

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

CHRIST PUT ON.

A Sermon

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”—Romans xiii. 14.

CHRIST must be in us before he can be on us. Grace puts Christ within, and enables us to put on Christ without. Christ must be in the heart by faith, before he can be in the life by holiness. If you want light from a lantern, the first business is to light the candle inside of it; and then, as a consequence, the light shines through, to be seen of men. When Christ is formed in you, the hope of glory, do not conceal your love to him; but put him on in your conduct as the glory of your hope. As you have Christ within as your Saviour, the secret of your inner life, so put on Christ to be the beauty of your daily life. Let the external be brightened by the internal; and this shall be to you that “armour of light” which all the soldiers of the Lord Jesus are privileged to wear. As Christ is your food, nourishing the inner man, so put him on as your dress, covering the outer man.

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” It is a very wonderful expression. It is most condescending on our Lord's part to allow of such an exhortation. Paul speaks the mind of the Holy Spirit, and the word is full of meaning. Oh, for grace to learn its teaching! It is full of very solemn warning to us, for we need a covering thus divinely perfect. Oh, for grace to practise the command to put it on! The apostle does not so much say, “Take up the Lord Jesus Christ, and *bear* him with you;” but, “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ,” and thus *wear* him as the garment of your life. A man takes up his staff for a journey, or his sword for a battle; but he lays these down again after a while: you are to put on the Lord Jesus as you put on your garment; and thus he is to cover you, and to become part and parcel of your outward appearance, surrounding your very self, as a visible part of your manifest personality.

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” This we do when we believe in him: then we put on the Lord Jesus Christ as our robe of righteousness. It is a very beautiful picture of what faith does. Faith finds our manhood naked to its shame; faith sees that Christ Jesus is the robe of righteousness provided for our need, and faith, at the command of the gospel, appropriates him, and gets the benefit of him for it. By faith the soul covers her weakness with his strength, her sin with his atonement, her folly with his wisdom, her failure with his triumphs, her death with his life, her wanderings with his constancy. By faith, I say, the soul hides itself within Jesus; till Jesus only is seen, and the man is seen in him. We take not only his righteousness as being imputed to us, but we take himself to be really ours; and so his righteousness becomes ours as a matter of fact. “By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” His righteousness is set to our account, and becomes ours because *he* is ours. I, though long unrighteous in myself, believe in the testimony of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ, and I am accounted righteous, even as it is written, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.” The riches of God in Christ Jesus become mine as I take the Lord Jesus Christ to be everything to me.

But, you see, the text does not distinctly refer to this great matter, for the apostle is not referring to the imputed righteousness of Christ. The text stands in connection with precepts concerning matters of every-day practical life, and to these it must refer. It is not justification, but sanctification that we have here. Moreover, we cannot be said to put on the imputed righteousness of Christ after we have believed, for that is upon us as soon as we believe, and needs no more putting on. The command before us is given to those who have the imputed righteousness of Christ, who are justified, who are accepted in Christ Jesus. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ” is a word to you that are saved by Christ, and justified by his righteousness. You are to put on Christ, and keep on putting him on in the sanctifying of your lives unto your God. You are every day continually more and more to wear as the dress of your lives the character of your Lord.

I will handle this subject by answering questions. First, *Where are we to go for our daily dress?* “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Secondly, *What is this daily dress?* “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Thirdly, *How are we to act towards evil when we are thus clad?* “And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” And then I will finish with the consideration of the question, *Why should we hasten to put on this matchless dress?* For “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us put on the armour of light.”

I. May the Holy Spirit help us while we, in the first place, answer the inquiry, *WHERE ARE WE TO GO FOR DAILY DRESS?* Beloved, there is but one answer to all questions as to our necessities. We go to the Lord Jesus Christ for everything. To us “Christ is all.” “He is made of God unto us wisdom,

and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” When you have come to Christ for pardon and justification, you are not to go elsewhere for the next thing. Having begun with Jesus, you are to go on with him, even to the end; “for ye are complete in him,” perfectly stored in Christ, fully equipped in him. “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” Every necessity that can ever press upon you between this Marah in the wilderness and yonder sea of glass before the throne, will be found to be met in Christ Jesus. You ask, What am I to do for a vesture which will befit the courts of the Lord? for armour that will protect me from the assaults of the foe? for a robe that will enable me to act as a priest and king unto God? The one answer to the much-including question is, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” You have no further need. You need not look elsewhere for a thread or a shoe latchet.

