

Eph 4:17–24 (ESV) Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ⁽¹⁸⁾ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ⁽¹⁹⁾ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ⁽²⁰⁾ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ⁽²¹⁾ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ⁽²²⁾ to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ⁽²³⁾ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ⁽²⁴⁾ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

1. Continuing the thought of the worthy walk that Paul began in Eph 4:1

Eph 4:1 (ESV) I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

- A. The logic: Because God has done a saving work in you – Chapter 1
 - 1). Because you have a new nature. New will. New heart. New power. New relationship with God
 - a). Then that **MUST** be reflected in the way you live

- B. Paul sums this up in Romans 6

Ro 6:4 (ESV) We were buried therefore with him by *baptism into death*, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, *we too might walk in newness of life*.

Rom 6:6 (NIV) For we know that *our old self was crucified with him* so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin--

Point: The change in us is radical! I think we fail to see this so many times

We think the new nature has been laminated onto the old – so we are both

- A. Paul says the old us that loved sin and hated God has been put to death
 - 1). That doesn't mean we will never be tempted – sin wasn't put to death – we were
 - 2). It means that we are no longer slaves to sin – we've been liberated – we can say "No"
 - a). So Paul says "Do that! Say No! Live like who you've become"

2 Co 5:17 (ESV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Rom 6:12-13 (NIV) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ⁽¹³⁾ Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, *as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness*.

- B. So Paul says – since this is true – ***"You no MUST no longer walk as the Gentiles (ungodly) do"***

Transition: Last week we saw how the ungodly walk

The Old Way of Living

Eph 4:17–19 (ESV) Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ⁽¹⁸⁾ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ⁽¹⁹⁾ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

- A. The ungodly live lives that are ignorant of God's truth
 - 1). They willingly suppress his truth to embrace lies
- B. The ungodly life is intellectually futile – that way of thinking always leads to emptiness
 - 1). Since we are created to enjoy God – nothing in this world is big enough to bring satisfaction
- C. This leads to a morally calloused heart – that creates a greediness for more and more sin
- D. If this path is continued it will lead to a mind that is depraved – reprobate
 - 1). The judicial hardening in Romans 1 – God rejects an individual – they are left to themselves
Now they sin with no remorse and have no desire at all for their creator

Transition: Paul says that isn't who we are – we have been rescued – delivered - liberated

Col 1:13 (ESV) He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

- A. Paul says you **MUST** not walk like that any longer – it makes no sense
 - 1). Now he tells us what we must walk like

I. THE WALK OF THE NEW LIFE

Eph 4:20–24 (ESV) But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ⁽²¹⁾ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ⁽²²⁾ to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ⁽²³⁾ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ⁽²⁴⁾ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

1. The new walk in Christ is the exact opposite of the old walk of the flesh

- A. The old life is self-centered – the new is Christ centered
- B. The old life had no appetite for God’s truth – the new craves it
- C. The old life was morally calloused – not sensitive to sin
 - 1). In the new life the conscience has come alive and we are sensitive to wrong
- D. The old life was characterized by a depraved mind – the new by a renewed mind

Transition: Let’s look at the characteristics of the new life

First: The New Life Is Christ-Centered Rather Than Self-Centered

1. Paul abruptly changes course here

- A. He has spoken of the way the ungodly live then says
BUT THAT is not the way you learned Christ!
 - 1). In other words to live a life that chooses disobedience over following God
To live a life that is characterized by spiritual darkness over walking in the light
To live a life that is leading to deeper and deeper depravity rather than greater light
 - a). That is exactly the opposite of how you learned Christ

Question: What does it mean to have learned Christ?

- A. It is referring to being saved – that initial point of receiving Christ by faith

Point: When you came to faith in Christ you **KNEW** it meant turning away from the world

- A. Jesus first message when he entered into public ministry
Mt 3:2 (ESV) “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- B. One of the first messages to the new church in Acts preached by Peter
Acts 3:19 (NIV) Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord...
 - 1). I’m always concerned when I hear the Gospel preached without any need of repentance
 - a). Peter says for your sins to be wiped out – erased – you must turn from them
- C. So how did they believers learn Jesus when they were saved
 - 1). They were taught that they had to turn from the sinful ways they used to live – repentance
And turn to God embracing his Son by faith
- D. So Paul says in v. 19 “You **MUST NOT** walk in the way of the Gentiles”
 - 1). Now backs that up by saying
“This is nothing new – not making this up – you’ve been taught this from the beginning”
 - 2). You were taught that saving faith was turning away from sin to God

Transition: Don’t live like the ungodly – you came to Christ knowing it required a different kind of living

