

Palmetto Baptist Church: November 1, 2020

Walking in Purity: Ephesians 4:17-24

¹⁷ 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,^[a] 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.

Paul's Appeal. (Ephesians 4:17a)

Paul's Admonition. (Ephesians 4:17b-24)

I. Paul's appeal. (17a)

- A. Paul's appeal was actionable. (*Now [ESV] / Therefore [KJV]: 4:1; 17, 25; 5:1, 7, 14, 17, 24*)

James 1:22

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Modeled in the book of Ephesians:

- Because we were called in Christ (Eph. 1:18), it motivates our unity (Eph. 4:1-16).
- Because we have been raised from the dead with Christ (Eph. 2:1-10), we should walk together in purity (Eph. 4:17-5:17)

- B. Paul's appeal was personal. (3:1, 14; 4:1, 17)

- He cared enough to express genuine interest in the believers at Ephesus.
- Remember the background of his love for them as seen in Acts 20:36-38)

Acts 20:36-38

³⁶ And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, ³⁸ being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.

- C. Paul's appeal was judicial. (I Thess. 4:3-8; I Cor. 7:10-16)

I Thess. 4:3-8 (note the appeal Paul makes to the authority of Christ)

³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification:^[a] that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body^[a] in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. ⁸ **Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.**

I Cor. 7:10-16 (note the direct connection Paul makes between his teaching and the teaching already done by Christ)

¹⁰To the married I give this charge (**not I, but the Lord**): the wife should not separate from her husband ¹¹(but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. [Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-12; Mark 10:6-9; Luke 16:18]

¹²To the rest I say (**I, not the Lord**) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. ¹³If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. ¹⁴For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. ¹⁵But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you^a to peace. ¹⁶For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

- D. Paul's appeal was logical.
- Paul starts with the negative and transitions into the positive.
 - Don't walk like the Gentiles. (17-19)
 - Follow Christ. (20-24)
 - Paul emphasizes the difference between stinking thinking and spirit directed thinking
 - 17 – futility of their minds (stinking thinking)
 - 18a – darkened understanding (stinking thinking)
 - 18b – hardness of their heart (stinking thinking)
 - 19a – become callous (stinking thinking)
 - 20 – learned Christ (spirit directed)
 - 23 – renewed in the spirit (breath) of your mind (intellect) (spirit directed)

I. Paul's appeal. (17a)

II. Paul's admonition. (17b-24)

- A. Be different from the world. (17b-19)
- Don't get confused about morality. (17b-18a)
 - Futility – (*mataiotēs*) state of being without use or value, emptiness, futility, purposelessness, transitoriness
 - Darkened – (*skotoō*) verb, passive plural participle : to be incapable of perceiving, to not be able to understand

Romans 1:21-28

²¹For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but **they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.** ²²Claiming to be wise, they became

fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴ **Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves,** ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, **God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.**

I Corinthians 2:14

¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and **he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.**

Colossians 2:18

¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions,[Ⓜ] puffed up **without reason by his sensuous mind.**

NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT ABSOLUTE TRUTH BECAUSE THAT WOULD MEAN CULPABILITY FOR SIN. (10 Commandments)

- *Don't get confused about morality. (17b-18a)*
- Don't try living independently from God. (18b)
 - Alienated – (*apēllotriōmenoi*) to be a stranger, to be a foreigner; estranged
 - Ignorance – (*agnoian*) unawareness, lack of discernment, want of perception
 - Hardness – (*pārōsis*) state or condition of complete lack of understanding, dullness, insensibility, obstinacy
 - Heart – (*kardias*) seat of physical, spiritual and mental life
 - Psalm 19:1-6 & Rom. 1:18-20 – All are held accountable for general revelation. Some are held accountable for special revelation. (Psalm 19:7-14) **NO EXCUSE FOR IGNORANCE!**
 - 2 Peter 1:8-9 – Even professing believers can struggle with temporary spiritual blindness (*typhlos*)... having forgotten (*lēthē lambanō*) failing to take hold of or grasp something...
- *Don't get confused about morality. (17b-18a)*
- *Don't try living independently from God. (18b)*
- Don't become numb toward life. (19a)
 - Callous – (*apēlgēkotes*) verb perfect active plural: to be so injured that one is not bothered by the implications of what one is doing,

dead to feeling; to be filled with a heavy sense of a loss of deprivation, be despondent

I Thessalonians 5:19

¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit.

