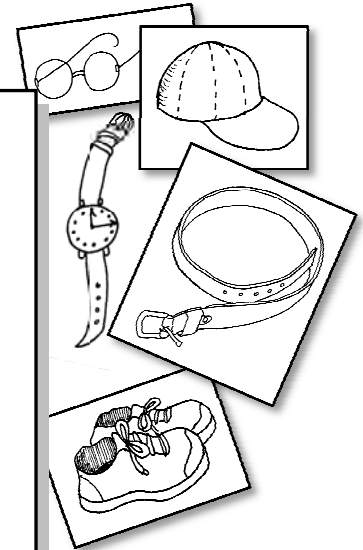


THE "PUT ON" CHART

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another, and if one have a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

And above all these, put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

Colossians 3:12-14



Most of us don't have any trouble seeing the attitudes our children need to "take off." They shouldn't be angry. They shouldn't gossip. They shouldn't be impatient, or dishonest, or disrespectful. As parents, we often focus our energies on disciplining wrong behavior. As we address the daily challenges of family life, we spend a great deal of time teaching our children about what they should **not** do.

But sin has been defined as "any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God." (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question No. 14) It is sin when we do something that God has told us **not** to do, and we do need to discipline that sin. But James 4:17 tells us, "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." It is also sin when we **fail** to do what God has told us **to do**.

While we train our children to "take off" sinful behaviors, we must also lead them in "putting on" godly attitudes and actions. If we just focus on the "don'ts", they will most likely grow up to be adults who do not live a life of joy in Christ or truly glorify God. While setting an example with our own joyful obedience, we should pray that our children, like David, will say, "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8, NKJV)

Put on godly attitudes.

Post the "Put On Chart", and refer to it as you do this study with your family. Its eight sections focus on each of the traits listed in Colossians 3:12-14 - compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, and love. Each is matched with a piece of clothing worn by the boy on the chart. These associations are simply tools to help you and your children remember each trait.

Each section in this study begins by explaining the associations between the trait and the piece of clothing. As you start to study each section, read the "Why is the boy wearing ____?" paragraph. Then read and discuss the next paragraphs which help define each trait.

Teach with the wisdom of Scripture.

Paul, in Colossians 3:16, tells us to **teach** and **admonish** one another with all wisdom. After introducing the trait, each section of this study helps you teach your children from Scripture. Read each Scripture passage together (from whichever translation you prefer), and use the questions that follow each passage to help you discuss its meaning.

First, read the verses that teach about the trait. Next, read the biblical accounts of people who demonstrated these traits. You may want to write notes on a whiteboard or have older children write notes in notebooks. Younger children may listen better if they illustrate the passages while you read, or if they dramatize the stories with you.

Put what you learn into action.

Following the Bible study passages, the words from the chart are highlighted with a box around them. Memorize the verse that is in the box. Then discuss the list of practical ways to "put on" the godly trait. What can your children **do** to put on this trait? Talk about other ideas you have.

Next is the "Learn to" portion of the study - suggestions for other ways to train your children to "put on" this trait. Work through as many of these suggestions as you think are practical for your family. This may take several short sessions together.

Sing songs!

Paul also tells us, in Colossians 3:16, to **sing** "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." Singing the truths of Scripture etches those truths into our hearts.

Each section of this study lists hymns and Psalms that relate to each trait. Many offer praise to Jesus, who is the perfect example of each of the godly qualities listed in Colossians 3. Others are taken from the Psalms, praising God's character and voicing David's trust in God.

Some may be unfamiliar to you and your family. Enjoy the pleasure of learning new songs and sharing in our rich history as Christians. Most of the tunes and lyrics can be found online or in two selected hymnals. (Each song title is followed by

abbreviations in parentheses. These indicate where you can locate the song. See "Hymn Resources" on page 4.)

In addition to, or in place of these songs, you may choose to sing other more contemporary songs that relate to each godly trait. Even if you don't consider your family particularly musical, make an effort to sing together. God has commanded us to sing, and He changes our hearts as we sing His truths back to Him.

Pray and give thanks.

Paul also tells us in Colossians 3:16 to sing "with **thankfulness** in your hearts to God." Conclude each study section by praying and giving thanks to God and to those He has brought into your life.

Use the chart to help you remember.

As you study each section, refer to the chart throughout the day to help you and your children remember what God has called us to "put on."

