

Put Off

Colossians 3:5-11

(CCF 01.04.26)

Intro

Usually, when we **put off** something it is a bad thing...

- We **put off** that *difficult conversation* because we know that it will be *emotionally draining*...

We **put off** that *dentist appointment* because we don't want *bad news*...

- We **put off** that *homework assignment* because our phone isn't going to *scroll itself*...

Each of these examples of **putting off** is a form of **procrastination** — the postponing of something that we should be doing...

- With that said, ***there is a time to put off things*** — but this good type of putting off is ***not about avoiding the things we should be doing***...

Instead, this type of **putting off** is the action of **getting rid** of the things ***we should not be doing***...

- Here in **Colossians 3:5-11**, Paul will call on believers to **put off sinfulness** — he will exhort believers to **put off sinful attitudes and actions that are not fitting for the born-again believer**...

As we consider this topic, we must remember that God the Father's goal for each and every believer is that *we would become as much like Christ as possible...*

- And since Christ is perfectly sinless, it only makes sense that we should continually **put off** *sinful attitudes and actions* as we seek to be conformed into the image of our Savior...

*With this as our introduction, would you please follow along as I read the passage that we will be studying this morning in a message I have simply entitled **Put Off...***

Colossians 3:5-11

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,

10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

I've divided this passage into two sections...

1) Out with the Old

2) In with the New

Let's move in to our first section...

1) Out With the Old (vs 5-9)

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth:

The imagery here is one of putting to death the parts of our body that commit evil practices — it is figurative language for killing those sinful things within us...

The Lord Jesus uses similar language in...

Matthew 5:29-30

29 “If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”

[expand on the fact that physical dismemberment cannot change the heart — so something else must be in view...]

One commentator

“Centuries past in England, if a pickpocket was caught and convicted, his right hand was cut off. If he was caught again, his left hand suffered the same fate. One pickpocket lost both hands and continued his occupation with his teeth!”

It is vital to understand that it is the **heart** that must be dealt with because the **heart** is source of our desires...

The Lord Jesus made this clear in...

Matthew 15:18-19

18 “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

*Now, as we continue on in Colossians 3:5 we find 4 elements of sinful sensuality which must be put to death — **fornication, uncleanness, passion & evil desire...***

1) fornication — *a broad term that can refer to any type of sexually immoral relationship...*

And the Scripture makes it clear that any and every type of sexual contact that occurs outside of a one man—one woman marital relationship is considered sexually immorality...

- [expand — this is pretty much the opposite of what the world teaches — we are swimming against the tide...]

Next we move to the second element of sinful sensuality that must be put to death...

2) uncleanness — *physical or moral impurity...*

- This word includes the immoral imagination, words, and actions of both the heart and mind...

3) passion — *this word could also be translated **lust**; it speaks of an inordinate affection; an obsession...*

- It is this **passion** or lust that *leads* to sexual excesses — to sexual contact that occurs outside to the marital relationship...

With this in mind, would you please turn to...

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,

5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.

[expand — unbridled passions inevitably lead to destruction —
“it takes a passion to conquer a passion”...]

John 4:34 (NKJV)

Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”

Please turn back to Colossians 3:5 as we look at the fourth and final element of sinful sensuality that must be put to death...

4) evil desire — a perverse craving for what is forbidden...

- It is the wicked, self-serving, aggressive lust that leaves nothing but destruction in its path...

This **evil desire** is what we see in ***Faust*** — the professor who sells his soul to the devil in order to enjoy all of this world’s pleasures...

The devil says this of Faust in the famous play...

***He’d pillage heaven for its brightest star,
And earth for every last delight that’s to be found;
Not all that’s near nor all that’s far
Can satisfy a heart so restless and profound.***

- [expand — sinful desires can never be satisfied — they always cry out for more — (ex. drinking salt water)]...

Now, before we move on in vs 5, let’s reread what we have covered so far...

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire...

So, Paul is clearly calling on believers to put these things to death — to execute them — to show no mercy...

But we must admit that this is easier said than done...

Alexander Maclaren

"It is far easier to cut off the hand, which after all is not me, than to sacrifice passions and desires which, though they be my worst self, are myself."

Paul further exhorts believers in...

Romans 13:13-14

13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

- [reminder — it takes a passion to conquer a passion...]

The Apostle Paul wrote about this type of single-minded passion in...

Philippians 3:12-14

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- [expand — must have a greater passion for receiving what God wants to give us than we have for the immediate fulfillment of sinful desires...]

[ex. choosing to cut back on expenses in order to save up for a down payment on a house — certain immediate things must be forsaken so that a future goal may be accomplished...]

