

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

“Extreme Makeover”

Colossians 3:12-17

2004

Introduction

There are a growing number of TV shows that are designed to take what you got (whether it's your house, your car or your body) and reshape, reform, rebuild, and rework it so that the before and after shots are breathtaking!

I went to the website for Extreme Makeover on the ABC site and they described the show this way: "... lucky individuals are chosen for a once-in-a-lifetime chance to participate in *Extreme Makeover*. These men and women are given a truly Cinderella-like experience: A real life fairy tale in which their wishes come true, not just to change their looks, but their lives and destinies."

We like these kinds of shows because:

1. We enjoy witnessing the remarkable transformations
2. We enjoy imagining what it would be like to have our own Makeover
3. We enjoy believing that while "those people" might need a makeover, we're just fine like we are!

I The Privilege Of The Believer

A. We are God's **chosen** people [Verse 12a]

Chosen people = Eklektos = "Elect"

Notice: We did not elect ourselves into the kingdom of God – God chose us!

John 15:16 "You did not choose me, but I chose you ..."

1 Pet 2:10 "Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

1. The evidence of God's choosing

1 Thess 1:4-5 "For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also **with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.**"

2. The purpose of God's choosing

1 Peter 2:9 "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, **that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**"

B. We are holy [Verse 12b]

See teaching on Colossians 1:22

Holy = Hagios = "Sacred or holy -- set apart for a special purpose"

Col 1:21-22 "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by

Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation ...”

There are three aspects of holiness or sanctification in the New Testament:

1. Positional: We have been made holy - Heb 10:10
2. Progressive: We are to make every effort to be holy - 2 Peter 3:14
3. Complete: We will be made holy - 1 Thess 5:23-24

C. We are dearly **loved** [Verse 12c]

Loved = Agapao

To be loved and accepted is one of the most fundamental heart-cries of man.

1 John 4:9 “This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.”

II The Lifestyle Of The Believer

The Christian life consists of two simple daily steps, repeated over and over again:

1. Put off the old man" (3:5-11) (The ungodly attitudes and deeds)
2. Put on the new" (3:12-17) (The Christ-like attitudes and deeds)

The first exhortation is always to “put off.” If you are going to put on something new, you must first put off what you already have on.

In Col 3:5-9, Paul told us that as believers we are to put off “sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed -- anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language.” And in their place ...

A. We are to **clothe** ourselves with: [Verse 12d]

Clothe = Enduo = “To put on” (present imperative)

1. **Compassion**

Compassion = Splagchnon (from spleen) = Literally: “Intestines or bowels”

Funny story:

You may have heard the story about the little girl who was asked to describe the parts of man. She said, "Man has three parts: the brainium, the chester, and the abominable cavity. The brainium holds the brain, the chester holds the heart, and the abominable cavity holds the bowels, of which there are five: a, e, i, o and u."

The Greek word means “intestines,” because the Greeks thought of emotions as coming from deep within...from our gut. In other words, we are to feel for others in a deep way -- to sympathize with or to show empathy toward someone in need.

1 Peter 3:8 “Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.”

Approach life with compassion. Put it on when you get up in the morning!

2. Kindness

Chrestotes = “Gentleness, goodness” (contrast with “harsh or bitter”)

The Greek word for kindness is also used to describe a high quality of wine that has grown mellow with age. In other words, it has lost its harshness.

That's what kindness is, treating another without harshness.

Kindness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22) and is a characteristic that as believers, we need to “put on” at the beginning of every day.

3. Humility

Tapeinophrosune = “A modest sense of one’s own importance”

John Stott rightly calls humility “the rarest and fairest of all Christian virtues.”

Funny story:

A young woman went to her pastor and said, "Pastor, I have a besetting sin, and I want your help. I come to church on Sunday and can't help thinking I'm the prettiest girl in the congregation. I know I ought not think that, but I can't help it. I want you to help me with it."

The pastor replied, "Mary, don't worry about it. In your case it's not a sin. It's just a horrible mistake." [Haddon Robinson, "Good Guys, Bad Guys, and Us Guys," Preaching Today, Tape No. 80.]

To be humble means to put others first – to consider their concerns as more important than your own.

