

Attitudes of Grace Ephesians 4:29- 5:2

By Phillip G. Kayser

Intro:

In John 11 there is the story of Lazarus' death. When Jesus asks them to open the tomb, Martha objects, saying, **“Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.”** The corpse was rotting, smelly and gross. They didn't really want to open that tomb. And Jesus said, **“Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?”** So in obedience they rolled the stone away from the tomb and Jesus cried out with a loud voice, **“Lazarus, come forth!”** And I have always been intrigued by what the next verse says. It says, **And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.** I always found that curious. Jesus could have just as easily made the grave-clothes fall off on their own. That would have been far less of a miracle than the resurrection of a rotting corpse. But He chose not to. Jesus wanted the people to have to touch these stinking garments and loose him so that they could know the glory of God for themselves. He didn't do a miracle with the grave-clothes, which means that they were in the same shape they had been in five minutes before – with body juices and the smell of a corpse. It was gross.

And that's an analogy for how God works in our lives. He resurrects us to new life when we are born again. And God could do a miracle in our lives and remove all the stinking clothes of our old nature instantly. He could do it if He wanted. It would be no more of a miracle than our regeneration was. Verses 17-19 describe unregenerate men, women and children who are dead in their trespasses and sins. And God regenerates them and gives them new life. He describes regeneration as being a resurrection of a dead man. But then He says in verse 22, **that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.** He is likening our sanctification to the taking off of the old grave-clothes and putting on of new-life-clothes. And just as the friends and relatives of Lazarus were involved in helping him to get rid of these foul smelling clothes, God wants us to be involved with

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each other in getting rid of the foul smelling attitudes that mar our Christian walk and produce all kinds of bad words and behavior.

Over the past two weeks we have been seeing that Christians can be bound in sin just as Lazarus was bound in grave-clothes. Romans 7 is not a denial that a true spiritual resurrection has occurred. Instead, Romans 7 shows new desires and new longings of the heart for holiness. The man of Romans 7 is regenerate. He has been raised from the dead, and has come out of the tomb, and he is ready to live a new life. But he is frustrated because he is bound in all these stinking grave clothes. We looked at two interpretations of Romans 7 that do not work: 1) to treat the condition of Romans 7 as the condition of an unregenerate unbeliever doesn't work and 2) to treat it as the normal Christian life doesn't work. Jay Adam's gives a third alternative. He points out that Romans 7 describes sin as dwelling in our members (our body parts). How can that be? Sin is not a metaphysical something that infects us like a virus. It is a choice. So how can it indwell our members? Jay Adams points out that the only way this is possible is through habituation of sin – where sinful attitudes, words and actions become such habits that they become part of our nervous system's reactions. Those sinful attitudes, words and actions have become such habits that we do them without even thinking.

But we saw in our first sermon that there is hope for holiness. We can get from Romans 7 to Romans 8. In fact, we must never think of Romans 7 as the normal condition for the Christian life. We can enter into victory over every one of those habits. It is true that we will never be sinlessly perfect this side of heaven, but we can conquer all these bad habits. We need not cry out forever as Paul did in Romans 7, **O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?** And that's why the very next verse transitions into the subject of walking in the Spirit that we find in Romans 8 by saying, **I thank God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!** He's the one who will deliver us!

So two weeks ago we looked at Ephesians 1 that convinces us that God the Father is on our side and has predestined us to holiness. He has a plan, and it is a good plan. Ephesians 2 shows us that God the Son is on our side, because He has purchased everything in the Father's plan, and it is in our bank account in heaven. We are wealthy in Christ. Ephesians 3 tells us that God the Spirit is on our side because He follows the Father's plan by taking all that Jesus has purchased and working it into our lives by the power of His might. Then in chapter 4, verses 1-16 we saw that God set up the church of Jesus Christ to be on our side and to be part of this growth in holiness. Each part does its share in helping us to remove the old grave clothes and putting on the new-life-clothes that Christ has provided.

Of course, there is a process that *we* must be involved in ourselves. We saw nine steps that must be in place if we are to gain the victory in verses 17-24. Then we saw specific examples of how that might work with issues such as chronic lying, apathy, stealing and corrupt words. But today we are getting to the innermost grave garments that stink the most: ungodly attitudes.

