

**Ephesians 4: 23 and 24; “Putting on the New Man”, Message # 35 in a series
entitled – “The Greatness of His Power, a Bible Study prepared by
Pastor Paul Rendall for January 19th, 2022.**

Paul is here giving instructions to the church at Ephesus, and to us as well, concerning how **we** should live the Christian life. If you have heard Christ and have been taught by Him spiritually, it is your responsibility to put off the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind. And, as we read on further, we are told that we are to put on the new man which was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness. Paul will give us specific examples of these things in verses 25-32, but I will save our looking at that until the next message.

What I would like to do at this time is to look 1st of all, at what it means, to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, as a Christian. And then 2nd, to look at what it means to put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. We have a responsibility to ourselves, first, in the sight of God, in this regard, before we can rightly take up the particular responsibilities that we have towards each other. May the Lord help us by means of this study to understand better what it means to be righteous and holy people, for this is what God has called us to. Let me pose these 2 truths to you in the form of questions.

1st of all – What does it mean to be renewed in the spirit of your mind?

It is worded here for us as a command – “And be renewed in the spirit of your mind”. Now, there are certain things that we need to remember when we think about being renewed in the spirit of our mind. The spirit of our mind is primarily related to the way that we think about God, ourselves, and other people around us; how we think about what life is all about. This is what needs to be renewed in the spirit of our mind. And so, in thinking about the way that you think, the desires of your mind, which is the spirit of your mind, you need to remember what your mind has been like from the time you were born to the time that we were converted to Christ. Because now that you have become a Christian, something much greater and better has come by the Holy Spirit’s power working in your mind.

Turn over with me to Romans chapter 8, verses 5-10. “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.” “For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.” “So then, those are in the flesh cannot please God.” “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.” So, you can see here that the unbelieving person is living according to the flesh. They set their minds on the things of the flesh. And verse 7 says that the carnal mind is enmity against God; that is, there is within the heart of a natural man, a man without the Spirit, a hostility to God and His will for their life.

Those persons who are in the flesh cannot please God because they do not want to be subject to the law of God; indeed it is impossible for them to live that way. All of the bent in terms of living their life is toward themselves and their own understanding. A person in the flesh may be a very outwardly moral person, but they will also be a very self-righteous and self-justifying person in the spirit of their mind. But when grace comes to them the Holy Spirit gives them a whole new disposition of mind. To be spiritually minded is life and peace. The person wants to be sanctified; to be holy as God is holy, and to be set apart more and more to God’s working in their mind and heart.

They want to be renewed in the spirit of their mind. They want to be transformed from one degree of glory to another, by the Spirit. If Christ is in you, the Spirit of God dwells in you, and you are not in the flesh because you now want to do God’s will at every point. This is the

fulfillment of New Covenant grace being bestowed upon you by the Spirit's working. Look over at Ezekiel 36: 26 and 27 – "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." So, once the Spirit has given you a new heart and put a new spirit within you, then you can be renewed in the spirit of your mind every day by His blessed working. And if you fall into sins, you will seek to be renewed in the spirit of your mind and heart so that you might be able to hold sweet communion with the Lord once again. Think of David after his awful sin with Bathsheba. He tells us what he prayed for at that time, what the Lord would do to renew his mind.

Psalm 51: 10 and 11 – "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." "Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." Being renewed in the spirit of your mind as a Christian means that you will, like David, pray that your spirit will be renewed as ever so much as you need it. In my King James Bible in the margin it says the word "renewed" could be translated – "constant". Renew a constant spirit in me. David is praying for a heart that would be firm and constant in the purposes of doing what was right, that would not yield to temptation, that would carry out holy resolutions; one that would be steadfast in the service of God.

In renewal as a Christian, you sometimes need to be brought back in your spirit to the place of right thinking; the kind of holy and righteous thinking that you did have before. But sin deceived you for a time, and it worked to deceive you in the thoughts of your mind and heart. Being renewed in the spirit of your mind always brings you back to living by faith in God and keeping His commandments. You see this thought over in 1st Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 23 and 24. "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." This is what the Christian's mind is taken up with; being sanctified completely, so that their whole spirit would be preserved at the coming the Lord.

Renewal of your mind takes place when you pray and pour out your thoughts and desires to God, to be holy as He is holy; to live a life devoted to God. And so you find these kinds of thoughts coming from the apostle Paul in Romans 12: 1 and 2 – "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Fleshly and carnal thoughts lead to being conformed to this world. But in each of us there must be desires of the mind for consecration; to offer ourselves to Him as a living sacrifice, and not devote ourselves to what is false, vain, worldly, or which leads to pride, sensuality, or foolishness in our behavior.

