

A True Miracle Makeover

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Bible Text: Ephesians 4:22-24
Preached on: Sunday, January 28, 2018

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Ephesians 4. What rich rich things the word of God is showing us in Ephesians as Paul has laid such an amazing foundation, exhorting the Ephesian believers who, by the way, may have included Philemon. He's in Ephesus so we don't know exactly how that works but to some degree he may have been a part of this congregation, at least for a time. Anyway, Paul has laid out such a marvelous doctrinal foundation of what salvation is and brings great great truth to bear glorifying God for this great work of converting his children and bringing them together. As I said in the Philemon message earlier today, how Jesus saves his church, and he structures his church, and he sanctifies his church, and he sustains his church. It's all about him.

I'm going to talk about a miracle tonight and talk a lot about miracles tonight, but I was thinking this afternoon that as we preach through the Bible, the truth of the local church just comes pounding forth over and over, especially out of the Apostle Paul's ministry, and I thought what a rare rare rare thing it is as pastor of this church, that we have a number of people involved in ministries outside this local church but I could not think of one that's out of balance. I could not think of a person in my church that was out of balance; that they keep a passion and their primary passion for their church knowing that other things come and go. That's a marvelous thing. Some of you have pastored a little bit or pastoring has been your life, and that's very very rare. Most pastors suffer from people going everywhere and doing their own thing and not giving much energy to the church ministry, and you guys are just mature like that and I thank God for you and appreciate you for it. The word is balance, a biblical balance to things.

We're going to talk about "A True Miracle Makeover." I'll read the text in a moment. You can't grow up in a family with four women like I have, a wife and three daughters, and not know about makeovers. Actually, I've learned a lot of stuff I wish I hadn't learned. I didn't really care to learn it but it's going to happen, it's just going to happen. It was like I just didn't exist, like they just talked about stuff like I wasn't a guy sitting there. And so you learn lots of things, but one of the things you learn is about makeovers and don't we have lots of stuff today about being made over? Just vaguely in my mind I remember it was some kind of television show about an ugly duckling or something. Was it something like that? And they just made these people over, just radically, just surgeries and all kinds of things. Then there is the one where very large people become muscle men and trim and wonderful, and honestly I just learned this a few months ago, that there are actually

people in the world that their whole life is to get a large following on social media. I mean, that's just all they do and they make money. I had no idea you could make money doing that. And Pam was telling me about a lady and, you know, she'll say my blouse came from Target and my shoes came, belts, or whatever, and they will get sponsors for all this stuff. Here's my point: is not our world obsessed with making over the outside? Just think about it for a moment. I mean, it's just, you can't conceive the billions of dollars and phenomenal effort that goes into making the outside look better.

I don't want to be too crude and too brazen in my comments, but I remember J. Vernon McGee. Do you remember J. Vernon McGee, the radio preacher who has been on for a thousand years now, I think. He's just been on forever and he's good. He has some good things to say, but he would talk about makeup and there has always been a group that thinks women should not wear makeup. He would always say, "Well, I think a little paint can help any old barn," so he said don't be so down on makeup. That was really supposed to be funny. That was actually a joke.

There is nothing wrong with some efforts to make your external look more pleasing or attractive, and obviously as husband and wife, our goal, our focus should be on our wives or for our husbands, what pleases them, what makes them happy certainly, and we certainly should be modest, but we live in a world that is obsessed with making things over and we keep going to new depths and new depths and new depths and now in this perverse era that we are in, you can now make up new genders, all kinds of things. And once you leave the word of God and start down that funnel, brothers, there is no bottom. It just gets more strange and more bizarre and more wicked, and that's the kind of trajectory unfortunately that we are on.

But the Bible talks about a true miracle makeover. Let's look at it there in Ephesians 4, beginning in verse 22. Paul says to the church at Ephesus,

22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self [or man], which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self [or new man], which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Now, I. A miracle where God transforms my nature. Actually the word "transforms" here could be a little weak because the real truth where you are going to see from the text is, God creates a new man. He creates a new nature. As a matter of fact, look down at verse 24, if you will, of our text again, and he uses that word "created, and put on the new man, or new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." Now, this word "created" here is the same word that God would use when the Hebrew equivalent of this word is used to express, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." The original Hebrew is ex nihilo, it means something came out of nothing. It's a miracle. God brought something out of nothing. Well, it's amazing the Apostle Paul pulls the same Greek equivalent of that old Hebrew word and uses it for what happens when you became a Christian, when you became a believer in Christ Jesus.

