DRESSING IN THE MORNING

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A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep:
for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed.
The night is far spent, the day is at hand:
let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.
Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.
But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."
Romans 13:11-14

THIS passage is a piece of holy teaching set forth under the parable of rising in the morning and preparing for the work of the day. May the Holy Spirit help me to place it before you in a clear light.

It is a great mistake in a man's life when he does not know the times in which he lives, and how to act in them—and when he does not know the time as to the day of his own life, so as to apply his heart unto wisdom.

The apostle speaks of his Roman brethren as "*knowing the time*." What, then, is the time of day with the Christian? It is no longer the dead of the night with us, but "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." A little while ago the dense darkness of ignorance was about us, but the Gospel has made us light in the Lord. We were asleep in the gloom of sin—like a thick cloud it enveloped all our powers—but God has brought us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Some of us were plunged in despair, a night without a moon, without a star. We were without hope, and feared that our future would be the "blackness of darkness for ever." That hopeless gloom is over, and we have the light and joy in Christ Jesus.

The daystar is shining upon us, the light that lightens the Gentiles cheers our path, and we look for a perfect day. It is not as yet full day with us. Cloudless brightness is still a thing of desire and expectation. The sun has risen, but it is not noon as yet. For that we look when we shall see the Well-beloved in His kingdom, and wake up in His likeness. "The day is at hand" says the apostle, and that is a word of good cheer.

What, then, is "the time" which Paul would have us know? It is the early morning, it is the dawning of the eternal day. The sun has scattered the thick darkness of nature's night. We are enjoying his first golden beams—the time of the singing of birds has come—the time of the dew of grace, and of the fresh breath of the Spirit. It is not full day yet, but still, the night has gone, and the perfect day of our salvation, when body and soul too shall be delivered from every taint and trace of the work of Satan, is "nearer than when we believed."

The light and heat of day are strengthening. The darkness and chill of night are vanishing. We are getting further off from the power of ignorance, sin, and despair. We are getting more and more under the influence of knowledge, holiness, and hope.

The apostle would have us know of a surety that the true light now shines, even that which will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Joy be to our souls, the Sun of righteousness has risen upon us with healing beneath His wings.

Of what value is the knowledge of the time of day? It lies here. Certain duties arise out of the hour. "Man goes forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening." From morning to evening, and from

evening to morning again, there is a round of duty to be fulfilled, and each work is comeliest if attended to in its own season. When the shadows of evening fall, the time has come for going home, where domestic joys await us at the hearth. It would not be right for the laboring man to go home in the morning, nor seemly for him to be going out at night.

Each duty has its own time of day, and therefore the apostle would have us know the hour, and be assured that it is high time to awake out of sleep. He urges us to the duties which attend the hour of rising, the hour to which we have now come.

As my Master helps me, I shall endeavor, first of all, to give *the morning call*. And then, secondly, to preach *the morning Gospel*.

I. First, LISTEN TO THE MORNING CALL.

I have shown you that the hour of the day is that in which men should rise and begin their daily service. And its first seasonable duty is to *awake*—"It is high time to awake out of sleep." When day begins sleep should end. The bugle sounds in the camp, "Awake! Awake!" But are not all Christians awake?

Yes, from the sleep of death, but not from other kinds of sleep. Many need rough shaking and loud calling before they will be thoroughly awakened. Beloved brethren, I speak to you upon whom the light has arisen, and who are now delivered from the power of darkness, for you will not deny that it is high time for you to shake off the bands of slumber.

You should rise from the sleep of inaction. Do not let your religion consist in receiving all and doing nothing. Work while it is called today, and as you wish to be faithful servants of your gracious Lord, be up at once. It is time for you to stir yourselves, and see what can be done with the golden hours for the glory of your Redeemer's name.

Go forth and see what herbs are to be planted, what weeds are to be rooted up, what part of the garden needs watering, and which of the vines need pruning. Your Master's vineyard needs constant labor, for He Himself keeps it with unceasing care. Up, then, gird up your loins and yield your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God.

Leave also all lethargy behind you. At night a man may yawn and stretch himself as he likes, but when the morning comes, good sir, have done with yawning, and display energy. Look about you and be brisk, for the day will be none too long. Does not the song of the birds and the glitter of the dew bid you shake off your slumber, and have done with listlessness?

Oh, I hate to see some professing Christian people go about the Lord's work in such a languid way, as if it did not matter how their Lord was served. Ah me! If God were obeyed with half the activity with which the devil is served, we should soon see a change in church life.

