

Walking In Truth and Holiness (Ephesians 4:17-32)

In the previous lesson, we saw where Paul began to describe our "duty" to "walk worthy of the calling with which we were called" - Ephesians 4:1.

In doing so, he first called us to "walk together in unity" by admonishing us to...

- a. Display the "attitudes" crucial for maintaining unity - Ephesians 4:2-3
- b. Understand the "basis" of the unity we have in Christ - Ephesians 4:4-6
- c. Utilize the "gifts" given by Christ to His church that serves to keep the body of Christ together and growing – Eph. 4:7-16

In the last half of chapter four (Eph. 4:17-32), Paul continues to describe the sort of "walk" that is worthy of our calling, especially as "a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21-22)

- a. Whereas the first half emphasized "Walking Together in Unity"
- b. This section emphasizes "Walking in Truth and Holiness"

Instruction / Warning - (Ephesians 4:17-24)

- I. **Not to walk as the Gentiles** (*Ephesians 4:17-19*) - They walk "in the futility of their mind" - How so? It starts with the "hardening of their heart" - Which leads to "ignorance that is in them" - Because of such ignorance they are "alienated from the life of God". And that results "having their understanding darkened" -- Notice where Jesus describes this same process – **Mathew 13:14-15**

Their walk is "past feeling" - as indicated by the fact that they;

- a. "have given themselves over to licentiousness" (i.e., unbridled lust, excess)
- b. "work all uncleanness with greediness" - Desensitized, they seek after ever-increasing forms of moral depravity - **Romans 1:18-32**

- II. Instead, Walk in righteousness and true holiness - *Ephesians 4:20-24*

- a. This is how you learned Christ
 - As you heard Him and were taught by Him (through His apostles, of course - **Mathew 28:19-20**)
 - In whom is the truth - **John 8:31-32; 14:6**
- b. For you were taught to "put off" the "old man". That is, your "former conduct", how you behaved before you were saved - **Col 3:5-9**. Putting off the old man is needed because it is never content, but "grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (like addictive drugs, you always need more)
- c. And to "be renewed in the spirit of your mind"
 - Which is the key to true "transformation" - **Romans 12:1-2**
 - You "renew" your mind only as you "set your mind on things above" - **Col 3:1-2**
- d. And to "put on the new man"
 - A new man "which was created according to God" - **Col 3:10**
 - A new man, "in righteousness and true holiness" - **Col 3:12-17**

In giving the admonition "No longer walk as the Gentiles do", Paul has made it clear that it involves both a "putting off" and a "putting on". Letting go of our old self to become the person God wants us to be. We becoming a new man are all about God working in us by the power of His Holy Spirit through His son Jesus Christ. **Galatians 2:20-21**

So Paul is saying to us here that we have a choice, either we allow the Spirit to work in us to righteousness or we stay in control and fall back to our old ways. So when we choose to allow the Spirit to work in us this is where it starts;

Application / Expectation - Good conduct – Ephesians 4:25-32

- I. Lying – verse 25
 - The "old man" thinks nothing of lying – **John 8:44**
 - The "new man" puts away lying, and in its place speaks truth with his neighbor
- II. Anger – verse 26-27 | **Ecclesiastes 7:9, Mathew 5:22, James 1:19-20**
 - The "old man" gets angry and lets it linger, or get out of control
 - The "new man" may get angry, but does not...Let it linger ("do not let the sun go down on your wrath"), allow it to prompt sinful behavior ("nor give place to the devil")
- III. Stealing – verse 28 | **John 10:10, Ezekiel 33:15-16**
 - The "old man" is willing to steal
 - The "new man" not only stops stealing, but works so he can help others in need!
- IV. Corrupt talk / communication – verse 29 | **Proverbs 18:21, Matthew 12:34-37, Matthew 15:11**
 - The "old man" doesn't worry or care what comes out of his mouth
 - The "new man" not only avoids "corrupt communication", but seeks to speak that which is uplifting to those who hear
- V. Grieving the Holy Spirit – verse 30 | **Isaiah 63:10, Mark 3:29, Luke 12:10**
 - By the Holy Spirit we were sealed for the day of redemption **Ephesians 1:13-14**
- VI. Kind, Compassionate, Forgiving – verses 31-32 | **John 3:16**
 - Therefore, we ought to put away those things befitting the "old man" (bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, malice)
 - And in its place we need to put on those things befitting the "new man" (being kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another just as God forgives us in Christ)