

**Read: Colossians 3:12-17**

## Wear your best Christmas clothes

### **Colossians 3:12-14**

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Michael hated his Christmas sweater. It was a red sweater with green cuffs and a green collar. And it was itchy. Every time he moved his head, he felt it scratching against his neck. But his parents made him wear it to church on Christmas for a reason. The red and green were Christmas colors. The sweater actually looked nice. So Michael thought to himself, "If we are going to church to celebrate God giving us his Son as a gift of his love, I can wear this sweater that 'fits' the reason we're going."

God's gift to you this new year are new clothes to wear every day. Because Jesus came as our Savior, God calls you his "chosen people, holy and dearly loved." That's his gift to you—you didn't earn it, ask for it, or deserve it; it was a gift of his love. Since God has made you his child, it's only fitting that we "dress" like his children. He tells us to put on "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience," almost like we're putting on clothes. How do you dress like God's child? Here are three encouragements God gives us.

First, he tells us to forgive people and treat them with patience. That's not easy, and it doesn't come naturally to us. Sometimes that will feel just like that itchy Christmas sweater Michael had to wear. Sometimes Michael just wanted to rip it off! But the more you "put on" forgiveness and patience, the more you'll realize how perfectly they fit God's children.

Second, he tells us to fill up with God's Word. The more we hear about God's love for us, the more God's love will live in us and change us. He tells us to do this "richly." That means more than going to church. It means reading our Bibles at home, having devotions with our family, and talking to each other about God.

Third, he tells us to be with God's people. We're to teach each other and admonish each other (that means correct each other when we get something wrong). We can't do this on our own; we need other Christians to help us.

Michael didn't like his Christmas sweater growing up, but it was right to wear it. Sometimes living as a child of God can feel a little uncomfortable. But remember the love God has shown you and who he's made you to be, and more and more you'll see it's a perfect fit!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Today's devotion talked about wearing kindness like clothing. Who can you think of who needs your kindness or gentleness right now? How could you show it to them?
- God tells us to fill up with his word by singing to each other. What's one of your favorite songs to sing from church?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Why do you think God compares the Christian characteristics of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience to clothes?
- Which ones from this list are hardest for you to "put on"?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- God says the way we are to act flows from what he's done for us. What are some things he says he's done for you in today's passage?
- How does knowing you're forgiven help you to forgive others?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Lord Jesus, you've made me God's holy, loved child and dressed me with your beautiful clothes. Help me to live as God's child every day as I show your love to others. Amen.