So, dear friends, I gather from this, that if we seek *an example*, we may not look elsewhere than to our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not written, “Put ye on this man or that”; but “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” The model for a saint is his Saviour. We are very apt to select some eminently gracious or useful man to be a pattern to us. A measure of good may result from such a course, but a degree of evil may also come of it. There will always be some fault about the most excellent of our fellow-mortals; and as our tendency is to caricature virtues till we make them faults, so is it our greater folly to mistake faults for excellences, and copy them with careful exactness, and generally with abundant exaggeration. By this plan, with the best intentions, we may reach very sad results. Follow Jesus in the way, and thou wilt not err: let thy feet go down exactly in his foot-prints, and thou canst not slide. As his grace enables us, let us make it true, that “as he was, so are we in this world.” You need not look beyond your Lord for example under any circumstances. Of him you may enquire as of an unfailing oracle. You need never enquire what is the general custom of those about you: the broad road of the many is no way for you. You may not ask, “What are the rulers of the people doing?” You follow not the fashion of the great, but the example of the greatest of all. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ” will apply to each one of us. If I am a tradesman, I am not to ask myself—On what principles do other traders conduct their business? Not so. What the world may do is no rule for me. If I am a student I should not enquire—How do others feel towards religion? Let others do as they will, it is for us to serve the Lord. In every relationship, in the domestic circle, in the literary world, in the sphere of friendship, or in business connections, I am to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” If I am perplexed, I am bound to ask—What would Jesus do? and his example is to guide me. If I cannot conceive of his acting in a certain way, neither must I allow myself to do so; but if I perceive, from his precept, his spirit, or his action, that he would follow such and such a course, to that line I must keep.

I am not to put on the philosopher, the politician, the priest, or the popularity hunter; but I am to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, by taking his life to be the model upon which I fashion my own life.

From our text I should also gather that we are to go to the Lord Jesus Christ for *stimulus*. We want not only an example, but a motive, an impulse and constraining power to keep us true to that example. We need to put on zeal as a cloak, and to be covered with a holy influence which will urge us onward. Let us go to the Lord Jesus for motives. Some fly to Moses, and would drive themselves to duty by the thunders of Sinai. Their design in service is to earn eternal life, or prevent the loss of the favour of God. Thus they come under law, and forsake the true way of the believer, which is faith. Not from dread of punishment or hope of hire do believers serve the living God; but we put on Christ, and the love of Christ constraineth us. Here is the spring of true holiness: "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." A stronger force than law has gripped you: you serve God, not as servants, whose sole thought is the wage, but as children, whose eye is on the father and his love. Your motive is gratitude to him by whose precious blood you are redeemed. He has put on *your* cause, and therefore you would take up *his* cause. I pray you, go not to the steep sides of Sinai to find motives for holiness; but hasten to Calvary, and there find those sweet herbs of love, which shall be the medicine of your soul. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" Covered with a consciousness of his love, fired with love to him in return, you will be strong to be, to do, or to suffer, as the Lord God may appoint.

Need I say, never find a reason for doing right in a desire to win the approbation of your fellow-men? Do not say, "I must do this or that in order to please my company." That is poor life which is sustained by the breath of other men's nostrils. Followers of Jesus will not wear the livery of custom, or stand in awe of human censure. Love of commendation, and fear of disapprobation, are low and beggarly motives: they sway the feeble many, but they ought not to rule the man in Christ. You must be moved by a far higher consideration: you serve the Lord Christ, and must not, therefore, become the lackey of men. His glory is to be your one aim; and for the joy of this you must treat all else as a light thing. Here we find our spur—"The love of Christ constraineth us."