Phil 2:3-4 “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

4. Gentleness

Prautes = “Mildness or meekness”

Meekness is the opposite of rudeness and abrasiveness and is characterized by the capacity to relate to others with tenderness and softness. It has often been defined as “strength under control.”

Eph 4:2 “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”

William Barclay:

"This is the spirit which never loses patience with its fellow-man. Their foolishness and their unteachability never drive it to cynicism or despair; their insults and their ill-treatment never drive it to bitterness or wrath."

5. Patience

Makrothumia = “Forbearance or longsuffering” (toward people, not things)

It is the enduring of another's exasperating conduct without becoming impatient, upset or angry. It is the capacity to restrain yourself when someone is driving you up a wall.

1 Thess 5:14 "... be patient with everyone."

Prov 19:11 "A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense."

B. We are to **bear** with each other [Verse 13a]

Bear = Anechomai = "To uphold and support someone"

Rom 15:1-2 "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up."

C. We are to **forgive** each other [Verse 13b]

Forgive = Charizomai = "To pardon"

(Whatever grievances you may have against one another)

Biblical forgiveness is not granted in isolation of the offending person. Matthew 18:15-17 instructs us that if a brother sins against us we are to "go to him and show him his fault, just between the two of you." We do not expected to repress every feeling of injustice or unfairness – we are to deal with it directly, biblically, and with the objective of reconciliation.

Luke 17:3-4 "So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."

1. Forgive as the Lord forgave you

Eph 4:32 "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

So our model is Christ who paid the price for our forgiveness 2,000 years ago, and yet requires us to repent and confess our sin to Him before we can enjoy the benefits of His reconciliation through the cross.

Forgiveness means:

1. Never bringing the issue up again
2. Never sharing the matter with anyone else
3. Never rehearsing the matter in your own mind

D. We are to put on **love** [Verse 14]

Love = Agape = "Divine, sacrificial love"

John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Application:

This is the characteristic by which a Christian should be known above all else. How are you known by others? Are you theologically sound? A good

speaker? An active member of the church? An involved member of the community? Maybe people know you for the gifts you have. Maybe you are known as a person with a beautiful voice, or as one who is a talented craftsman, or a person of uncommon wisdom, or one who has experienced God's power in spectacular ways.

But in 1 Cor 13:1-3 the Lord asks: "Do you love?"

1. Which binds them all together in perfect unity

Perfect unity = Teleiotes = "Completeness"

Jerry Bridges, in his book, The Pursuit of Godliness points out that love is the foundation of all the other virtues. He shows this by taking the familiar words of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and writing them as positive statements. As you listen to these words, ask if they describe how you feel toward others.

- I am patient with you because I love you and want to forgive you.
- I am kind to you because I love you and want to help you.
- I do not envy your possessions or your gifts because I love you and want you to have the best.
- I do not boast about my attainments because I love you and want to hear about yours.
- I am not proud because I love you and want to esteem you before myself.
- I am not rude because I love you and care about your feelings
- I am not self-seeking because I love you and want to meet your needs
- I am not easily angered by you because I love you and want to overlook your offenses
- I do not keep a record of wrongs because I love you , and "love covers a multitude of sins." [Practice of Godliness p. 246,247]

III The Calling Of The Believer

A. Let the peace of Christ **rule** in your hearts [Verse 15]

Rule = Brabeuo = "To arbitrate or govern -- to act as umpire"

An umpire is expected to rule in an unbiased fashion on various aspects of the game and to remain absolutely unruffled no matter what happens. That is the idea here: let the calmness of Christ rule your heart in the midst of the heat of the game of life.

The kind of peace God offers has nothing to do with an absence of difficult circumstances. Rather, it is seeing your problems in light of God's promises, power and provision.

But how do we experience inner peace in the face of life's daily challenges?

Isa 26:3 "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you."

Phil 4:6-7 "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts

and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Important point:

Before you can know the peace OF God you must find peace WITH God. In Romans 5:1 Paul says, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God." The Bible explains it quite plainly: if we want to know peace with God then we must be justified by faith.

1. Since as members of one body you were called to peace
 Eph 4:3 “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”
 Rom 12:18 “... as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”
2. And be thankful
Thankful = Eucharistos “To be grateful”
 In light of God’s grace toward us, a lifestyle thanksgiving is one of the most beautiful and becoming characteristics and evidences of a true believer.
 And one of the surest signs of “unbelief” is “complaining or grumbling.”