E. Replace destructive attitudes with gracious attitudes (vv. 31-32)

1. Put off the grave clothes of the old man

Verse 31 says, **Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.** Those are the garments that we are to put off.

a) All Bitterness = “the bitterness associated with grief, disappointment, hate and anger” (NIDNTT) sharpness, harshness, animosity, spitefulness, resentment (see BDAG)

The first piece of grave-clothes is a foul and stinky garment called “bitterness.” The Greek word bitter can refer to literal bitter tasting stuff that you wouldn’t eat, or it can refer to an inward bitter or resentful spirit. In Acts 8:23 Peter said to Simon, **For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness...** Bitterness is a poison that comes into our system from unresolved anger. Let me give some definitions various scholars have given of this word. T.S. Rendall defines bitterness as “The atmosphere produced in us internally when we meditate over life’s circumstances and decide that we have not been given a fair deal.” Have you ever felt that way? A bad feeling that gnaws at you and won’t go away when someone else got the promotion, or your spouse isn’t what he/she should be, or your parents aren’t letting you do what you want? If you have felt that way, you need to recognize it for the dangerous thing that it is. But some people think, “Pastor, you don’t know the raw deal that I have received. I have a right to be bitter.” That’s as silly as saying, “I deserve to keep these foul smelling grave clothes on me.” No, get them off. They will bind you and make you unfit to live with. Who wants to live with someone that smells like a corpse? No one.

Another scholar defined bitterness as “The radioactive fallout that contaminates everything in life after there has been a failure in the core of

our being to come to grips with life's disappointments.”¹ When you are bitter, you have been overcome by evil. That other person is still controlling you. He may be 500 miles away, but he is living in your heart and controlling you. John MacArthur defines it this way: “Bitterness is that feeling of hurt, resentment, anger, hate, and even revenge, that often build up in our heart when we have been bitten by certain experiences of life.” James Merritt said, “Bitterness is harbored hurt hidden in the heart.”²

I think you get the picture. It's not a good picture, is it? You may be bitter with your spouse, with your parents, with a boss who has been unfair or with a friend who violated your trust. You can be bitter with a church that wasn't there for you, or with a preacher who didn't call on you. Bitterness can be expressed either to man or to God. But bitterness is a poison that eats away at your inside, that crowds out joy, peace, contentment and ends up destroying relationships. Hebrews 12 says that bitterness not only defiles you but it defiles many people around you. Are you held in the bonds of bitterness? Don't relish it. That's like relishing stinky grave clothes. Put it off.

b) Wrath = “anger erupting, anger that boils over but soon subsides” (Fields). It can be rendered as “outbursts of passion” (Barclay). It refers to a bad temper or explosions of anger.

The second and third pieces of grave clothes are wrath and anger. The difference between those two are simply that wrath flies off the handle and gets over it fairly quickly whereas the Greek word for anger is a kind of anger that is under the surface and hangs on for a long time. You can see the definitions in your outlines. Wrath is “anger erupting, anger that boils over but soon subsides” (Fields). It can be rendered as “outbursts of passion” (Barclay) or simply as a person with a bad temper.

c) Anger = “a settled disposition of indignation, an angry outlook upon everything” (Fields). It can be rendered as “long-lived anger” (Barclay). Whereas wrath is spontaneous, this is more premeditated.

Whereas anger is “a settled disposition of indignation, an angry outlook upon everything.” It can be rendered as “long-lived anger” (Barclay). Whereas wrath is spontaneous and quick, anger is more

¹ “Prairie Overcomer” July/August, 1983.