- A. Now Paul turns to that which will sustain that new lifestyle – truth

Second: The New Life Desires God's Truth Rather Than Staying Willfully Ignorant

Eph 4:21 (ESV) assuming that you have *heard* about him and were *taught* in him, as the *truth* is in Jesus,

1. *Heard* about him

A. Again that goes back to that saving message – the Gospel

Eph 1:13 (ESV) In him you also, *when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation*, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

1). You heard the truth about Jesus and through the drawing of the Spirit you responded

Transition: But notice that is only the beginning – we don't stop there

2. We are *taught* in him

A. The truth about Christ brings us into the kingdom – but we need a constant supply of truth to grow

1 Pet 2:2 (NASB) like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

1). So you are saved – now grow in your salvation – in your knowledge of Jesus Christ

a). Don't get your foot in the door and stay a spiritual infant – no joy there

1a). Characteristic of infants – everything is about them – ME – ME - ME

Meet my needs – serve me – burp me!

2a). That can only lead to frustration – little kids cry a lot – get angry a lot

b). There is a stage where that is fine – when they are an infant - normal

But a 15 year old still in a high chair – throwing fits - is not cute!

1a). Driving them around in the car until they fall asleep at night

2). Peter says to grow will take a disciplined effort – need to treat the word like newborns treat milk

a). They crave it – won't do without it – they are maniacs until they get it

1a). So the command comes to us – be like that with the Word

Don't set it down – don't let it gather rust – don't think you'll grow if you do

Thought: Notice the progression

A. You have heard about Jesus – you answered that call to salvation

B. Now be taught about Jesus – dig into the word so you can grow

1). Dig into the word so you will enjoy your Christianity – enjoy victory over temptation

So you don't live like the Gentile

1 John 2:14 (NIV) ...I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

a). They were no longer infants – they had matured into strong, young men

b). They were no longer defeated constantly – they were now enjoying victory

1a). Why? Because the Word of God lived in them

2a). It was fresh – alive – because it was being put in regularly

Transition: Then Paul encourages us – when you are taught of Jesus that is the truth

3. The *truth* is in Jesus

A. I love this – in this day of relativism – absolute nonsense

1). Where A can be diametrically opposed to B and yet both are somehow right

2). Where Jesus said he was the only way to God – yet churches teach many ways – both are good

a). Wrong – If A is true then when B contradicts it – it can't be true too!

B. Let me tell you the answer to this foolishness that says

“What is true for you is true for you and what is true for me is true for me...”

1). Wrong – what is true to God is true! The TRUTH that is found in Jesus is true

- a). There is one truth and it doesn't change to please you
- 2). Yeah but times change – so what was true 2000 years ago is not still true today
“I mean that book you're reading may have been fine for the first century Jew but...”
- a). Wrong! The theological concept of immutability tells us that God never changes
- b). Therefore what he said was wrong 2000 years ago is still wrong today
What he said was right 2000 years ago is still right today
- C. How blessed to know when we give ourselves to this book we are ingesting truth!
- 1). We are giving ourselves something that will never change – never fail – rock solid

Point: So we have heard about Jesus and were saved

- A. Now grow in Jesus through a disciplined intake of the word
- B. Rest assured when you do give yourself to this book – your giving yourself to truth

Transition: So the new life:

- A. Is Christ-centered rather than self-centered
- B. Desires knowing the truth of God rather than staying willfully ignorant of his truth

Third: The New Life Is Delivered from The Old Self Rather Than Satisfying the Old Self

Eph 4:22–24 (ESV) to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ⁽²³⁾ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ⁽²⁴⁾ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

1. There are three things here that happened when we were saved

- A. Our old self was put off – our mind was renewed – a new self was put on

Thought: This is not something we do to merit salvation – it is something God did when we were saved

- A. It's important we do them – they become evidence of God's saving grace at work in us
 - 1). They don't merit salvation – they are the fruit of being saved – the proof

Put Off Your Old Self

1. This begins with God – salvation is his work in the soul of the sinner

- A. He has put the old man to death – he has made us brand new in Christ
 - 1). But once he has done that – we are called to work that out

Php 2:12–13 (ESV) Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation* with fear and trembling, ⁽¹³⁾ *for it is God who works in you*, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

- a). Not work FOR your salvation – but work OUT your salvation
- B. Because he has done that work in you – now live like who you've become
 - 1). Put aside the ways of that old life and put on the new – just makes sense
 - a). We don't expect the butterfly to crawl back into the Chrysalis and be dormant again
It's been changed – given wings – we expect it to fly
- C. We could go back to the first section – to live that old life is not how you learned Christ
 - 1). You were taught to embrace him by faith meant to lay aside that old self