Here is a good cross reference just to reemphasize that truth, Colossians 1:16, "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created [by] Him and for Him." Now, while the primary emphasis of that text is on the material universe, Jesus is the person who spoke all that is into existence but it must also include now the new creation, Christians, the church. That is being created by Jesus also. He creates all things and it is a miracle work of God. The act of God creating the physical universe is absolutely a miracle, and the work that God performs in making us Christians is a miracle.

Ephesians 2:10 as we reflect back on where Paul has taken us so far, he says, "For we are His workmanship," here it is again, "created in Christ Jesus." Created, same word. His work. He does the creation. 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature," a new creation, if you will, "the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

Now, this is not a creation of man. Man did not will himself to become a miraculous new creation. Now think about that for a moment. There is no way you willed yourself into this being a new creation. Deity had to act in an initiatory way on your behalf for you to become this new creation. So this isn't of man.

Romans 7:18, Paul says, "I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh." There is just nothing good there. In my unredeemed humanity, there is nothing to do anything with. Are you hearing me, church? There is just no component of your natural, fallen, unredeemed humanity whereby you can come up with anything close to as good as being a new creature in Christ Jesus. There is just not the material there to work with.

John 3:7, Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'" The context here makes it completely clear that this is not a command. Jesus did not say, "Nicodemus, go out there and get born again." He's actually wanting to confound Nicodemus. He's wanting Nicodemus to grasp that, "You are a Pharisee of the Pharisees. You are an admired and acknowledged leader among the Jews and in the things of the Jewish law. But Nicodemus, do you understand that to become one of mine, it takes something outside of you. You must be born again." It's a work the Spirit performs in man.

Ephesians 2:5 reminds us, "even when we were dead." Dr. Jimmy Milliken has preached here many times before. He was my major theological professor in graduate school. Dr. Milliken would get up there and we would egg him on in the lectures until his glasses fell down on the end of his nose and he would start preaching instead of lecturing because he believed what he was teaching. And he would bring us to the doctrine of sin and he would begin to teach us about the sinfulness of man, and he would always bring this text up and say, "You were dead in trespasses and sins," then he would stop and he would say, "How dead were you? How dead were you?" Well, there is only dead and alive, there is no in between. You were dead, the text says, in our transgressions, and notice he made us

alive. He acted on us and on our behalf to this miracle happen. He caused life to come about.

Let's remind ourselves afresh. Now, I know these are not new doctrines to us but, brothers and sisters, can I just say this to you: the Bible just teaches this over and over and over again. Do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to preach it over and over and over again. If it's in the text, we're going to it again. Amen? No one, no one can birth himself. If you are going to be born again, you have to be birthed of another and by another. So we don't go out and command people to be born again. No, we do, in balance we do go out and urge, plead, encourage, persuade, and command all men everywhere to repent and believe. That's our job. That's the human side of the equation. God is in back of what happens but our job is to urge, plead, beg, pray for.

I remember the story of Charles Haddon Spurgeon and he talks about sitting around the table and his godly mother having her Bible study with her children and she was working on them to come to faith in Christ. She looked at little Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and this is a good mama right here, because she parented according to truth, not according to sentiment and emotion. She looked at little Spurgeon, or Charles Haddon, I should say, and she said, "Charles Haddon, you are a sinner before a holy and just God. The wrath of God is upon you and if you die in your sins, you're going to come under the judgment of God and I will testify against you before God." She wanted her son to know, "Son, you've got to find Christ."

That's our job, to persuade men about the urgency, but that's not in this passage. I just want you to know I still believe it but Ephesians, I mean, literally from the beginning to the end, forces us to humble ourselves and acknowledge afresh if a man does repent and believe, God was in back of that, though that man is fully responsible. Can I say it to you again? Who is responsible if a man goes to heaven? God is responsible. Who is responsible if a man goes to hell? That man is responsible. In his sins, he chose not to come to Christ. "Well, pastor, how do you balance that?" I don't have to, it's taught in the Scriptures. I preach all that's there. When we get to heaven, all this will dissolve into a higher unity when we can finally understand it all, but it's amazing that God doesn't wait until we can grasp it all before he teaches much of it, and he's teaching us much of it here in Ephesians.