² Sermon, “Don't Get Bitter, Get Better” by Dr. James Merritt

premeditated. Now some people think that they are OK because they don't fly off the handle. Sure they may feel angry, but they don't shout and yell and carry on. So they feel more righteous than the wrathful man. Well, I'm sorry. God still considers it a soiled grave cloth that is making you miserable. On the other hand, the person afflicted with wrath thinks he is OK because he is just venting, and once he gets it out of his system, he is OK again. But the Bible doesn't think that way. Both are grave clothes. Both are stinky. Both must be put off. And if you think you can't do it, let me remind you to review the hope for holiness of sermon #1. In 1984 I gave nouthetic counseling to the most angry man I have ever met in my life. Several times I thought I would be beaten to a pulp as I counseled him and held him accountable. And he would always regret it and think he couldn't overcome this terrible habit of wrath. He lamented just as Paul did in Romans 7. But by using the principles found in God's Word, this man gained complete (and I mean complete) victory over his habits of anger. He's now a pastor in the PCA. You too can do it.

d) Clamor = “loud quarrelling” (margin); “a loud outcry, loud speech based on ungoverned feelings” (Fields). It is “quarrelsome shouting” (F.F. Bruce) or “the loud self-assertion of the angry man, who will make everyone hear his grievances” (Findlay).

The next piece of grave clothes is clamor. The margin renders it as “loud quarrelling.” A lot of times you will see a husband and wife arguing loudly and someone eventually slamming the door and leaving in a huff. That is clamor. You may think such “quarrelsome shouting” (as FF Bruce renders it) or “loud self-assertion” (Findlay) is OK because this person is a pain in the neck. (Although, in the heat of the moment you probably used more choice words than “pain in the neck.”). But it doesn't matter how bad the other person was, to hold on to the supposed “right” to be clamorous is as silly as Lazarus saying, “I have a right to these grave clothes. After all, the Pharisees want to kill me. They are mean. I think I will get back into these grave clothes and feel sorry for myself.” No. You must recognize those grave clothes are bondage with the stench of death clinging to you. You aren't pleasant in the sight of others and you aren't pleasant in the sight of God. Yet God in His compassion has made a way for you to become a pleasant person who is never engaged in clamor.

Now – when you get two clamorous persons together, you have got major trouble. They just feed off of each other. It reminds me of the saying, “never slap a man who's chewin tobacco because it will come back all over

you.” There’s another saying that goes, “There’s two theories to arguin’ with a woman. Neither one works.” But you know, that is an absolutely false statement. What the statement *should* say is, “There’s two theories to arguin’ with a *clamorous* person (whether male or female). Neither theory works.” Clamorous people don’t listen to reason because they are focused on winning. If you are a clamorous man, woman or child, recognize that sin for the foul garment that it is and vow to put it off. And let the body help you with those filthy windings.

e) Evil speaking = This is a reference to the foul language or “cussing” that comes when a person gets angry.

The fifth piece of grave clothes is “evil speaking.” This is a reference to the foul language or “cussing” that comes when a person gets angry. And if you are one of those that rips into people and let’s them have it, realize that no one likes four day old stinking grave clothes in their face. Back off and reflect the grace of God.

f) All Malice = “ill will, desire to injure” (Fields). It refers to an “evil inclination of mind... that even takes delight in inflicting hurt or injury on one’s fellowman” (Hendriksen). It is “resentment that has turned even more sour, so that ... we wish to see them suffer” (Deffinbaugh) or have a “desire to injure” (Hodge).

The last piece of grave clothes is “malice.” Look at the definitions. It is “ill will [or a] desire to injure” (Fields). It refers to an “evil inclination of mind... that even takes delight in inflicting hurt or injury on one’s fellowman” (Hendriksen). It is “resentment that has turned even more sour, so that ... we wish to see them suffer” (Deffinbaugh) or have a “desire to injure” (Hodge). You could say that this is the kind of attitude that day dreams about getting even, or seeing the other person being embarrassed. This is the attitude that wishes you could have said an even zingier zinger than you did say. And you lie awake at night thinking of all the responses that would have put that person in his place.

In his book, *Once I Was Blind but now I Squint*, Kent Crockett talks about an elderly woman who passed away. He said, When the

“family members were cleaning out her house ... they found a scrapbook filled with obituaries from the local newspaper. Many of the death notices pertained to people she had detested. As bizarre as it

may sound, she kept a scrapbook of her dead enemies. This woman had five different clippings of her most despised foe in her morbid memory book. Apparently she had gained some kind of strange satisfaction by thinking they could no longer torment her. Or could they? If we don't forgive our deceased enemies, they'll continue to haunt us through our hateful memories of them." (Kent Crockett, *I Once Was Blind But Now I Squint*, Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2004, 102-103)

And that is so true. The people who insist on hanging on to these bad attitudes are the ones that suffer the most. They are bound up in these old grave clothes.