- [ex. “hard now — easy later” — (backing a car into a space) — this is a picture of training — we must train ourselves in the little things...]

Continuing on now in Colossians 3:5 we read...

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

covetousness — *not merely the desire to possess more than you have, but more than you **ought to have**, particularly that which **belongs to someone else...***

idolatry — *lit. “Image-worship”; the worship of false gods...*

- [expand on the futility of worshiping material things — they are **temporary, unsatisfying, and enslaving...**]

Galatians 5:1 (ESV)

For **freedom** Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Continuing on in Colossians 3 to vs...

6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

The fact is, **fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, covetousness** and **idolatry** are all things that provoke **the wrath of God...**

- [expand on God being righteous — it is not His nature to simply let sin go — His justice must be satisfied...]

[ex. If you went home today and someone had moved into your home and changed the locks and said it was their home now — would you just let it go?...]

- If you could not just let that go — how could the perfectly righteous Judge of the universe let sin go?...[expand] 🤔

Please realize that everyone and everything belongs to God...

- And for fallen human beings to do whatever they want with the lives that He allows them to live is **theft** and **rebellion** — He cannot just let that go...

We must remember that our lives have never truly belonged to us — they have always belonged to Him...

Please notice vs 6 once again...

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

Paul makes it clear that God is going to pour out His righteous **wrath on the sons of disobedience** — *on those who continue on in disobedience and fail to repent...*

- Those who *refuse to repent of their sin and trust in Christ* are the **sons of disobedience** who will suffer God's eternal **wrath**...

And as we consider this challenging subject, it important to understand that *each and every person comes into this world as a son of disobedience*...

We are all born into this world as rebellious sinners...

- *If you don't believe this to be true, please volunteer to serve in a children's church class...* 😊

And though this is the sad truth of fallen humanity — that we are all born as **sons of disobedience**...

- The good news of the Gospel is that ***we don't have to stay that way***...

When we place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ we are forgiven of our sins and we become adopted children of God...

As Paul wrote in...

Colossians 1:12-14

12 ...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

So, please understand — if you are *not* a believer in Jesus Christ then you are currently a **son of disobedience** — you are living in rebellion against your Creator...

- And I urge you to lay down your arms — to give up the fight — surrender to the Lord and *you will find forgiveness...*

Thankfully, this is just what the Colossians had done — they had started off as **sons of disobedience** but had turned to Christ and become children of God...

We see this clearly as we read Colossians 3:6-7...

6 **Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,**

7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

In other words, the Colossians used to be **sons of disobedience** — walking in their sinful desires and actions...

- But as believers they were to **put off** those sinful attitudes and actions and instead walk in obedience to Christ...

This reminds me of what Paul wrote in...

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,

10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Now as we move on in Colossians 3 to vs 8 we see once again that becoming a believer does not result in automatic obedience...

8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these:

Here Paul is once again calling on believers to **put off** sinful attitudes and actions...

- If you have been a believer for any length of time then you **know** that this is a needed exhortation — that as believers we live a life of conflict...

Though we have been ***born-again by the Spirit*** we still wage war with ***our flesh, the world and the Devil...***

- Walking in obedience to the Scriptures — in the power of the Spirit — requires our ***active participation...***

We are to be active in our faith — we are to actively **put off** those attitudes and actions that are not fitting for the one who follows Christ...

Let's seek to understand what we believers are to put off as we continue on in vs 8...

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

anger — *an abiding, settled and habitual anger that may include the desire for revenge...*

This anger includes unforgiveness and bitterness — it is an anger that is fed with the continual remembrance of how you were wronged...

- [expand — playing the HD recording in our minds — continually repeating the story of the wrongdoing to others...]

The antidote to **anger** — *and to all of these sins* — is to ***put them off through prayer...***

Instead of telling the story — pray...

Instead of plotting revenge — pray...

Instead of wallowing in bitterness — pray...

*Let's move now in vs 8 from **anger** to...*

wrath — *a sudden violent anger...*

- This **wrath** is what we refer to as being short-fused...

Some of us have ***trained ourselves to be wrathful*** — we have spent a lifetime flying off of the handle...

- If we are wrathful people then we must submit to the retraining of the Spirit — we must habitually train ourselves to be patient...

malice — *ill-will, the desire to injure others...*

Instead of wanting the best for the other person, **malice** wants the worst for the other person...[expand]

Malice *is the complete opposite of what the Lord Jesus taught in...*

Matthew 5:43-45

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’

44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Please understand that ***malice*** and ***evangelism*** are diametrically opposed...