So here we are in this text, verse 24, where the point is that God created this miraculous new thing inside of me. So the Christian is one who has been transformed from within by the work of God. Now it's miraculous and it's mysterious. Again, I've said this to you before but I don't know of many pastors over the last 30 years that studied much more than I have studied because you are a wise and gracious people that gave your preaching pastor the assignment, you preach and you pray and you study, and let most everything else be handled by other people. So I have been able to spend a lot of time in studying and I'm telling you, I keep learning and learning and learning and every week I learn stuff I didn't know. Every week I have to repent of some notion or some nuance or some view of things that I thought, "Well, I had that a little wrong in my thinking." I have to repent and change it a little bit, humble myself before the word of God. Amen? That's what

we're supposed to do. But I'm telling you, the new birth, being born again, being created in Christ Jesus, being brought to life by God's Spirit, is still as much a mystery today as it was that night driving my car through Columbia, Tennessee on my way back to Middle Tennessee State University when I heard a Presbyterian preacher on the radio and I believed on Christ. I don't know how it happened. I don't know how it happened. I went from one direction in life and one hope and one love, me, to a new direction, a new hope with Jesus, and a new chief love for him. Something miraculously changed.

Now, some people, it's a little more of a gradual thing. I understand that and we've got to be careful and that's gotten Baptist churches and evangelicals in general in a lot of trouble trying to make a cookie-cutter conversion experience. Everybody does it this, this, or this way, and then we can get a lot of people saved. Then things would change and we would find a new little nuance, a new little way, and what we do is we pack our churches with a bunch of lost Baptists who have not experienced the new birth. There has never been the true miraculous change on the inside.

1 Peter 1:23 is another good insight here. He says, "for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable," no humanity, all humanity is perishable, no humanity had a role in this, but you've been born of something beyond the perishable realm, "but imperishable," he says, "that is, through the living and enduring word of God."

Now, there is a practical application for us and the Bible reminds us in 2 Peter 1:10 that we ought to be all the more diligent to make certain that we have believed on Jesus. Wait a minute, that's not what it says. Doggone it, the Bible is doing it again. We've got to go back to God's sovereignty again. I like being there myself, but some of you are still uncomfortable with it so I'm trying to be patient with you. "Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you." Make certain about his calling and choosing you. Isn't that an incredible way to say that? I wouldn't have said it that way. I would've said, "Have you really repented? Have you really believed?" No, but Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit writes, "No, brethren, make certain about His calling and choosing you." In other words, work toward – now you listen to me tonight, notice the balance here – work toward stirring up in your heart and practicing in your life the kind of fruit that marks one called and chosen of God.

The assurance of your salvation, surely most of you remember the tomato stake. The assurance of your salvation is not that you went behind the barn one day and found a tomato stake and drove the tomato stake in the ground and said, "Devil, you see that right there? I just asked Jesus to save me and this tomato stake is witness of that, so I am truly saved." That's the most foolish unbiblical nonsense I have ever heard in my entire life. Throw the tomato stake away and find the assurance of the indwelling Spirit of God.

The Spirit, the Bible says, bears witness with our spirit that I am a child of God. That's what I'm looking for. That's what I'm looking for. And do you know what? I don't think God intends for any of his children to live in some sort of toil and turmoil every day, "Am I saved? Lost? Saved? Lost? Saved?" That's not what he's talking about, but he is talking about there is no place in Christianity for a slothful, undisciplined, lazy, grace

perverter, but to understand this grace gave me a new heart. This grace gave me a new zeal. This grace gave me a new purpose. This grace gave me a new way of looking at things. This grace has enabled me to open this Bible and continually repent and re-sharpen my thinking according to the word of God. And as those things are happening, that is evidence the Spirit of God is working in me and assuring me I'm one of his called and chosen ones. Peter's words. Not Jeff Noblit's, Peter's.

So we want to be certain that we are those who he has acted on; we are those, one of those whom he has created in Christ Jesus; we are one of those in whom he has birthed new life; we are one of those who is his workmanship. All these are Bible words and Paul uses the word "believe." We are one of those who has believed and the evidence is seen in a new heart and a new desire and a new pattern in my life.