Men are wide awake when they are serving themselves. Jingle a guinea seven miles off and they will hear it. But if service is to be done for Christ, you must put the clarion to your mouth and blow a blast as loud as the judgment summons before you can wake men up to hearty enthusiasm. It is high time that we woke out of half-heartedness.

Moreover, it is time to have done with dreaming. That is proper for the night, but not for the morning. An ungodly man's pursuits are mere dreams. He hunts after shadows. He feeds upon ashes. His weightiest business is a mere vision, a thing of nought. You who are not of the night must not dote on the world's shadows, but look for heavenly substance.

Live for eternal realities. Set about business that is real in God's sight, such business as you will think worthy of your heart when you come to die, and when you stand before the judgment seat of God. Have done with daydreams as well as night dreams, and come to stern matters of eternal fact. Trifle no longer. The time past may suffice you for that. Be earnest! Be all awake, put forth all your powers, arouse all your faculties. "It is high time to awake out of sleep."

When awake, what is the next duty? Is it not to *cast off your night clothes*? Our text says, "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness." The man who is just awakened, and finds that it is morning

light, must first of all take off the garments which covered him during the night. He quits his bed, and in so doing shakes off his bed clothes and leaves them.

Your friends do not come downstairs wrapped in the sheets which wrapped them at night—we should suppose they were seeking their graves if they did. The coverlet of night is not our covering by day. There must be a putting off in the morning before there can be a putting on—there is a measure of undressing before we commence to dress.

Simple and homely as the figure is, it conveys a lesson which I pray you to remember. Sins and follies are to be cast off when we put on the garments of the light. I have known a man profess to be converted, but he has merely put religion over his old character.

He has been a passionate man with bad companions, and all he has done is to carry his bad temper into a church meeting. He has been accustomed to drink more wine than is good for him, and all the change is that he drinks it in respectable company or in secret. He has taken up the saint without casting off the sinner. The rags of his lust are rotting under the raiment of his profession.

This will never do. Christ has not come to save you *in* your sins but *from* your sins. Anger and drunkenness, and such like, must be got rid of. Christ never came that you might christen your anger by the name of warmth, and your drunkenness with the name of liberty.

I have heard of persons living unclean lives who have heard that faith in Jesus Christ would save them, who have misunderstood this doctrine so grievously that they have thought of believing in Christ, and continuing in their evil ways. That attempt will be their ruin.

Rahab the harlot was saved by faith, but she was saved from being a harlot any longer. The rags of sin must come off if we put on the robe of Christ. There must be a taking away of the love of sin. There must be a renouncing of the practices and habits of sin, or else a man cannot be a Christian.

It will be an idle attempt to try and wear religion as a sort of celestial overall over the top of old sins. The King's daughter is all glorious *within*, or she would never have received her clothing of wrought gold.

The vision of Zechariah teaches us the way of the Lord—when he saw Joshua clothed with filthy garments, the Lord did not put upon him a goodly vesture over these—but He first said, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And then He added, "Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." You must be cleansed in the blood of Jesus before you can be clothed in the white linen which is the righteousness of the saints. See to it that, being awakened out of your sleep, you cast off all the garments of the night.

What were they? We find a list of them in the third chapter of the epistle to the Colossians. "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth." Were we fond of the joys of the ungodly? Put them off. Did we speak things which are untrue? Put them off. Could we sing a loose, lascivious song? Put it off. Were we angry, morose, malicious? Put it off. Were we greedy, grasping, covetous? Put it off.

Alas, many professors are as greedy of gain as they ever were, but they wear religion over the top of their miserly rags, and want you to call the churl generous, though he is as stingy as he can be. Whatever it is that is unworthy of the light of day, let us put it off.

The apostle says, "*cast off*." Let the habits of your sinful nature be henceforth regarded as cast offs—put them right away and say, "I have done with them! There will not be another night for me, and therefore I shall not want them. Bury them, burn them—they are my cast offs." Let us only remember our evil habits to weep over them. Let us only speak of them to warn others, and to glorify the grace of God. As to ever bringing out our ill habits, and trying to put them on occasionally, God forbid it should be so!

So far we have described our getting up—first, we awake, and then we cast off the garments of darkness. Now *we must put on our morning dress*. The believer should at once look to his toilet and array himself for the day—"Let us put on the armor of light." "What?" says one, "armor? Why, I

thought my danger was over. The darkness has departed, and I am no longer afraid of thieves and robbers, for the daylight has come. Why, then, should I put on armor?"