- If you notice a child neglecting an opportunity to show compassion, take him to the chart. Discuss the question, review the verse, and encourage him to take action.
- If you want to give a gentle reminder to a child in the course of the day, you might just ask him if he is remembering to "wear his gloves" (or shoes, backpack, etc.).
- If you have disciplined a child for anger, take him to the chart and talk about putting on patience.

If you choose, you can have your children wear the particular piece of clothing that is paired with the trait you want them to work on. For example:

- Spend a day focusing on humility while everyone wears hats to help them be more mindful of their goal.
- For a child in special need of encouragement, have him put on his coat for awhile to help him remember to work harder at putting on love.

Make this light-hearted fun, not a punishment. You may still need to discipline a child for wrong behavior, but wearing the hat or gloves is just a fun reminder to do the **right** thing.

Play and teach with the paper dolls.

Reinforce the teaching of your younger children with the paper dolls in this kit. Copy, on index-weight paper, enough sets for your children to color and cut out.

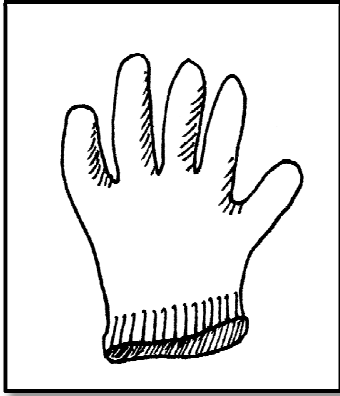
You can also make another doll set to use on your refrigerator. Photocopy the pages with the dolls and clothes. If your children are young, you may want to enlarge the pages when you photocopy them.

If desired, draw over all the dotted lines to make them solid, and then color and laminate these pages. Cut out the laminated boy and girl and attach them to your refrigerator. You may choose to cut off the stands around their feet.

Then cut out the clothes, cutting off the tabs. (The wristwatches may be too small to use in this way.) Using a strong glue, attach a magnet to the back of each piece, and you will have a magnet toy that you can also use as a teaching tool. Little ones can go to the refrigerator and put the gloves on their doll when they need to remember to be compassionate. They can also dress the doll with each piece of clothing as they work on memorizing the Colossians 3 passage.

Hymn resources:

- Songs that are followed by "(CC)" can be found in *Cantus Christi*, published by Canon Press. This hymnal includes many psalm settings and historic hymns of the faith. A companion CD set also provides four-part piano accompaniment for more than half of the tunes. Learn a new song by setting your player to "repeat," and singing through all the verses while it accompanies you.
- Songs followed by "(NH)" can be found at www.nethymnal.org. This site provides lyrics, midi files, and scores for hundreds of hymns. Every section of this study lists at least one song from www.nethymnal.org, so if you desire, you can select a song to sing for every section of this study *without purchasing any other hymnal*.
- Songs that are followed by "(TH)" can be found in the *Trinity Hymnal*, published by Great Commission Publications.



PUT ON COMPASSION

Why is the boy wearing gloves?

We often use our hands to show compassion by:

- Holding a person's hand
- Putting our hand on a person's back
- Putting our hand on a person's head when he is not well
- Putting out our hands to draw a person toward us
- Using our hands to write an encouraging note or card
- Laboring to provide for a person's needs

We sometimes put on gloves to protect our hands from dirt or injury while we work. The gloves can remind us to use our hands to comfort and provide for others.

What is compassion?

Compassion is tenderness toward those who are unhappy or suffering. This word is sometimes translated as "mercy" or "pity." A compassionate person puts himself in the place of the other person, and seeks to ease his discomfort, pain, or sorrow.

What does the Bible say about compassion?

- *"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."* (Luke 6:36)

Why should we be merciful? How has God shown us mercy?

- *"If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?"* (James 2:15-16)

"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" (1 John 3:17)

Do our words help someone in need if we don't also give them the things they need? Does it do any good to know someone is in need if we don't help them? Does God's love live in us if we turn our hearts away from those in need?

- *"...weep with those who weep."* (Romans 12:15b)

How can we comfort those who are sad and weeping?

- *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we*

may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”(2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Why does God comfort us in our affliction?

- *“He will tend his flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in his arms; He will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.”(Isaiah 40:11)*

How does a shepherd care for the little lambs in his flock? What kind of things does he do to take care of them? In what ways does God care for us like the shepherd cares for his lambs?

