

What's the Difference?

Week 3: In With The New

Have you ever replaced an appliance, a piece of furniture, or even a car, and felt the excitement that comes with owning something new? When something is new to us, we treat it differently and it makes us feel different about ourselves. The old item gets tossed, forgotten, or abandoned and the new item is given a place of honor and treated as something more valuable than the thing it replaced. This principle is evident in so many areas of our lives, even in our faith.

Discussion Questions

1. We forget about old things, but new things affect us. We treat them differently than we do the old. Give an example of something you have purchased that was new, or new to you, and how it made you feel. How did you treat that new item? Why do we treat new things so differently than those we consider to be old?
2. In areas like exercising, eating well, and committing to financial investments it can take a long time to see how our new efforts and commitments are making a difference. Why do we sometimes lose focus in these areas? How can we stay focused in these areas where it takes more time to see a significant impact?
3. **Read Colossians 3:11–12.** Last week we looked at a verse in Ephesians where Paul talks about putting off the old self. This week in Colossians 3:11, Paul lists the old ways and names that people used to identify themselves. What are some old ways and names that you have used to identify yourself that you need to get rid of? Why do you need to get rid of them?
4. In verse 12, Paul uses the example of putting on new clothes and being clothed with Christ. What does it mean to be clothed with Christ? What difference does being clothed with Christ make? Do we see an immediate impact in our lives when we are clothed with Christ? Why or why not?
5. Following Jesus doesn't make us perfect, but it does lead us to the new us. Choose one of the words in verse 12, and place it in the blank space in the following sentence.

Following Jesus will lead me to become more _____, more quickly, more often, and more fully.

Why did you choose that word? What would it look like for that word to be evident in your life?

6. When we place our faith in Jesus, our identity begins to be found in him instead of in our old identity. Where do you currently find your identity? What does it mean to find your identity in Christ? How should that impact your life every day?

Moving Forward

Following Jesus can feel like trying on new clothes. We feel different about ourselves and we value the new relationship we have with Christ. However, it can take time to understand how to constantly put off our old selves and to put on our new selves in Christ and to allow Jesus to live in us (Colossians 3:11). Identifying with our new selves in Christ is exciting, but we must be willing to put in the time to see the true impact of our commitment. It is in our choosing to be clothed with Christ every day that we begin to see the long-term effects of our relationship with him. Take some time this week to consider where you really find your identity. Identify one way, one behavior, or one attitude in which you can put off your old self and put on Christ.