

## Put On Spiritual Love

**Colossians 3:14** Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity

Beyond all ‘what’ things?

**Colossians 3:12** So, put on, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, (1) a heart of compassion, (2) kindness, (3) humility, (4) gentleness and (5) longsuffering

**Colossians 3:13** (6) bearing with one another, and (7) forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love which is the perfect bond of unity

Believe it or not verse 14 is complicated as to what is being said.

**Colossians 3:14 (NASV)** Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

The Greek starts with a particle generally translated **and**. But, the NASV omits it altogether. The Greek particle serves to introduce something more, so we will translate it **moreover**.

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

Then we have a Greek preposition translated in various ways: *beyond*, as in the NASV or *over* as NIV, also translated *above*. The idea of *over* keeps the idea of ‘putting on clothing’ with it, meaning, **over all these other items you have put on...put on over them love**. This idea is beautiful. For example, **put on a heart of compassion — covered with love; be kind — with love, be gentle but with love; be longsuffering but with love**. An effective prayer “Father, give me wisdom expressed in love.” Verse 14 **moreover above** Then, we do have the all-important inclusive **all — moreover above all**, meaning most important.

Then in verse 14, we have **these things** referring to the seven Christian virtues previously listed in verses 12-13: **heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness in adversity, longsuffering, bearing with one another and forgiving each other – and above these things, these virtues given to us by the Holy Spirit...love** — love is here seen as the outer garment. And why not. It is of this one...love that Jesus Christ said **by this all will know that you are mine**.

**Moreover, above all these things put on love** Oh, but dear people, this is not referring to just any love. This refers to love that is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. **Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love** First one mentioned...First in priority.

There are three primary sources of love on earth:

First from God — Divine love;

Then, there is love that comes from humans, that is from our flesh nature — human love and

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

Thirdly, there is love that comes from God the Holy Spirit through humans who are saved and are new spiritual creatures and who are filled with the Holy Spirit. So, this love is from the Holy Spirit, through a New Spiritual creation (that is a believer in Jesus Christ). This is the only love that has spiritual impact in the Angelic Conflict.

Therefore, we shall call this Spiritual Love.

The most important question about Spiritual Love is how does the believer have this love? It is not by the discipline of the flesh. So many people, Christian or non-Christian, are so impressed with their love. The love of a mother, or of a father or of a patriot. Many Christians are so impressed with their love; their love for God, for Christ and for certain others in life. As difficult as this may be to grasp, God is not impressed with human love, any more than He is impressed with human righteousness. And our righteousness is as filthy rags before Him. God is not impressed with our righteousness nor is God impressed with our love. In fact, He rejects our righteousness and our love. He rejects any works that come from our flesh nature. So many Christians work diligently on self-discipline of their flesh nature, overcoming various trends like of alcohol, sex, gambling etc. And while this is wonderful in normal life, but before God, it is of no profit, no spiritual profit.

We can see in a study of 1 Cor. 13 that it is Spiritual Love that alchemizes or converts normal things into spiritual dynamics and rewards. It is referred to as the more excellent way in:

Put On Spiritual Love  
Colossians 3:14

**1 Corinthians 12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.**

And in chapter 13, Paul will talk of Spiritual Love, where in the first three verses he tells how Spiritual Love transforms common things into something precious before God.

**1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak with the tongues/languages of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.**

An echoing sound that just draws attention to me but not to Jesus Christ. So, without Spiritual Love we say nothing!

**1 Corinthians 13:2 If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, (insurmountable obstacles) but do not have love, I am nothing.**

**1 Corinthians 13:3 And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. (spiritually)**

So as wonderful as these common services are — knowing all Scripture, and all knowledge and have faith to move insurmountable obstacles, and

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

give all you possesses so that you become poor yourself, and even give your life...without Spiritual Love, you are nothing before God and it profits you nothing at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

So, I hope you can see just how important Spiritual Love is to God.

But it is also important to Jesus Christ. He makes Spiritual Love the New Commandment for the Church Age.

**John 13:34 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**

**John 13:35 “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

This is a New Commandment, in that it has never existed on Earth before! It is a New Love that has never existed before on Earth, because Jesus Christ by His incarnation was on Earth as a human being which He has never been before.

Now if we are going to love just as Jesus Christ loves we must know what His love is like and how He loves.

If Jesus Christ loves from His Deity then there is no way we can love as He loves.

If Jesus Christ loves from His perfect humanity, then again, there is no way we can love as He loves.

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

But, if Jesus Christ loves by the power of the Holy Spirit, which He did, then – POW! Now we can do it. We can love as Jesus Christ loves because God the Father has graciously supplied us with the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 3:5). So, if you desire to fulfill the New Commandment and love as Jesus Christ loves then you must be filled with the Holy Spirit. This of course means you must know how to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The most important question for the unbeliever is how to be saved eternally?

