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Sermon Notes

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A Radiant Garment of Holiness Held Out for You to Wear

Ephesians 4:21-24

Like most men, I have no great interest in clothing

I remember when I was in fifth grade, I was invited to a birthday party for a classmate of mine; he was a spoiled kid, made plain by how he reacted to the gifts that kids gave him. Many of them contained the most dreaded thing you could ever get as a ten year old boy: CLOTHES! He ripped open the gift, tearing the wrapping paper with violence... the box would come open, there would be a shirt, or some pants or a winter hat or something... his disdain for the gift was obvious! I remember being thankful that my mom had chosen a "cool gift" – a model airplane – which he liked. I also remember thinking in my own immature way how badly he was behaving.

When I got older, through my teen years, I started to care much more about clothing... not as much as some people, but my appearance mattered to me... I started actually shopping for clothes and caring to get things that were in style, though I was never CUTTING EDGE (you all knew that!!)

In 1981, I remember being captivated by the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer... I remember reading about the stunningly expensive wedding dress she wore that day: made of ivory silk taffeta and antique lace, with a 25-foot train; the dress was valued at over 9000 pounds sterling

The dress was designed by David and Elizabeth Emanuel, who described it as a dress that would "go down in history, but also something that Diana loved"

The gown was covered with over 10,000 pearls, and it was spectacularly radiant for that memorable wedding day

This lavish outfit is one of the most memorable articles of clothing in history... an it is a symbol of the garment of holiness that Christ's bride, the church, must wear for the glorious wedding day with Christ that is yet to come:

Revelation 19:7-8 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

So, the "righteous acts of the saints" will make up the WEDDING DRESS of the bride on the final wedding day...

Ephesians 4:21-24 describes plainly how that garment of holiness is constructed, thread by thread throughout history

The bride of Christ donning a garment of holiness is described in powerful detail here:

Ephesians 4:22-24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Every time we put on holiness by faith in Christ, we are ACTING RIGHTEOUSLY, and are adding another thread of pure, white linen to the wedding dress of the church

Context: Living a life worthy of the calling

Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Ephesians 1-3: Paul has given a magnificent fly-over of the eternal purpose of God in our salvation

- Election in Christ before the foundation of the world... TO BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS BEFORE HIM
- Predestination in Christ for adoption as sons of God
- Atonement through the blood of Christ... full forgiveness of sins
- Justification by simple faith in Christ when we heard and believed the gospel of our salvation; "by grace saved by faith, not by works..."
- Sealing with the Spirit

- The blessings of a life of good works: for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works
- The central work of the rising temple, the invisible spiritual temple of the church of Jesus Christ, in which God will live by His Spirit
- The delights of an almost limitless experience of the infinite dimensions of the love of Christ for us

That is the CALLING we have received... full salvation in a glorious, resurrection body, fully saved from everything sin has ever done in this universe

NOW... live a life WORTHY of such an infinite calling

Daily life is in view... how we are to do this

He begins with an urgent CALL TO UNITY: Ephesians 4:2-6

He follows with a magnificent section on SPIRITUAL GIFTS, which work together to build Christ's body into full maturity, Christlikeness

Now: Ephesians 4:17-24.... He addresses the issue of personal holiness, from the heart out to the actual use of the body

Last time: a deep look at the inner life of the non-Cristian... the corruption of the unregenerate, from the inside of his heart and mind, flowing out to his life:

Ephesians 4:17-19 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

That is WHO the lost person is... who we all were apart from Christ

But the power of the gospel came in to change everything

Paul begins by ASSERTING MOST POWERFULLY the command to be holy as God is holy... He commands, he testifies most solemnly, that we MUST NO LONGER LIVE like the unregenerate do

Having described in some of the clearest terms possible the nature of the unregenerate, he asserts that the MESSAGE OF CHRIST in the gospel changes everything:

Vs. 20-21 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. ²¹ Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.

The clear implication: the teaching of the gospel changes our hearts: what we love, how we think, what we choose

The doctrine of Christ is a LIFE-CHANGING one... it is TRUTH

Now comes the magnificent three-step process that Paul commands for the rest of our lives to live a life worthy of the calling we have received:

Ephesians 4:22-24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

This powerful three-step process will be with us for the rest of our lives, as we battle indwelling sin

PUT OFF the old self

BE MADE NEW in the spirit of your mind

PUT ON the new self

Resulting in INCREASING CHRISTLIKENESS

This is an ACTIVE life of Christian holiness... not a merely passive "Let go and let God" approach to Christian growth

The Keswick lie that if you're striving, straining, making effort toward Christian growth, toward holiness, you have missed the TRUE POWER of the Christian life... that false teaching says there is no STRIVING, only BELIEVING

But Paul doesn't teach sanctification that way!

