



April 17, 2016
Elevation | 11:00 am
Pastor Matt Davis

Off with the Old, On with the New Ephesians 4:17-24

Remember your old life and the ways you used to walk. Ephesians 4:17-19

"...that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart..." (v.17-18)

- **Our old life was enslaved to spiritual death**
 - **We had a HARDNESS of heart:** Verse 18 describes a "hardness of heart." Man's condition has at its root the hardening of the heart. It is referred to as a heart of stone. An unwillingness to respond to God's truth.
 - **We had a DARKNESS of heart:** Verse 18 says, "They are darkened in their understanding." From hardness comes darkness. The more the truth is suppressed, the less capable of discerning spiritual reality.
 - **We had a DEADNESS of heart:** From hardness and darkness comes deadness. Verse 18 says, "alienated from the life of God." This death state makes it possible to call evil good and good evil.
 - **We had a RECKLESSNESS of heart:** The deadness spawns recklessness. Verse 19 says, "they have become callous," meaning they were beyond feeling. Having got beyond the pain, nothing hurts. They performed every impurity. Sensuality does not satisfy, but only creates a greater appetite.

But you did not learn Christ in this way! Ephesians 4:20

Remember that you have a new life and a new way of walking. Ephesians 4:21-24

"...that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." (v.23-24)

- **With regard to our old life and our new life, Paul brings in language about clothing**
 - ἀποτίθημι - Apotithemai ("rid yourselves") (Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:8) - "to take off clothes"
 - ἀπεκδύομαι - Apekduomai ("taken off") (Colossians 3:9) - "to take off clothes"
 - ἐνδύω - Enduo ("put on") (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10) - "to put on clothes"
- **There is certain clothing that needs to be taken off**

"But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices..." (Colossians 3:8-9)
- **There is certain clothing that needs to be put on**

"So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity." (Colossians 3:12,14)

Remember that you are not alone in this. We are better together. Colossians 3:15-17

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

Digging Deeper:

(Adapted from John MacArthur Ephesians Commentary)

Like the church in our own day, the churches at Ephesus and Colossae were surrounded by paganism and immorality. Ephesus was a leading commercial and cultural city of the Roman empire. It boasted the great pagan temple of Artemis, or Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. But it was also a leading city in debauchery and sexual immorality. Some historians rank it as the most lascivious city of Asia Minor.

The temple of Artemis was the center of much of the wickedness. Like those in most pagan religions, its rituals and practices were but extensions of man's vilest and most perverted sins. Male and female roles were interchanged, and orgiastic sex, homosexuality, and every other sexual perversion were common. Artemis was herself a sex goddess, represented by an ugly, repulsive idol that looked something like a cross between a cow and a wolf. She was served by thousands of temple prostitutes, eunuchs, singers, dancers, and priests and priestesses. Idols of Artemis and other deities were to be seen everywhere, in every size and made out of many different materials. Of special popularity were silver idols and religious artifacts. It was because Paul's preaching cut deeply into that trade that the Ephesian silversmiths rallied the populace against him and his fellow believers (Acts 19:24-28).

The church at Ephesus was a small island of despised people in a giant cesspool of wickedness. Most of the believers had themselves once been a part of that paganism. They frequently passed by places where they once caroused and ran into friends with whom they once indulged in debauchery. They faced continual temptations to revert to the old ways, and the apostle therefore admonished them to resist.

Eubelius wrote in the fourth century, "There's sadness beneath the merriment. Pain is sounding below their frantic attempts not to hear it. They are trying to mask the pain and brokenness they feel but it does not satisfy."

LifeGroup Discussion:

1. **Read Ephesians 4:17-24 together.** In this passage, how did Paul compare the old, or unsaved, man with the new, or saved? What do you do with things when they become old?
2. We talked about the one thing that always destroys God's people is compromise. You have nothing to offer the world around you because there's nothing different about you. In what ways have you seen compromise impact the lives of believers, including your own?
3. Many believers live in the middle. The middle is the place where they live for the world and live for Jesus. They want to wear the old shirts in layers with the new shirts. What are the shirts that need to go for you? What are the shirts that need to be put on? How does putting on LOVE help us?
4. **Read this C.S. Lewis quote together more than once.** "When you are not feeling particularly friendly but know you ought to be, the best thing you can do, very often, is to put on a friendly manner and behave as if you were a nicer person than you actually are. And in a few minutes, as we have all noticed, you will be really feeling friendlier than you were. Very often the only way to get a quality in reality is to start behaving as if you had it already." C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

This quote goes along with this idea that Paul is talking about, a type of "fake it till you make it" mentality that in the end, will hopefully produce the desired outcome. Do you think this is true? Explain yourself.

Next Steps:

1. **Join the conversation at the Alpha Course and explore some of life's big questions about life, faith, the Bible and Jesus over a relaxed time of dinner, learning and group discussion.** The Alpha course meets Wednesdays through May 25 from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Lobby. For more info, please visit calvarylife.org/alpha
2. **Attend the Wednesday night series, Couple Talk, to build healthy communication in your relationships.** Couple Talk meets Wednesdays through April 27 at 7:00 pm in the Chapel. You will learn - and use - practical tools to manage disagreements, handle strong emotions, and repair your relationship when it's been ruptured. As a result, you'll have better communication, feel closer to each other, and be able to resolve conflict faster! Find out more at calvarylife.org/marriage
3. **Connect with a mentor at the Mentor Meetup to grow in your faith and better follow Jesus through a one-on-one discipleship relationship.** Join us for some dessert at the next Mentor Meetup on Sunday, May 1 at 7:00 pm in the Lobby. Learn more at calvarylife.org/mentor