I. INTRO:

A. Congrats - Our Girls VB took championship (State Tues); Marching Band won 1st place in state competition in our division (Pat Valines granddaughter best solo out of all bands).

B. What is the identifying mark of a Hindu? (Bindi/u; “a drop/dot”; Forehead decoration; Forehead is the exit point for kundalini energy; thus wear Bundi to help retain energy & strengthen concentration; & protect from demons & bad luck)
What is the identifying mark of a follower of antichrist in trib? (mark on forehead)
What is the identifying mark of the 144,000? (seal on forehead Rev.7:3)
What is the identifying mark of a Punjabi/Sikh religion? (Turban)
What is the identifying mark of a pious Jew? (phylactery on forehead)
What is the identifying mark of a Mormon? (name badge w/1st name “elder”)
What is the identifying mark of a JW? (Watch Tower magazine)
What is the identifying mark of a Christian? (wears a cross? bumper sticker?)
What is the identifying mark of a Genuine Believer? (Love!!!)

C. Not only is the believer to put off the evils of the old life (vs.8,9), he is to put on the graces of the new life.
   1. Do we ever get past the putting off? We seem to only define ourselves, or be defined by, what we’ve put off & not by what we put on!
   2. We’ve advertised to the world what we “don’t do, don’t see, don’t read, don’t say”. Can we start showing them what we’ve put on? What we do...do!

II. THE CHRISTIAN’S NEW CLOTHES!

A. In 1837 Hans Christian Anderson wrote “The Emperor’s new clothes” about an emperor who unwittingly hires two swindlers to create a new suit of clothes for him.
   1. This cloth, they told him, is invisible to anyone who was either stupid or unfit for his position. The Emperor cannot see the (non-existent) cloth, but pretends that he can for fear of appearing stupid; his ministers do the same. When the swindlers report that the suit is finished, they dress him in mime. The Emperor then goes on a procession through the capital showing off his new "clothes". During the course of the procession, a small child cries out, "But he has nothing on!" The crowd realizes the child is telling the truth. The Emperor, however, holds his head high and continues the procession.
2. I believe **name only Christians** have tried to promote the **same fraud**. They prance down the runway of life, telling everyone they’re wearing **new spiritual clothes**, but no one can see them!

3. Paul gives us the ability to spot **The Christian’s New Clothes**.

**B. Outline:** Our **Position**; Our **Principles** (The New Clothes); Our **Process**; Our **Progress**.

**C. OUR POSITION!** (12a)

D. These 3 descriptions tell of what the Christian **is** in the sight of God.

E. **Elect**, chosen of God! & **Holy**, consecrated for God! & **Loved**, by God!
   1. And all these come from our union with Christ!
   2. We belong to His **redeemed community** because of **His saving initiative**.
      a) So we must be clothed with a **new kind of life**.

**F. OUR PRINCIPLES!** (12b-14)

G. Often **clothes** are an indication of **personality** [Overly baggy pants; surf clothes; business suit; western; mini-skirt; Muslim women’s burka], so the impression & expression of these graces will show **whose we are** & **whom we serve**!

H. **Tender mercies** - a heart of compassion.
   1. Because with the affections right...everything else should follow.

I. **Kindness** - opposite of **harshness** & **severity**.

J. **Humility** - recognizing of one's own weakness but also the recognition of the power of God.

K. **Meekness** - gentle attitude, kind acts towards others, often in the face of opposition.

L. **Kindness** - opposite of everything rude & overbearing.

M. **Longsuffering** - a **long holding out** of the mind, before it gives room to action or passion.
   1. Those who are **humble in mind** will naturally be **slow to resent wrongs** & will won’t **contemplate revenge**.

N. **Bearing with one another** - to endure, “to put up with someone”.
   1. Every **social group** has its set of problems, & the church is no exception!
   2. We must have **Christian graces** that enhance our relationships.

O. **Forgiving one another** -
   1. In all matters of **complaint** & **blame**, this **readiness to forgive** should be shown.

P. **Love** - above all these things put on **love**.
1. Love is regarded as that which holds together the various Christian graces already mentioned.

