

Romans 13:8-14

Who Are You Wearing?

The limousine pulls up to the red carpet, the driver gets out and opens the back door, the anticipation builds and a person of fame emerges from the darkness into the light of cameras flashing and the waiting red carpet commentator ready to get in a quick interview before the celebrity moves on. One of the first asks is "Who are you wearing?" The answers come, Ralph Laurne, Luca Faloni, the bag is Gucci, Louis Vuitton. The next days after a gala, the social media reporters are all over the conversation of who was best dressed and worst dressed.

More recently with the coronation of the king one of the important conversations for reporters was who was wearing which designer's clothing. Again, the answer to the question "Who are you wearing?" seems to be front and center. I googled to find out what different people were wearing, as I am not one to follow that kind of thing and discovered a website that answers the question of what and who Kate Middleton is wearing on any particular day.

I understand the importance of this for designers. To have stars and royalty wearing your clothing can make a huge difference in popularity and in sales. Still in my ordinary day, I may get a comment about what I am wearing, usually good comments as I am pretty sure when I get it wrong people just keep that to themselves or share with others, but no one ever asks me "who am I wearing?"

In the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, or NRSV for short, in Romans the Apostle Paul writes, "put on the armour of light" (v12) and just a few lines after writes it more succinctly, "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." (v14). Eugene Peterson uses "Get out of bed and get dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!"

This is not the only place in the scriptures that these or similar words are used. In Galatians 3:27-28 we hear, "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have *clothed yourselves with Christ*. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Then again in Colossians 3:9-12 it is written,

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.¹

This passion from Colossians helps us get to what it means to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, or put the way we heard it in *The Message*, dress ourselves in Christ. To sum it up in one word would be to clothe ourselves in love - top to bottom. Paul says, "When you love others, you complete what the law has been after all along." The law being what we know as the Ten Commandments. Paul shares a few of those commandments,

...don't sleep with another person's spouse, don't take someone's life, don't take what isn't yours, don't always be wanting what you don't have, and any other "don't" you can think of. [Which] finally adds up to this: Love other people as well as you do yourself. You can't go wrong when you love others. When you add up everything in the law code, the sum total is *love*.²

So basically, all you need is love. But to clothe oneself in Christ means that people can visibly see how you love. It is not hidden. It is as recognizable as designer clothing.

There have been a few people I have met in my lifetime who I could see were clothed in love. Just being in their presence it was as if love surrounded them. You couldn't help be see it. Feel it. One of the first people I remember this of was a good friend of my mothers. Though very much my senior, I loved being with the woman whose love and faith was as much of who she was as the clothes she had chosen to wear for the day. I made opportunities to sit with her over a cup of tea.

Another was a retired minister of the PCC, who had moved to my small community in Northern Alberta. I relished in the times when I got to sit next to him at coffee hour after church or visit in his home. Something about his presence just exuded love, as if he not only dressed in it in the morning, but wore pajamas of love, it so permeated his being. The same could be said of a missionary to India of the PCC who died this year, Pauline Brown. Our home was never so blessed as when we hosted her overnight. Just being in the same room with her was to know love and blessing.

The words that one might use to describe someone dressed in Christ would be more about how they are in the world. People dressed in Christ are compassionate, kind, humble, gentle, and patience as described in Colossians. Maybe this other familiar passage speaks to you from Galatians in which the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Again, love pretty much sums this up. And to get up and get dressed with this kind of attitude, this kind of meaning and purpose, might take practice, and even if you are

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² ***The Message (MSG)*** Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by [Eugene H. Peterson](#)

someone who is like this most of the time, all of us have days that it feels like we got out of the wrong side of the bed. Yet, when we call ourselves Christians, or followers of Christ, we are to make a conscious decision to love as it is love that is the clothing of Christ.

When you put on this clothing you don't take it off mid-day as you might a jacket that has become too warm in the mid day sun. This outfit of love is to last you the day no matter who you encounter. Note, this is not to say you take abuse or put yourself in a situation that you know will be harmful to you, at least not without the appropriate supports. What it does mean is that when you look at someone whether it be your spouse, your child, parent, or friend, when you look at the cashier, the drive through clerk, the doctor or nurse, the custodian, the teacher, the person bruised and battered coming toward you on the street, it means you see them and you see in them Christ. Then you love them as Christ loves.

That I know is a big ask, a tall order, maybe a difficult task, but it is what being dressed in Christ is about. It is about seeing the other, friend, family, or foe, seeing them as Christ see them – as children of God. Some may be rough around the edges, some more elegant, but all are human. As some say, we all have to take down our pants to go to the bathroom. Well my uncles would be more indelicate in saying that, but you know what I am getting at.

Hearing from The Message again,

We can't afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!

Get up, get dressed, show up. Put on Christ, which is to clothe yourself with love and then get out there and love others. If you can't leave your room, know that you can love those who enter into your space to care for your needs and love them. If you can go wherever you wish, show up with love as your foundational garments, and love so bright that it becomes a light in the darkness of this world.

Maybe this quote attributed to St. Patrick will help you dress yourself in Christ each day. Think of these words as putting on the clothing of Christ.

“Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,

Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

May the love of God, permeate your life, your being so deeply, that all will recognize who you are wearing. Amen.