That's quite a list of stinky garments, isn't it? Are you with me in wanting to put those off? I have suffered from some of these in the past, and I can assure you that it is not pleasant to be wrapped up in those grave clothes. But before you can put on the beautiful garments that Jesus Christ has already hung in your wardrobe, you have got to take off the old and take a shower of forgiveness. Let's look quickly at the new-life-clothes that Jesus has provided.

2. Put on the new-life-clothes of Christ (4:32-5:2)

a) Be kind to one another. "Kind" means "gentle, kind, agreeable." (Mounce), "manageable, mild, pleasant" (Thayers). The most basic meaning refers "to that which causes no discomfort, easy" (BDAG) and has sub-meanings of "kind, loving, benevolent" (BDAG). Another dictionary has, "friendliness, kindness, mildness" (NIDNTT).

The first beautiful garment is listed in chapter 4:32. It says, **...and be kind to one another.** The word "kind" means "gentle, kind, agreeable." (Mounce), "manageable, mild, pleasant" (Thayers). According to one dictionary, the basic meaning is "to that which causes no discomfort, easy" (BDAG) and gives sub meanings as "kind, loving, benevolent." Another dictionary has, "friendliness, kindness, mildness" (NIDNTT). Spicq says, "In the second century, the spectacle of Christian *agape* was so stunning for pagans... [who said] ("Behold, how they love one another!")—that according to Tertullian, they called Christians not *christiani* but *chrestiani*, "made up of mildness or kindness."

If you have a tendency to be abrupt and rough around the edges, you might consider this admonition to be impossible to do. You might think,

“I’m just not that way.” It’s just so easy to respond in rough ways that are anything but gentle, mild, agreeable or pleasant. “This is the way my dad was, and I can’t help it.” And yet this is a piece of clothing that Christ has already purchased for you with His precious blood and He wants you to value it and to put it on. Proverbs 31:26 says about the virtuous woman, **she opens her mouth with wisdom and on her tongue is the law of kindness.** We shouldn’t think of this as something that only applies to special people. It is a law of kindness. When you start practicing kindness to those you would have been tempted to get angry and gruff with, you are killing the inward principles that led to the sin. You are putting yourself into a place where God’s grace can flow through you. And it’s fun to see God’s grace come through. It’s like the man with the withered hand. Christ commanded him to do the impossible when He said, “stretch forth your hand.” The man could have responded, “I can’t. It’s withered. Heal it first and then I will stretch it forth.” But if he had said that, he wouldn’t have been healed. You see, God in His sovereignty works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, doesn’t He? And as you will to do the impossible by responding in the ways listed here, God will come through, because He is the one who has already made you willing. I mentioned in another sermon the story of Corrie ten Boom meeting a former guard after a conference. He extended his hand and asked for forgiveness. She felt the cold grip her heart and she didn’t want to forgive him. But in obedience to the Lord’s prompting she stretched forth her hand and said, “I forgive you.” And it was in the act of doing this that she felt the overwhelming power of God’s grace coursing through her and loving this man. It was because she was willing to step out in the obedience of faith.

b) Tenderhearted

The second new-life-garment is called “tenderhearted.” Being tenderhearted is the ability to weep with those who weep and to sense pain in others very quickly. It is being sensitive to the hurts that others are going through. Many times people use a sharp tongue against you because they are hurting, and if you respond with cutting words in return, it just deepens the hurts and exacerbates the argument. But if you respond to their snapping and their anger with a soft answer, and if you can say, “I’m sorry that you feel that way. You must have had a tough day. Tell me some of the things that have frustrated you. I want to be here to pray for you,” there is a chance that you might be able to pull that person out of their negative attitudes and into a constructive, healing discussion – simply because you were tenderhearted instead of giving them what they deserved. In fact, being tenderhearted will

make you genuinely feel sorry for the person who is laying into you because God has enabled you to see with new eyes, and to recognize that that person is bound in grave clothes like Lazarus.

But tenderheartedness also makes our eyes see ministry needs before anyone else does. Let me read you an interesting letter that was written to Ann Landers. I am usually not a fan of her column, but I think this story illustrates a couple that was being tenderhearted to this lady.

