

# CLOTHED IN LOVE

October 28, 2018

Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



## Colossians 3:12-17

<sup>12</sup> As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

<sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

## REFLECT & DISCUSS

### Context

What is described are the contours of the "new community" made possible by Christ. This is no simple, easy, or costless community (not a "cheap grace" form of friendship, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer might say), but a daunting and beautiful challenge to *be* the church with Christ's Spirit.

The *Pax Romana* (Peace of Rome) that ruled the day stood in stark contrast to what Christians were (and still are) called to do: "let the peace of Christ rule" (v. 15). Roman peace was made possible by oppression squeezing out dissent, by fear keeping order, and by power exercising military control. The Peace of Christ rules in a different way: not by eliminating conflicts through might, but by transforming all conflicts with love.

The Christian moral virtues are described as articles of clothing. Clothing is:

- Chosen
- Made comfortable with repeated wear
- An identity maker
- Inclusion in a community

One supreme virtue, Love, is designed to bring the whole wardrobe together. Love makes the ensemble "work."

South Elkhorn Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

4343 Harrodsburg Road • Lexington KY 40513

859.223.1433 • [southelkhorncc.org](http://southelkhorncc.org)

## Big Ideas

1. Christians are branded by virtues, not brands.
2. Love makes the outfit “work.”
3. What you wear says something about who you are. What you do in Christ says something about who God is.

## Reflect

1. Read the scripture passage carefully and slowly. What word or image stands out to you? Why?
2. Describe a favorite article of clothing from your childhood, teenage years, or adulthood. Why did you love it so? What about now?
3. Why do you think clothing is so important? What does clothing “say” about us? Does that change with time?
4. Which of the Christian virtues do you find more challenging to live? Why?
5. Why or how might love be the one thing that binds all the virtues together?
6. What do you think it means to let “peace rule” in your heart? What does that kind of life look like?

---

**Listen Online**

Sermon audio available at [southelkhorncc.org/sermons](http://southelkhorncc.org/sermons)