

COVERED



Covered: *Courtesy of Kate Austin*

Let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts.

Romans 13:13-14

The Spirit of the Lord has been highlighting a truth to the Body of Christ at this hour which will be absolute dynamite when this truth is actualized in our daily living. Here it is:

We have been called, as sons and daughters of Heaven, to function in two places at once.

- 1. We are to live in the unshielded presence of the Living God.**
- 2. We are called to dwell in the unmodified presence of human anguish.**

A lot of people want to walk in the presence of God, but they don't want to get near human pain. They talk about healing, but they don't want to get near the sick.

When the day comes that we are spending ourselves in these two places, we will see the kingdom of God as we have never seen it before, we will have power to minister the Kingdom so effectively that chains will break,

captives will be set free,
eyes will open to the glory of God.

Of course, it is much easier to talk about coming into the presence of God than to actually get there. And to truly reach out and touch the human anguish involves a great deal more than walking through a convalescent home or sitting in a skid row bar.

In order to come into God's presence, and at the same time, touch the human heart where it hurts, we have to have the "covering" that protected the prophets of old.

We need a covering when we step into God's presence.

In His mercy, and for our protection, God has set an angel with a flaming sword at the doorway to the Garden of Paradise, because, if we were to go in there in our natural state, our very bodies would be seared with the intensity of the light, our minds would wither, our spirits would faint.

After their rebellion, Adam and Eve became conscious of their nakedness. So they covered themselves with fig leaves. But when the Lord drew near to them in the cool of the day, they realized that the covering they had put on themselves was not enough. Trembling with fear, they ran into the bushes.

If we are having difficulty getting near to God, it's probably God's mercy holding us at a distance until we are properly covered.

Only when we are covered can we safely come into his presence and boldly approach his Throne of Grace and get help in time of need.

The Old Testament saints understood this. They would never even dare to approach Yahweh without some kind of covering - a kafar, an atonement. And they knew that the atonement had to be blood.

Nor can we draw near to God without that covering.



Through the Veil Kate Austin

We also need a covering when we walk through the Valley of Human Anguish.

God, in his mercy, is watching over our movements out in the world among men. Because the minute we begin to open our hearts to human need, we are exposed to seen and unseen danger:

- physical danger,
- hatred,
- discouragement,
- the temptation to jump down into the "mud bath" ourselves.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness.

Ephesians 6:12

We need to be shielded, protected, covered.

It is dangerous to draw near to God, or the heart of human need, without a covering. The priestly robes that were worn in the Old Testament were symbolic of this.

They weren't getting all dressed up to prove that they were priests. They were wearing this clothing, at the command of God, as a sign that they had to come into his presence clothed with a righteousness which was not their own. They also wore this garb as they came out from God's presence and *ministered God's mercy* to the people again as a sign that they were clothed in a righteousness which was not their own. This covering, which was symbolized in those Old Testament priestly robes, became actual the day Jesus came up out of the Jordan River from his baptism and began to minister as the Messiah. Jesus was under a threefold covering as he went off into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan and as he came forth to reveal the Living God to Israel.

He was covered first of all with the water of his baptism—

He who was without sin and yet became sin for us commanded that he be baptized to fulfill all righteousness.

He was covered with the Holy Spirit —

who came down upon him as he emerged from those waters, making him the Anointed One, the Messiah.

He was also covered with blood —

his own blood. And that blood was effective every time he forgave sin or touched somebody for healing.

For he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of calves or goats, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.
Hebrews 9:12

So covered, our Lord came as the Son of Man into the presence of the Holy God for us. And now, through the Spirit, he comes out from God's presence to minister eternal peace for those reading these words who will receive his word.

But what about our covering?

What do we put on, as we approach God,
and as we move out among men?

We also need the water, which is a symbol of our death in Christ.

We need the Spirit who is the sign of our life in Christ.

We need the blood - our forgiveness in Christ.

This threefold covering becomes ours when we take Jesus himself to be our protecting Rock.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
Psalms 91:1

Most of us have no conception of how completely we can be enveloped in the reality of Jesus ... how necessary it is for us to be covered by his abiding presence. As Paul says, "we are to be dead — hid with Christ in God — so that our lives are truly wrapped up in him, before God and man."

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation/ she is a new creation; the old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

We are to put on Christ.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

This covering,

 this enveloping ourselves,

 this wrapping ourselves in the reality of Christ,

...is not something we obtain by mysterious spiritual exercises, or long periods of fasting, or reading certain wonderful books on the deeper spiritual life.

Lord, Lord cover me. Shield me, cover me so that I can enter into your holy presence. Cover me so that I may face human suffering and need under your protection. May I see and take up this awesome blessing of enveloping myself in you, wrapping myself in you.

This awesome blessing is obtained by an act of faith in each of four situations:

1. By faith we cover ourselves with Christ as we draw near to the Father.

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."

John 14: 5-6

He's not just talking about coming to the Father after our death, or when the trumpets sound, but now.

If you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it to you.

John 16:23

To ask something of the Father in Jesus' name,

 is to come under the covering of Jesus,

 to be wrapped in him,

 enveloped in his life.