Beloved, the text means more than this. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ"; that is, find in Jesus your *strength*. Although you are saved, and are quickened by the Holy Spirit, so as to be a living child of the living God, yet you have no strength for heavenly duty, except as you receive it from above. Go to Jesus for power. I charge you, never say, "I shall do the right because I have resolved to do it. I am a man of strong mind; I am determined to resist this evil, and I know I shall not yield. I have made up my mind, and there is

no fear of my turning aside.” Brother, if you rely upon yourself in that way, you will soon prove to be a broken reed. Failure follows at the heel of self-confidence. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

I charge you, do not rely upon what you have acquired in the past. Say not in your heart, “I am a man of experience, and therefore I can resist temptation, which would crush the younger and greener folk. I have now spent so many years in persistent well-doing that I may reckon myself out of danger. Is it likely that I should ever be led astray?” O sir, it is more than likely! It is a fact already. The moment that a man declares he cannot fall, he has already fallen from sobriety and humility. Your head is turned, my brother, or you would not talk of your inward perfection; and when the head turns, the feet are not very safe. Inward conceit is the mother of open sin. Make Christ your strength, and not yourself; nor your acquirements or experiences. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ” day by day, and make not the rags of yesterday to be the raiment of the future. Get grace fresh and fresh. Say with David, “All my fresh springs are in thee.” Get all your power for holiness and usefulness from Jesus, and from him alone. “Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.” Rely not on resolves, pledges, methods, prayers; but lean on Jesus only as the strength of your life.

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” This is a wonderful word to me, because it indicates that in the Lord Jesus we have *perfection*. I shall in a moment or two show you some of the virtues and graces which are resplendent in the character of our Lord Jesus Christ. These may be likened to different parts of our armour or dress—the helmet, the shoes, the breast-plate. But the text does not say, “Put on this quality or virtue of the Lord Christ”; but “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” He himself, as a whole, is to be our array. Not this excellence or that; but himself. He must be to us a sacred over-all. I know not by what other means to bring out my meaning: he is to cover us from head to foot. We do not so much copy his humility, his gentleness, his love, his zeal, his prayerfulness, as himself. Endeavour to come into such communion with Jesus himself that his character is reproduced in you. Oh, to be wrapped about with himself: feeling, desiring, acting, as he felt, desired, and acted. What a raiment for our spiritual nature is our Lord Jesus Christ! What an honourable robe for a man to wear! Why, in that case, our life would be hid in Christ, and he would be seen over us in a life quickened by his Spirit, swayed by his motives, sweetened with his sympathy, pursuing his designs, and following in his steps. When we read, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,” it means, Receive the whole character of Christ, and let your whole character be conformed to his will. Cover your whole being with the whole of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a wonderful precept! Oh, for grace to carry it out! May the Lord turn the command into an actual fact. Throughout the rest of our lives may we be more and more like Jesus, that the purpose of God may be

fulfilled wherein we are “predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

Once more, observe the *speciality* which is seen in this dress. It is specially adapted to each individual believer. Paul does not say merely to one person, “Put *thou* on the Lord Jesus Christ,” but to all of us, “Put *ye* on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Can all the saints put on Christ, whether babes, young men, or fathers? You could not all of you wear my coat, I am quite certain; and I am equally certain that I could not wear the garments of many of the young people now present; but here is a matchless garment, which will be found suitable for every believer, without expansion or contraction. Whoever puts on the Lord Jesus Christ has put on a robe which will be his glory and beauty. In every case the example of Jesus is admirably suited for copying. Suppose a child of God should be a king; what better advice could I give to him, when about to rule a nation, than this, “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ”? Be such a king as Jesus would have been. Nay, copy his royal character. Suppose, on the other hand, that the person before us is a poor woman from the workhouse; shall I say the same to her? Yes, and with equal propriety; for Jesus was very poor, and is a most suitable example for those who have no home of their own. O worker, put on Christ, and be full of zeal! O sufferer, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and abound in patience! Yonder friend is going to the Sunday-school this afternoon. Well, in order to win those dear children to the Saviour, “put on the Lord Jesus Christ,” who said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.” In his sacred raiment you will make a good teacher. Are you a preacher, and about to address thousands of grown-up persons? How better can I advise you than that you put on Christ and preach the gospel in his own loving, pleading, earnest style. The preacher’s model should be his Lord. This is our preaching gown, our praying surplice, our pastoral robe—the character and spirit of the Lord Jesus; and it admirably suits each form of service.

