

## STUDY 21 – WHAT WILL I WEAR TODAY?

### PART 1A – WHAT TO CHANGE

We are looking specifically at the idea in [Romans 13:14](#) of what it means to “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**”. The real question is whether or not I am actually doing this in my life. This is a **very strategic conviction** that must be developed in the life of any genuine follower of Jesus. In [John 3:30](#) John the Baptist said it this way,

Jn 3:30 (NKJV) **He must increase, but I must decrease.**

So, I want you to ask yourself a simple question - “*Am I actually putting on and displaying the Lord Jesus Christ in my life?*” Our life is our testimony and our answer to that question. If you are not putting on Christ, then what consequences will that create in your life? Here is what I believe.

#### **The absence of godly convictions leads to ungodly choices.**

A lack of godly convictions always leads to ungodly decisions. However, if we think of this in a positive way, then we would say that **godly convictions lead to godly choices**. So, in every believer’s life, it is crucial to develop “*godly convictions that lead to godly choices*”, and this idea of “**putting on the Lord Jesus Christ**” is one of those life changing convictions. Listen carefully. **Any successful Christian life is filled with making small, godly choices every day.** I rarely ever make really big decisions, but every day of my life I do make a lot of small decisions, and here is what I have found.

#### **The small decisions we make that no one ever sees are the ones that produce the results that everyone wants.<sup>1</sup>**

If you will be faithful in doing small things well, in making good, small choices every day, then that will become a godly habit in your life, and **godly habits produce godly results**. For instance, if my wife privately chooses to forgive me of something that I have done to hurt her rather than becoming resentful, no one will see that happen in her life, but everyone will see the results in our marriage. Why? It is because **small godly decisions produce large godly results**. Every godly decision that you make in your life, no matter how insignificant it may seem at the time, can have an incredibly godly impact on your life. The same is true for ungodly decisions. When my father made a decision to take his first drink of beer, he never dreamed that he would shortly become an alcoholic, have an affair, divorce my mother, abandon his children, and die at the age of 55. He never saw that coming. The lesson should be clear. **You cannot minimize the strategic importance, both for yourself and your family, of developing and maintaining godly convictions in your life.** The following is inevitable.

#### **If you do not have godly convictions, then you will always be making bad decisions.**

**For every one of us, our convictions (godly or ungodly) drive our decisions.** So, you must see godly convictions as an integral and controlling part of your identity in Christ. This is very important, so please do not minimize what I just said. A conviction is something of which you are firmly persuaded. It is what you deeply believe and what ultimately controls your life. For instance, I deeply believe in the sovereignty of God, so the lens through which I look at my life and what happens in it is that God is sovereign over my life. This is a deep, deep conviction that controls my life. Your

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<sup>1</sup> Groeschel, Divine, 15.

convictions, or lack thereof, represent your identity with one of two things – your identity with Christ or your identity with the world. **Either we identify with Christ or we do not identify with Christ.** Someone may ask me “*Well, how can I know if I identify with Christ?*” The answer is simple – “*Are you putting on Christ? What are you wearing, what is your life displaying, what do your choices and decisions reveal about your life?*” Ask yourself this question – “*When someone looks at my life, what do they see and hear, and would they even think that I was a Christian?*” It is vital to understand that even though “**you may say**” that you have a certain conviction, **it is not a conviction until you actually live out that conviction in your life.** If you do not live out a conviction, it is simply a meaningless and worthless idea.

So, let us just think for a moment about this idea of “**putting on the Lord Jesus**” and what that truly means for your life. If I can say it in a strong way, **either it means everything to you or it means nothing to you.** When I get up every morning, I put on certain clothes based on what I intend to do that day. Some days I go to my cardio rehab, so I wear clothes that allow me to work out. Some days I cut the fields on the tractor, so I wear clothes that reflect that. On Sunday, I teach at church, and I wear clothes that reflect that. So, here is what I want to encourage you to do. “***When you get up in the morning, put on the Lord Jesus Christ***”. At the beginning of your day, yield your life to Christ, allow Him to be Lord of your life, accept His standards above your own, depend on His strength. Whenever I watch a football game, each team has on a uniform that lets everyone know who they represent. So, in the same way, put on Christ so that everyone will know that you are a committed follower of Christ.

