

Week 9: Living in New Life (March 3rd)

I think most of us have heard this phrase:

“Fake it till you make it”

Faking confidence and competence long enough to get through whatever challenge you are facing. Acting like you have it more together than you really do.

Some people hate it – it’s just sounds like your being phoney or trying to cheat or lie your way to the top of the system.

Some people love it – it’s a way to work through a lack of self-confidence - after all, much of life isn’t learned until you just jump in and start doing it. I suspect we have all found ourselves in roles where we just have to figure it out along the way.

Can I be honest – there is a lot about ministry that you might say qualifies as “faking it till you make it.”

My first counseling - you pray and listen and pray and listen and trust that God won't let you say anything stupid

My first wedding – trying to not do or say something stupid

My first funeral – pray and pray and trust that God won't let me say anything stupid

A lot of my ministry life is praying God won't let me say something stupid

Have you ever felt like your faking it till you make it in your Christian life?

1. Showing up at church when you'd rather be home
2. Giving even when you don't really want to.
3. Serving when you'd rather be playing.

The sincere Christian knows there is often a disconnect between our public behaviors and private emotions. We feel bad or maybe even hypocritical.

That's why today's scripture encourages me:

PRAY

After spending two chapters breaking down how the Gospel transforms our positional standing with God, Paul now turns his attention to how it transforms our practical day to day lives and behaviors. We are new creations in Christ and we now get to live in the newness of that life.

Colossians 3

3 Since we are in Christ:

1. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

- a. Put off the old nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, anger, rage, malice, slander, lying it needs to be rooted out
- b. Put on the new nature: Cultivate the new life of Christ in you

Today Paul will continue that theme of being new creations in Christ

As God's chosen people:

Colossians 3:12-17

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

What does it mean FOR YOU AND ME to be chosen?

God does a lot of choosing:

He chose the Jewish people to be a special people for himself (Deuteronomy 7:6-8)

He chose Jerusalem as his city

He chose Saul to be king, only to reject him and chose David to replace him (1 Samuel)

He chose Jesus to be the Messiah (Matthew 12:18)

Jesus chose the Apostles – even tho one of them would betray him (John 6)

And here Paul says,

You too were chosen by God- “no man comes to me unless the Father draws him.”

Chosen = Eklektos – “elect” - appointed - Assigned

(Ekklesia) The elect (church)

Chosen not just elected to a position to enjoy the benefits of salvation but elected to a purpose

Like me in this position or you in yours, we hold positions not just so we can rake in the big bucks, but so we can accomplish a purpose:

What is that purpose?

Peter 2:9-12 NIV

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

Did you see the purpose there?

Your purpose is to declare – in word, thought, and action – the praises of your deliverer.

“...Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”

It mirrors so well what Paul said:

Like clothes, Paul says to put off the old (abstain from sinful desires) and clothe yourself in the new (live lives that glorify God)

And reflect that fact that you are indeed chosen.

CHOSEN:

To be chosen – elected – appointed – means not just saying yay! I’m chosen - it also means showing up at work and doing what you’ve been chosen or appointed to do.

Live in such a way that you praise God.

If you are like me, on my own, I am woefully unqualified to live a God-glorifying life:

Thankfully, we are not on our own!

We have the power of Holy Spirit

2 Peter 1:3

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

We may not feel up to the task, but there’s really no need to fake it till you make it - God has placed in our spiritual closet everything we need.

Feeling uncompassionate, go to Holy Spirit closet clothe yourself with compassion

Feeling harsh and judgmental, - go to the Holy Spirit, clothe yourself in kindness

Feeling too confident, putting too much trust in your own understanding – clothe yourself in humility

Getting frustrated – clothe yourself in patience

You see feeling the feelings isn't bad – it's not hypocritical – it's human,

The disconnect between how we feel and how we act as Christians isn't hypocritical, it's part of putting on Christ.

And invariably, our emotions catch up with our actions.

We leave church so glad we came

We give blessed by our generosity

We serve and finish up thankful for the opportunity to do so.

We pray for our enemies and end up really and truly caring for them.

When we cultivate the God-honoring attitudes , we are “working out our salvation” we are cultivating the new life God is creating in us.

Notice that all these attributes – compassion, kindness, understanding, patience – are all attributes of God

He bore our sins – bear with one another

He forgave you, now forgive the same way – forgive as you have been forgiven

He loves you – dearly loved – love

“Holy and Dearly loved”

He loved us when we were very hard to love

Romans 5:8 - But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Nothing can separate us from his love

Romans 8:37-39 - For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

He's not embarrassed to express his love.

Zephaniah 3:17 - The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

All day long he is surrounding you with loud expressions of his love, watch and listen!

He loves us with an eternal love

Jeremiah 31:3 - I have loved you with an everlasting love

God absolutely loves you.

He loves you and me so much that he sent his only Son to die that we might live through him.

Colossians 3:15-17

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Did you catch that?

Let the peace of Jesus govern your life in everything

Look for ways to express thankfulness

Alphonse Karr

"Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns; I am thankful that thorns have roses."

Let your time together – as you sing and pray and teach and encourage one another – reflect the goodness and graciousness of Jesus

And don't worry if you get it perfectly right – just do it in Jesus name with gratitude that he's called you.

COMMUNION