The apostle Paul reminded the brethren at Colossae that upon becoming a child of God those things inconsistent with Christianity were to be “put off.” He also reminds his listeners that there are certain things that must be “put on” if one is to please God. And, last but not least, there are those things to “let in” and those things to “cast out” as proof of one’s faith.

Let us first note some things that are to be put off. Paul specifically mentions "anger, wrath, malice, and shameful speaking" (Col. 3:8) in admonishing these brethren to "put off the old man with his doing" (verse 9). The Bible is clear that one who genuinely obeys the gospel and "is in Christ is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). There are other sins the Bible mentions that must not be practiced, but rather "put to death" if one is to live the Christian life (1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19-21).

The influence of the world is strong. Worldly ways have slowly but surely overcome many without them realizing the distance they have traveled. Followers of Christ must exercise every care not to conform to worldly standards, but to transform themselves with Christian character that is well pleasing unto God (cf. Rom. 12:2).

Let us now observe some things that the faithful child of God will desire to put on. The Bible says the one who is converted to Christ will "have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:10). In the Old Testament Ezekiel challenged the people by saying, "Cast away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel" (Ezek. 18:31)? To the Ephesian brethren Paul says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

One who is truly a "new creature" in Christ will put on certain virtues. Paul told the Colossian brethren, "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, meekness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:12-14).

There are those things a Christian will "let in" his heart. Paul said, "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Col 3:15). There will be no peace for the one who does not believe in and trust in God. Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). The prophet Isaiah knew the formula for the peace that all need. He said, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3). The apostle Paul also says to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly ... " (Col. 3:16). Ignorance of the word of God will destroy one (cf. Hosea 4:6). The Psalmist knew the value of storing up God's Word in our minds. He said, "Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psa. 119:11). Reading God's Word is one thing. Accepting it as truth, believing it, and laying it up in our mind is what really matters.

There are those things a Christian will cast out of his life. Loyal service to the Master and to His church will be forthcoming from the steadfast child of God. Paul said, "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17). The authority for the things we do always comes from Christ.

Hearty service to the cause of Christ will be rendered joyfully. One must not forget the admonition
that says, “whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men” (Col. 3:23). Lip service and mere pretense is but to make mockery of sacred matters (cf. Matt. 15:9).

"Giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17b) will not be neglected by the one who truly loves the Lord. Ingratitude has ravaged the world like a plague of locusts. Do you remember the ten lepers that Christ made clean? Only one upon seeing he was healed turned back and gave thanks - a Samaritan! The question Christ asked is both penetrating and demanding, "Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine " (Luke 17:17)?

Christian character is something that man must add to his life. God will not do it for one! The rewards of Christian character are many, but when we cross over Jordan to the "house not made with hands, eternal, in this heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1), our hope will become reality and our joy made complete.

Develop Christian character while it is yet today!