Please notice that Paul did not say “*Put on half of the Lord Jesus*”. You cannot just put on half of the Lord Jesus. It would be similar to you only putting on half of your clothes every day to go to work. You get to work, and you only have one shoe on and one sock on the other foot. You have pajama pants on, and just a tee shirt with holes under the arm. You are half-dressed, and when everyone looks at you, they think that you are very weird and have literally lost your mind. You cannot just have half of Jesus. Either we are followers of Christ or we are not followers of Christ. What if your life was half for Jesus and half not for Jesus? What would that look like? What if you were faithful to your marriage partner one week, but very unfaithful the next? What if you said nice things to people at church on Sunday, but you cursed at your co-workers on Monday? Listen carefully. God wants you to “**put on ALL of the Lord Jesus Christ**”, not just some of Him. Either you are willing to embrace this or you are not willing to embrace it. We are not talking about perfection, but we are talking about direction. Does my life clearly have a “**divine direction**” to it? **Can people just look at my life and know that I am a Christ follower?** Listen carefully. This is very important. **Other people should be able to look at your life and know with certainty that you are deeply committed to Christ.** Jesus said these words in [Luke 6:46](#),

Lk 6:46 (NKJV) “**But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?**”

I.e., “*Why do you say one thing and act like you have a conviction about it, you but you live another way?*” This idea of “**putting on the Lord Jesus**”, of emulating Him and His character, of coming under His control and influence, of relating to other Christians with grace and mercy and forgiveness, of submitting every area of our life to the authority of Scripture, all of this is a full-time job for any believer – even the most mature. None of us can live out the Christian life on “*auto-pilot*”. There is no “*spiritual cruise control*” that we can tap into. Everyday life is filled with trials, difficult moments,

problematic people, and very testing challenges, and if I have not made a conscious decision to “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**”, I will make a lot of bad decisions in the process.

So, this verse on the believer putting on and embracing the same character and disposition that Christ has is no small issue. In my mind, right or wrong, it is one of the defining characteristics that separates the sheep from the goats and the wheat from the tares. If someone cannot clearly recognize that you have personally “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**”, then there is something strategically missing in your life. It could be a lack of meaningful conviction about your personal identity with Jesus, or it could simply be a meaningless profession of faith in Him. I had a lady who does not go to our church that called me on Friday morning asking me how she could know if someone was truly saved or not. My answer to her was very simple. I said, “*You look at their life.*” I told her this – “**Everyone’s life is simply the sum total of what they truly believe.**” If you are someone who has genuinely decided to “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**”, to emulate Christ, to let Him be your identity, then your life will display that conviction. It will reveal that, express that, demonstrate that. There should never be any question about your commitment to Christ. However, if you have not decided to “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**”, then the sum total of your life – your choices, your decisions, and your lifestyle will all clearly reflect and display that bad choice. Listen very carefully. This is so super important.

#### **YOU CANNOT HIDE WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU ARE COMMITTED TO.**

You just cannot hide it. Ultimately, everyone knows who we are and what we are. We can try and fool people, but eventually what we have done in the dark will come to light. Jesus said in [Luke 12:2](#),

Lk 12:2 (NKJV) **For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.**

So, not only will your life betray you, but your tongue will also betray you. [Matthew 12:34\(b\)](#) says,

