2023 09 10    THE EMPEROUS NEW CLOTHES. **or**

**Our real New Clothes in Jesus**.

Exodus 12:1-14. Psalm 149. Romans 13:8-14. Matthew 18:15-20.

In the Genesis account of Adam and Eve they needed no clothing, they had no shame or unclean thoughts because there was no evil in them, no decay, no danger - simply freedom in Gods company. Then they listened to the origin of that other voice – you know the one – the one that says no – I want, I will, - and something went wrong, they felt shame – notice the first emotion after rebellion, sin, was shame and they hid from God.

A book that has been lent to me about toxic and good shame, the author sees ‘toxic shame’ as the basic black hole that sucks us into ourselves – drains our freedom and joy.

Now shame is a valid emotion – it tells us we have done something that is not in - “love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and love your neighbor as yourself” and draws us to repentance and back into Gods Presence.

Look at the reading Matthew 18:15-20 – “ what you bind on earth is bound in heaven and what you loose on earth is loosed in heaven” now that is a strange thing for our Lord Jesus to say because he is the judge, he is the one whose life, death and resurrection brought us - forgiveness and freedom to be in Gods  Presence. How can we ‘bind or loose’ another’s sin!!

If we hold anger, unforgiveness, jealousy, bitterness, envy, sexual lust for someone, then how can we be free in Gods company. There will always be that divide between us and God Spirit and between us and the other person and our personality, and freedom with other people will be, slightly awkward. We can release or hold onto these things.

**Forgiveness -** if we hold a grudge we are holding a sort of curse on the other person!! And we are damaging ourselves – our relationship with God and others “Lord forgive me as I forgive others”  what does forgive mean – giving it to God – the hurt is not ok - it does matter – of course it matters – the same as our sins matter to God yet Gods love overcame them in Jesus.  *Sort it out – even if they reject us – that is between them and God – we have no part except to forgive and set ourselves free from it and leave them for God to work with.* **Binding and loosening.**

1. **In Romans we are told that *we*** have to cast off our old temptation and put on these new cloths. Jesus our Savior made no space for the works of darkness – for gratifying the desires of the flesh and hurts of the emotions. I know that I still have space in me that respond to things when they should not.
2. **In place of these, God, in His Presence being in us, has given us the character that he made us to have as His children.** – see how each of these replaces the not from God emotions. We will name them later.

“The mystery of the ages, the things that angels longed to know and planned by God from all eternity” is:-

“Jesus became sin for us and we, you, myself, became **the right ness of God /not in anyway God, but the word in Greek means the character/ of God in Jesus.** if anything of our own hurts and feelings contaminate Gods rightness in us.– there will be a disquiet in us, a distance – Jesus said “I, you, become the righteousness of God “----- therefor we must be honest with ourselves as to who we are and what clothing we are dressed in.

In ‘love your neighbor as yourself’ when we put the needs of the other- for forgiveness, appreciation and care and acceptance before our own feelings of hurt or rejection etc- we free them to grow in fulness to be the person that God designed them to be – the real complete person – we also free ourselves for the exact same reason - to be free in ourselves and in our walking in Gods Presence. – there is nothing like resentment, feeling unappreciated to keep us struggling to be relaxed and honest in ourselves in Gods love.

Without covering an excess of material I want to look at three things,

WHERE ARE WE AT THIS TIME IN OUR LIVES:

1. **Knowing that we are God child** but challenged as to our thoughts, actions, moods, life? Look at Romans 7 the dilemma and agony that this man faced – spending his life spreading the news of salvation and Gods love in the - life and death and resurrection of Jesus – suffering rejection for it and feeling the contamination that some, were trying – even at that early stage of the church, to bring in - to bind the freedom of believers with laws and regulations -bring them under control of the ‘*religion’*  of law and obedience to religion – to earning the approval of God. “You foolish Galatians how could you so soon go back to the old captivity.” Yet this man writes of his own trauma in wanting to do good in Gods eyes but still feeling the draw of his old arrogant selfrightous nature and cries out – “who will save me from this body of death – thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord – that even though my body wants to serve the law of death but my mind and spirit serve the law of God. He wrote “there is now NO condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. Because the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.”

*And “I am now looking through a dark glass but I am growing in the likeness of Christ and when I see His fullness in my death I will be like him.”(paraphrased)*

 Am i an old baby still learning to live.

1. **Still in the now/today so how do I live -** when our Lord Jesus returned to His full union in God , the Spirit or Presence of God came to be our companion and guide and friend and teacher and comforter and security and the stamp of God ownership of us – we are not left alone to fight it out. Ephesians 1 tells us…. It is like someone buying something and paying for it in the market and he puts his personal seal on the article – a seal that He is going to return and collect us. That seal is why we do not have to fear the mark of the beast - because we already have Gods seal on us.
2. **OUR CLOTHING**

We are not left naked or without amour, left to do it on our own - we are to live a life of victory staying faithful in trouble and temptation – get up when we fail. Miss Paul at 98 “you would think that the devil would have the decency to leave an old lady alone.” Expect temptation from inside and out.

God has given us new clothing and told us to take of our filth rags of self and put on the new life. What are some of these new clothes.

1. Psalm 149 tells us to - Praise God ? what is praise – thanking, speaking of Gods love and character …
2. Singing to God  - a new song in the assembly of  believers  what do we sing.? salvation
3. To be glad – in our maker and His creation and ?
4. Rejoice – children of God - who is our leader/ who do we give allegiance to?  **All of these are our protective clothing**
5. Praise His name with dancing – the rhythm of our bodies
6. Make melody to God on musical instruments – tambourine, lyre
7. **God takes pleasure in me/ you**  isn’t that unbelievable!!!!!!!!! What a glorious shining piece of clothing for us to hold close and rejoice in..
8. **Adorns  the humble with salvation  -**  our salvation is an adornment – something beautiful that makes us stand out!
9. **We exult in Gods glory** what is exult – what brings it out?
10. **Sing from joy from our beds** imagine laying in bed singing and falling asleep in peace.
11. **High praise of God**  let it be spoken and sung
12. **A two edged sword in our hand**

V7-9 our attitude to our temptations and rebellious ways. We are to treat them as invaders and fight them -see also Psalm 139.

1. Matthew 18:15-20 gives a critical piece of clothing. Binding and loosing.
2. Just to mention **other protections and clothes that God has given us in the Holy Spirits presence.**
3. *The 10 Commandments which Jesus summarized into two –“Love the Lord your God with all your  heart and mind* and *your neighbor as yourself ie walk in their shoes.*

*The ‘Beatitudes” find them in Matthew and rewrite in your own experience.*

*The Fruit/character of the Spirits presence*

*The Armor of the Christian to protect and fight with (remember there is no protection for the back so we do not pretend that temptation does not exist.*

***Rather than me read them out individually – the ribbons that you have represent an article of clothing – could you hold the ribbon high and call out the item of clothing that God has given us.***

*Are these the emperors imaginary clothes or are they real and we are learning through experience and trust to put them on?*

*PRAY*