

**Dressing up like Christ****970314**

*You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*  
Galatians 3:26-27

C. S. Lewis in his book *Mere Christianity* writes that when we pray "Our Father," we are putting ourselves in the place of a son of God, and in doing this we are dressing up as Christ. Considering our sinful nature, this is a very outrageous thing to do. The odd thing is that God has ordered us to do it. In order to accept us, we must be made as though we were righteous, or like Christ. In other language, we are accounted as righteous as Abraham was through his faith.

We have all dressed up as someone else at one time or another. I have a great picture of myself as a young boy in a cowboy outfit side by side with a picture of Zach in a Ghostbusters costume. It is sort of typical that we dress up as our hero, as someone we want to be like. And we see the parallel to dressing up like Christ. Paul gives this idea spiritual merit in the scripture quoted above.

There is a fascinating Old Testament story about a person who dressed up like someone else. In Genesis 27 we read of the conflict between two brothers Jacob and Esau. Esau was the favorite of their father Isaac, and as such was to be the recipient of his special blessing. When Isaac was old and it came time for this to occur, he told Esau to prepare some wild game for him. But Isaac's eyes were weak and he could not see to recognize anyone. Esau went off to prepare his father's favorite meal, and knew that at its conclusion he would receive his father's blessing. Isaac's wife Rebekah was listening to all of this, and decided to fool Isaac so that her favorite, Jacob, would be blessed instead. She prepared a meal in a way that Jacob would love, and then she covered Jacob's hands and neck with goatskins and put him in Esau's clothes so that he would feel and smell like Esau.

Jacob was hesitant, for he knew that it would be difficult to pull this deception off. He was afraid that Isaac would find out and curse him rather than blessing. But his mother convinced him to go on and do as she said. Jacob has to lie outright and claims to be Esau, giving God credit for his quick success. Isaac is a little suspicious, but though the voice is not quite right, he does accept the impostor.

The blessing was given, that of wealth and authority of Jacob over his family (especially his brothers). I think that it went much deeper, however, and is associated with the lineage of Christ through Jacob. This was a very powerful and meaningful thing, so you can imagine the horror in Esau's mind when he comes in and sees that he has been cheated. Esau cried to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father!" Isaac is able to give him a limited blessing, which doesn't sound very promising except that Esau will finally break away from his brother's rule.

Of course, the parallel between the story of Jacob and Esau and our own situation with Christ is somewhat limited, but we might be able to learn from a few points. Jacob had to use deception to get the blessing, but God wants us to have it. He wants all men to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). Isaac was able to give Esau a limited blessing, but God will not bless us unless we are truly in Christ. There is no longer condemnation if we are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

The most important point that I see here is that we must use the "disguise" because we will not be accepted on our own. We are sinners and fall short of the glory of God. But Paul tells us in Ephesians 3:12, that in Christ "and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence." We must be clothed in Christ so that we can be accepted by God and blessed. It is not to fool God, but to please Him. Interestingly enough, Christ was found in appearance (dressed) as a man (Philippians 2:3-11). We must be found in appearance as Christ, and have the same attitudes. So let's put on our disguise and receive the blessing!

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