- **Malice** wants the worst for the other person — it wants that person to suffer as much as possible...

Evangelism stems for a desire for the **best** for the other person — the person's **eternal salvation**...

Next in vs 8 we come to...

blasphemy — *verbal abuse against someone; slander; wounding someone's reputation by evil reports — it may be directed toward God or man...*

So, blasphemy is the speaking of evil against another with the goal of tearing that person down — it is the opposite of what Paul commanded in...

Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

This brings us to the last part of Colossians 3:8...

filthy language out of your mouth.

This **filthy language** that we are to put out of our mouths refers to *foul speaking, low, abusive and obscene speech...*

Continuing on in Colossians 3 to vs...

9 Do not lie to one another,

The word **lie** here is in the *present imperative* — *it is a command to stop something that is currently going on...*

- In other words, Paul is calling on believers to stop lying to one another...

APPLICATION — Are we lying to fellow believers? — Are we pretending to be something that we are not? — Are we hiding sins that we refuse to repent of?...

Let's move into the last part of vs 9...

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,

As born-again believers we are not to **lie to one another** — or to do any of the sinful things that we have read about in vs 5-8 — because we have **put off the old man with his deeds...**

To remind ourselves of the freedom we have from the old man, please turn to...

Romans 6:15-22

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

We read something similar in...

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Now, if you consider yourself a believer in Jesus Christ but you continually walk in the sins of the old man...

- If your life is characterized by sinful attitudes and actions — then one of two things is true...*

1) You are a Christian who is walking in disobedience — you are not putting off the old man and walking in obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit...[expand]

2) You have never truly placed your faith in Jesus Christ — you have never been truly born-again...[expand]

- Either way, a change is needed — either way repentance is in order — if you are a believer then turn back to the Lord Jesus...

If you are not a believer then turn to the Lord Jesus for the very first time — put off the old man and his deeds and be born again...

*Let's move now from **Out with the Old** to our second section...*

2) In With the New (vs 10-11)

10 and have put on the new man

Just as believers have **put off** the old man and are to continually **put off** the sinful attitudes and actions of the old man — so we must realize that we **have put on the new man...**

I love the way that Paul put it in...

Ephesians 4:17-24 [please turn there]

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But you have not so learned Christ,

21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Back now to Colossians 3 as we continue on in vs 10...

and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

This verse lets us know that there is a ***constant renewal*** taking place in believers' lives as we keep increasing in the true **knowledge** of what God is like...

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

This knowledge of God leads to progressively being conformed to the image of the Creator and in the process living life as He would have us live it...

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Moving on to our final verse...

11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

In Christ, all of the old barriers are done away with and ***each and every believer is a child of God...***

- Each and every believer is a partaker of all that is offered with that familial bond...

Race, religious upbringing, cultural differences, social status — none of these are factors of distinction for those who are in Christ...

The racial barrier of **Greek** or **Jew**, black or white, Hispanic or Asian — is of no consequence in Christ...

- The religious barrier of being **circumcised** or **uncircumcised** — of growing up with religious ritual or not — is of no consequence in Christ...

The cultural barrier of being a **barbarian** or a **Scythian** — whether or not one is socially sophisticated — is of no consequence in Christ...

- The social barrier of being **slave** or **free** — of being owned by another or of being a free citizen — of being poor or rich — is of no consequence in Christ...

And all of these distinctions are no barrier to fellowship because **Christ is all and in all...**

One Commentary

“In the realm of the new self — that is, where the image of God is truly reflected — these distinctions have no real significance. Differences, to be sure, remain in the Christian community, but not in such a way as to be barriers to fellowship. To the extent that Christians do permit them to be barriers, they are acting out of character...Christ is the great principle of unity. In him all differences merge, all distinctions are done away. [Christ is all and in all is] “a vigorous and emphatic way of saying that Christ is ‘absolutely everything.’ Loyalty to him must therefore take precedence over all earthly ties.”

Conclusion

Now, before we move into our time of communion I want to leave you with three encouragements...

1) Remember that as you seek to put off sinful attitudes and behaviors, you didn't get into this situation in a day and you are not going to get out of it in a day...[expand]

2) Remember that sinful attitudes and behaviors are fostered through time and attention — and if we want to foster godly attitudes and behaviors then we must spend time and attention on that which is godly...[expand]

3) Remember that putting off sinful attitudes and behaviors and putting on godly attitudes and behaviors is the best possible life — it is a life of usefulness, joy and fellowship with God and with one another...[expand]

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NKJV)

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."