So the individual Christian should be continuously diligent to make certain that he is one of God's called and chosen ones. The beautiful part about this, when Peter says it this way, one of the things he's getting at is God has no doubt about you. If you are one of his called and chosen ones, it's settled. But on your part, you may have some doubt and your way to secure that or find that security is through cultivating, stirring up, the new heart and the new lifestyle that looks like I'm one of his newly created, one of his called ones, one of his chosen ones, one of the ones he has birthed life into.

All right, so we've been talking about Paul writes here about being created by God and we became a Christian. Something miraculous happened by deity that made me brand-new. It's a brand-new makeover. Now he goes a step further into what I call the mechanics, the mechanics, if you will, of this miraculous new life, and we see this beginning in verse 22 with subpoint A under II. I'm doing good with my numbers tonight, I hope. Subpoint A under II which is: laying aside the old man or laying aside the old self. You can translate it either way. He says here in verse 22, "that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self," or the old man, "which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit."

So we are laying aside the old man and so here's the thing, he's building on again all these glorious truths of how Christ has saved us and we are secure in that, now what are we going to do with that? God has changed me radically so I gladly lay aside what I formerly was. I gladly lay aside and I'd like to use these two words: I have laid aside the old purpose of my life and the old pattern of my life. I have once for all laid it aside. Now, I wish I could tell you that it no longer works on me, it no longer gains any victories over me, but I can't tell you that because it does, but as far as who I truly am, that's no longer who I am. I'd like to say that's not the true new me anymore. It's a picture of repentance. As a purpose and as a pattern of life, I no longer desire to live for self and this world and the ends of this earth like the rest of the worldlings live. I've been changed and I am now focused on a new purpose and a new pattern to my life, Christ at the center and the glory of God as my purpose, and now my life is marked by something different. I have put on a new man.

So 2 Corinthians 5:17 talks about this being a new creation. One of the things that that night in my car when I was a freshman at Middle Tennessee State University, I'm listening to this Presbyterian preacher on the radio, and my life changed. I just believed on Christ and I increasingly began to sense my sinfulness and my wretchedness and my great offensiveness to this beautiful and holy God, but increasingly I was grasping but Christ has cleansed me and I belong to him and I am forgiven and just great joy was in my life. Do you know what I started doing? Do you know what I started doing? Do you know what I started doing? The very next Sunday, I went to church. I didn't go to church. And the very next Sunday night, do you know what I did? I went to church. And the next Wednesday night, do you know what I did? I went to church. Now, when I was not at school, I was at First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. Some sweet saints of God there. Most of the church is dead, or it was then, but there were some good people there that loved me and encouraged me and I thank God for them. But I'm not exaggerating, I'd go to church at First Baptist, Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, on Wednesday night and it would be me and about 18 women over 90 years of age. But I went every Wednesday night. Do you know why I went every Wednesday night, why I went every Sunday morning, why I did that? Because my purpose and pattern to life had changed. Now, I still sin. As a matter of fact, the last time I checked, I still sin, but that's not my purpose and pattern anymore. That's not the new true me, because if God has acted on me, I am involved in acknowledging the laying aside of the old man, the old self.

Hodge, Charles Hodge, the Presbyterian theologian, says the old man is that which is decrepit. It is deformed. It is degrading to destruction. As God has worked within me, I became awakened and then convicted and then I broke through in faith and found Christ, and in faith I began to see everything I could not see before. I'm a new man. I began to see my old man as sinful and wretched and guilty and hell deserving. I began to see Christ as lovely and loving and forgiving. And I increasingly began to grasp what it means to put my hope, my confidence to rest in what he did for me on the cross that I could be forgiven; one who couldn't do anything to save myself, but he could perform it all. And at that point, due to the continued interworking of God, God began an ever increasing love relationship between me and himself, and I gained an ever increasing abhorrence of myself as a wretched sinner, and all of this was the working of God. I had new life within me and I once and for all declared that my old person, the old me that was full of pride and arrogance and pseudo-intellectualism, I laid that aside and like a child I looked to the word of God to begin forming this new man.

Now, verse 22, he continues on talking about the old man that we have laid aside, he says, "which is being corrupted according to the lust of deceit." Now, at one time we were hopelessly trapped in this digression, this lifestyle of digression that was encased in the lust of deceit. That's an interesting phrase. It's actually the idea of baiting a trap for a beast and you can bait a trap and trappers do this all the time, cages, traps, whatever, it may be a snare, and they will put the bait in there and the beast will come by and his animal instincts will take over and he is drawn to the bait but it's a lie. Good word, it's a lie. It's a trap. Boom, the snare is shut and he dies a painful death.