No man’s example will precisely fit his fellow-man; but there is this strange virtue about the character of Christ, that you may all imitate it, and yet be none of you mere imitators. He is perfectly natural who is perfectly like Christ. There need be no affectation, no painful restraint, no straining. In a life thus fashioned there will be nothing grotesque or disproportionate, unmanly or romantic. So wonderfully is Jesus the Second Adam of the new-born race, that each member of that family may bear a likeness to him, and yet exhibit a clear individuality. A man advanced in years and wisdom may put him on, and so may the least instructed, and the freshest comer among us. Please remember this: we may not choose examples, but each one is bound to copy the Lord Jesus Christ. You, dear friend, have a special personality; you are such a person that there is not another exactly like you, and you are placed in circumstances so peculiar that no one else is tried exactly as

you are;—to you, then, is this exhortation sent: “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” It is absolutely certain, that for you, with your personal singularity, and peculiar circumstances, there can be nothing better than that you array yourself in this more than royal robe. You, too, who live in ordinary circumstances, and are only tried by common temptations, you are to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ”; for he will be suitable for you also. “Oh,” cries one, “but the Lord Jesus never was exactly where I am!” You say this from want of knowing better, or from want of thought. He has been tempted in all points like as you are. There are certain relationships which the Lord Jesus could not literally occupy; but then, he took their spiritual counterpart. For instance, Jesus could not be a husband after the flesh. Does anyone demand how he could be an example for husbands? Hearken! “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.” He is your model in a relationship which, naturally, he never sustained, but which, in very deed, he has more than fulfilled. Wherever you may be, you find that the Lord Jesus has occupied the counterpart of your position, or else the position is sinful, and ought to be quitted. In any place, at any hour, under any circumstances, in any matter, you may put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and never fear that your array will be unsuitable. Here you have a summer and winter garment—good in prosperity, as well as in adversity. Here you have a garment for the private chamber or the public forum, for sickness or for health, for honour or for reproach, for life or for death. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,” and in this raiment of wrought gold you may enter into the King’s palace, and stand among the spirits of just men made perfect.

II. Secondly, trusting to the Holy Spirit, let us enquire WHAT IS THIS DAILY DRESS? The Lord Jesus Christ is to be put on. May the Spirit of God help us to do so!

We see how the sacred dress is *described* in three words. The sacred titles of the Son of God are spread out at length: “Put ye on the Lord—Jesus—Christ.” Put him on as *Lord*. Call him your master and Lord, and you will do well. Be you his servant in everything. Submit every faculty, every capacity, every talent, every possession to his government. Submit all that you have and are to him, and delight to own his superior right and his royal claim to you. Be Christ’s man; his servant, under bonds to his service for ever, finding therein life and liberty. Let the dominion of your Lord cover the kingdom of your nature. Then put on *Jesus*. Jesus means a Saviour: in every part be covered by him in that blessed capacity. You, a sinner, hide yourself in Jesus, your Saviour, who shall save you from your sins. He is your sanctifier driving out sin, and your preserver keeping sin from returning. Jesus is your armour against sin. You overcome through his blood. In him you are defended against every weapon of the enemy: he is your shield, keeping you from all evil. He covers you all over like a complete suit of armour, so that when

arrows of temptation fly like a fiery shower, they may be quenched upon heavenly mail, and you may stand unharmed amid a shower of deaths. Put on Jesus, and then put on *Christ*. You know that Christ signifies “anointed.” Now, our Lord is anointed as Prophet, Priest, and King, and as such we put him on. What a splendid thing it is to put on Christ as the anointed *Prophet*, and to accept his teaching as our creed! I believe it. Why? Because he said it. This is argument enough for me. Mine not to argue, or doubt, or criticize; the Christ has said it, and I, putting him on, find in his authority the end of all strife. What Christ declares, I believe; discussion ends where Christ begins. Put him on also as your *Priest*. Notwithstanding your sin, your unworthiness, your defilement, go to the altar of the Lord by him who, as Priest, has taken away your sin, clothed you with his merit, and made you acceptable to God. In our great High Priest we enter within the veil. We are in him; by faith we realize this, and so put him on as our Priest, and lose ourselves in his accepted sacrifice. Our Lord Jesus is also anointed to be *King*. Oh, put him on in all his imperial majesty, by yielding your every wish and thought to his sway! Set him on the throne of your heart. As you have submitted your thought and understanding to his prophetic instruction, submit your action and your practical life to his kingly government. As you put on his priesthood and find atonement in him, so put on his royalty and find holiness in him.