Psalm 13

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

²How long must I take counsel in my soul
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

³Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,

⁴lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

⁵But I have trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

⁶I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

- *Don't get confused about morality. (17b-18a)*
- *Don't try living independently from God. (18b)*
- *Don't become numb toward life. (19a)*

- Don't give into temptation. (19b)
 - Given themselves up - (*paredōkan*) verb aorist active: hand over, give (over), deliver, entrust, allow
 - Sensuality - (*tē aselgeia*) lack of self-constraint which involves one in conduct that violates all bounds of what is socially acceptable; [BKC] "A LIFE WITHOUT CONCERN FOR PERSONAL STANDARDS OR SOCIAL SANCTIONS."
 - Greedy - (*en pleonexia*) the state of desiring to have more than one's due, insatiable, covetousness
 - Impurity - (*akatharsias*) any substance that is filthy or dirty, refuse, immorality (Rom. 1:24)

A FORM OF IDOL WORSHIP:

Ephesians 5:5

⁵For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Colossians 3:5

⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:^{5a} sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

I John 5:21

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

II. Paul's admonition. (17b-24)

A. *Be different from the world. (17b-19)*

B. Be set apart to Christ. (20-21)

- Based on a proper understanding of Jesus. (20)
 - Learned - (*emathete*) verb aorist active: to gain knowledge or skill by instruction
 - NOTE: NOT LEARNED ABOUT CHRIST BUT **LEARNED CHRIST**
- Based on a personal relationship with Jesus. (21)
 - Assuming that you heard about him - (*akouō*) verb aorist active: to exercise the faculty of hearing; to listen; to give ear to
 - Assuming that you were taught in him - (*didaskō*) verb aorist passive: to receive instruction in a formal or informal setting
 - As the truth is in Jesus

I John 5:20

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

II. Paul's admonition. (17b-24)

A. *Be different from the world. (17b-19)*

B. *Be set apart to Christ. (20-21)*

C. Practice biblical sanctification. (22-24)

- Put off the old self... literally: man (*anthrōpon*). (20)
 - Put off - (*apothesthai*) verb aorist middle infinitive: to take off... literally clothes, lay aside, rid oneself of; stop being a spectator and become a contestant
 - Which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires (perhaps a reflection back to the fall of man in Genesis 3:1-6? Definitely connects to Hebrews 3:13 – “that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”)
- Be renewed (*anaeousthai*) verb present passive: become young again, made fresh
 - More accurately translated: “to be made new in your spirit and mind.” (Rather than implying that the mind has a spirit of its own. 😊)

- Put on (*endysasthai*) verb aorist middle: to put clothing or apparel on someone, dress, clothe
 - the new self (literally man or Anthropos)
 - Created after the likeness of God
 - PICTURE OF THE CREATION ACCOUNT BEFORE SIN CREPT INTO THE WORLD THROUGH THE DECEITFULNESS OF DESIRES IN GENESIS 3:1-6.
 - In true righteousness (the last 6 commandments dealing with loving your neighbor)
 - And holiness (the first 4 commandments dealing with loving God)

Application:

- **Encourage others to *learn* Christ. (4:20)**
 - He is the perfect image bearer of God who was not corrupted by the Fall. (Rom. 5:18-19)
 - He is the only one to have perfectly kept the 10 Commandments. (Rom. 10:4)
 - He is available to serve as your substitute. (2 Cor. 5:21)
- **Fight Temptation** (Be different from the world in the way you face temptation. (4:17b-19)
 - Embrace Absolute Truth.
 - Depend on God for Help.
 - Respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
 - Yield to the control of the Holy Spirit.
- **Practice biblical sanctification.**
 - Put off the old man.
 - Renew your mind.
 - Put on the new man.