That's exactly where we were before we were changed. We were falling. The only thing we knew is fall. It's the only thing we had. You see, beforehand we were left to the animal instinct, "What do I desire? What do I crave? What do I want?" Isn't that what our culture looks like today? Every lust and depraved thing that floats across men's minds, "That's what I am." Used to they'd say that's what I do, now they've gotten more sophisticated and say, "No, this is what I am." I'll tell you what you were, you were made in the image of God but you are a rotten fallen sinner like me and everybody else. But that's where we were trapped until that day that we were saved. That's the characteristic of the old man. He keeps following the natural, animal, based lust of his life until it leads him to destruction and then the judgment of God. Aren't you glad through the miracle work of Christ Jesus we have laid aside the old man? We no longer yield to his purpose in life. We no longer live to a pattern of life that he would dictate to us. And we no longer face the consequence that he would have faced, the judgment of God.

Well, the idea here where he says lay aside is literally the picture of taking off a coat. It's like we took off that coat. That's who we were and that has been laid aside. It's no longer who we are. Now he goes to another part of what I call the mechanics of this miraculous new life, and that's B under II: putting on the new man. Laying aside the old man, putting on the new man. Now this is like putting on a new coat. By God's transforming power, there is something new in me and it's like putting on a new garment. Again, I have a new love for God, a new love for God's word, a new love for God's people, a new love for his law. I remember very clearly after I was converted reading the Bible every night until I fell asleep. What changed? Something changed. That's me putting on the new man, putting on the new coat.

I read about in the ancient world that some systems of law required that if you murdered a man, a certain level of murder, a certain maybe premeditated element of it, you were required to strap that man's corpse to your body and that corpse was strapped to you and you had to live until it rotted off. Well, that's something the picture of what we are now. We're brand new but the old corpse of the old man is still there and he stinks and he's rotten, he's decrepit, he's putrefying, he's corruption and he's still there.

Isn't it interesting why Paul ended chapter 7 of Romans saying, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death?" In other words, Paul is saying, "I'm brand new but I've got this old dead man hanging on me that I hate. I hate him. I hate his desires. I hate his purposes. I hate his lust. I hate everything about him but I still have this guy strapped to me."

Now, the new man is not anything like that old, decrepit, old man, that old corpse that's still hanging on. The new man, look at verse 24, "put on the new self, which in the likeness of God." What a phrase. The new man is created in the image of God. That is an interesting phrase. Once again, we get a New Testament equivalent of an Old Testament truth. What was Adam and Eve made like in the garden of Eden? Genesis 1:27, in the image of God. Man was originally made in the image of God. Christ Jesus by his power makes us new and recreates us in the image of God. The new man, the new you, is back to the image of God, but even better than that, because when you're born again, you're the

new creation and as the new creation, you no longer bear a man's righteousness. Now we bear, we stand in the righteousness of Christ so the new creation is better than the old. We don't deserve it but it's better.

So through the working of God's power, man now has changed, the image of God has been restored to him. Now he uses the word "truth" in here in verse 24, "has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." Now we're of the truth now instead of the old liar. The old lie was the old man. When the old man says, "Live for the world! Chase that lust! Grab for all the gusto! Get all the world you can! Get all you can, can all you get, sit on the lid and poison the rest! Be for yourself! Grab it all!" That was a lie, but the new man is of the truth. It's of the truth, verse 24.

Then he says in truth we walk in holiness and righteousness of the truth. That marks the new pattern we're striving after. Now, God's word is truth and that's why we should have our daily quiet time. That's why you should have a verse or two of Scripture you try to keep in your heart and mind that you're memorizing and meditating on. That's why we have Bible study. And that's why we must sit under strong, Spirit-anointed preaching of the word of God, so it can continue to help us to keep walking in the new man that we truly are. There is a new true me but I have to keep working to walk in him and the word of God is the truth that enables me to do so.

So what a glorious and miraculous transformation that God has wrought in my heart to make me a new man, give me a new desire to set aside the old man, and live with this new purpose and new pattern to my life, a pattern that is of the truth that is righteous and holy. This truly is a miraculous makeover.

