**Lessons from a Lockdown**

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**Day 27**

**Colossians 3:5-11**

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. What would it take to put to death my earthly nature? Am I willing to do that?
2. Which of the sins listed am I tempted with the most now? Why?
3. Which of the sins listed were sins I was enslaved to before I became a Christian? How was I able to overcome? Can I do the same with the sin I am tempted with now?
4. Based on what Paul said here, why should I not go back to the sins I committed before?
5. What do I need to “put on” to replace the sins?

***Insight:***

What belongs to our earthly nature? Sin. We used to sin in many ways. These are the earthly things we used to set out heart on. But because Christ is now our life, we should put to death sin. This is the only correct response to sin. We need to kill it. We are not simply to minimize, regulate or even abstain from it. The only way to treat sin is to kill it. Extermination not moderation. Killing something is difficult because it requires effort and its consequences are final. But killing sin is necessary in order for us to set our hearts and minds on heaven. We cannot seek heaven if there is sin in our hearts.

Before we became Christians, we repented of our sins. But there will always be temptations. Because we live in a sinful world, sinful influences are all around us. Though we repented, we can still fall into sin if we do not overcome temptation each time it appears. Temptation is a virus that is all around us, so we need to build up our immunity against it. We should protect ourselves from it so that it does not enter our hearts and minds. We should not place ourselves in situations or indulge in activities where the probability of infection is great. We should distance ourselves from sources of temptation. But if temptation does infect us and we sin, we should quickly put it to death.

Sin comes in different forms. We should know what these are so we know whether we are in sin or not. It is our duty to know what sins are. How can we fight if we do not know what we are fighting against? *Sexual immorality* refers to sexual activity outside of marriage; *impurity*  is anything filthy or unclean, which includes thoughts; *lust* is a depraved passion; *evil desires* are sinful cravings; *greed* is craving for more than what you need or deserve; *anger* and *rage* are similar and refers to intense displeasure which leads to sinful actions and speech; *slander* is speech that injures; and *filthy language* is foul or obscene communication. Are we struggling with any of these sins today?

Paul singles out Christians lying to each other as sin. Lying can be deliberate falsehoods or subtle attempts to hide the truth. This is particularly destructive because it prevents us from getting the help we need or we can destroy the faith of others.

We need to be honest with our brothers and sisters about how we are doing. Because we are quarantined in our own homes, it is easier to hide from each other. Therefore, we should put greater effort now in being transparent with each other. Let’s talk to each other daily about how we are doing.

Being a Christian means putting off our old sinful self and putting on a new self which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Our old life is like old dirty and smelly clothes. Why would we want to put them on again when God has given us new and clean clothes? It really makes no sense for us to go back to our old ways. Also, putting on a new self means replacing our sinful practices with righteous acts. Our repentance is not complete until we replace our sinfulness with righteousness.

Paul said that our new self is *being renewed.* God has a design for each one of us even before we were born. But as we grew older, we made choices that deviated from God’s design. We removed things that should be there and added things which we should not. We neglected essential parts of our life, while we spent more time polishing the trivial. But when we became Christians we decided to go back to God’s original design. Being renewed is like a renovation being done by God. He is transforming us into his image. All we have to do is put on our new self every day.

Before we became Christians, there were labels that divided us. These were labels we gave ourselves and labels we imposed on other people. We divided ourselves racially, culturally, socially, politically and economically. Such divisions do not exist in the body of Christ. Because Christ is in all of us, we need to see Jesus in each one of us. If there is anything in our background (bias for or prejudice against certain types of people, political beliefs, economic or social status etc.) that stands in the way of this unity, we should get rid of it. This is part of our earthly nature and therefore we should put it to death.

During the lockdown, let’s not forget to put on our new self every day.