Is it not instructive that no sooner do we awake than we have to put on "the whole armour of God"? Does it not warn us that a day of battle is coming? Brethren, you may as well expect a conflict, for it is sure to come, and it will be wise to put on your harness for the fight.

Dress according to what you will meet with during the day. You are not at home yet—the land of peace is yet beyond you. Young converts think that they have got to heaven, or very near it, but it is not so. You *will* get there one day, but the time is not yet. You are in an enemy's country—put on the armor of the light.

Perhaps before you get down to breakfast, an arrow will be shot at you by the great enemy. Or you may come downstairs after your morning prayer feeling as safe as if you were among the angels—and yet you will not get through the first meal in the day without an assault from the arch-enemy, or an outburst of your own corruptions, or an attack from the world. Your foes may be found in your own household, and they may wound you at your own table.

Before you leave your bed-chamber, you had better put on girdle, helmet, breastplate, shield—you had better take the complete panoply. A Christian is never safe unless he is protected from head to foot by grace, for in such a world as this you know not behind what bush the assassin may be lurking, or from what corner the fatal bolt may fly.

Go forth as a mailed knight to the war, for the battle rages on all sides, and you need the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. The saint must be a man of war from his youth. He must pray that his hands may be taught to war and his fingers to fight.

The Greek word, however, may be understood to signify not only armor, but such garments as are fitted and suitable for the day's work. These should be put on at once, and our soul should be dressed for service. Pray God to clothe you in such style that you may be ready for whatever comes. You are not a gentleman on the parade, but a workman in his workday clothes.

Some people are too fine to do real service for the Lord. When the Duke of Wellington asked one of our soldiers how he would like to be dressed if he had to fight the battle of Waterloo again, he answered that he should like to be in his shirt sleeves. How I wish that Christians would get into their shirt sleeves, as if they meant to work for Jesus. I like to see the carpenter with his apron on bending down to his work, and not sitting on the bench swinging his legs all day. Alas, that some Christians should be usually seen in this latter posture!

O brethren, it is morning with you, and I beseech you, by the mercies of God, array yourselves to do your Lord's bidding. What said God to Jeremiah? "Gird up thy loins and arise." Brace your soul to action—there is work for you to do today which angels might well envy you. Go forth like a man ready for work.

The Lord would have us live with our loins girt about, our lamps trimmed and our lights burning, because we have come to an hour when idleness and inaction are out of place—earnest, watchful diligence is required of us. Let us put on the habiliments of light, and let us work while it is day—for our Father works hitherto, and Jesus works.

Now you are dressed, what next? *It remains that we walk forth and behave as in the light*. The directions are explicit—"Let us walk honestly, as in the day," which means let our demeanor be such as becomes daylight. How should a child of light conduct himself?

The word translated "honestly" may mean decently—with decorum and dignity. In the middle of the night, if you have to go about the house, you are not particular as to how you are dressed—there is no person to see you—and so you will slip from one room to another in casual dress. But when you rise in the morning and come down to your day's work, you choose to be somewhat neat. You do not go out to your business slip-shod and half-dressed, but you array yourself according to your station in an appropriate manner.

Let it be so with you spiritually—holiness is the highest decency, the most becoming apparel. You live in the daylight, brother, therefore walk as one who is "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses."

Yet more—walk as one who has the eye of God upon him, which is infinitely more. "Thou God seest me." King of kings, should I rush into Your court in dishabille? Should I ask you to walk with me while I am all undressed, or wearing filthy rags, which I ought long ago to have cast away? The soul's appearance should be a matter of great care. "Be ye clean," says God. He will not walk with us unless we keep our garments unspotted from the world. He would have us observe that dignity of spirit and conduct which are becoming in the temple of God.

Sleep in what garments you may, but when you walk abroad in the day, take heed, O princes of the blood royal of heaven, that your raiment is according to your rank.

"Walk honestly," says our translation, because that is the right thing for daylight. The thief breaks through and steals beneath the cover of darkness, but a child of the light must be upright and just. I earnestly beg all professing Christians to be honest in heart, and then they will be honest in word and deed.

You ask me, "Do you mean that we should pay our debts?" Of course, I mean all that, but I mean far more—be honest when you speak to others and of others. Do not say of any man behind his back that which you would not utter to his face. Do not carry a mask about with you—it is a horrible instrument of torture to an honest man. Say what you mean, and mean what you say.