Now, a third part, renewing the spirit of my mind. He gives us another mechanical aspect, if you will. Verse 23, "and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind." Now there is something interesting here in the Greek tense that Paul uses as he's writing this. When he says take off the old man, it's the aorist tense verb. When he says put on the new man, it's the aorist tense verb. Aorist tense means finished action in the past with continuing results. So he said there's a once and for all aspect. When you're truly saved, you have as a form of a new stance and a new purpose, laid aside the old man. That's no longer who I am. I'm different now. Once and for all that's done, now I'll continue to keep him laid aside. And I put on the new man. Once and for all I've put on the new man, one that is of the truth and walks in holiness and righteousness. He's put on and now the continuing results of that. It's aorist tense. It speaks to action in the past time with continuing consequence.

Alright, but that's not the tense of verse 23. When he says "and you be renewed," that's really not a great translation because it's the present tense, not the aorist tense, and the present tense means continuing action. Not finished action in past time, in fact, you and I are now walking in a continual discipline, in a continual pattern of taking out the old man thoughts in our minds and putting on the new man thoughts. Do you know what that's called? Do you know what that lifestyle pattern starting at a point in my life, laid aside the old man, put on the new man, and now walking, I'm renewing the spirit of my mind? I

keep taking in the word of God and when anything in my thinking that contradicts the word of God, I kick it out and say that's the old man, and I put on a new man, new thinking. Do you know what that's called? Christianity. That's just normal A, B, C everyday Christianity. If you ain't doing that, you're not living like a Christian. That's just what we do. We are continually repenters, amen? Remember when you got saved, you didn't just place faith in Jesus Christ and repent of sin, you became a father and became a repentor. Tonight sitting here under this preaching, you better have repented some. You better have found a point or two where you said, "I didn't think of it quite that way. Lord, if that's biblical, I'm going to kick out my old thoughts and put your new thought in there." That's what I have to do. That's what you have to do.

So it's continual. It's present tense. So I am to be progressively renewing the spirit of my mind. Now, the word "spirit" here doesn't mean the Holy Spirit, it means my human spirit. It means that part of man, that immaterial part of me that's behind my thinking. It's in back of the mind, if you will. It gives the mind its direction. It gives the mind its fuel. It's a new type thing like a dragster that goes down the drag strip, they have special fuel for a dragster. It's a different type thing. Well, we have a new special fuel. Our spirit is to be renewed by the truth of God's word.

It has the idea, there are two aspects to this and in Scripture there are two different words used and one Greek word means that a renewed mind means a changed mind, a changed opinion, a changed doctrine, but more than that, it means something that's fresh and vigorous and new versus what's old and dead and lifeless. But not only fresh and new, it has also the idea of being excellent and of high value. So we have a new spirit awakened in us. It's fresh and it's new and it's different from the old and it's of a high high excellence. Where we used to run around following our animal instincts like an old stray dog, low, base, animalistic drives. As a matter of fact, because we're so wicked and depraved, we get into stuff that animals wouldn't dare think about doing and I'm talking about human beings. Surely not us but human beings. That's all we had, low, base, animal drives, but now something new and fresh and vigorous has happened of a high excellence. The new man.

You and I when we look at this world today and this world tells us, "No, it's good and wholesome and wonderful and blessed and we ought to celebrate this particular lifestyle and that particular lifestyle," we say, "No, that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says these desires are acceptable in these contexts with this person and there are barriers and there are guards. This is a more excellent way to look at these things." And you could take any aspect you like. Our finances. The way we raise our children. The way we clothe ourselves. We are striving for a more excellent view of things. Not legalism. Not a condemning, cold, letter of the law type lifestyle. But the new excellence of the truth of the word of God guides our very lives now.

So those two things are true about the new man. So we've learned that the Apostle Paul has said, "When God saved you, he did a miraculous new true makeover from the inside out. You're to be setting aside the old man, putting on the new man, and continually walking renewing the spirit of your mind to be honoring and pleasing to Christ and for

his glory." Do you know what I'm thankful for? I'm thankful that I don't have to talk you into this. It's the Spirit of God that communicates to you that this is right and true and you want to walk in it while I try to walk in it also, that God would get the glory and the honor and the praise. Now, it's interesting as you think about the context here, Paul is writing to Gentiles in a very pagan, promiscuous, perverse, sexually perverse, immoral culture and he said, "But you guys are headed in a totally different direction now." And so must we.