And the most important question for the believer is how to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Lewis Sperry Chafer (founder of Dallas Theological Seminary) so brilliantly describes how we are filled with the Holy Spirit. He follows the pattern of how we are saved by grace through faith, in his concluding chapter 7 of his book ‘He that is Spiritual.’ Anyone who believes that God’s plan is always by grace through faith, should understand Chafer’s pattern. “The Bible treats our deliverance from the bond-servitude to sin as a distinct form of salvation, and there is an analogy between this and the more familiar aspect of salvation, which is from the guilt and penalty of sin.” To grasp this analogy or pattern between our eternal life salvation or deliverance from the penalty of sin as unbelievers, and our salvation or deliverance from the power of sin as a believer we must:

**First**, understand our condition in each of these. First, as unbelievers we are spiritually dead under the penalty of sin and need to be saved or delivered from this condition. Then, as believers, even though we are

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

eternally saved when we sin, we are in a similar situation to when we were unsaved. We are spiritually dead ‘temporally’ under the power of sin and need to be saved or delivered from this condition. We are in a state of unrighteousness and therefore not in fellowship with God. Even though we are now saved for all eternity, there is nothing our flesh nature can do to deliver us from the power of sin. Our only hope is to completely depend upon God for His saving power and grace.

**Secondly**, in either of these two conditions – spiritually dead under the penalty of sin as unbelievers or spiritually dead temporally as believers under the power of sin there is nothing our flesh nature can do to save or deliver us. Some people teach that to be saved eternally the unbeliever has to do something: repent, change your life style, some ritual, join a church, be moral etc. But, the Bible is very clear that we are saved by grace through faith. There is nothing that we can do in the flesh to save or deliver ourselves. It must be totally the work of God and we are saved or delivered by grace through faith. On the other hand, there are some who teach that to be saved or delivered from the power of sin, the believer must now do something in the flesh to be saved or delivered from the power of sin: repentance, confession, yield etc. But again, the Bible is very clear that there is nothing we can do in the flesh that is acceptable to God.

**John 6:63 “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.**

What is interesting is that many of these believers who teach that you are filled with the Holy Spirit by works of the flesh of confession or

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

repentance would protest if one were to say that the unbeliever is saved or delivered from the penalty of sin by confession or repentance. They would correctly say that would be salvation by works. But by some 'mystical' way, once we are saved, the flesh can now do something that is acceptable to God. But we must remember our flesh nature is neither saved nor delivered nor recovers from its sinful state. Therefore, anything coming out from it, like repentance or confession is unacceptable to God. We must be delivered from the power of sin by grace through faith.

**Third**, The unbeliever, under the penalty of sin, can do nothing to save himself from the penalty of sin. The believer, under the power of sin and out of fellowship with the Holy Spirit, can do nothing to deliver himself from the power of sin. Any deliverance must be by God alone!! Salvation is of God alone from the Penalty of sin and Salvation is of God alone from the Power of sin. Every aspect of your salvation is beyond human power and strength. Because you are helpless under the penalty of sin, you cannot save or deliver yourself. You must depend totally upon God.

**1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

It is equally true that the Christian is helpless to deliver himself from the power of sin. Now that you are a Christian, every salvation is just as much a deliverance as when you were a non-Christian. You cannot save or deliver yourself from the power of sin anymore than you could save yourself from the penalty of sin. You must depend totally upon God.



**Romans 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?**

**Fourth,** Salvation is only by and through the Cross from the Penalty of sin for the unbeliever. God, out of His love, has solved the problem of the penalty of sin by sending His Son to die on the cross. Jesus Christ took upon Himself the penalty for your sins so that God would be free to save you eternally. By Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, God is now free to save us eternally.

**1 Peter 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.**

It is the same pattern of salvation by grace that God is free to deliver or save every Christian after he has committed personal sins. Jesus Christ has died for all sins -- past, present and future. Because of this, God is now free to deliver you from the power of sin and to deliver you into the power of His Spirit.

**Romans 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;**

**Fifth,** Salvation is by Grace alone from the Penalty of sin. Since you as a non-Christian cannot do or say or experience anything to save or deliver

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

yourself, you must totally depend upon God's Grace. Grace is God providing everything necessary without any merit or work from man.

**Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;**

**Ephesians 2:9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.**

Again, since you as a Christian are rendered helpless due to personal sins, your salvation or deliverance from the power of sin must be by grace. It cannot be by anything you do or say or experience while under the power of sin.

**Romans 11:6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.**

**Sixth, Salvation is by Faith Alone from the Penalty of sin.** Salvation that will deliver you from the penalty of sin and reconcile you with God can only be a work of God. The only way you can receive what God has done for you is by your faith in the one whom God has sent, that is His Son Jesus Christ. This salvation is yours by a simple act of faith in Jesus Christ.