 Col 2:7 tells us that we are to be a people who “overflow with thankfulness.”
 1 Thess 5:16-18 tells us to “... give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”

- B. Let the word of Christ **dwell** in you richly [Verse 16]
Dwell = Enoikeo = “To inhabit, reside, take up residence”
 The Bible is to saturate the life of a believer. 1 John 2:14 tells us that one of the signs of spiritual strength and maturity is when the word of God lives in you.”

So, how do we allow the Word of Christ to dwell in us richly?

Hand illustration:

1. **Hearing** - Romans 10:17
 Hearing the Word from godly pastors and teachers provides insight into others' study of the Scriptures as well as stimulating your own appetite for the Word.
2. **Reading** - Revelation 1:3
 Reading the Bible gives an overall picture of God's Word. Many people find it helpful to use a daily reading program which takes them systematically through the Bible.
3. **Studying** - Acts 17:11
 Studying the Scriptures leads to personal discoveries of God's truths.
 Writing down these discoveries helps you organize and remember them.
4. **Memorizing** - Psalm 119:9, 11

Memorizing God's Word enables use of the Sword of the Spirit to overcome Satan and temptations...to have it readily available for witnessing or helping others with a "word in season."

5. **Meditating** - Psalm 1:2-3

Meditation is the thumb of the Word Hand, for it is used in conjunction with each of the other methods. Only as you meditate on God's Word--thinking of its meaning and application in your life--will you discover its transforming power at work within you.

1. As you **teach** one another

Teach = Didasko = "Instruct"

Neh 8:7-8 "The Levites ... instructed the people ... They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read."

Rom 15:14 "I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another."

Notice, we are all to be commissioned to "teach" one another" – in homes, in church, at work, in Bible study groups, in breakfast groups. This is the Mission of the church – to make disciples of all nations.

2. As you admonish one another with all wisdom

Admonish = Noutheteo = "To put in mind, to caution or reprove gently"

We must be willing to not only teach, but also to "admonish" one another.

2 Tim 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Col 1:28-29 "We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me."

3. As you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs

a. With gratitude in your hearts to God

Eph 5:19-20 "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord ...

What is the difference between Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual songs?

1. Psalms: The Book of Psalms put to music
2. Hymns: Great doctrinal music filled with theological instruction
3. Spiritual songs: Contemporary worship

C. **Whatever** you do: [Verse 17]

1. Whether in word or deed

Kent Hughes:

“There are few exhortations in Scripture that are more comprehensive than this one. "Word or deed" takes in everything in life. "Deeds" can be preaching, teaching, eating, exercising, driving, cleaning house, shopping, visiting, working, playing -- everything! Our words are everything that passes our lips, even in unguarded moments. Everything we say or do is to be done "in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Illustration:

Ruth Graham had a sign over her kitchen sink that said, "Divine services rendered here three times a day."

Col 3:23-24 “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

2. Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus

In manner consistent with the character (the name) of the Lord Jesus Christ.

a. Giving **thanks** to God the Father through him

Eph 5:20 “... always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Conclusion

The “Extreme Makeovers” the world offers promises to change their looks, their lives and destinies. But we know that these transformations are temporary and only skin deep.

But God’s “Extreme Makeovers” are life-transforming and eternal.

Unbeliever:

If you would like to sign up and have God transform you life then you must:

1. Admit and repent of your sin - Ps 32:5
 2. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins - John 3:16-19
 3. Confess Him as your Savior and Lord - Romans 10:9-10
- Be baptized in obedience to God’s command - Acts 2:38

Suggested prayer:

“Dear Lord Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner and have done wrong. Please forgive my sins. I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins and was raised from the dead. And now I surrender my life to you and acknowledge you as my Lord and King. Thank you for hearing my prayer and thank you for giving me new life in Christ!

Believers:

Take a few moments to yield your life to the examination of the Holy Spirit. Is there some aspect of your old life that you need to “put off”? Is there some

aspect of your new life in Christ that you need to “put on”? Ask for God’s grace and power to cooperate with His life-transforming work in your life.

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