

When we wake up each morning, one of the first things we do is put on our clothes. Outer garments cover our bodies and allow us to walk with dignity before others. But Scripture reminds us that there is another type of clothing—inner garments.

These are not made of fabric but are spiritual virtues that every believer must wear in order to live a Christlike life. Outwardly, you may look well-dressed, but if you are missing these inner garments, you remain spiritually naked before God.

Paul explains this in Colossians 3:12–14 (NIV):

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

Notice Paul uses the phrase “clothe yourselves”, showing that these virtues are not optional but necessary garments of the

Christian life. Let's look closely at each one:

1. Compassion (Mercy)

Compassion is the heart of God expressed through us. A merciful person does not see themselves as better than others but humbles themselves before God and extends forgiveness to others.

Jesus said: *"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy"* (Matthew 5:7, NIV). If we refuse to show compassion, we reveal a heart that has not fully understood God's mercy.

2. Kindness

Kindness flows from the inner life of the Spirit. It is more than polite words—it is an active expression of love. The Good Samaritan is our model: though he had no obligation, he showed kindness to a stranger in need (Luke 10:30–37).

Paul affirms this in 2 Corinthians 6:6, where he describes Christian ministry being carried out *"in purity, understanding,*

patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love”
(NIV).

3. Humility

Humility is not weakness but strength that bows before God. Pride blinds us and leaves us spiritually exposed, but humility keeps us covered by God’s grace.

Peter instructs us: *“All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.’”* (1 Peter 5:5, NIV).

Without humility, even good deeds can become self-serving. With humility, we reflect the mind of Christ who *“humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross”* (Philippians 2:8, NIV).

4. Gentleness (Meekness)

Gentleness is not weakness—it is controlled strength. Jesus perfectly modeled gentleness. Though He had the power to

summon legions of angels (Matthew 26:53), He chose the path of peace and submission to the Father's will.

He said: *"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."* (Matthew 11:29, NIV).

True gentleness means we have the strength to retaliate but the love to withhold it.

5. Patience (Longsuffering)

Patience is the ability to endure trials, insults, or pain without giving up or striking back. It is a fruit of spiritual maturity.

James points us to the prophets and Job as examples: *"As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy."* (James 5:11, NIV).

Without patience, we lose heart; with patience, we reflect the

enduring love of Christ.

6. Love

Finally, Paul crowns all virtues with love, calling it “*the bond of perfection*”. Love is the garment that ties everything together. Without love, all other virtues collapse.

Paul makes this clear: “*If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.*” (1 Corinthians 13:1, NIV).

Love is not merely an emotion; it is the very nature of God expressed in us (1 John 4:8).

Inner Garments and the Fruit of the Spirit

These six garments are echoed in Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV):

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Against such things there is no law.”

Notice that the same qualities are present, with even more added. These inner garments are not produced by human effort alone but by the Spirit of God working in us.

Final Reflection

Just as we cannot leave the house without clothing, we cannot face the world spiritually naked. Every day, we must put on these inner garments—compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and above all, love.

When we wear them, we reflect Christ Himself, who is our ultimate covering and righteousness (Isaiah 61:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

May the Lord clothe us daily with these virtues so that our lives shine as a testimony of His grace.

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