I now wish to show *the description given in Colossians iii.* from the twelfth verse. I will take you to the wardrobe for a minute, and ask you to look over the articles of our outfit. See here, “Put on therefore”; you see everything is to be put on; nothing is to be left on the pegs for the moth to eat, nor in the window to be idly stared at: you *put on* the whole armour of God. In true religion everything is designed for practical use. We keep no garments in the drawer; we have to put on all that is provided. “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness.” Here are two choice things: mercy and kindness—silken robes indeed! Have you put them on? I am to be as merciful, as tender-hearted, as kind, as sympathetic, as loving to my fellow-men as Christ himself was. Have I reached this point? Have I ever aimed at it? Who among us has put on these royal gloves?

See what follows—these choice things come in pairs—“humbleness of mind, meekness.” These choice garments are not so much esteemed as they should be. The cloth of one called “Proud-of-heart” is very fashionable, and the trimmings of Mr. Masterful are much in request. It is a melancholy thing to see what great men some Christians are. Truly, the footman is bigger than his master. How some who would be thought saints can bluster and bully! Is this to put on the Lord Jesus Christ? Point me to a word of our Lord’s in which he scolded, and tyrannized, and overrode any man. He was meek and lowly, even he, the Lord of all: what ought we to be, who are not worthy to loose the latchets of his shoes? Permit me to say to any dear brother who has

not a very tender nature, who is naturally hard and rasping, “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ,” my brother, and make not provision for that unfeeling nature of yours. Endeavour to be lowly in mind, that you may be gentle in spirit.

See, next, we are to put on longsuffering and forbearance. Some men have no patience with others: how can they expect God to have patience with them? If everything is not done to their mind they are in a fine fury. Dear me! whom have we here? Is this a servant of Mars, or of the Fire-god? Surely, this fighting man does not profess to be a worshipper of Christ! Do not tell me that the man lost his temper. It would be a mercy if he had lost it, so as never to find it again. He is selfish, petulant, exacting, and easily provoked. Has this man the spirit of Christ? If he be a Christian, he is a naked Christian, and I would urge him to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ,” that he may be fitly clothed. Our Lord was full of forbearance. “Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds.” Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and bear and forbear. Put up with a great deal that really ought not to be inflicted upon you, and be ready to bear still more rather than give or take offence.

“Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” Is not this heavenly teaching? Put it in practice. Put ye on your Lord. Have you fallen to loggerheads with one another, and did I hear one of you growling, “I’ll, I’ll, I’ll—”? Stop, brother! What will you do? If you are true to the Lord Jesus Christ you will not avenge yourself, but give place unto wrath. Put the Lord Jesus on your tongue, and you will not talk so bitterly; put him on your heart, and you will not feel so fiercely; put him on your whole character, and you will readily forgive, not only this once, but unto seventy times seven. If you have been unjustly treated by one who should have been your friend, lay aside wrath, and begin again; and perhaps your brother will begin again also, and both of you by love will overcome evil. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

“And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” Love is the girdle which binds up the other garments, and keeps all the other graces well braced, and in their right places. Put on love—what a golden girdle! Are we all putting on love? We have been baptized into Christ, and we profess to have put on Christ; but do we daily try to put on love? Our baptism was not true if we are not buried to all old enmities. We may have a great many faults, but God grant that we may be full of love to Jesus, to his people, and to all mankind!

How much I wish that we could all put on, and keep on, the next article of this wardrobe! “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” Oh, for a peaceful mind! Oh, to rest in the Lord! I recommend that last little word, “Be ye thankful,” to farmers and others whose interests are depressed. I might equally recom-

mend it to certain tradespeople, whose trade is quite as good as they could expect. “Things *are* a little better,” said one to me; and at that time he was heaping up riches. When things are extremely well, people say they are “middling,” are “little better”; but when there is a slight falling off, they cry out about “nothing doing, stagnation, universal ruin.” Thankfulness is a rare virtue; but let the lover of the Lord Jesus abound in it. The possession of your mind in peace, keeping yourself quiet, calm, self-possessed, content—this is a blessed state; and in such a state Jesus was; therefore, “put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” He was never in a fret or fume. He was never hurried or worried; he never repined or coveted. Had he nothing to worry him? More than you have, brother. Had he not many things to distress him? More than all of us put together. Yet he was not ruffled, but showed a prince-like calm, a divine serenity. This our Lord would have us wear. His peace he leaves with us, and his joy he would have fulfilled in us. He wishes us to go through life with the peace of God keeping our hearts and minds from the assaults of the enemy. He would have us quiet and strong—strong because quiet, quiet because strong.

