**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ Over Ethnic and Social Distinctions**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 3:9b-11**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to walk in newness of life, in Christ Jesus.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 4 principles necessary for addressing the ethnic and social divide.**

**Introduction:** This section Colossians 3:1-7 covers the implications and applications of the believer’s identification with Christ begun in Colossians 2:20.

**Colossians 2:20** Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—

**I. The new implication. V.9b**

**II. The new identity. V.10**

**III. The new illustration. V.11a-d**

**IV. The new insight. V.11e**

**I. The new implication. V.9b**

The metaphor of changing clothes pertains to an actual observable change of behavior, based on the believer’s new position. The new man replaces the old man that is corrupt. (**2:9-13**) These words are the basis for the command of (**v.8**). The old man died and was circumcised in Christ and the new man lives in Christ – because that is the implication of the new creation or regeneration.

**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.

**Romans 5:12-14** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned-- **13** (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. **14** Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

**Ephesians 4:22** that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

Therefore, the implication is to cut yourself off from the old order, and live out the new order.

A. The picture of **slavery**. (**Romans 6:6-9**)

B. The picture of **marriage**. (**Romans 7:1-6**)

**II. The new identity. V.10**

A. The **position** of the new man. V.10a

The new, regenerated self, which replaces the old man, this is the essence of what believers are in Christ, positioned in Christ.

**Ephesians 4:17** 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,

**Ephesians 5:1** Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

**Ephesians 5:8** For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

**Ephesians 5:15** See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

The reason believers still sin is the unredeemed flesh. (**Romans 6:6, 12**)

B. The **progression** of the new man. V.10b

The new man is also being continuously renewed to reflect the image of Christ. This reference to the new self applies to the individual but also carries corporate connotations relating to the body of Christ. (**Colossians 1:15-20; Ephesians 5:1-17**)

“renewed in fuller and fuller knowledge, closer and closer to the image of its creator”

[**The Complete Jewish Study Bible, p.1698**]

The renewal is a progressive new quality of life and behavior that never existed before.

The concept of knowledge is a deep spiritual knowledge or understanding of Christ, God’s will, and the Word of God. Without this there can be no spiritual growth, maturity, or thinking in line with Christ.

**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.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**1 Peter 2:2** as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

**III. The new illustration. V.11a-d**

“The new self and conformity to the image of Jesus Christ individually and corporately leaves no room for distinctions that discriminate.

The old order was characterized by ethnic and social divisions, but the new order obliterates those distinctions, as far as segregation in and among the body of Christ.

Even as individual believers must discard the old, sinful habits, the body of Christ must realize its unity and destroy the old barriers, that separate people.

A. The new **ethnic** illustration. V.11b

B. The new **cultural** illustration. V.11c

1. Barbarians: This was an insulting term used by the Greeks for all who had not been trained in Greek language and culture. When someone spoke in another language, it sounded to the Greek like “bar-bar-bar,” or unintelligible chatter. The narrow sense is the uncultured, uneducated, and unwise.

2. Scythian: This was an ancient nomadic and warlike people that invaded the Fertile Crescent in the 7th Century BC. Noted for the savagery, they were the most hated and feared of all the so-called barbarians.

C. The **social** illustration. V.11d

1. Slaves: a slave was considered a living tool. Were very often purchased.

2. Free: non-slaves, masters.

**IV. The new insight. V.11e**

A. The **pre-eminence** of Christ over all.

**Colossians 1:17** And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

B. The **presence** of Christ in all.

**Colossians 1:27** To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.