In justification, there is NO WORK, NO EFFORT, only faith

In glorification, there is NO WORK, NO EFFORT, only instantaneous transformation by God into perfection

BUT IN BETWEEN, in sanctification, there is sweat and strain and effort... there are COMMANDS we MUST OBEY:

- PUT OFF the old self

- BE MADE NEW in the spirit of your mind
- PUT ON the new self

I. Put Off the Old Self (vs. 22)

Ephesians 4:22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires

A. YOU WERE TAUGHT...

1. It all starts with careful doctrinal instruction... going back to verse 21

ESV Ephesians 4:21-22 you have heard... him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,²² to put off your old self

2. We have seen again and again the role of Christian instruction, even focused on in this chapter
 - a. Vs. 11: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers: delivery system for the Word of God, which primes the pump for all Christian growth
 - b. Vs. 13: unity in THE FAITH and THE KNOWLEDGE of the Son of God; “the faith” = a body of doctrines; so also knowledge refers to this doctrinal side of Christianity... that results in MATURITY... as you THINK, SO YOU WILL LIVE
 - c. Vs. 14: depicts immaturity in mental, doctrinal terms: “infants, blown and tossed by the waves, blown here and there by the WIND of FALSE DOCTRINE
 - d. Vs. 15: depicts maturity by contrast as SPEAKING THE TRUTH (i.e. right doctrine) IN LOVE... right beliefs coupled with a heart of love
 - e. Vs. 17-19: focuses on the darkness of the MIND and HEART that characterizes the unregenerate Gentile:

Ephesians 4:17-19 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.

NOTE: again... as they THINK, so will they LIVE

¹⁸ *They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.*

Again... the “life of God” is available, but the unregenerate cannot live it because of their DARKENED UNDERSTANDING, and the IGNORANCE caused by the HARDENING of their HEARTS...

as you think, so you will live

¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

3. So... the remedy to BAD LIVING is RIGHT THINKING, and right thinking is worked by the sovereign grace of the Holy Spirit by the ministry of the Word of God
4. Paul was one of the ones who TAUGHT THEM how to live out their Christian faith by pouring out the Word of God on them
5. BUT what had he told them? And what would he tell us NOW, in how to be holy?

Ephesians 4:22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires

Negative sanctification: Paul starts with PUTTING OFF the old self with all its corrupt ways

This is vital: we must be active in our own holiness... and it involves BOTH negative and positive work

B. Negative Sanctification is Essential to Christian Progress

1. Some Christians MOCK negative commands

“I don’t drink, smoke, or chew... or go with girls who do!”

2. Some want to be only positive: “Love God, and do as you please!”

3. BUT there must be a perfect blending of the putting off and the putting on

a. If you only strive after the positive side of Christianity, trying to be loving, and kind, and patient and positive and happy—but not putting sin to death—you will be destroyed by the poison of sin; your testimony will be corrupted by sin; this is the error of the ANTINOMIAN, those who denied the role of the Law in the Christian life

b. ON THE OTHER HAND: If you only put OFF evil things, and don’t put on righteousness and holiness, if you say Christianity is all about what you DON’T DO, what movies you DON’T SEE, what places you WON’T be found in, what language you DON’T USE, you will lapse in to WORKS

RIGHTEOUSNESS, and the sternness of the ascetics, who beat their bodies, and fasted and were strict, BUT LOVELESS, no sense of joy

- c. Some Puritans went too far in this... in constant introspection, in applying the LAW to their consciences, forgetting justification by faith

C. Focus: the “OLD SELF”

- 1. Some translations: “the old man”; the “old self”; “Old nature”
- 2. It is grammatically linked here to your former way of life... the former pattern of life you used to live
 - a. The OLD MAN is spoken of in Romans 6:6 as having been crucified with Christ by faith
 - b. It is the PERSON WE WERE IN ADAM...