2. The unbeliever makes himself the center of his life; the Christian makes “others” the center of his life.

3. Love is the identifying mark of the genuine believer!!!

Q. What a wonderful picture of Christian living here!

R. **OUR PROCESS!** (15,16a)

S. The **Peace of God** rule in your hearts! (15)
   1. Rule = peace is to be the **umpire** or **arbiter** deciding & ruling the life.
      a) It settles the differences, especially where there is any **conflict** of thoughts & feelings.
      b) Under such circumstances the **peace of Christ** is to decide!
      c) It stresses harmony **in the group** rather than personal peace! (15)

T. Be thankful - (Lightfoot) “forget yourselves in thanksgiving towards God”.
   1. How do I deal with our **economy**? “forget yourselves in thanksgiving towards God.”
   2. How do I deal with **doubts & fears**? “forget yourselves in thanksgiving towards God.”
   3. How do I deal with our **future**? “forget yourselves in thanksgiving towards God.”
      a) And what a great week to do it! (Thanksgiving) :-) 

U. Be thankful - (Pres. tense) “a continual action pointing to a habit of life.”
   1. Can you say you’re **habitually thankful**?
   2. {Invite out for Thanksgiving Eve Service}

V. The **Word of Christ dwell in you richly!** (16)
   1. Yes, the Scriptures are derived from the inspiration of the H.S., but they are full of Jesus’ **person, character, sufferings, & glory**!
      a) He is the **author** & **subject** of their contents.
      b) Jesus told the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms **concerning Me**.”
      c) Take **Him** out of the **bible** & you take the **sun** out of our **world**, & the **soul** out of the **body**. (William Jay; **Morning Exercises**; pg.401)

2. It’s not enough to be **taught** the truth; we must **possess** it as a **present personal experience**!
   a) Not just **learning about** God, but **how to walk** with Him!
b) We about helping people become *more Christian* or *to get to know Jesus better*?

c) Do we obligate people to a *meeting* rather than equip them to *live in Him*?

d) *Church life* is not about an *institution* but about a *family*!

e) Church life must not be about *managing the machinery* but about *equipping followers*! (by helping them find a real *relationship* w/the *living God*)

3. **The Word** is to be *in us* as abiding there, *dwelling in us* as in a home.

4. It should not be treated as a *stranger* or *slave*, at a distance; but received as an *intimate guest*. (Griffith Thomas pg.101)

5. Its to abide in us plentifully(*richly*).

6. Its to abide in us “in all wisdom” - so that we ma know how to help others live!
   a) Some put the punctuation(:) after *one another*; to separate it out.

W. Teaching* (central form the beginning of Christian history);
   Admonishing* (Christians have a responsibility for the moral & spiritual lives of one another; we can't say “I'm not my brothers keeper” like Cain); Singing* (expression of gratitude & worship).

1. It shows our response, **Our Progress**...

X. **OUR PROGRESS!** (16b,17)

Y. Psalms - Psalm with instruments.

Z. Hymns - Christian compositions.

AA. Spiritual songs - This word is a *general term* including the other 2, but goes further in referring to *all forms of songs*..so long as they are *spiritual*.

BB. Singing with *grace* in your *hearts* to the *Lord* - Here is our deepest challenge.
   1. Speaks of our inner life in-tune w/God; our soul’s *personal fellowship* w/God
   2. When we put on love, have the peace of God, & have the Word of Christ hidden in our lives, the result...singing w/grace in our hearts to the Lord.

CC. The **Name** of the Lord Jesus do all! (17)

   1. Now he takes it outward to our entire life! *Everything is included in this!*
   2. Christianity is a religion of *principles*, not *rules*, & *everything* is to be done to the glory of God. [1 Cor.10:31 *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*]

   a) Illustration: I have a friend that installs flooring. The wood of the flooring went bad on a job. The manufacture wouldn’t take responsibility. He replaced the whole floor himself. There’s a man who doesn’t work for the almighty dollar, but works for His God...to bring Him glory! And, he won a beautiful friendship out of the job.

DD. Invite up worship team: focus, “singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”