

PUTTING OFF AND PUTTING ON.

"Having put off the old man with his practices...put on the new one, being renewed by knowledge according to a likeness of him who created him." – Col. 3:9,10.

The great work of the consecrated in this present time is this process of putting off the old defilements and putting on the new character. However zealous we may be in our efforts to spread the truth, to enlighten those about us, and to see the great harvest work progressing, we should ever keep in mind this one element of the work, which, to each of us personally, is the all important work; for it is possible that after having preached to others, we ourselves should come short and be counted unworthy of a place in that chosen company to which we are called, and to which we aspire.

Let us then consider what it is to put off the old nature, and how we may put on the new. The Apostle tells us, saying, "Put to death, therefore, those members on the earth – fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire and inordinate lust, which is idol-worship; on account of which things the wrath of God is coming." And "Put off also all these – Anger, wrath, malice, evil-speaking, vile words out of your mouth. Do not speak falsely to each other, having put off the old man with his practices."

Here are two sets of evil dispositions to be put to death by patient and continuous [R1215 : page 7] resistance: the one gendered by perverted love, which is idolatry, and the other by hatred. These are the filthy rags of sin with which the old nature is clothed since the fall, and these must be put away. We cannot keep and cherish them and put on the new nature too; we must be washed, cleansed, sanctified by the blood of Christ and with the washing of water by the Word; and then we may begin to put on the new man – the new nature. "As chosen ones of God, beloved

saints, be clothed therefore with a merciful mind, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, endurance, bearing with each other, and freely forgiving each other, if any one for some things may have a cause of complaint; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do you forgive."

What a transformation it will make when all of those are put off and all of these are put on! How like the Lord himself, when so cleansed and attired in the livery of heaven! Consider each item of this apparel and daily strive to have it all on. But, "besides all these things, put on *love*: it is the bond of the completeness:" it is the girdle which binds and fits them all close to the person. "And let the peace of the Anointed preside in your hearts...and be thankful."

With such a cleansing and robing comes the delightful refreshment of that peace which passeth the understanding of the old, sinful man. The feeling of spiritual refreshment is akin to that of the natural refreshment when the body has been cleansed in water and clothed in clean linen, pure and white.

Thus cleansed and clothed, we are ready to put on the whole armor of God and to go forth to battle for truth and righteousness. Without the invigorating cleansing and the robing of righteousness, we would be unable to bear the heavy armor; but thus attired the armor fits, and is well sustained; and the man of God, thoroughly equipped, may confidently and courageously go forth to battle.