Many act upon quite another principle, practicing reserve and policy, if not duplicity. They bring themselves into a great deal of trouble by being cunning, and "playing their cards well," as they say. What has a Christian to do with such a deceitful piece of gaming? Walk honestly. Let all your actions be such as will bear the light.

A man that stands under a powerful electric light bearing right down on him would feel uncomfortable with everybody looking at him. At any rate, he would be careful what he did. Behold, the light of eternity is shining full upon your soul. God Himself sees you. You stand in the blaze of the eternal day. O Christian man, act with transparent honesty. Have nothing to conceal—come to the light that your deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. Be clothed with light, and walk in the light as God is in the light.

Our position in the light of the morning demands of us one more point of behavior—*we must renounce the deeds of darkness*. If we have been truly awakened, and have put on the garments of light, it behooves us to have done with the things that belong to the night. I will not dwell upon them at any great length, but I may not pass them over, since the apostle thought it necessary to mention three pairs of evils with which we must have done.

He mentions them because even in Christian assemblies it is necessary to denounce these things. People exclaim against the preacher if he speak plainly home about the vices of the times. "Really, it is shocking," says one, "I do not like to hear such indelicate things referred to."

No, no, ladies and gentlemen who do such things cannot bear to hear of them by way of rebuke. I have noticed that none are more fantastically nice than the morally nasty. None are so ready to find fault when a spade is called a spade as those whose morals most want digging. They will commit the vice themselves, but they cannot bear to hear it mentioned—it shocks their marvelously delicate minds.

The apostle Paul felt none of the noxious daintiness which touches sin with a delicate hand—he speaks out plainly, and he says that all Christian people, first, must have done with *sensuality*, which he describes as "rioting and drunkenness." If a drinking bout is held, it is usually at night. Banquets generally begin in the evening—if they become scenes of gluttony and drunkenness they advance far into the night.

But the sun rebukes such orgies, and men usually give heed to the warning—"They that be drunken are drunken in the night." Christian men have done with night, and ought to have done with all excess in meat and drink. Alas, there are some who spend more over a single dinner for a few than would keep

families of poor people a month. Gluttony is seldom mentioned as a possible fault, and yet I fear it is far from being an obsolete vice among professed followers of Jesus.

"Drunkenness," well, I need not say how shameful it is in any man, but he that professes to be a Christian man, how temperate, how abstinent should he be. For intoxication is a soul-destroying sin, and no drunkard can enter the kingdom of God.

These are night vices—let the children of night have them if they will—as for us, we desire to be filled with the Spirit, and fed upon the bread of heaven, for we are the children of the day. We have nobler feasts than the banquets of revelers, and choicer wines than the vintage of Sodom can yield. Take heed, brethren, of these works of darkness.

Then Paul denounces *impurity* by saying, "Not in chambering and wantonness." It is an awful thing when a man calls himself by the name of Christian, and yet can be foul in language, unchaste in conversation, lascivious in spirit, wicked in life. If any man indulges in fornication and adultery, and yet calls himself a Christian, he will surely come under the curse of God.

We speak of such persons weeping, for they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Oh that you who are young might be kept from anything like looseness or effeminacy. Avoid glances, words, and thoughts which tend that way. Do not go near the borders of that sin, for men and women sin not grossly all at once—they slide by degrees—as the vessel slides from the stocks into the sea at the time of its launching. It moves very little at first, but by and by it gathers impetus, and glides rapidly into the deep.

God keep you from sins of the flesh, for they are a deep ditch, and the abhorred of the Lord do fall into them. They are base deeds of the night—does not nature itself teach us so? Vice walks abroad beneath the moon—it is by night that our streets are defiled. O you who have reached the morning light, abhor these things, and hate even the garment spotted by the flesh.

The next night deed is *passion*—passion taking the two shapes of "strife and envying." Brawls are for the night. Fierce assaults disturb us in our sleep, but they are not usual in the day. So Christian men, being of the day, are not to strive. It is a great pity when strife comes into a family, when brother is divided from brother and father from son, and when relatives cannot speak well of one another. These bitter things are for the night—you have reached the daylight, and must have done with them!

