



The Teaching Ministry of Larry and Kathy Blackburn

PUTTING ON OF CHRIST

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
Galatians 3:27

From Clarke's Commentary:

To put on, or to be clothed with one, is to assume the person and character of that one; and they who do so are bound to act his part, and to sustain the character which they have assumed. The profession of Christianity is an assumption of the character of Christ...

Vincent's Word Studies:

To put on Christ implies making his character, feelings and works our own. Thus Chrysostom: "If Christ is Son of God, and thou hast put him on, having the Son in thyself and being made like unto him, thou hast been brought into one family and one nature." And again: "He who is clothed appears to be that with which he is clothed."

Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible:

That is, they have put on his sentiments, opinions, characteristic traits, etc., as a man clothes himself. This language was common among the ancient writers. The phrase to "put on" a person, which seems a harsh expression in our language, was one not infrequently used by Greek writers, and means to imbibe* his principles, to imitate his example, to copy his spirit, to become like him. Thus, in Dionysius Halicarnassus the expression occurs, "having put on or clothed themselves with Tarquin;" i.e., they imitated the example and morals of Tarquin. So Lucian says, "having put on Pythagoras;" having received him as a teacher and guide. So the Greek writers speak of putting on Plato, Socrates, etc. meaning to take them as instructors, to follow them as disciples. (See Schleusner.) Thus, to put on the Lord Jesus means to take him as a pattern and guide, to imitate his example, to obey his precepts, to become like him, etc...

* imbibe – to drink or drink in; hence, to absorb. To receive or absorb into the mind and retain; as, to *imbibe* new ideas.

The "putting on" of Christ has been often referred to the putting on of clothes, but it means much, much more than 'changing clothes'.... far too many change into this apparel when it is convenient or suits them (example: politicians).

In the old-days, it is said of Greek writers who wanted to say they were well-versed in the thoughts of great men, would say "I have put on Socrates," or "I have put on Plato." They meant that they knew enough Socrates or Plato to quote it – they had immersed themselves into the thought-life such that they could "walk Socrates", "talk Socrates"... they would be so immersed into the person of Socrates, that their every thought, every word, would be that which Socrates had. Likewise, another would do the same for Plato, Pythagoras, or others.

So, standing for their respective mentors, they would argue – one holding up for Plato, and the other for Socrates, etc; and what it meant was that you have learned so much that you have embodied so much of their wisdom, their life, their character, that your mind has been changed by the power of that great thinker.

Jesus said: *If you abide IN ME, and MY words abide in you...* John 15:7

For as many of you as have been baptized [immersed] into Christ have put on Christ.

Galatians 3:27
(bracket added)