"Dear Ann, I'm a 46-year-old woman, divorced, with 3 grown children. After several months of chemotherapy following a mastectomy for breast cancer, I was starting to put my life back together when my doctor called with the results of my last checkup. They had found more cancer, & I was devastated. "My relatives had not been supportive. I was the first person in the family to have cancer & they didn't know how to behave toward me. They tried to be kind, but I had the feeling they were afraid that it was contagious. They called on the phone to see how I was doing, but kept their distance. And that really hurt.

"Last Saturday I headed for the laundromat. You see the same people there almost every week. We exchange greetings, & make small talk. So I pulled into the parking lot, determined not to look depressed, but my spirits were really low. While taking my laundry out of the car, I looked up & saw a man, one of the regulars, leaving with his bundle. He smiled & said, 'Good morning. How are you today?' Suddenly I lost control of myself & blurted out, 'This is the worst day of my life! I have more cancer!' Then I began to cry. "He put his arms around me & just let me sob. Then he said, 'I understand. My wife has been through it, too.' After a few minutes I felt better, stammered out my thanks, & proceeded on with my laundry. "About 15 minutes later, here he came back with his wife. Without saying a word, she walked over & hugged me. Then she said, 'I've been there, too. Feel free to talk to me. I know what you're going through.'

"Ann, I can't tell you how much that meant to me. Here was this total stranger, taking her time to give me emotional support & courage to face the future at a time when I was ready to give up.

"Oh, I hope God gives me a chance to do for someone else what that wonderful woman & her husband did for me. Meanwhile, Ann, please let your readers know that even though there are a lot of hard-hearted people in this world, there are some incredibly generous & loving ones, too."

Being tenderhearted is a beautiful, beautiful thing. And you don't have to look at it with envy and wish that you could do it. You can cast aside the self-pity and begin to realize that it is better to give tenderheartedness than to receive. And because Christ has already purchased that garment for you, it is simply a matter of using the steps outlined in sermon #1 and every time the garment falls off, putting it right back on again.

c) **Forgiving one another**

The third beautiful garment is called "forgiving one another." Now I am not denying that these are all hard things to do. But they bless us more than they bless the person whom we are forgiving.

Clara Barton, the founder of the American Red Cross, was reminded of a horrible thing that some person had done to her years before. Clara acted as if it did not bother her. The friend was surprised and said, "Don't you remember it?" And Clara Barton said, "No. I distinctly remember forgetting it." (SermonIllustrations.com) I should clarify that we don't actually forget the sins that were done, but we can refuse to bring them to remembrance. There is a difference between forgetting and refusing to bring something to remembrance. God can't forget our sins since He is omniscient, but He refuses to remember our sins. Let me explain the difference. Forgetting is a defect just like amnesia is, and it's passive. It's something you can't help. But refusing to bring to remembrance is deliberate and active. It means that we refuse to think and brood about something; we refuse to have bad feelings toward that person; we refuse to shun them. It means that we will refuse to savor the pain and nurse the grudge. Those who don't forgive are those who are bound the tightest in the stinky grave bandages. It is inevitable that they will become poisoned with bitterness.

d) **Supernatural love**

The last garment that Paul mentions is love. Not human love, but supernatural, God-given love. Chapter 5:2 says, **And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us.** This is self-giving agape love. It's the opposite of the world's love. The world's love is really self-indulgence, not agape love. That's why they fall in love and fall out of love. When the relationship is not indulging them, they quit. When Britney Spears broke up with her boyfriend the newspaper reported her as saying, "I need my single time" to learn how to be "self-loving." That's an amazing statement, yet that's the way that the world often thinks, isn't it? Self-assertive; self-loving; self-preoccupied, self-appreciated, self-congratulated. "I need my single time to learn how to be self-loving." Those words should

never be on our lips. And if they are, you will find yourself more and more miserable. We receive the most when we give the most, and it is as we exercise the same kind of self-giving love that Christ gave to us that the Sermon on the Mount says that we are really manifesting that we are sons – that we are walking by a supernatural power. In fact, wherever this clothing is found, you know that you are walking in the Spirit, because only the Spirit can produce these things. This past week I forwarded an email from someone on the counterfeits to the fruit of the Spirit. I thought it was good, and encourage you to meditate on that email. We want the real thing.