- *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”(Hebrews 4:15-16)*

Who is our “high priest?” Why should we come boldly to God in prayer? If Jesus shows compassion to us, shouldn't we think about how others feel, and show them compassion, too?

Who in the Bible showed compassion?

- **The Good Samaritan.** Luke 10:30-37

In what ways did the Samaritan show compassion to the injured man?

- **Jesus.**

Isaiah 53:4. What does it say about Jesus? What did He do?

Matthew 9:35-36. What did Jesus do as He went through the towns? How did He feel when He saw the crowds? What did He think the people were like?

Matthew 14:13-14. What happened when Jesus withdrew to a secluded place? How did He respond?

Matthew 15:29-39. What was Jesus doing on the mountainside? What concern did He express to His disciples? What did He do?

Matthew 20:29-34. What did the two blind men shout to Jesus? What were they asking Him to have for them? What did He ask them? How did He respond to their request?

Luke 7:11-15. What did Jesus and his disciples see as they entered the city? Who was the dead man? What did Jesus say to his mother? What did He do?

John 11:1-45. How did Jesus feel when Mary came to Him? How did He feel when they arrived at the tomb? What did He do for Mary, Martha, and Lazarus?

Put yourself in someone else's place.

How do they feel? Can you help them feel better? Do it!

"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous." (1 Peter 3:8, NKJV)

Look for ways to show compassion!

- When you see someone struggling to do something, help him.
- When someone is crying or hurt, comfort him. Hold his hand, give him a hug, get a band-aid, find his mother.
- When someone is lonely, cheer him up. Talk together. Play a game.
- When someone is sick or not feeling well, do what you can to make him more comfortable. Bring him a glass of water, a book to read, or a blanket. Read him a story. Do his chores for him. If the person does not live with you, go visit, call on the phone, or send a card.

Learn to be more compassionate.

- Role-play different situations: how to comfort someone who is hurt, sad, sick, or lonely.
- List what others have done to show compassion to you in times of need.
- Learn to give hugs if you don't already do so.
- Write and post a list of things to do for someone sick in the family, someone who has been hurt, someone who is sad. Refer to the list often.
- As a family, on a regular basis, serve someone in need - a widow, single mother, disabled, ill, or elderly person, or someone who lives alone.
- Watch for opportunities to be compassionate throughout the day. Your parents can watch and point out missed opportunities to help you learn.

Sing songs!

- "Come Unto Me, Ye Weary" (Crosby version, NH) (Dix version, NH, TH)
- "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (NH, TH)

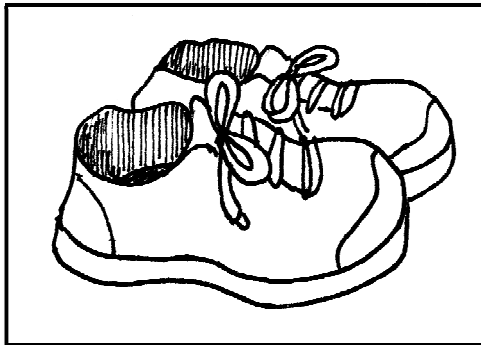
- "I Am Jesus' Little Lamb" (NH, TH)
- "O Thou My Soul, Bless God the Lord" (Greene version, NH, TH) (Scottish Psalter version, CC)

Pray!

- Keep a list of those who have special needs, and pray for those people each day.
- Pray each morning that your hands will be used to demonstrate God's compassion to others.

Give thanks!

- Thank God for His comfort, compassion, and mercy.
- Thank God for showing compassion to you by sending His Son to die for you.
- Thank your family and friends for the compassion they show to you.
- Thank God for His Holy Spirit who will help you recognize those who need compassion, and who will assist you in showing compassion.



PUT ON KINDNESS

Why is the boy wearing shoes?

The word for "kindness" in Colossians 3 means "useful" or "employed." Being useful to someone else requires action! The picture of the shoes can remind us to **go do** something for someone!

What is kindness?

Kindness involves being useful to someone else. A kind person is courteous, and seeks to do all he can to promote friendship. He looks for ways to serve others with his words and with his actions.

What does the Bible say about kindness?

- *"Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth."* (1 John 3:18)

How should we love?

- *"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."* (Galatians 6:10)

When should we do good to others? Who should we especially do good to?