Envy is a thing of darkness and shame—that "green-eyed monster" comes out in the dark and finds fault with those who are better than itself. Sinners do not like good men because their excellence rebukes them, and hence they endeavor to mar their reputation. This evil is not of the day. Leave it, scorn it, dread it, abhor it. God deliver you from it! Away, then, from all deeds of darkness, and seek only that which may be set in the face of the sun and cause no man to blush.

II. Now, I have preached so long upon things required of you that you are beginning to say, "Ah me, how much there is for us to do! How shall we ever accomplish it? We have to wake, to put off our night garments, to dress in suitable attire, to behave ourselves as children of the light, and to avoid the deeds of darkness. Alas, what shall we do?"

Now listen, you anxious ones—here is something sweet and blessed for you—you shall be inclined and helped to obey in all things. Therefore hearken diligently and hear, that your souls may live. I preach to you THE MORNING GOSPEL. Here it is—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

This verse has been rendered very famous in church history, since that chief among the fathers, the mighty teacher Augustine, found the light through reading this verse. He had been leading an ungodly and more or less dissipated life, when he began in a measure to think upon his condition. And he thought he heard a voice saying to him, "Tolle, lege. Tolle, lege!" "Take up and read."

So, taking up the New Testament which lay near, he began to read it, and as God would have it, he opened upon this very place, and he read—"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Here are his words, which I will read to you—"I would read no further, for I needed not; for when I had read to the end of this sentence, all the darkness of doubtfulness vanished away, as if some clear

light of security were poured into my heart. It was as if it had been said, 'O man, acknowledge thy misery, thou art naked; cover thy filthiness: *put upon thee Jesus Christ*!' And forthwith I felt a fire within me. My heart was lightened, the scales fell from mine eyes—I was able to see."

How earnestly do I desire that these words may strike some of you in the same powerful manner. Does anyone here desire to take off his old garments of sin and to dress in robes of holiness? And does he mourn over an empty wardrobe? See, here is a robe for him—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Did I hear one cry, "You told us to put on armor, but we have neither shield nor breastplate. How can we put on the armor of light?" Here is the panoply—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Does the man cry, "I am afraid to go into the world undressed, and I dare not put on the old garments of darkness. But what can I do?" Here it is. Here is the death of sin and the life of holiness—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Oh, blessed, charming word. I wish I had the power to fully set forth its meaning before you.

For, first, in the Lord Jesus Christ, there is *covering for your nakedness*. The garment covers the man—he is hidden, and his garments are seen. Come, then, poor sinner, and take by faith the Lord Jesus Christ to be a covering for your soul. You are naked, but He will be your robe of righteousness.

There is in the Lord Jesus a complete and suitable apparel for your soul, by which every blemish and defilement shall be put out of sight according to the word, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered." In Christ Jesus there is merit to cover our demerit, purity to cover our impurity, obedience to cover our disobedience, beauty to cover our deformity, perfection to cover our imperfection, acceptance to cover our provocation. We are comely with the comeliness which the Lord Jesus puts upon us.

He is seen, and we are hidden, or only seen in Him so as to be accepted in the Beloved. We have nothing to do but to enter into Christ by faith, for, virtually, that is what a man has to do with his garments—he gets into them, and so he who puts on Christ is in Christ. Christ is over him and round about him.

Did a poor naked, shivering soul ever hear more pleasant words than these—"Put on Christ"? You may do so, for the Lord commands it. Was there ever a sweeter message? You, poor soul, just awakened out of sleep, and startled into saying, "What must I do to be saved?" Here is Jesus set before you. He is perfect in righteousness, matchless in holiness, unrivalled in beauty, and you may put Him on and stand clothed in that righteousness and beauty.

I hear you say, "I see Him, but how is He to be mine?" He is yours by God's free gift—put Him on! You have not to improve upon Him, or add to Him, or embellish Him, but to take Him as you take your coat, and put Him on. There He is—He is a robe that delights to be worn. Myriads of souls have tried this garment, and it has been exactly suitable to every one out of all who have put it on. This is all you have to do—put it on—and that the Holy Spirit will help you to do.

You have not to make the garment, to decorate the garment, or in any way to add to it or to alter it, but only to put it on. Nakedness, poverty, or guilt need not prevent a man's putting on a robe which is provided for him. Put it on! Put it on! This is a most vivid picture of what faith does. She puts Christ about her, and He covers all.

