



| Tuesday, December 17

Our New Coat

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Once a year in late October I rummage through the bins of winter clothes stored in our basement and take inventory of what we have and what we need for the upcoming Minnesota winter. When the kids were younger, it was a much more labor-intensive process, what fits who and what do we need new to keep little toes and fingers warm.

This annual ritual was not always enjoyed by my littles. It would require them to try everything on...which I guess 5 years olds don't much enjoy. I specifically remember one afternoon going through the winter bin and my son trying on coat after coat to find one that fit just right. At one moment he turned to me and said, "Mom, none of these fit, I think we need to buy a new one this time". I looked at him with a big smile on my face and a giggle in my response. "John, you need to take the old coat off in order to find the right new coat that fits."

He had forgotten to take off the old coat before he tried a new one on. If we're wearing a coat already, we don't put the new coat on over the old coat. That would be silly, because we're not going to know if it fits! It makes sense to take off the old one before you put on the new one.

It also makes sense that we can't keep the old heart or the old attitude on while asking God to make us new. The new heart will never quite fit right over the old. We must first take off the old us to be made new. A task more difficult than going through bins of winter clothes, that is for sure. But when we humbly ask God to forgive us and to create in us a clean heart, we experience the grace of forgiveness beyond our wildest imaginations. You've got to take off the old before you can put on the new.

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The key to understanding what it means to be made new is that we are not made new by ourselves; we need Jesus to be made new. Our newness is nothing we have earned or that covers up who we are; we are a totally new thing that God has created. We exchange sin for forgiveness, pride for humility, legalism for grace, fear for love, weakness for strength, and anger for joy. We take off the old coat in order for the new coat to fit.

Thank You Father that in Christ all things are made new. Help me to take off the old and put on the new. I pray that I may come to a deeper understanding of what being a new creation in Christ really means. In His name I pray. Amen.

- Deb Yliniemi-Ahlin