Romans 6:6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

- c. Romans 6:6 speaks of a BODY OF SIN that is gradually rendered powerless, emaciated, weakened by starvation
- d. Ephesians 4:22 speaks of a lifestyle, a manner of life, in connection with that OLD MAN that died with Christ
- e. These are the SAME THING... the habits, the imprint in our minds and bodies of our former status as SINNER IN ADAM
- 3. So the combination of it is the OLD WAY OF THINKING that produced an OLD WAY OF LIVING
- 4. The old mind and old habits
- 5. HABITS = patterns of thinking resulting in patterns of living
 - a. The mind and the body are trainable
 - b. Think of ADDICTIONS: like a young teen that takes up smoking under pressure from his peers; he is learning a way of thinking from them (e.g. “Smoking is cool, we all do it, if you want to be part of us, you’ll have to do it too!”)
 - c. Soon his body will be addicted to the nicotine and he will crave a cigarette to feel normal
 - d. The FLESH becomes ADDICTED to sin... it’s both a MENTAL and a PHYSICAL thing

- i) In the same way liars become addicted to lying in certain situations
- ii) Sluggards become addicted to laziness, oversleeping, procrastination, excuse-making
- iii) Complainers become addicted to complaining when life starts pressing hard on them
- iv) Gluttons become addicted to food as a remedy for their other problems
- v) Drunkards become addicted to alcohol...
- vi) Vain people become addicted to compliments and affirmation, and turn every conversation to themselves

e. This is the OLD NATURE, the OLD MAN, the OLD MANNER OF LIFE

6. Paul describes this OLD NATURE as

corrupted by its deceitful desires

- a. The life we lived back then was increasingly corrupted by LUSTS that LIED
- b. This is the very life that Paul just described in verses 17-19... the life lived to gratify the desires of the flesh in bondage to Satan and his evil world system
- c. The deceitfulness of these lies is powerful... they LIE to us

Hebrews 3:13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

The lusts come knocking on the door of our hearts; they promise life, but in the end, they bring only death. They deceive us and through their enslavement, they kill us

7. Paul discusses it in Romans 6:

Romans 6:19 ...you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness

D. The Command: Put Off the Old Self

- 1. The verb used here is to LAY ASIDE, lay down, take off like a garment OUR OLD SELF
- 2. We are to take that old pattern of life, and all its particulars, and PUT IT OFF... like some filthy robe covered with manure

3. Think about the prodigal son who was feeding pigs; when he resolved to return to his father's house, his robe was covered with the stench of mud and pig dung
4. Perhaps he LAID IT ASIDE; perhaps when the Father called for a rich robe to be put on him, he was still wearing the emblems of his life in sin... that filthy robe
5. So it is with our patterns of sin in the OLD NATURE: we are commanded to LAY IT ASIDE... to put it off
6. No need for a delay! We don't have to work up to this... we can, by the power of the Spirit, PUT TO DEATH the deeds of the body

Romans 8:13 ...if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,

- a. Death by starvation!! The longer it's been since you indulged the old pattern of life, the weaker its hold over you will be
- b. PUT OFF:
 - i) Falsehood and lies
 - ii) Stealing
 - iii) Sinful anger
 - iv) Sexual immorality
 - v) Drunkenness
- c. These sin patterns are part of the OLD MAN's way of life

II. Be Renewed in the Spirit of Your Mind (vs. 23)

ESV Ephesians 4:23 ... and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds

- A. An INNER-WORKING of the mind
 1. The key to the Christian life is the MIND/HEART
 2. We've already seen that that is the very center of the sinful life lived by the pagans
 3. So, if we are going to LIVE DIFFERENTLY, we have to THINK DIFFERENTLY
- B. Not Looking for External Moralism

1. Though Paul lists the renewing of the mind second, it really must come first!
2. You can't truly PUT OFF the old pattern of life without first HATING IT
3. Paul is not talking about some hypocritical SHOW of morality
4. It is very possible for the kind of practical moral transformation he's about to describe to be done with NO INTERNAL CHANGE at all toward God
5. Moralists can give up external patterns of sin
6. But they are "whitewashed tombs" full of dead men's bones and everything unclean
7. Gospel hypocrites can take on a pattern of Christianity, stopping drugs and alcohol, learning how to talk like a Christian, going to church

In 2009, a Brown University undergraduate named Kevin Roose went undercover at evangelical Liberty University to research a book on evangelicalism called "An Unlikely Disciple." To pull it off, Roose had to learn the language and external behavior patterns of evangelical students... and he had everyone fooled... he was even chosen to be a small group leader

Roose studied the 46-page code of conduct called the "Liberty Way," which outlines the rules and regulations of student life. "There's no drinking, no smoking, no R-rated movies," Roose says, "but also no dancing, no cursing and no hugs that last for longer than three seconds."

Roose tried to follow all the rules, even buying a Christian self-help book to help him avoid cursing. For a couple weeks he walked around campus saying "Glory be!" and "Mercy!" Turns out Liberty students don't talk like that anyway... he says they thought he was raised in some weird home school!

