

Pastor Dave – Sunday Sun 9th June

A study in Ephesians – Chapter 4

Where The Rubber Meets the Road.

Ephesians 4:17-32

Reference made to Sin City – somewhere that we are familiar with and what comes to mind when we think of Sin City – Las Vegas.

- Greed.
- Sensuality.
- Sexuality.
- Sin of every kind.

In walking the streets of Las Vegas, you can tell.

For the Apostle Paul Ephesus would have been sin city.

- 2 years of preaching the gospel.
- 2 years of church planting for Paul.

Some heard – but many had hardened hearts.

- Many came to faith and burned their books of magic.

Dimitrius was angered at this happening as this was his income, his livelihood – producing items for idol worship.

- He was trying to gather up Christians to stop this from happening.
- Trying to run Paul out of town.

Ephesus was a wicked place.

This was the backdrop for the Ephesian people.

Paul took time to remind them of the life they were rescued from.

- This was not new information – but a great reminder for them.

Ephesians 4:17-32 Christian Standard Bible

Living the New Life

¹⁷ Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thoughts. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them and because^[a] of the hardness of their hearts. ¹⁹ They became callous and gave themselves over to promiscuity for the practice of every kind of impurity with a desire for more and more.^[b]

²⁰ But that is not how you came to know Christ, ²¹ assuming you heard about him and were taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to take off^[c] your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, ²³ to be renewed^[d] in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on^[e] the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

²⁵ Therefore, putting away lying, **speaking the truth, each one to his neighbor,**^[f] because we are members of one another. ²⁶ **Be angry and do not sin.**^[g] Don't let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and don't give the devil an opportunity. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he is to do honest work with his own hands, so that he has something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need,^[h] so that it gives grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit. You were sealed by him^[i] for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. ³² And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you^[j] in Christ.

Verses 17-19

This portion of scripture taking them back to was written earlier.

- That they were dead in their trespasses and sins.
- Then because of the grace of God they were made new.

This is good for us as believers to be reminded of where we once were.

- No longer walking as the gentiles do – pagan living.

They and we have been saved from this life and no longer characterised by it.

Now walking in the spirit – Paul teaching what this looks like.

- Paul reminding them again what they once were.

It is easy for us to look around our society and see this – it angering us!

- It should!

But the Holy Spirit burdens us – people in our community described in this way and how we should be responding to them.

- We would have been there apart from the grace of God.

The language being used here by Paul is consistent with the language used in Romans Ch 1.

Question – Is Paul being hyperbolic (inflated/exaggerating) here?

NO!

Left to their own sinful selves, they would have become more and more sinful.

- Futile thinking.

Reference made to King Solomon here and the book of Ecclesiastes that makes note of these things.

- Wealth.
- Fames.
- Pleasure.
- Success.

Ecclesiastes 1:2 English Standard Version

²Vanity^[a] of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

Ecclesiastes 1:2 Christian Standard Bible

²“Absolute futility,” says the Teacher.
“Absolute futility. Everything is futile.”

- Futile – vain – worthless.

The end thought of Ecclesiastes is as follows...

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 English Standard Version

¹³ The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.^[a] ¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, with^[b] every secret thing, whether good or evil.

The end of the matter is that we should pursue God – with all of our life.

They lived in ignorance...

- Loving nothing of God.
- The life they could have.

2 Timothy 3:1-7 English Standard Version

Godlessness in the Last Days

³ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. ⁶ For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, ⁷ always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

Paul is saying – You once were like this...

- Hardened of heart – perosis – the idea being rock hard.
- Sin has a petrifying affect.
- Making the heart harder and harder towards God.

Maybe we know someone like this.

Dimitrius had a hard heart.

- Getting angry at Christians and wanting to get rid of them all.

These verses a reflection for us on where every non-believer is heading.

- This should burden our heart.
- For our friends, family, neighbours, colleagues – following this way of life.
- More and more sinfulness and futility.

Breaking our hearts for the lost.

- Driving us to get out there.

Or – do we move onto the next section of scripture and our thinking being...

I am so pleased I have been saved from this! Let's move on!

Question – Do we see the sinfulness of the world as we ought to?

Stirring us to be active.

- Then sharing the life changing – saving gospel.

Part 2 – Being released for new life.