Mt 12:34 (NKJV) **...For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.**

#### **Our words will always reveal what we truly believe.**

Either we have decided to “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**” or we have decided to live a different way. Let us just assume for a few moments that we know someone that we do not believe is truly saved. They have successfully navigated through all of the religious trappings and learned all of the right things to say, but simply have never come to Christ. When someone looks at their life, there is no real, meaningful evidence of actually being born again in their life. They have become religious, and are satisfied with their religion. However, being religious is spiritually deadly. Just ask the scribes and the Pharisees. Let us assume that you decide to talk to someone about their salvation. If you do, please do not be general, but be very specific with your questions. Why? **It is because general questions rarely ever get specific answers.** Just as examples, here are three specific questions:

1. How would someone know that you truly identify with Jesus?
2. How would someone know that Jesus is the real difference in your life?
3. Would someone be willing to say that your love for Jesus is what truly marks your life?

[John 7:38](#) seems to add some clarity to this issue of what marks a true believer when Jesus says,

**Jn 7:38 (NKJV) He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.**"

What Jesus says here is actually startling within an American brand of Christianity where people simply make “decisions” relative to salvation, but their life has never come close to declaring that they really do identify with Christ. You cannot look at their life and say “*Hey, that person is a genuine follower of Christ.*” Do they go to church? Maybe some times. Do they help on a work day? If it is convenient. Do they seem like a nice person? They do. Unfortunately, though, there simply is no evidence of real salvation in their life. However, Jesus said that if a person truly believes in Him, if they have genuinely committed their life to Him that this person’s heart will literally be “**rivers of living water**” for all of those who are around them. The words “**will flow**” are in the indicative mood, the future tense. What that means is that it is a fact that the **one who truly believes in Christ will truly display Christ**. They are always putting Christ on display. They know exactly what it means to “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**”. In the mind of Jesus, there was nothing nebulous or vague about the evidence of salvation in a person’s life. If it is real salvation, then it will make a **spiritually defining difference** in a person’s life. If the salvation that someone thinks that they have is not making a difference in their life, then I have absolutely no biblical reason whatsoever to believe that they are saved. I am not saying that they are not saved, but simply that their life gives no evidence of it. Why would I ever tell someone that I thought they were a Christian if I have never seen any meaningful evidence of that reality. We all know people who make an outward claim to be a Christian, but they have never come close to experiencing what this verse is even talking about. Experientially, they have no idea what “**rivers of living water**” even means. In [John 10:10](#), Jesus said the same thing again. He said,

**Jn 10:10 (NKJV) The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that THEY may have life, and that THEY may have it more abundantly.**

Jesus is very definitive in what He is saying here. [John 10:1-18](#) is a passage on the Good Shepherd and His sheep, so when Jesus uses the pronoun “**they**”, He is clearly talking about what He calls “**His own sheep**” in v3-4. The Greek word for “**abundantly**” is “*perissos*” and it literally means to “abound beyond”, to super abound, to be extremely excessive, and unable to measure.<sup>2</sup> Jesus is clear that the person who is given His supernatural life has it in an abundant, prolific, inexhaustible way. This is one of the clearest evidences of salvation. This person has “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**”.

Two things should always be apparent for a genuine believer:

1. **First, they KNOW that they have had a truly life changing, salvific encounter with Christ.**  
This is never in question. There is no doubt in their mind. They know beyond any shadow of a doubt that they are saved.
2. **Secondly, THEIR LIFE REFLECTS that they had a life changing encounter with Christ.**  
They can share their faith with confidence, with courage, and with grace. Their convictions run deep because their saving encounter with Jesus was real and life changing for them.

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<sup>2</sup> Strong, *perissos*, #4053, ep.

So, for those who know that they have been truly saved, this idea of “**putting on the Lord Jesus Christ**” should be one of their deepest convictions. If someone has not embraced this change in their life, then it is not unreasonable to suspect whether or not they have ever been saved. My encouragement is simple. Just keep “**putting on the Lord Jesus Christ**”. Make this your new normal, your way of life, your lifestyle. Put Christ on display in every area of your life. Keep reminding yourself that you are a Christ follower and that you are going to “**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**” no matter what life demands of you. You will never, never regret making that decision.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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