.Constructive (it helps, builds up)
3.Instructive (it teaches)
4.Calm (under the Spirit's control)
5.Honest (true and sincere)

"Edifying" -(cp. "edifice") to build up; to construct

A simple motto: "If it won't build up - shut up!"

"Minister" -to give

"Grace" -benefit

Our words have tremendous power, either to tear down or to build up; to rip apart, or to put together; to weaken or to strengthen.

Ask yourself: "What is the value of the words I spoke today?"

CONCLUSION: V. 30-32

V. 30

"Grieve" - to cause sorrow to

The fact that the Holy Spirit can be grieved demonstrates:

1.That He is a person, not a mere "force"
2.That He has emotion
3.That He cares about those He indwells
4.That corrupt speech (v. 29) or bad attitudes (v. 31) are a big deal to the Holy Spirit

Note: Since this admonition to not grieve the Holy Spirit is sandwiched between these verses, it indicates that our words and attitudes effect our fellowship with the Holy Spirit. We cannot be filled with the Spirit if we are grieving or quenching the Spirit (I Thes. 5:19)

This is why the most miserable person is not the unsaved man (devoid of the Spirit) who speaks evil and harbors wrong attitudes, but is the Christian, who is grieving the Spirit. He therefore is miserable, most miserable!

The Holy Spirit's sealing is a mark of:

1)Ownership
2)Protection
3)Security

(See: Eph. 1:13-14)

Why would we grieve the One who is the guarantee of our eternal salvation?

Note: The Holy Spirit may be grieved at our sin, but He does not leave because of our sin! He remains in a believer until *"the day of redemption"*!

V. 31

***"All"* -**None of the following are to be tolerated in our lives at all!

3 forms of anger:

1)Bitterness (to hold grudges, resentfulness in the heart) a bad taste comes to your mouth when you think of that person. A man who is bitter is often: Sharp; cynical; cold; harsh; unpleasant.

2)Wrath (bad temper, hot explosive outbursts; when we blow up)

3)Anger (deep-seated anger; when we bottle up)

Three manifestations (outworkings) of anger:

1)Clamor - outcries; shouting; it is the cry of strife

2)Evil speaking - blasphemy; slander

3)Malice - any form of badness

"Put away" -to pick up and carry away; to make a clean sweep

V. 32

1)Kind (helpful
2)Tenderhearted (compassionate; lit. to have "good insides" toward someone)
3)Forgiving (to exercise grace in freely forgiving; the positive aspect of forgiveness)

"One another" -This action is to be:reciprocal
impartial

Your pattern (cp. 5:1 - *"Followers"* -imitators) is God, who because of Jesus' death forgave you.

God's forgiveness is:
1)Undeserved
2)In Christ
3)Complete
4)Personal (*"you"*)

In Matthew 7:12, Jesus said that we should treat others how we would want them to treat us. Now the Lord says: we should treat others the same way God has treated us.