3. Aids to help us get out of these clothes

a) See the steps of the first sermon

Let me end the sermon by giving you some aids that can help you to get these clothes on and to keep them on. Point a is simply encouraging you not to forget the points in the first sermon.

b) Ask the Spirit to help you to realize the stench of the grave clothes

But point b is also important. When you are tempted to respond to fire with fire; to evil attitudes with evil attitudes and words, ask God's spirit to help you realize the stench of those grave clothes. The odd thing is that when we are in the heat of the moment, we don't even think of those grave clothes as being bad. We *want* to nurse that wound, or fly off with that word. We just think it and say it and later regret it. But the more we realize how horrible and self-destructive those attitudes are, and that they are set on fire by hell itself, the better off we will be. In fact, there was a story that Snopes.com was not able to verify as to whether it is an urban legend or not, but the site suggests that it may be true. I won't vouch for it, but the story goes that a certain private school in Victoria, BC, Canada had a frustrating problem for the janitor. A number of girls found it humorous to put lipstick on their lips, then press their lips to the mirror, leaving dozens of little lip prints. Every night the janitor would remove them and the next day the girls would put them back. And it was really frustrating for the janitor. Finally, the janitor and the principle devised a plan. The principle called the girls into the bathroom to meet with the janitor. She explained that the lip prints were causing a lot of extra work for the janitor. To demonstrate how difficult it was to clean the mirrors, the janitor put some soap into a toilet, dipped a long handled squeegee into the toilet and cleaned the mirror with it. The thoroughly disgusted girls never kissed the mirrors again. All they could

think about when they looked at those mirrors was where the squeegee had been – in the toilet. Next time you are tempted to whine, get bitter, or cuss out someone, remember this story. If you could see the dirt you are kissing with your thoughts and your words, you wouldn't do it. You are giving in to the suggestions of demons and the grave clothes of your flesh. Ask God to give you a new awareness of how stinky such sins are. Ask Him to make you revolted over those sins.

c) Ask the Spirit to give you a new appreciation of the sweet aroma of the new clothes provided by the Christ

(1) Fresh realization of our forgiveness (4:32)

Point C – ask the Spirit to give you a new appreciation of the sweet aroma of the new clothes provided by Christ. And I've given several aspects of how sweetly perfumed Christ's clothes really are. Look at the perfume of His forgiveness. Chapter 4:32 says, **forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.** Things don't look so bad when we more fully realize all that we have been forgiven.

(2) Imitating God's forgiveness and care for us (4:32; 5:1)

Chapter 5:1 tells us, **Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children.** Our actions are just a call to reflect in a tiny way the incredible actions of God toward us. The more you know the depth of God's forgiveness and of the fact that you are dear to Him (He calls you "dear children") the more you will be ready to forgive others and treat them in a tenderhearted and kind way.

(3) Seek God's Spirit for true love versus indulgence (5:2)

Daily ask God to give you His true love to love the unlovable. God does not call us to only love the loveable people of this world. In the Sermon on the Mount he tells us that even pagans can do that. Instead He calls us to love our enemies and those who persecute us. Think about it: we were hardly loveable in His sight apart from Christ. Yet God says in chapter 5:2, **And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us.** But you've got to experience His love to be able to give His love. Guilt alone can never motivate us enough. In fact, guilt is a rather lousy motivator. So Paul said, **the love of Christ compels us...** (2 Cor. 5:14). The more we experience of His incredible love, the more we will be able to give of it.

Developing a deep relationship with the Lord is a key step in putting on the new-life-clothes of Christ.

***(4) Cloth yourself in Christ's legal righteousness
(5:2)***

Fourth, clothe yourself daily in Christ's legal righteousness. Satan will try to beat up on you and tell you that you are such a dirty, rotten, lousy Christian. Satan will try to make you so discouraged over your failures that you will want to give up and not try. But your response should be, "Of course I'm a lousy Christian. That's why I'm not looking to myself for cleansing and victory. I'm looking to Jesus." Satan will do everything he can to get your eyes off of Jesus and onto yourself. Instead, remind yourself of the theology of chapter 5:2 which speaks of Jesus as being **an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma**. Until you are secure in Christ, you will not be able to put off the grave-clothes and put on the new-life-clothes.

