

April 14, 2024

# MY NOTES:

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EPHESIANS 4:17-24

# EPHESIANS

13. OLD AND NEW

## TODAY'S VERSES:

- Ephesians 4:17-24
- Ephesians 2:10
- Isaiah 5:20
- Romans 12:2
- Romans 1:32
- 1 John 1:9

How can you specifically honor God with your life this week?

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# EPHESIANS

## 13. OLD AND NEW EPHESIANS 4:17-24

Today in Ephesians we explore what it means to put off the old and put on the new. We put off our sin and put on Christ's righteousness.

- ♦ **How does the clothing metaphor address sin and righteousness?**
- ♦ **How would you describe your "former manner of life"?**
- ♦ **What does it mean to be made new in Christ?**

So far in Ephesians, we have looked at who God is, His great calling for us, and what His intention is for human history and the Church. God's grace is ultimately demonstrated in His removal of our sin and clothing us in Christ's righteousness. We continually *put on* sin when we should be taking it off. One person said, "*Clothing can polish the image but not the soul.*"

### Read Ephesians 4:17-24.

John Stott outlined this as 1) *hardness* of heart moves to 2) *darkness* of heart, and then 3) *deadness* of heart, and finally 4) *recklessness* (unrestrained abandonment to sin). While not EVERYONE who lives apart from Christ goes to the depths mentioned here, it is still a portrayal of life apart from Christ in general. All lives without Christ are dominated by sin (even those in *Christ* still struggle with it).

- ♦ **In what ways do you still struggle?**
- ♦ **What unbelief (lies about God) can you identify?**

**Hardness** – The word for "hardening" meant "a stone harder than marble." This is why we say, "a heart of stone." A "hardening of hearts" describes not just an unwillingness, but also an inability to respond to God's truth.

**Darkness** – This is an absence of spiritual understanding. In Romans 1 Paul says that the more we suppress the truth, the less capable we became of discerning spiritual reality.

**Deadness** – From hardness and darkness comes deadness. This is the state where people start calling "evil good and good evil."

## DISCUSSION NOTES

**Recklessness** – Recklessness means callous beyond feeling.

- ♦ **Can you give examples of the above in people or relationships around you?**

Paul tells us that if we are going to clothe ourselves with Christ we must get undressed from our sin; the only way to do that is by trusting in Jesus and then listening to His Spirit as He leads and guides us.

Here are 10 questions to ask yourself about things in your own life:

1. **How is your thinking about that issue wrong?** The Bible draws a correlation between the way we THINK and the way we live.
2. **In what ways is your understanding about your sin growing darker?** Meaning, how is it getting worse?
3. **How have you tried to separate this sin/issue from God?** Many people like to try to sin in private and act like God is not there.
4. **In what ways have you made yourself more ignorant about the consequences of your sin?** Paul says we reap what we sow.
5. **Is your heart hard and growing harder (about this sin)?**
6. **How are you becoming more insensitive toward God and others (because of your sin)?**
7. **How are you giving your life over to this as if you were powerless to it?**
8. **In what ways do you indulge yourself in your sin?**
9. **How has this sin defiled other parts of your life?**
10. **How is this sin clamoring for your life?**

Either Jesus kills our sin, or it will eventually kill us. Sin seeks to isolate us from others and bring about our death; the Gospel brings true, abundant life.

- ♦ **Along with your community, practice confessing sin with one another, as well as confessing the "true righteousness and holiness" found in Jesus.**

1. **Do you know Christ**
2. **Are you learning about Jesus**
3. **Are you putting off and on**