Faith does not say, "I must clothe myself and then put on Christ." No, no! Its cry is, "Because I am naked I cover myself with Christ." The soul says, "I have nothing of my own that God can look upon with satisfaction, but I will put on Christ, for I know in Him God is well-pleased." The sufferings of Jesus will be set to my account, His merits shall avail for me, and His righteousness shall be my righteousness. Oh it is a blessed, blessed word. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and sing, "He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness."

"But," says one, "I need more than just to be covered. I must have *a garment provided for my necessity*, suitable for my everyday work." My text points you to a full supply—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ"—as the most suitable dress for a saint at work, as well as for a sinner desiring justification

before God. As we have already said, a first necessity is to awake, and truly none can lie and dream after they have once beheld His glorious robe—they are eager to obtain it.

Our next necessity is to cast off the old garments of the night, and nothing helps us more than to put on Christ. Only look at this robe of righteousness as yours, and you will loathe the filthy rags of sin at once. When a man perceives the perfection of the righteousness of Christ, which is freely given to him by God, he abhors his sin, he loves his God, and pines to be like He in holiness. There is no breeder of repentance like simple faith in Jesus Christ.

Unbelieving philosophers tell us that if we preach salvation by faith in Christ alone, people will take license to sin—but in this they err from want of observation. Now speak your own experience, Christian man—did you ever feel yourself moved to sin by the assurance of being justified by Christ's righteousness? Never was there such a case in this world.

A man may hear about it and turn it into an excuse for sin, but he cannot in his heart believe it and do so. I know that when I most clearly see that I am saved by Christ alone, it is then that I most of all pine to be holy. I never follow after personal righteousness so eagerly as when I know that my righteousness comes wholly from the Lord.

The grandest motive power for the death of sin is the death of Christ, and nothing makes us so eager to die *unto* sin as Christ's death *for* sin. Off goes the filthy raiment at the sight of the glorious, spotless righteousness which is freely presented to every needy sinner in Christ Jesus.

Ay, and it is not only repentance that is thus wrought by Christ, but all the power to be holy, to be gracious, to be forgiving, to be heroic, to be enthusiastic in the service of God—all comes through Christ when we are in Him. If you desire to be holy in life, the short path to it is to have done with your own righteousness and put on Christ.

If the man who has been a drunkard resolves to be sober, let him put on Christ, and in Jesus he will deny himself. If the man who has been unchaste would fain be pure in life and heart, let him put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

There is such a matchless power about a simple faith in Christ, when it puts on Christ to be our righteousness, that it leads the believer to such a walk as is decorous, dignified, honorable, holy. The man is moved to walk worthy of the noble garment in which he is arrayed, and his whole life rises out of the common level into the excellence of grace.

I would call attention to this garment very specially in a few words. The text says, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." What made him use the three names there? Because he meant to point out the three senses in which we clothe ourselves from head to foot with Christ. "Put ye on the Lord"—become His servant, wear His livery, let Him be your Rabbi, your Master, your King, your Lord.

Put you on "Jesus," the Savior—acknowledge yourself as a saved one, saved by Him whose name is called Jesus—"For he shall save his people from their sins." Put you on "Christ"—that is the Anointed—take an anointing from God the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ to whom He is given without measure. As Christ is anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King, put Him on in all these three offices and rejoice to do so. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Do not put on Jesus only as your Savior, put Him on as your Commander. Do not only put Him on as your Master and Savior, but as your Christ, anointed for you. Take a whole Christ to yourself that you may be wholly in Him, and so may be spiritual, gracious, holy. Henceforth may those around you see nothing of you, but much of your Lord. May your outward character be so Christlike that men may see Christ displayed upon you, as a new garment is displayed by the act of wearing it.

May the spirit of glory and of Christ rest upon you. May you be clothed with power. Our Lord said to His disciples "Tarry at Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high"—the word signifies, "clothed." If we are clothed with Christ, we shall be clothed with power from on high, even as He has said, "The works that I do shall ye do also." Therefore put you on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Yes," but I hear another say, "I want not only raiment to cover my nakedness and supply my necessity, but I want *apparel for my dignity*. You told us that we were to walk abroad in a worthy and

honorable manner." Ah, and so you will, if you put on Christ. Oh what a bright creature in the sight of God is the man who has put on Christ. God Himself asks no purer or more acceptable array.

You never saw a seraph—bright like a flame of fire is each holy messenger of God—but if you could see a soul that is arrayed in Christ's righteousness, you would think a seraph a dull, dim thing, compared with it. A seraph wears nothing but created brightness, but a child of God clothed in Christ wears uncreated splendor. The perfection of God is upon the soul that has put on Christ.

