



I Am Becoming Better By Becoming More Like Christ

PART 2

Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 137–141.



Colossians 3:12–17 (NKJV)

12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

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15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

- God has forgiven us “for Christ’s sake”, and not for our own sake.
- Chosen by God, set apart for God, loved by God, and forgiven by God.
- They all add up to GRACE!
- Now, because of these gracious blessings, the Christian has some solemn responsibilities before God. He must put on the beautiful graces of the Christian life.

Paul named eight graces.

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1

Put On ... *Tender Mercies*

(Col. 3:12)

- The Greek uses the term *bowels of compassion* because the Greek people located the deeper emotions in the intestinal area, while we locate them in the heart.
- As believers, we need to display tender feelings of compassion toward one another (see *Phil. 2:1ff*).

Philippians 2:1–3 (NKJV)

1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,

2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

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- This is not something that we turn on and off, like the TV set.
- It is a constant attitude of heart that makes us easy to live with.

2

Put on... *Kindness*

(Col. 3:12)

- We have been saved because of God's kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:7 (NKJV)

that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

2

Put on... *Kindness*

(Col. 3:12)

Titus 3:3–4 (NKJV)

3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

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- We, in turn, ought to show kindness toward others.

Ephesians 4:32 (NKJV)

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

- This is God's command.
- One of the most beautiful pictures of kindness in the Bible is King David's treatment of the crippled prince, Mephibosheth (*see 2 Samuel 9*).

- David's desire was to show "the kindness of God" to King Saul's family because of his own love for Saul's son, Jonathan.
- The young man chosen was Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, a poor cripple.

- If David had acted according to justice, he would have condemned Mephibosheth, for the man belonged to a condemned family. But David acted on the basis of love and grace.
- David sought Mephibosheth and assured him not to be afraid. He invited Mephibosheth to live in the palace as a member of his family, and to eat at the king's bountiful table. This is the kindness of God!

- You and I have experienced an even greater kindness, for as Christians, we are God's children and shall live with Him in heaven forever!

3 Put on... Humbleness Of Mind

(Col. 3:12)

- The pagan world of Paul's day did not admire humility.

Romans 12:16 (NKJV)

Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

- Instead, they admired pride and domination. Jesus Christ is the greatest example of humbleness of mind.

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- Humility is not thinking poorly of oneself. Rather, it is having the proper estimate of oneself in the will of God.

Romans 12:3 (NKJV)

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

- The person with humbleness of mind thinks of others first and not of himself.

4

Put on... *Meekness*

(Col. 3:12)

- Meekness is not weakness; it is power under control. This word was used to describe a soothing wind, a healing medicine, and a colt that had been broken.

Matthew 5:5 (NKJV)

Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

- In each instance, there is *power*: a wind can become a storm; too much medicine can kill; a horse can break loose.

- This power is under control.
- The meek person does not have to fly off the handle because he has everything under control.

5

Put on... *Long-Suffering*

(Col. 3:12)

- This word is literally “long-temper.”
- The short-tempered person speaks and acts impulsively and lacks self-control.

1 Corinthians 13:4 (NKJV)

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

- When a person is long-suffering, he can put up with provoking people or circumstances without retaliating.
- It is good to be able to get angry, for this is a sign of holy character.

- It is wrong to get angry quickly at the wrong things and for the wrong reasons.

Ephesians 4:26–27 (NKJV)

26 “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath,
27 nor give place to the devil.

6

Put on... *Forbearance*

(Col. 3:13)

- This word literally means “*to hold up*” or “*to hold back.*”
- God is forbearing toward sinners in that He holds back His judgment (*Rom. 2:4; 3:25*).
- Meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance go together.

7

Put on... *Forgiveness*

(Col. 3:13)

- This is the logical result of all that Paul has written so far in this section.
- It is not enough that the Christian must endure grief and provocation, and refuse to retaliate; he must also forgive the troublemaker.
- If he does not, then feelings of malice will develop in the heart; and these can lead to greater sins.

Matthew 6:15 (NKJV)

But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. It is Christ like to forgive, and forgiveness opens the heart to the fullness of the love of God.

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- The very instant we have a complaint against another person, we should forgive him in our hearts.
- “Family forgiveness” is another matter. We should go to the offender and seek to help him in love. *See Matt. 18:15–35*

8 Put on... Love

(Col. 3:14)

- This is the most important of the Christian virtues, and it acts like a “*girdle*” that ties all the other virtues together.
- All of the spiritual qualities Paul has named are aspects of true Christian love, as a reading of 1 Corinthians 13 will reveal.

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- Love is the first of the fruit of the Spirit and the other virtues follow—joy (*Col. 3:16*), peace (*Col. 3:15*), long-suffering, gentleness, kindness, and meekness (*Col. 3:12*).

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- When love rules in our lives, it unites all these spiritual virtues so that there is beauty and harmony, indicating spiritual maturity.
- This harmony and maturity keep the life balanced and growing.
- The gnostic system could never do this.