

“Created For Companionship and Community”

Colossians 3:12-16

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One church member shared this story with me and I want to pass this story to you. Imagine our future!! An example of a future service might be: The PASTOR would say: "Praise the Lord!" CONGREGATION will answer: "Hallelujah!" Pastor then might say: "Will everyone please turn on their tablet, PC, iPad, smart phone, and Kindle Bibles to 1 Corinthians, 13:13. Oh, and please switch on your Bluetooth to download the sermon."

(P-a-u-s-e.....)

"Now, Let us pray committing this week into God's hands. Open your Apps, BBM, Twitter and Facebook, and chat with God."

(S-i-l-e-n-c-e)

Our liturgist will explain our processes: "As we take our Sunday tithes and offerings, please have your credit and debit cards ready." "You can log on to the church Wi-Fi using the password 'Lord909887.' The ushers will circulate mobile card swipe machines among the worshipers:

- a. Those who prefer to make electronic fund transfers are directed to computers and laptops at the rear of the church.
- b. Those who prefer to use iPads can open them.
- c. Those who prefer telephone banking, take out your cell phones to transfer your contributions to the church account.

Now, you see that the holy atmosphere of the Church becomes truly electrified as ALL the smart phones, iPads, PCs and laptops beep and flicker!

Final Blessing and Closing Announcements:

- a. This week's ministry cell meetings will be held on the various Facebook group pages where the usual group chatting takes place. Please log in and don't miss out.
- b. Thursday's Bible study will be held live on Skype at 1900hrs GMT. Please don't miss out.
- c. You can follow your Pastor on Twitter this weekend for counseling and prayers. God bless and have a nice day.

And Jesus wept.....

What's missing in this silly exaggeration and satirical imagination about the church? This may be a chance to rethink the meaning of Christian faith and the purpose of the church's mission. We are not here to receive the pastor's sermon copies, nor give our offering to entertain worship and enjoy our

membership. We have a more important purpose to be a church of a faith community. We are eager to meet with God and grow in God's love and build a community of love. I want to call this companionship. We are called to companionship experiencing the grace of God, growing in love and building God's community. Truly, we Christian people are created for this. This morning, let's explore Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossian Church.

In our Scripture reading, Paul tells the church what to wear as God's holy chosen people. Paul uses the changing of clothes as a metaphor for the way we act as God's people. Listen to Paul's suggestion again, "As God's chosen ones, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (NRSV) What does this mean to wear these styles of clothes like clothes of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience and most of all, wear love?

One important point that we don't want to miss is Apostle Paul's metaphor for dressing, which is to understand the purpose of changing our clothes. We aren't invited to wear God's clothes to show off to people being a prince or princess. Rather, we are humbly reminded that we are relational beings connected to one another in God. The fact we are called to wear love is not to exclude ourselves from others, wearing stage hero costumes. Rather we probably wear love like volunteer clothes to connect ourselves to others who are in need whoever they are. Moreover, we love them and accept them as ourselves with equality and dignity as God's chosen people.

Let's go further. Compassion is empathy for those suffering or in need, and kindness is a friendly act and attitude through good deeds. Humility means a humble attitude that we do not think more of ourselves than we should. Meekness is gentleness. Lastly, we are called to wear love. Paul reminds us that love is our basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it! Apostle Paul lists different styles of clothes but there is a common theme here. Simply speaking, Paul reminds us and his church that we are relational and connected to one another. Companionship love is not a selfish love. As Thomas Merton, a spiritual master says, "our job is to love others without stopping whether or not they are worthy." It is more about communal sharing, love for one another, and building community.

Last Sunday, we made a special offering for "Imagine No Malaria". I am pleased to tell you that we raised \$957.00 for our children and brothers and sisters in Africa. I am very thankful and grateful for your generosity. A couple of Sundays ago, we also made a special offering to support the UMCOR mission

team helping earthquake victims in Nepal. You have shown to our world wonderful examples of companionship love that we put on. The world is our community as well! What impressed me was that you didn't care about locations, but we regard people in Nepal and people in Africa as our brothers and sisters in Christ.

There was an anthropologist who had been studying the life and customs of a tribe of people in Africa. He worked for months and months. Finally, he was ready to go home and compile all of what he had learned into a book. He had some extra time before leaving for the airport, so he suggested a game to a group of children who were there to say "Good-bye." The scientist took a basket and filled it with fruit. He put the basket of fruit under a tree about 50 yards from where the children were gathered. He went back to the group and drew a line on the ground. He explained that they should wait behind the line for his signal. When he said, "Go!" they should all run to the basket. Whoever got there first would win the fruit. The man said, "On your marks, get set, Go!"

At the signal, "Go!" all the boys and girls held each others' hands and ran off toward the basket together. When they all arrived at the same time, they shared the sweet fruit. The anthropologist was super surprised. "Why did you all run together, when one of you could have won all of the fruit?" he asked. A young girl answered, "How can one of us be happy if all the others are sad?"

Love is our Christian uniform to wear all the time. Wear this love, as Apostle Paul reminds us. May God bless each of you and our church as we continue to share and spread our love for the world! Amen.