Sermon Summary: Colossians 3 - Over all these virtue put on love

The sermon explores **Colossians 3**, placing it within the context of Paul's letter to the church in Colossae. Written while Paul was in prison around AD 61, the letter encouraged believers who were doing well but facing pressure from their surrounding culture. Paul reminds them that because of what Christ has done for them, they are called to live differently.

1. Keep an Eternal Perspective

Paul urges Christians to "set your hearts on things above" and focus on Christ rather than becoming consumed by earthly concerns. Although believers live on earth, they are also citizens of heaven. Remembering that God is in control helps maintain the right perspective and reduces anxiety.

2. Put the Old Life to Death

Becoming a Christian means leaving behind old ways of living. Paul calls believers to reject sinful attitudes and behaviours such as sexual immorality, greed, anger, slander, lying, and malice. This ongoing process of becoming more like Christ is known as **sanctification** and requires daily commitment.

The preacher uses the image of changing clothes: Christians are to take off their "grave clothes" (old sinful habits) and leave them behind.

3. Put on the New Self

Christianity is not simply about avoiding wrongdoing. Believers must also actively put on godly character. Paul teaches that Christians should clothe themselves with:

- Compassion
- Kindness
- Humility
- Gentleness
- Patience
- Forgiveness

These qualities reflect the new life God has given them.

4. Love Is the Greatest Virtue

Above all else, Paul says believers should "put on love," which binds all the other virtues together. Love is not merely a feeling but a deliberate choice to seek the good of others and reflect Christ's character.

The sermon connects this teaching to 1 Corinthians 13, emphasising that even impressive acts of service, ministry, knowledge, or sacrifice are meaningless without love.

5. Examine Your Heart

The preacher challenges listeners to examine their motives, asking questions such as:

- Why do I serve?
- Why do I pray?
- Why do I do what I do?

Using Psalm 139 ("Search me, O God"), the congregation is encouraged to allow God to reveal attitudes that need changing and to cultivate genuine love.

6. The Church Should Be Known for Love

Paul teaches that in Christ there is no place for racism, prejudice, or discrimination. The church should be united despite differences in background, culture, or status. Jesus said that His followers would be recognised not by their criticism of others but by their love for one another.

Main Message

Because Christians have died to their old lives and been raised with Christ, they are called to take off their old sinful nature and put on Christlike virtues. Above everything else, they must clothe themselves with love, allowing it to shape their relationships, motives, and witness to the world. The greatest mark of a true disciple is not what they oppose, but how well they love God and others.