**John 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."**

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

Salvation is by Faith Alone from the Power of sin. Salvation or deliverance from the power of sin is equally a work of God. Again, the only response that the Christian who has sinned can have towards God to receive this deliverance is faith in the one whom God has sent, that is the deliverer, the Holy Spirit. Non-Christians are not saved until they trust the Savior and Christians are not saved or delivered until they trust the Holy Spirit. God has made both of these salvations possible through the work of His Son on the cross. Salvation from the power of sin must be claimed by an act of faith from the believer.

Any and all deliverance must be by the grace of God and the only thing compatible with grace is non-meritorious faith. “By grace alone through faith.” Now, and here is the tricky part, many of those who teach that we, as believers are saved or delivered or restored from the power of sin by confession, contend that they are doing this by faith. But the question arises, *is this the faith God is looking for?* In other words, this person is in effect saying I believe that if I do this then God will save me or deliver me. If I repent or confess, then God will restore me back to fellowship. Their faith is in what they do. This would be no different than a person contending that they are saved eternally if they do something, whatever their list calls for: repentance, joining a particular church, repenting, being as moral as they can etc. Their faith in truth is in what they do.

The faith God is looking for is a faith in Him! The relationship word between humans is love, but the relationship word between creature and creator is faith followed by love from the Holy Spirit.

So, again, we must ask ourselves, is this the faith God is looking for? God is looking for faith in the one He has sent:

Put On Spiritual Love  
Colossians 3:14

**John 6:29** Jesus answered and said to them,  
“This is the work of God, that you believe in  
Him whom He has sent.”

And God the Father has sent His Son to save or deliver unbelievers from the penalty of sin, therefore our faith is in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Then God has sent His Spirit to save or deliver the believer from the power of sin, therefore our faith is in the Spirit of God, that is the Holy Spirit.

**Isaiah 48:16** “Come near to Me, (pre-incarnate Christ) listen to this: From the first I have not spoken in secret, From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord GOD (GOD THE FATHER) has sent Me, (Jesus Christ—Gospels) and His Spirit.” (day of Pentecost).

Why did God the Father send His Son, Jesus Christ? And why did God the Father send His Spirit?

**Seventh,** Where are we taught faith in the Holy Spirit? First, the Holy Spirit is the mystery of the Church Age. And just as many did not realize that this Jesus was the promised Messiah, many throughout the Church Age do not realize why God sent His Spirit.

**Put On Spiritual Love  
Colossians 3:14**

Bill Bright who led a wonderful spiritual success, in winning souls for Christ understood that the believer is filled with the Holy Spirit by faith.

## FILLED BY FAITH

How can one be filled with the Holy Spirit? We are filled with the Spirit by faith. We received Christ by faith. We walk by faith. Everything we receive from God, from the moment of our spiritual birth until we die, is by faith. Do you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit? You can be filled right now, wherever you are, by faith.

<https://www.cru.org/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/transferable-concepts.html>

To see this in Scripture:

**Colossians 2:6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,**

The importance here is the Greek adverb translated **as** meaning in what manner or in what way. So, the question is, in what manner or in what way did we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior? Answer: by grace through faith. So, it is in that manner that we walk or live in Him, *by grace through faith*.

Next:

Put On Spiritual Love  
Colossians 3:14

**1 Corinthians 2:4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and even of power,** (referring to the Holy Spirit, of whom this chapter is devoted)

**1 Corinthians 2:5 so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.** (their faith, and ours, should be on the power of God, whom he has just spoken of as the Holy Spirit. So therefore, we should trust the Holy Spirit).

**Romans 1:17 For in it (the gospel) *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith* (eternal saving faith in Jesus Christ) **to faith** (living faith in Holy Spirit); **as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”** (the Holy Spirit empowers us to live a righteous life and without the Holy Spirit no one can be righteous in his life before God).**

In Romans 7:24 Paul, as a believer — already saved eternally but in need of being saved or delivered from sinful flesh asks ‘**wretched man that I am** in the flesh **who will set me free from the body of this death.** When we are under the power of sin, in carnality, we are spiritually dead temporally. So ‘who’ is going to set him (and us) free from this power of

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

sin? Then in Chapter 8 he summarizes how Jesus Christ has set him free of eternal condemnation, then proceeds to answer ‘who’ it is that will set him free of power of sin, the Holy Spirit.

**Romans 8:4 so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**

**Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.**

**Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,**

**Romans 8:7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*,**

**Romans 8:8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** (which of course means that repentance and or confession do not please God.)