For me, it is just proof that someone can put off all the external sin patterns, and put on a LEARNED PATTERN of behavior that looks like Christianity

For years, hypocrites in the BIBLE BELT were doing precisely that!!
UNREGENERATE CHURCH MEMBERS!!

No one did that better than Judas Iscariot, who had everyone fooled that he was a true apostle of Christ!

C. What Does It Mean to be RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND

1. The mind = the brain, the thought process... but Paul adds the word "spirit"

2. NIV translates it “attitude of the mind”, but I think it goes deeper than this
3. The brain of non-Christians works perfectly well to achieve AMAZING things in many fields of study
 - a. Music, science, literature, mathematics, poetry... anything
 - b. That is the ORGAN of the BRAIN... the ability to think, reason, comprehend... it works perfectly well in the unregenerate man
 - c. BUT there is an operating SPIRIT behind the entire focus of his life that Paul is addressing...
 - d. Why he does what he does... what motivates him... what he truly loves and truly hates...
 - e. ESPECIALLY toward God and toward Jesus Christ

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 17:25 Righteous Father! The world has not known You.

- f. Fundamentally it has to do with what you LOVE and what you HATE, what you DESIRE, and what you CHOOSE concerning God, Christ, the Scriptures, the children of God... these topics

SO a brilliant scientist can make completely amazing and true observations in the pharmaceutical laboratory and come to entirely correct scientific conclusions and help create a powerful new drug that's amazingly effective in cancer treatment... but the whole time, his HEART is corrupted toward God and toward Christ and he HATES GOD and is doing none of those amazing things for the glory of God

4. To be MADE NEW in the SPIRIT of the mind is to LEARN HOW TO THINK CHRISTIANLY about everything in life
 - a. “MADE NEW” = the new creation work of the Holy Spirit

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

In Revelation 21, after John describes seeing the New Heaven and New Earth, and the New Jerusalem in which there is no more death, mourning, crying, or pain, he says this:

Revelation 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

This “new creation” work in our souls is the first work of God in humanity that will last eternally... it is a new person within us, with an eternally new love for God... it will live forever... it will survive Judgment Day and grow ever more glorious eternally in the New Heaven and New Earth

So... to be “renewed in the spirit of our minds” means to think more and more according to this NEW WORK God is doing through Christ

It means:

- b. To learn what it means to LOVE GOD with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength
 - c. To learn how to do everything for the glory of God
 - d. To learn how to love righteousness and hate wickedness
 - e. To learn what it is to hunger and thirst for righteousness at every moment
 - 5. It means to HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST and to use it more and more
 - 6. The Grammar is literally: TO GO ON BEING MADE NEW...
 - a. This is a work of the Holy Spirit of God
 - b. This is an ONGOING WORK, a continual work
 - i) Paul is commanding this of Christians
 - ii) So this is a continual work that has to be done in our hearts
 - c. Though this is a work of the Spirit, it is something we should desire and yearn for, and there are specific things we must do
 - 7. We MUST immerse our minds in the Scripture, the Word of God
 - 8. We MUST NOT quench the Spirit or grieve the Spirit as he works these new things in us
- D. The Role of the Spirit and the Word

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

1 Peter 2:2 like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.

1. It is the Spirit, using the perfect Word of God, that little by little transforms our way of thinking, making us conform to true doctrine and thereby changing the entire way we live
2. The Spirit originally inspired every word of the Bible
3. Now the Spirit removes the dimness of our souls and ILLUMINATES the scripture line upon line, verse upon verse

E. Word Feeds Faith, Faith Transforms Character

1. Faith originally entered our souls by the work of the Spirit AND the Word of the gospel

Romans 10:17 faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

2. Now, more and more, faith is the “eyesight of the soul” by which eternal spiritual realities become clearer and clearer

Ephesians 1:18-19 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

The “eyes of the heart” = faith... the ability to see things SPIRITUALLY as they really are... made clear by the Spirit and the word

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

This is the direct opposite of the darkness and blindness that characterizes the life of the pagans:

Ephesians 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

3. So the “renewing of the spirit of the mind” means more and more to UNDERSTAND the world as it really is... not merely the five-sense, physical world that the pagans live for, but the combined physical AND spiritual world as God really made it and presently rules it...