***(5) Daily depend upon Christ's sweet smelling
cologne (5:2)***

It's not *we* who smell so great, but Christ dwelling in us. So put on the Lord Jesus Christ. His imputed righteousness makes you secure in justification, and His imparted righteousness transforms you in sanctification with grace upon grace and from glory to glory. But it is Christ, and Christ alone who can make you smell like cologne to the Lord. So when you blow it in this next week, don't give up. Confess your fault immediately to the one you sinned against and to the Lord, receive cleansing from Christ's atonement, and ask God to finish the good work that He has begun in you. Tell Him that you want to get from Romans 7 to Romans 8 by His power. You have a power within you that is greater than anything that the greatest pagans have ever had. Alexander the Great was able to conquer the world, but he couldn't conquer his own negative attitudes. In a fit of rage he killed his best friend for teasing him. And he felt bad that he could not control himself. But in contrast, I have seen men, women and children conquer their bad attitudes and words and become people who were actually pleasant to be around. Make that your goal – to so show forth the character of Jesus, that others would be attracted to the Lord of glory through you. Will you join me in asking God for this? Let's pray.

Children of God, I charge you to put off the grave clothes of the old man – that's your old identity with Adam, and to put on the new-life-clothes

that Jesus purchased for you. And when they get soiled, put them into the Laundromat and put them on again to His glory. Amen.

Attitudes of Grace **Ephesians 4:29- 5:2**

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 8-26-07

Introduction

- E. Replace destructive attitudes with gracious attitudes (vv. 31-32)
1. Put off the grave clothes of the old man
 - a) All Bitterness = “the bitterness associated with grief, disappointment, hate and anger” (NIDNTT) sharpness, harshness, animosity, spitefulness, resentment (see BDAG)
 - b) Wrath = “anger erupting, anger that boils over but soon subsides” (Fields). It can be rendered as “outbursts of passion” (Barclay). It refers to a bad temper or explosions of anger.
 - c) Anger = “a settled disposition of indignation, an angry outlook upon everything” (Fields). It can be rendered as “long-lived anger” (Barclay). Whereas wrath is spontaneous, this is more premeditated.
 - d) Clamor = “loud quarrelling” (margin); “a loud outcry, loud speech based on ungoverned feelings” (Fields). It is “quarrelsome shouting” (F.F. Bruce) or “the loud self-assertion of the angry man, who will make everyone hear his grievances” (Findlay).
 - e) Evil speaking = This is a reference to the foul language or “cussing” that comes when a person gets angry.
 - f) All Malice = “ill will, desire to injure” (Fields). It refers to an “evil inclination of mind... that even takes delight in inflicting hurt or injury on one’s fellowman” (Hendriksen). It is “resentment that has turned even more sour, so that ... we wish to see them suffer” (Deffinbaugh) or have a “desire to injure” (Hodge).
 2. Put on the new-life-clothes of Christ (4:32-5:2)
 - a) Be kind to one another. “Kind” means “gentle, kind, agreeable.” (Mounce), “manageable, mild, pleasant” (Thayers). The most basic meaning refers
 - a) “to that which causes no discomfort, easy” (BDAG) and has sub-meanings of “kind, loving, benevolent” (BDAG). Another dictionary has, “friendliness, kindness, mildness” (NIDNTT).
 - b) Tenderhearted
 - c) Forgiving one another
 - d) Supernatural love
 3. Aids to help us get out of these clothes
 - a) See the steps of the first sermon
 - b) Ask the Spirit to help you to realize the stench of the grave clothes
 - c) Ask the Spirit to give you a new appreciation of the sweet aroma of the new clothes provided by the Christ
 - (a) Fresh realization of our forgiveness (4:32)
 - (b) Imitating God’s forgiveness and care for us (4:32; 5:1)
 - (c) Seek God’s Spirit for true love versus indulgence (5:2)
 - (d) Cloth yourself in Christ’s legal righteousness (5:2)
 - (e) Daily depend upon Christ’s sweet smelling cologne (5:2)