Ay, and while God thus sees us in Christ, and is well-pleased with us, our fellows are obliged to admire us too. If you put on Christ, so that you become like Christ, your walk and conversation will be bright and lustrous before the eyes of those about you. They, perhaps, will not like it—they may even hate you for it, but they will not be able to do otherwise than own your excellence. He who lives in Christ lives a charming life, which, by its loveliness, commands the homage of onlookers. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Oh, you that trick yourselves out with jewelry and ornaments, how much more lovely and dignified you would become if in all your carriage and conversation, by sacred gentleness and love, by holy zeal and unswerving decision for truth, you put an Christ.

"Ay," says another, "but you have forgotten part of your sermon. You said that now we were awake we were to put on armor." I have not forgotten, for Christ *is armor for our defense*—therefore put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is a coat of mail for you. The man that does as Christ would do, thinks as Christ would think, and lives as Christ would live, makes Christ to be all in all to him, and therefore armors himself with Christ, is thereby made impervious to the shafts of the enemy, and amid the darts of temptation or the arrows of slander he may abide unharmed. The Lord is our defense, and the Holy One of Israel is our King.

"Ay," says one, "but you told us that the day, when it was once up, would never again darken into night, but brighten into a perfect day." It is even so, and here is *raiment provided for our expectancy*. We may expect to meet with years of mingled conflict, service, and suffering. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" and you will be prepared for all weathers, fair or foul, and for all conditions and requirements.

This garment will never wax old—it will last you all the desert through, and what is more, it is suitable for Canaan, and you shall keep it on forever and ever. We need a garment that we can wear in all the events which will happen in the awful future, the endless future. It is on this account that I press home the words of my text—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Our Lord is a fit robe for life and death, for time and for eternity. I expect to battle till I die—here is my armor, the integrity and uprightness which I learn of Christ will preserve me. I expect in death to rise out of this lower life into a higher one, and when I reach that higher life, that glory life, I shall require a dress, and I shall find it in my Lord. I cannot have a better garment than the Lord Himself, and there is a wedding coming on!

Every believer expects to be married to his Lord. Then, dear friend, you must certainly have a wedding dress. How can you go in unto the marriage feast not having on a wedding garment? But here you have it—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." When the King comes in to see His guests, and He sees Jesus Christ covering them all, He will be well-pleased.

He will see His dear Son reflected in them all, and from them all, and His delight shall be in them, even as it is in His Son. If you put on the Lord Jesus Christ you will be fit for the inspection of the King, fit for all the royalties and pomps of the eternal marriage, fit to stand in the coronation of Christ Himself, as one of the many brethren of the crowned Firstborn.

Now I have done, but how I wish that some souls would be moved as Augustine was, and at once put on Christ before they leave the place. I wish that some of you that came in here this morning with nothing on but your old ragged righteousness would at once pull it off and throw it under your feet. Here is Jesus Christ Himself, waiting to become your righteousness.

Will you not have Him? His is a perfect righteousness, for He magnified the law, and made it honorable. He made a perfect robe, and then He dyed it in His blood, that you might wear it as the imperial purple of the kingdom which He gives you.

"What is to be done with it?" Put it on! Did I hear you say, "I would like to take it home to think about it"? What, and do nothing? I pray you put it on at once. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. "But I do not know that it will fit me." Put it on and try. "Oh, but I am not fit to wear anything so good." I know you are not. Put it on, and you will see how wonderful you will look when Jesus covers you. The fitness lies in the dress—not in you.

Do you cry, "I am anything but what I ought to be"? Put it on, and let Christ be seen. "Ah, but still, am I to be saved in a minute?" Put on Christ at once, and see, for it is written, "He that believeth in him hath everlasting life." Put it on, poor soul—that is all.

"But I have nothing that I can bring." Do not bring anything, but put on Christ. There He is! Do not refuse Him! I beseech you, do not refuse Him, for he who will not put on Christ, when Christ is freely set before him, must not be wonder if at the last he stands shivering amidst the glare of the last lightnings, in front of the awful judgment seat, with the eyes of men and angels, and the eyes of the great Judge, fixed upon him.

Ah, then he tries to hide himself and cannot. And he shrieks to rocks and mountains, "Hide me, hide me from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne." He will have no one but himself to blame when it comes to that, if he will not put on Christ.

May the Lord Jesus now be made unto you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ROMANS 12

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—913, 435

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.