Verses 20-24

Ephesians 4:20-24 Christian Standard Bible

Living the New Life

²⁰ But that is not how you came to know Christ, ²¹ assuming you heard about him and were taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to take off^[c] your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, ²³ to be renewed^[d] in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on^[e] the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

Commentary writer.

- Verb tenses – Taking off/put on

These tenses are past complete acts – speaking to believers – when they put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ – in that moment they were transformed renewed.

Transformed – renewed.

- New nature.
- New Creations in Christ.
- New believer.

The old is gone.

Still contrasting the old to the new.

Pastor comments...

The old is self-centred and futile, the new is Christ centred and purposeful.

We as believers in the lord Jesus Christ have been...

1. Rescued from the old life.
2. Released for the new life.

That is Christ centred and purposeful.

Ephesians 4:20 Christian Standard Bible

Living the New Life

²⁰ But that is not how you came to know Christ,

Paul speaking to this church of believers. He didn't lead all of these believers to Christ.

- If you are a believer, you have come to know him – term for salvation.

Followers of Jesus Christ - taught by Jesus Christ.

- The old man was taken off – the new man put on.

The old is morally and spiritually calloused and shameless, the new is sensitive to sin of every sort.

John McArthur speaks of these verses in this way...

The mark of a Christian life is to think like Christ – act like Christ – love like Christ and in every possible way be like Christ.

Our lives are to be marked by righteousness and purity in life.

Reflecting the saviour we serve.

Our...

- Thoughts.
- Words.
- Actions.

In the workplace – during activities and with our families.

Our family often see a side of us that others don't see – that really shouldn't be.

Not putting this on in and of ourselves – allowing the Holy Spirit to work this out in us.

Our thinking impacts the way we live.

- Wrong attitude.

We are to be taking these thoughts captive.

- God ruling and reigning in our lives.

Knowing that these thoughts have out makings in our life.

New Life –

As we move from our old life to our new life, it is like taking off an old gross garment.

- Then putting on the righteousness of Christ.
- The new self.

Question – What does this look like?

Point 3 – A New Life in Action

Ephesians 4:25-32 Christian Standard Bible

²⁵ Therefore, putting away lying, **speak the truth, each one to his neighbor,**^[f] because we are members of one another. ²⁶ **Be angry and do not sin.**^[g] Don't let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and don't give the devil an opportunity. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he is to do honest work with his own hands, so that he has something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need,^[h] so that it gives grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit. You were sealed by him^[i] for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. ³² And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you^[j] in Christ.

Putting away these things...

- a) Put away lying and put on honesty.

These things are lived in community.

- Unity produced by the Holy Spirit.

We are to maintain the unity.

One faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God.

We are reminded of the diversity of the body that we heard during last week's message.

- Living in community – a body working together.

These verses talked about what we are to do as we live in community.

Think about when we lie to each other – the trust – the unity is then destroyed.

Christians should be the most honest people around.

Christ never once lied, he always spoke the truth.

- b) Put away stealing put on sharing.

Ephesians 4:28 Christian Standard Bible

²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he is to do honest work with his own hands, so that he has something to share with anyone in need.

Honest works – so that we have something to share with other people.

Question – Are we stealing time away that we should be giving to someone else?

- c) Put away imitation and put on indignation.

Ephesians 4:26 Christian Standard Bible

²⁶ **Be angry and do not sin.**^[a] Don't let the sun go down on your anger,

If we don't give it to the Lord, our anger will be sinful anger.

- Giving the devil an opportunity.

We have to deal with righteous indignation and move on quick.

- d) Put away foul speech and put on fruitful speech.

Ephesians 4:29 Christian Standard Bible

²⁹ No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need,^[b] so that it gives grace to those who hear.

Reference made to a preacher who mentioned the movie – It's A Wonderful Life.

The movie was censored for the phrase – "Lousy jerk"!

Original accused of it being foul language.

But! – think about the TV shows that are shown today – foul language now common place.

- Even out of our own mouths.

- e) Put off bitterness and rage and put on kindness and forgiveness.

Ephesians 4:31 Christian Standard Bible

³¹ Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice.

We can really grieve the personhood of the Holy Spirit.

- It really grieves the Holy Spirit when we are not putting away the old.

As Christians we should be the first to forgive.

Question – Why?

Because we have been forgiven so much.

- Put off the old filthy rags.
- Put on the new garments of a life-giving life – Reflecting Christ.