

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS
CHRISTIAN LIVING IN A PAGAN NEIGHBORHOOD
Romans 13:8-14

“Dress for Success”

To get ahead, you must dress appropriately!

How should a Christian “dress” for success?

We’re considering **how Gospel changes our lives.**

How we respond to God’s grace shown to us in Christ?

We don’t go on living same way we used to.

How will gospel change way we treat our neighbors?

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR 13:8-10

Main obligation in relationship with our neighbors: *LOVE*

Let no debt remain outstanding to anyone 13:8a

Lit., “Owe no one anything”

Some take it as prohibition to borrow money

It is clear that Christians ought to **pay** their debts."

Issue here *isn't* about danger of debt.

*People ought to **pay attention to the warning!***

BUT, is this Paul's point in this verse?

He’s talking about not leaving "unpaid bills"—debts we don’t pay.

13:7 *“Pay to all what you owe!”*

7 => "debt" to authorities: taxes, respect

8 adds: **don’t leave obligations unpaid to anyone!**

Only obligation we should let remain outstanding: obligation to love one another!

In other areas, *fulfill commitments faithfully*
In the context of Rom. 13, If we NEVER have any debts,
but can't be trusted to do our part in our neighborhood,

*to help a neighbor in need,
to pay our taxes and respect public officials,*

WE'VE MISSED THE POINT!

We should give everyone what's due them. 7

–leave no unsettled accounts–no "unpaid bills!"

Love one another 8b *"Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another."*

2 reasons we should love our neighbor:

We love our neighbor because love fulfills the whole

law 13:9-10 *"He who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not covet," & whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in 1 rule: "Love your neighbor as your-self." ¹⁰Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore **love is the fulfillment of the law.**"*

If we fulfill *this* command, we'll never commit adultery, murder, robbery; never bear false witness or covet!

He who loves his neighbor fulfills entire law!

2nd We love neighbor because GOD changes our lifestyle 11-14 What does change look like?

=> GOD produces kind of love which motivates us to...

LIVE AS IDEAL CITIZENS 13:11-14

Urgency of times 13:11-12a *"Do this, understanding the present time: The hour's come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we 1st believed. ¹²The night's nearly over; the day's almost here."*

We love others because *we know what time it is*

Night's almost over; day's at hand 11-12a

It's time to wake up–get ready for work;

Time of our deliverance is getting closer.

Time of darkness is almost gone;

day will soon be here.

God calls: *Wake up! Time is short!*

2 figures clarify change needed 13:12b-14

Changing our clothes 12b “So then let us put aside the deeds of darkness & put on the armor of light.”

It's time to take off night clothes–old lifestyle– clothes of darkness

Put on work clothes–weapons designed for day use–to use in light–weapons of LOVE!

TAKE OFF THE WORKS OF DARKNESS

DRESS WITH WEAPONS OF LIGHT

To go to work we have to dress appropriately.

Dress to work for God isn't same as to work for world

God wants us to *take off world's clothing*;

put on appropriate clothing to serve Him.

Working at home–dress casually –don't mind if I get dirty.

If we have company, I change clothes; dress up.

Be alert; company may come before nightfall.

Lord may come today!

We want to be appropriately dressed!

Not talking about style of shirts or dresses

He's talking about **lifestyle**.

We should look different than we used to!

2nd figure: **Getting up in the morning 13-14**

“Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies & drunkenness, not in sexual immorality & debauchery, not in dissension & jealousy.”

We should live like people in daylight!

Main difference between night & day? light

At night **darkness** prevails; in daytime, **light** prevails.

We shouldn't live like people who live in dark 13

3 pr. of activities characterize people in darkness:

1) Orgies & drunkenness Not normal among God's people

2) Immorality & debauchery Not normal among God's people

Though last IS found among God's people, these be-long to darkness.

3) Dissension & jealousy= self-centered sins, though found in God's people, not appropriate in daylight!

God's children ought to be characterized by love, **NOT** quarreling & jealousy.

2 commands teach us how to live in daylight

13:14 *“Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ & do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature”*

1. Put on Christ 14a Instead of outfit world wears.

We put on Christ so people can see what He's like

2. Don't focus on what the FLESH desires 14b

“Don't think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature”

What *our* nature produces when we live by our effort.

Flesh produces fruit 13: orgies & drunkenness, sexual immorality & debauchery, dissension & jealousy.

Change doesn't come as result of *our* efforts.

Paul warns: ***Stop trying to "do it yourself."***

Don't provide for flesh to do what we want. Rather, put on Jesus Christ.

When I try to do it myself, I get same result as when I try to live by law: Fruit of flesh is ugly! **Gal. 5**

When we take off self; put on Christ =>

Holy Spirit produces HIS lifestyle in us!

Transforms us into people who love neighbor as self!

It's not putting on *MY* best clothes that changes my life!

It's dressing up in Him—putting on Christ

How can I dress for success this week?

We'll only love neighbor as self—avoid dissension— when we know what time it is & change our clothes into something appropriate.

In Christ, God has provided new clothes!.

Take off clothes of darkness & dress appropriately for living in daylight— **PUT ON CHRIST!**

Then we'll really be dressed for success!