I have read of a great man, that he took two hours and a half to dress himself every morning. In this he showed rather littleness than greatness; but if any of you put on the Lord Jesus Christ you may take what time you will in making such a toilet. It will take you all your lives, my brothers and sisters, fully to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to keep him on. For let me again say, that you are not only to put on all these garments which I have shown to you in the wardrobe of the Colossians, but, more than this, you are to put on all else that makes up Christ himself. What a dress is this! “Put on Christ,” says the text.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ for daily wear. Not for high days and holy days only, but for all time, and every time. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ on the Lord’s-day, but do not lay him aside during the week. Ladies have ornaments which they put on occasionally for display on grand occasions: as a rule, these jewels are hidden away in a jewel-case. Christians, you must wear your jewels always. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have no casket in which to conceal any part of him. Put on Christ to keep him on. I saw a missionary from the cold north the other day, and he was wearing a coat of moose-skin, which he had worn among the Red Indians. “It is a capital coat,” he said, “there’s nothing like leather. I have worn it for eleven years.” In the arctic region through which he had travelled, he had worn this garment both by night and by day; for the climate was much too cold to allow the taking off of anything. Brethren, the world is far too cold to allow of our taking off Christ even for an hour. So many arrows are flying about that we dare not remove a single piece of our armour even for an instant. Thank God, we have in our Lord a dress which we may always wear. We can live in it, and die in

it; we can work in it, and rest in it, and, like the raiment of Israel in the wilderness, it will never wax old. Put it on more and more.

If you have put on something of Christ, put on more of Christ. I dare not say much in commendation of apparel, here in England, for the tendency is to exceed in that direction; yet I noticed, the other day, the remark of a missionary in the South Sea Islands, that as the heathen people became converted they began to clothe themselves, and as they acquired tenderness of conscience, and delicacy of feeling, they gave more attention to dress—wearing more clothes, and of a better sort. However that may be as to dress for the body, it is certainly so as to the arraying of the soul. As we make spiritual progress, we have more graces and more virtues than in the beginning. Once we were content to wear faith only, but now we put on hope and love. Once if we wore humbleness, we failed to wear thankfulness; but our text exhorts us to wear a full dress, a court suit; for we are to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” You cannot wear too much of him. Be covered from head to foot with him.

Put on the Lord in every time of trial. Do not take him off when it comes to the test. Quaint Henry Smith says that some people wear the Lord Jesus as a man wears his hat, which he takes off to everybody he meets. I am afraid I know persons of that kind, who wear Christ in private, but they off with him in company, especially in the company of the worldly, the sarcastic, and the unbelieving. Put on Christ, intending never to put him off again. When tempted, tried, ridiculed, hear in your ear this voice, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Put him on the more as others tempt you to put him off.

III. My time fails me, and I must hurriedly notice, in the third place, HOW WE ARE TO ACT IN THIS DRESS TOWARDS EVIL. The text says, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” By the flesh is here meant the evil part of us, which is so greatly aided by the appetites and desires of the body. When a man puts on Christ, has he still the flesh about him? Alas! it is even so. I hear some brethren say that they have no remaining corruptions. I claim liberty to believe as much as I like of a man’s statements as to his own personal character. When he bears witness concerning himself, his witness may or may not be true. When a man tells me that he is perfect, I hear what he has to say, but I quietly think within myself that if he had been so, he would not have felt the necessity of spreading the information. “Good wine needs no bush”; and when our town once holds a perfect man within its bounds there will be no need to advertise him. Goods that are puffed, probably need puffery. Brethren, I fear we have all very much of the flesh about us, and therefore we need be on our guard against it. What does the apostle say? “Make no provision for the flesh.” By this, he means several things.

First, give *no tolerance* to it. Do not say, “Christ has sanctified me so far; but you see I have a bad temper naturally, and you cannot expect it to be removed.” Dear brother, do not make provision for thus sheltering and sparing one of your soul’s enemies. Another cries. “You know I always was a good deal desponding; and therefore I can never have much joy in the Lord.” Don’t make room for your unbelief. If you find a kennel for this dog, it will always lie in it. “But,” says another, “I was always rather fond of gaiety, and so I must mix up with the world.” Well, if you cook a dinner for the devil, he will take a seat at your table. This is to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it. Do not so; but slay the Canaanites, break their idols, throw down their altars, and fell their groves.