4. The Spirit works in us to SEE every moment spiritually

- a. The sexually immoral man, now converted, increasingly sees sexual sin from God's perspective... he repents continually and fights continually to be pure because he can SEE with spiritual eyes the holiness of God, the blood of Christ shed on the cross for his sins, Christ at the right hand of God interceding for him, JUDGMENT DAY that is coming soon when he'll have to give an account... so when internet porn is attracting him, he hates it NOW as he will hate it THEN... on Judgment Day... all of this by faith... and he PUTS OFF the uncleanness of his past life as a direct act of worship to God
- b. So also the liar, or the slanderer, or the gossip, or the arguer, or the complainer sees the word of his mouth as God does... he thinks NEW THOUGHTS about words, about the tongue, about how to use speech... he PUTS OFF old, evil speech patterns and PUTS ON a new way of speaking... using his words only to build others up, pouring out the word of God on people to bless them
- c. So also the husband who has been treating his wife harshly repents and sees her in the light of eternity; he is renewed in the spirit of his mind when he sees her; he knows that he is commanded to love her as Christ loves the church, and he seeks to do that by the power of the Spirit
- d. So also the mother who has been complaining about all the work of raising three little children is convicted by scripture to do everything without complaining or arguing... she desires to pour out the gospel on these little ones

2 Timothy 3:15 how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

- e. So also the employee who has been lazy and cutting corners when his boss is not around seeks to be a better employee for the glory of God; he is renewed in the spirit of his mind and seeks to give the best possible work he can to his company
- f. So also the materialistic, selfish person, who used to live for shopping and selfish pursuits now repents and seeks to give more and more money away for the glory of God... for the relief of the poor, for storing up treasure in heaven; he realizes that money is a temporary tool, and that God will call him to account on Judgment Day for every penny he ever had... so he yearns to be wise and use his money for building Christ's Kingdom

The Holy Spirit feeds the minds of each of these people, showing them WHOLE NEW WAYS TO THINK about everything in their lives... their sexuality,

their time, their money, their words, their careers, their marriage, their children, their friends...

EVERY TOPIC is seen in a NEW WAY

This is a CONTINUAL WORK of the Spirit in the mind of the Christian

III. Put On the New Self (vs. 24)

Ephesians 4:24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

A. Put On Like a Royal Robe...

1. This is POSITIVE SANCTIFICATION... the irresistible BEAUTY of HOLINESS
2. It is attractive to speak words of godliness... it is virtuous to spend money on the poor and needy... it is alluring to share the gospel with a hostile, unsaved coworker... this is a BEAUTIFUL ROBE of righteousness that the Holy Spirit holds out to us, for us to PUT ON at every moment
3. There is a sense in which it is coming from the OUTSIDE IN, it is held to us from above, from outside, and offered to us to PUT ON
4. It is the imputed righteousness of Christ now LIVED OUT in daily life
 - a. Christ's imputed righteousness is his PERFECT OBEDIENCE to the moral law of God credited to our account
 - b. He perfectly lived out the two great commandments: Love God with all your heart, love your neighbor as yourself
 - c. NOW, through the Spirit, by the Word of God, he holds out a robe of righteous behavior for you to PUT ON as an act of faith at every moment
 - d. It is submission: Christ says, "Here, put this on..." and you yield as an act of your will by faith
5. The robe IS CHRIST!!!!

Romans 13:13-14 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

B. Put On Like a Coat of Armor

Romans 13:12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Later in Ephesians, Paul will speak of putting on the full armor of God... we are IN BITTER WARFARE to live a truly godly life

C. Redemption Comes Full Circle

1. Originally created in the image of God

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

2. Image of God terribly ruined by sin

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

3. Image of God now gloriously restored by the redemption of Christ

Ephesians 4:24 the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

4. We are now able to be what we were originally meant to be... "like God"

5. Especially in holiness: "true righteousness and holiness"

1 Peter 1:15-16 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

See the absolute beauty of a holy life:

Jonathan Edwards, "Personal Narrative":

Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed: enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the years; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet flagrancy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility,

brokenness of heart and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be all, that I might become as a little child.

We are to PUT ON CHRIST... put on the NEW NATURE... held out for us by the Spirit in the Word at every moment... attracted to the most beautiful, virtuous actions at every single moment of the day!!

In every area of your life... in your personal struggle with lusts; in your use of your minutes, hours, and days... in your expenditure of money...in your words toward your spouse or your friends or your co-workers or total strangers

PUT OFF WICKEDNESS

BE MADE NEW IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND

PUT ON CHRIST!!

D. Final Word: This Cannot Happen Unless You're Born Again

1. Trust in Christ for the forgiveness of your sins
2. You will be made a NEW CREATION
3. You will be given the gift of the Holy Spirit
4. You will be handed a Bible and told to read it every day
5. You will then be able to take these three steps continually...
 - a. PUTTING OFF SIN
 - b. BEING RENEWED IN YOUR MIND
 - c. PUTTING ON CHRIST