"Lord God, I make bold to draw near to you, not on the strength of anything I am or have done, but on the strength of your Son, Jesus, my Lord. Covering myself in his righteousness, I now make bold to ascend into deep heaven; into the place of eternal life, and worship your holiness, and lay my petitions before you."

And the more totally we are permeated with the Spirit of Christ, the more direct and swift is our approach to the Father.

2. By faith we cover ourselves with Christ as we move out among each other — and among people out there in the world beyond.

*"When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."
1 Corinthians 2:1-2*

Paul approached those Corinthians *absolutely wrapped up in the Crucified Jesus* –

This was an obsession with him.

This was a passion with him.

So much so that one could say, "This man is out of his mind."

And from this obsession flowed life everywhere Paul went.

Notice how his epistles are filled with the passion of Christ.

Paul makes clear that it is impossible to move out among men *with any effectiveness*, except as we are covered with Christ.

"I am crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Galatians 2:20

"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,"

Philippians 1:21

"For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

Colossians 3:3

The problem with many of us is that we don't take that covering with us as we leave the assembly.

Maybe we experience a taste of it when we are at the Lord's Table, but then when we go out, we leave it behind – we forget to take it....

into our jobs,
into our homes,
out on the highway,
visiting in the hospital.

*"Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."
Ephesians 6:11*



You are Light *Kate Austin*

What is the armor of God?

Having your loins girded about with truth – *the truth is Jesus.*

Putting on the breastplate of righteousness – *who is that but Jesus?*

Taking the shield of faith

- the helmet of salvation
- the sword of the Spirit
- feet shod with the gospel of peace

all of these things are Jesus himself.

We are to be wrapped in

the Person,
the Presence,
the Living Reality of Jesus himself

....so that we can then go out with something real to offer people.

We are to practice that Presence day and night everywhere we are.

Lord help me to bring your presence with me wherever I go. May I never forget you are with me..

Oh that I may be wrapped in you so that every interaction I have is touched with your living presence.

3. By faith we cover ourselves with Christ when our minds come under the assault of temptation.

Not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its lusts.

And the mind loves to make provision for the flesh;

- to think ahead,
- to scheme,
- to plan,
- to worry,
- to fret,
- to fantasize,
- to dream dreams - good and bad.

When this happens, it's necessary to clothe our minds in the sanity, which is Jesus himself — to bring order into our mental chaos.

It's a matter of choosing his Presence instead of the flaky thoughts we indulge in.

"Lord, come into my mind. Flood me with your light. Fill me with your reality again. Take me away from these inmost lies."

4. By faith we cover ourselves with Christ as we approach the reality of our own death.

No matter how near the Lord's return may be, don't forget that your death might precede his coming.

For we know that if this earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made by human hands which is eternal in the heavens. Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we should be unclothed, but that we should be further clothed, so that what is mortal might be swallowed up in life.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4

So that this naked spirit might be clothed in a new body which is the body of Jesus himself.

So that the same covering that

- takes me into the presence of God,
- takes me safely out among human beings with something good to give them,
- protects my mind against the lies that constantly bombard it,

.... now also takes me through the door of death.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

When I cover myself with the covering of Christ, the anxiety, and dread, and terror of death leave me.

I begin to see death as something, which is far better than what I now have.

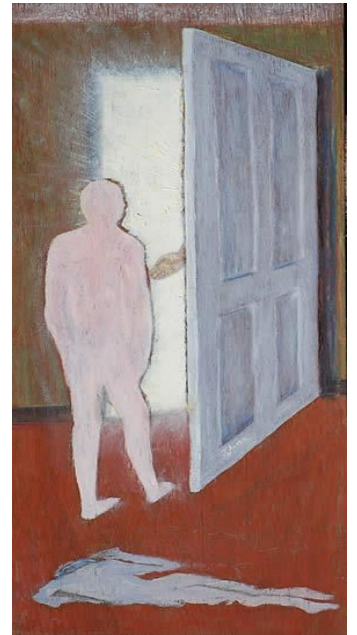
I begin to say that with my heart, not just with my mouth,

that I might depart and be with Christ which is better by far.

If it should be the Lord's will that we remain until the King comes back, good.

If it should be the Lord's will that we should be taken in the meantime, praise God, provided we're covered with his life.

Lord may I be so covered in you, your life that I no longer fear death



Well Done Kate Austin

In order for us to live a life that makes sense, we have to put on the covering...

Help us Father,

- that we may clothe ourselves, with the presence of your Son,
- that we might truly come up into his presence and touch his throne,
- that we might go out among men and women and touch their broken hearts with healing,
- that we may conquer the enemy as he attacks our minds,
- that we may approach our coming death with holy joy.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3:1-4



His Beauty Kate Austin



From 1978

All art from Kate Austin. An artist from the United Kingdom. She has no formal art training. She paints from the inner impressions that come from prayer. She sees her art as "windows into the Heart of a loving and all powerful Father, to be used as inspiration to draw near to Him." and gives all glory for the art to God. Her website is [Christ art uk](http://Christartuk.com).