Renewal of your mind takes place when you begin to compare spiritual things with spiritual as Paul says in 1st Corinthians 2, verses 12-16. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God." "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one." "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? "But we have the mind of Christ."

Paul is saying here that there is a spirit of the world which guides and governs worldly people. They have received this spirit from Adam the first man who fell from his original righteousness. But each and every person descended from him cultivates this spirit of the natural man. They cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. They are foolishness to them. They cannot know and understand the spiritual things of the Bible either or do what the

Christian does with the Bible, which is to compare spiritual things with spiritual. The Christian reads the Bible and uses the analogy of faith in understanding it. He compares scripture with scripture, and he comes to understand the truth of what God would have him to learn about God Himself, about himself as a man, and about his responsibility to apply God's truth to all of his life, so that He will learn to please God in his thoughts and actions. The Christian knows that He has been given the Holy Spirit so that he might know the things freely given to him by God. God has given us all things in Christ. He has given us Himself, His Son, a justifying righteousness through Him; the forgiveness of our sins, through His blood. He has adopted us into his family and made us His sons and daughters. He has given us all things that we need for life and godliness.

We have all the true knowledge that we need concerning this life, when we read the Scriptures. And we learn to judge things rightly when we will pay attention to God's word. He who is spiritual judges all things rightly in accordance with that word. But we who know God through His word are rightly judged by no one. And this is because we have His mind in the Scriptures and His blessed word by the power of the Spirit speaks to our mind and heart convincing us of all that we need to pay attention to, believe, and retain, so that we can apply it to every situation that we face. We have the mind of Christ. No one is God's counselor. But He is our Wonderful Counselor. And we are being renewed in the spirit of our mind, day by day.

2nd – What does it mean to put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness?

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” The “new man which was created” is the new person that you have become, when you come to Christ for salvation. You believe in Christ, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit, and you come to realize that you have a new nature which has been planted in you. The Spirit plants this nature as a spiritual seed in your heart so that you will become a tree of righteousness over the course of the rest of your life. Romans chapter 6, verses 3-5– “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” “For if we have been united (planted in the KJV) in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.”

This “walking in newness of life” comes from your having a new nature. You are a new creation because everyone who comes to Christ, comes to know His working in their heart by the Holy Spirit. Galatians 6: 14 and 15 – “But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.” And 2nd Corinthians 5: 17 – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.” In other words, the believer in Christ is a new person because they have a sinless new nature which is given to them by the Holy Spirit.

If you look at 1st John chapter 3, verse 9 you will see this – “Whoever is born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. This verse shows us that the new nature which is planted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, does not sin. The Christian who walks according to the Spirit, and according to this new nature, cannot sin. It is only when he walks, making provision for the desires of the flesh, that he can sin. And so, everything that the Christian does, in the Spirit, and according to this new nature, there will be no sin in it. This seed remains in the Christian permanently, and it grows up to be a tree of righteousness in their life. And, as a result, greater Christlikeness is seen the believer over time, because of the Spirit's working.

So, you are a new man, a new creation and a new creature when you come to Jesus Christ. But you yourself, in cooperation with the Spirit's working, must consciously think of what it means for you to put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. It means that you will often be thinking about what it means to be righteous and holy. To put on the man in true righteousness is to think about your duty to keep the commandments of God in relation to Christ and other people around you. Your duties can be summed up by loving God with all of your mind, and loving your neighbor as yourself.

Turn over to Romans chapter 13, verses 8-14. "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law." "For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" "Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." "And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed." "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." "Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." "Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy." "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

This last sentence that I just read to you, goes hand in hand with your putting on the new man in verse 24 of Ephesians 4. In order for you to put on the new man, you must first consciously put on the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, you consciously present yourself to God each day as a person who is clothing himself or herself with the righteousness of Christ. Just like you put on your clothes every day when you get up in the morning, you should consciously clothe your spirit, by faith, with the righteousness of Christ. You put Him on, and as you go through your day attempting to do His will at every point, you pray and you think of what He would have you to do in every situation, to glorify God, and to become more like Him. You are to walk as He walked, in love, in meekness, in patience, in humility, and in holiness.

As the apostle Peter said in 1st Peter 1: 13-16 – "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'" In other words, remember to put on the new man by putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that He was holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners. He was set apart in every way to do God's will. And He did it perfectly. You can be changed and transformed by His grace by putting Him on and putting on the new man which was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.