**Faith and Dressing**

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*Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Colossians 3:12* NLT.

Does dress matter? Does it matter to the world around you what you put on? So how do you dress yourself? What is your style? Edgy, comfy, latest fashion? Thrift store chic? How do you select your clothing each day? Picking out clothes to wear each day is not always easy. The weather, the activities, and simply what is clean may affect our natural clothing choices. But as we walk with the Lord, Paul lists the attitudes we must clothe ourselves with if we want to be the holy people he has chosen us to be. He doesn’t give any exceptions. These are things we must put on every day. It isn’t always easy to be tenderhearted, have mercy, and walk in kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Famous people may have their stylists and “dressers” but no one can clothe us in these attributes except ourselves. It is a daily choice.

But the Apostle Paul also gives us another list. The putting on the armor of God. *Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. Ephesians 6:11.* Are you like me? Sometimes you forget not only to put them on, but that you’ve even been given them? I think they are like some other clothes that get lost in the back of the closet. My friend mentioned them yesterday, and as I was reading them today, I felt others needed to be reminded that not only do you have them, but they must be put on with intention. Paul exhorts us to put them on so we will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. We know he has many strategies—that are sneaky and deliberately set to trap us in his ways. Without utilizing this armor, we subject ourselves to needless wounds and battles.

*Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then, after the battle, you will be standing firm.*Maybe you have been feeling pushed around and defeated. Check yourself. Have you been putting on the armor? *Put on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Ephesians 6:14-17 NLT.*

My friends, we need to be properly dressed to face the world. We can’t just randomly grab “comfy clothes of the flesh” and expect to walk victoriously in this world. We need both lists to be effective lights. Dress matters. Make a fresh decision to put on both lists every day. If you do, you will be prepared to face whatever comes your way.

*Father, you’ve given us these lists for a reason. We can trust that they are for our good and the good of your kingdom. My dear Father, we need your help in remembering to take the time to put on your armor and to clothe ourselves with these helpful attributes. Help us trust your wisdom that we need these things, and not be like children who don’t want to put on coats in the middle of winter. In Jesus’ Name, amen.*