Put On Spiritual Love  
Colossians 3:14

**Galatians 3:2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?**

**Galatians 3:3 Are you so foolish? (Non-thinking) Having begun by the Spirit, (at eternal life salvation) are you now being perfected (advancing to spiritual maturity) by the flesh? (works of the flesh! confession, repentance, joining a church etc.)**

**Galatians 3:4 Did you suffer so many things in vain — if indeed it was in vain? (By context this should be translated) Did you have such remarkable things happen to you in vain - to no purpose; (Liddel & Scott Greek Lexicon and Bauer's Basic Greek Lexicon)**

Question: How would all these things be in vain OR of no purpose? By us not using them by Faith.

Now in verse 5, Paul concentrates on one of the remarkable things that happened to us when we believed in Jesus Christ as Savior.

**Galatians 3:5 So then, (all that God did for us at salvation) does He (God the Father) who provides you (graciously supplies you) with the Spirit (Indwelling of the Holy Spirit) –and - even**



**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

**working** (Present Active Participle) **miracles** (Greek word *dunamis*-) **power among in you**, (Revised Translation:) **So then, does He who graciously supplies you with the Spirit even working power in you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?** (We received the Indwelling Holy Spirit by faith and we receive His empowering ministry by faith).

So, now we know how to ‘put on Spiritual love’ which is the perfect bond of unity.

L. S. Chafer describes it in these words in his 5<sup>th</sup> step of an analogy between these two aspects of salvation:

***“Salvation is by Faith”***

a. From the penalty of sin.

“Since salvation is always and only a work of God, the only relation man can sustain to it is that of expectation toward the One who alone can undertake and accomplish it. Salvation from the guilt and penalty of sin is wrought for us the *moment* we believe. It is conditioned on the *act* of faith. Men are not saved, nor kept saved, from the consequences of sins because they *continue* their faith. Saving faith, as related in the first aspect of salvation, is an *act* of faith. We are saved by grace through faith.”

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

b. From the power of sin

“Salvation unto sanctity of daily life is equally a work of God, and the only relation the child of God can sustain to it is an *attitude* of expectation toward the One who alone is able. There should be an adjustment of the life and will to God, and this salvation must then be claimed by faith; but in this case it is an *attitude* of faith. We are saved from the power of sin *as* we believe. The one who has been justified by an *act* of faith must now *live* by faith...”

“Sinners are not saved until they trust the Savior, and saints are not victorious until they trust the Deliverer.” Whom Chafer has identified as the Holy Spirit.

We are filled by the Holy Spirit by grace through faith, just as we were eternally saved by grace through faith. The pattern of grace is the same. Here our faith is in the third member of the Godhead that is faith in the Holy Spirit. (Col. 2:6; 1 Cor. 2:4-5 followed by verses 10-16; Gal. 5:5; John 6:29; Gal. 3:5; 1 Cor. 5:7; Rom 7:24-8:25)

OK, Jesus Christ loves by the power of the Holy Spirit. And He loved sacrificially to Himself for the benefit of others. We just saw in 1 Cor. 13:1-3 that you can give sacrificially for the benefit of others but it be of no spiritual profit to you. So, what makes our love like His love? The Holy Spirit!

One of the chief characteristics of Spiritual Love is that Spiritual Love sees a need and then meets that need.

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

**John 3:16 “For in this manner, God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.**

The love of God saw the need of all mankind in total depravity, lost forever. His love could not just save everyone because of His perfect righteousness. But His love found a way to make it possible that every human being could be saved forever. First, He sent His Son to die twice on the cross. First, spiritually, taking away the sins of everyone in history. This is the negative part of the gospel: taking away judgment and guilt of sins. Then, He died physically. But by a simple act of faith in Jesus Christ, God the Father is now free to impute to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior, His perfect Righteousness. This is the positive part of the Gospel and now that person is saved forever. This is how powerful God’s love is in the universe. And believer, this same love is poured into you by the third member of the Godhead when you walk by faith in Holy Spirit.

***Definition***

Poets, philosophers, lexicographers, and theologians all strive at a definition of love, but they all fall short no matter how many pages they strive for a definition.

The Bible defines faith, but the Bible does not define love. God in His Word describes love, describes the impacts, the effects of love. This is not unlike gravity. Gravity cannot be defined, we define gravity by describing when gravity is not present and when gravity is present.

**Put On Spiritual Love**  
**Colossians 3:14**

One way of understanding love is understanding that it is a force. And as a force it has direction, magnitude and impact or effects. For example: the direction of the love of God:

**John 3:16 in this manner God loved the world**  
(the direction of the love of God is the world of lost sinners. The love of God has magnitude:)  
**that He gave His only Son** (and the love of God has impact or effect:) **that who so ever believes in Him shall not parish but have eternal life.**

For us to have this love, it must be by faith in the Holy Spirit who then pours His love into us. And then we love as Christ loved.