

Ephesians 4:17-32

What do they need to know? How to live as a new creation in Christ

Why do they need to know it? To live a life that is worthy of our calling

What do they need to do? Put on their new nature

Why do they need to do it? The results will be a character created to be like God, righteous and holy.

How can I help them remember? Lists! Racquetball?

One Point: Live like Christ

We

Do you ever wish there was a list of what Jesus expects of us? I mean come on we have the ten commandments but don't kill anyone? I have that down...unless you count me playing video games. Don't steal, I really don't want to go to jail. So, I don't do it.

As Paul switches over from what it means to be a Christian to what a Christian does we see how we should truly live as followers of Christ.

God

A.D.D. part of Ephesians where Paul just makes lists of everything to make sure that if you are that type A personality you know exactly what he is trying to say.

Eph 4:17-32

17-19

Paul explains our mindset before Christ (Thinking: futile thinking, darkened understanding, separated from the life of God, ignorant), the cause of that condition (hardened heart), and the result (Actions: seared conscience, sensuality, every kind of impurity and continual lust for more). Most people come to Church and into a relationship with Christ through a crisis in life. These crises are caused by our, or someone else's hardened hearts, or even by a transition of life that no one could do anything about. We tend to work toward change until the consequences get better, then we stop and return to the way of life that we knew before.

20-24

Notice that Paul doesn't describe an instant transformation, but a progressive, habit-by-habit move from old habit to a new habit.

Put off/put on – symbolizes dirty clothes at the end of the day. Like our sin is said to be like filthy rags/garments, we should throw them off, burn them, so they can't be recognized with us anymore and dress ourselves with Christ's righteousness.

New – not a renovation, revamp or even rehabilitated person but a completely brand spanking new persona, characteristic, identity, person.

Kainos - recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn

It is not the remaining old nature that causes us to keep sinning but the shirt that we left on and weren't willing to give up that continues to contaminate our lives. We are transformed by not perfect. We might have sin in our lives but not consistent and demoralizing sin.

Think about working out or running. If you came home from a run and put on new clothes without taking a shower, what would happen?

Wait, stealing...not an issue again right? This verse, compared to the rest of the things Paul is talking about seems to not apply to us. However, stealing was an issue in the church at Ephesus because back then the church was welcoming...ouch. Ya, people who made their livelihood from stealing were getting saved. They needed to be taught what to do instead. This verse is in here because for those of us who "don't steal" actually steal the opportunity to know Christ when we don't allow ANYONE into our circle. To allow anyone who wants to come through the doors of this building, any church building, any small group, any service, any conversation. We must remember that Christ is for everyone! We have to stop expecting people to get cleaned up with their sin before they come to know Jesus. These verses say that you must change after you are renewed and put on your new self, not before. We get cleaned up (and are still being cleaned) after we experience what God did for us on the cross where His Son died for every single thing that is wrong and hurtful in the eyes of God that we have ever done and will do. Then miraculously Jesus came back to life 3 days later and proved to everyone that He had the power to make us whole and clean before God so that we can believe in Him and live eternally in heaven and experience the love of God beyond anything else.

This verse also means we should be giving generously...first your tithe which is thanking God for what He has given you. Then giving when you see it is needed. But, if you are using the money on yourself then you don't have any to give do you? Hmmm sounds like stealing to me.

**You:
So What?**

As the Ephesians grasp what God has done for them and in them, they should live transformed lives with a decided difference between their old lifestyles and their new lives in Christ.

Now What?

We did a series called UnChristain. We should be known by what we are for, not what we are against. We should not be known by what this world is overrun by: bitterness, hatred, deception, immorality. As followers of Christ we should be marked by love, forgiveness, truthfulness, and purity. Put those old things behind you and live in your new identity.

We

When we live as new creations in Christ, as people who truly live differently than the rest of this world, then what we have will be desired, then we will hear God clearly, then we will know His Will! As we follow what Paul tells us, not like a checklist (even though it feels like it), our lives will look more and more like Christ, truly righteous and holy. Daily we will experience His love and grace and look to please Him with no reservations. When we get rid of our old sinful nature and former way of life, renew our minds, and put on our new nature, we become people who look like Christ. Then you will walk by faith and not by sight, worry less, experience God more and have that glow. Ok, weird, that feeling where everyone wants what you have. People will spend time with you and say, wow, that person is someone I want to be like...they love Christ so much. They don't worry, they aren't selfish. They truly live for God.

Gentiles/before Christ

1. Mind full of darkness
2. far from the life God gives
3. Closed minds and hardened hearts

Results

1. No sense of shame
2. live for lustful pleasure
3. practice every kind of impurity

After Christ

1. Throw off old sin nature/former way of life
2. Renew your thoughts and attitudes Rom 12:2
3. Put on your new nature

How to put on your new nature

1. Stop lying – tell the truth
2. Stop sinning from anger – Don't let the sun go down on your anger
3. Stop stealing – give generously
4. Watch your mouth – Encourage and build up

Results **of not** doing these things

1. Bitterness
2. Rage
3. Anger
4. Harsh words
5. Slander
6. ALL TYPES OF EVIL BEHAVIOR

Results **of** doing these things

1. Kindness
2. Compassionate
3. Forgiveness