Moreover, give sin *no time*. Allow no furlough to your obedience. Do not say to yourself, “At all other times I am exact, but once in a year, at a family meeting, I take a little liberty.” Is it liberty to you to sin? I am afraid there is something rotten in your heart. “Ah!” cries one, “I only allow myself an hour or two occasionally with questionable company. I know it does me harm; but we must all have a little relaxation, and the talk is very amusing, though rather loose.” Is evil a relaxation to you? It ought to be worse than slavery. What a trial is foolish talking to a child of God! How can you find pleasure in it? Give no license to the flesh; you cannot tell how far it will go. Keep it always under subjection, and make no space for its indulgence.

Provide *no food* for it. Carve it no rations. Starve it out; at any rate, if it wants fodder, let it look elsewhere. When you are allotting your provision to the body, the soul, the spirit, allot nothing to the depraved passions. If the flesh says, “What is for me?” say, “Nothing.” Some people like a little bit of reading for the flesh. As some people like a little bit of what they call “rather high” meat, so do these folk enjoy a portion of tainted doctrine, or questionable morality. Thus they make provision for the flesh, and the flesh takes care to feed thereon, and to give its lusts a meal. I have known professors, whom I would not dare to judge, dabble just a little in matters which they would forbid to others, but they think them allowable to themselves, if done in secret. “You must not be too exact,” they say. But the apostle says, “Make not provision for the flesh.” Do not give it a morsel; do not even allow it the crumbs that fall from your table. The flesh is greedy, and never hath enough; and if you give it some provision, it will steal much more.

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,” and then you will leave *no place* for the lusts of the flesh. That which Christ does not cover is naked unto sin. If Christ be my livery, and I wear him, and so am known to be his avowed servant, then I place myself entirely in his hands always and for ever, and the flesh has no claim whatsoever upon me. If, before I put on Christ, I might make some reserve, and duty did not call, yet now that the Lord Jesus Christ is upon me, I have done with reserves, and am openly and confessedly my

Lord's. "Know ye not," saith the apostle, "that as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ?" Being buried with him, we are dead to the world, and live only unto him. The Lord bring us up to this mark by his mighty Spirit; and he shall have the glory of it.

IV. If this be the case, and we have indeed "put on the Lord Jesus Christ," we will thank God evermore; but if it be not so, let us not delay to be arrayed in this dress. WHY SHOULD WE HASTEN TO PUT ON CHRIST? A moment is all that remains. It is dark. Here is armour made of solid light; let us put on this attire at once; then the night will be light about us, and others beholding us will glorify God, and ask for the same raiment. With so dense a night round about us, a man needs to be dressed in luminous robes; he needs to wear the light of God, he needs thus to be practically protected from the darkness around him.

"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ," moreover; for the night will soon be over: the morning will soon dawn. The rags of sin, the sordid robes of worldliness, are not fit attire for the heavenly morning. Let us dress for the sun-rising. Let us go forth to meet the dawn with garments of light about us.

"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ," for he is coming, the beloved of our souls! Over the hills we hear the trumpet sounding; the heralds are crying aloud, "The bridegroom cometh! The bridegroom cometh!" Though he has seemed to tarry, he has been always coming post haste. Today we hear his chariot-wheels in the distance. Nearer and nearer is his advent. Let us not sleep as do others. Blessed are they who will be ready for the wedding when the Bridegroom cometh. What is that wedding dress that shall make us ready? Nothing can make us more fit to meet Christ, and to be with him in his glory, than for us to put on Christ today. If I wear Christ as my dress I do great honour to Christ as my Bridegroom. If I take him for my glory and my beauty while I am here, I may be sure that he will be all that and more to me in eternity. If I take pleasure in Jesus here, Jesus will take pleasure in me when he shall meet me in the air, and take me up to dwell with himself for ever. Put on the wedding drees, ye beloved of the Lord! Put on the wedding dress, ye brides of the Lamb, and put it on at once, for behold he cometh! Haste, haste, ye slumbering virgins! Arise and trim your lamps! Put on your robes, and be ready to behold his glory, and to take part in it. O ye virgin souls, go forth to meet him; with joy and gladness go forth, wearing himself as your gorgeous apparel, fit for the daughters of a King. The Lord bless you, for Christ's sake! Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Romans xii.; xiii. 8–14.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—917, 262, 263.