2. Put off = Verb. To strip off, as in the case of old filthy clothes

- A. The tense in the Greek is aorist middle = indicating a once-and-forever action
 - 1). So when the believer comes to Christ in salvation – that repentance is a settled issue
They are putting off (stripping off) that old life for good

Question: What does that *old life* look like? Paul tells us

Eph 4:22 (ESV) to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires

Eph 4:22 (NLT) throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, *which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception.*

- A. That old you was characterized by sinfulness – lust - deception
 - 1). To live in sin is always deceitful isn't it – you have to cover it – lie about it
- B. This doesn't mean we will be perfect – but the character of our life is to look like the new not the old
 - 1). One who claims to know Christ but doesn't change – how can that be?
 - a). Scripture will not allow that kind of thinking
 - 2). This logic is ironclad – if you have been made new – your life will provide evidence
 - a). *You may struggle with sin – but the struggle is new isn't it!*
 - 1a). You struggle because your not who you used to be
 - 2a). You used to love sin – now when you fail you're miserable – that's NEW

Transition: This brings us to our last point

- A. In contrast to the depraved, reprobate mind of the unregenerate person
The Christian is renewed in the spirit of [his] mind
The result will be a putting on of the new self

Put on the New Self

1. The process (Paul is always so logical)

- A. Because of who you have become – don't live like that old you
Because God has made you new – then choose to live like that
How you do that is by the renewing of your mind
- B. Again – this begins with God's work – He renews the mind so we can understand truth
 - 1). If he didn't do that – we wouldn't have a clue what the Bible is saying
2 Co 4:4 (ESV) In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
1 Cor 2:14 (NIV) The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.
 - 2). So God has given you the ability to understand his truth
 - a). He has given you a renewed mind – SO USE IT!
 - b). It reminds me of a parent telling his child – “Use your Mind – THINK!”
- C. As we input the truth – we see what the new us is supposed to look like
 - 1). This is so important – so many in the church are acting like fools – claiming it's the Spirit
 - a). The remedy is to get the Book out and see what the new life looks like

Question: What does the new life look like? Any ideas?

- A. Paul tells us

Eph 4:24 (ESV) ...and to put on the new self, *created after the likeness of God* in true righteousness and holiness.

- 1). The new us looks like Jesus – it looks like God
 - a). It acts in a righteous and holy way like he does
 - b). This is working out our salvation – we walk – respond more and more like Christ did

Important: 1 John 2:6 (NIV) Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

Question: I am to live like him. Where do I see what he looks like?

- A. Again – it is the word isn't it? As I focus on the Scriptures I am gazing upon Christ

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- 1). The Bible is a Christ saturated book
 - a). Jesus teaching the two disciples on the road to Emmaus
Lk 24:27 (ESV) And beginning with *Moses* and all the *Prophets*, he interpreted to them in *all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself.
 - 1a). The Old Testament told what Christ would do
 - 2a). The Gospels told us what Christ did do
 - 3a). The Epistles explain what Christ has done
 - 2). But what happens when I gaze into the word – I see Him! And I am changed!
TURN: I want you to see this: 2 Co 3:18 (ESV) And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.
 - a). As we behold the glory of the Lord on the pages of Scripture
 - 1a). The Spirit takes those words and transforms us into that same image
 - 2a). We become more and more like Christ – loving like he did – responding like he did
 - b). This beautiful growth moves from one degree of glory to another
 - 1a). In a practical way we are putting off the old and putting on the new
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CONCLUSION

1. The logic is flawless

- A. If you've been saved then God has done a radical work in you
 - 1). Therefore you **MUST NOT** live like that old you – you died to that life
 Now you should be living in a way that gives evidence of that saving work of God in your life
- B. How do we work this out? What is my responsibility in all this?
 - 1). I have to think – remember – I came into the Christian life:
 - a). Knowing that repentance was necessary
 - b). Knowing I was called to turn from that old life and live in a new way
 - 1a). Living this new life was to be a once-and-for-all commitment
 - 2). But where does the energy come to sustain living like the new me
 - a). That comes from disciplining myself in the Word
 - 1a). The Spirit will take that Word - illuminate it to my renewed mind
 And I will change from glory to glory – I will grow in Christlikeness
 - 2a). I will practically put off that old me more and more
 And practically look more and more like Jesus Christ