

April 28, 2024

MY NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

EPHESIANS 4:22-32

# EPHESIANS

15. BITTERNESS



## TODAY'S VERSES:

Ephesians 4:22-32

2 Corinthians 2:10-11

James 3:14

Hebrews 12:15

Ruth 1:20

Ephesians 5:1

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

---

---

---



# EPHESIANS

## 15. BITTERNESS EPHESIANS 4:22-32

Everything at the end of Ephesians 4 is related to our family identity in Christ. Because we are family, we tell the truth, use our anger correctly, don't steal from one another, don't put one another down, and don't live in bitterness. These actions are borne out of our new identity in Christ. When Paul says to "put on the new self," it means to remember and live in alignment with this new identity.

- ♦ **When do you need to be reminded of your true identity the most?**

What makes Christianity different from every world religion is the truth that we don't make ourselves worthy enough for God to love us; we live in response to God's great love and grace given to us.

**Read Ephesians 4:28-32.**

- ♦ **Are there things listed here you would like to "put away" from your life?**
- ♦ **What do you think about the fact that we forgive others because we have already been forgiven?**
- ♦ **What tends to inspire bitterness in your own life?**
- ♦ **How are you (and no one else) at the center of your own bitterness?**
- ♦ **How does the Gospel speak to bitterness that crops up in our own lives?**

Amy Carmichael once said, "For a cup brimful of sweet water cannot spill even one drop of bitter water however suddenly jolted." This refers to how circumstances of life may bump or "jolt" us, and what's inside is revealed.

- ♦ **When you are jolted/bumped by hardship, what spills out of your "cup"?**
- ♦ **As a community, do you have the love/trust to speak into one another's lives when bitterness is evident?**

## DISCUSSION NOTES

- ♦ **How does the Gospel free us to take accountability for bitterness and other sin?**

Paul redirects so that we would see what a life lived in the reality of the Gospel results in:

1. **Giving to others.**
2. **Building others up.**
3. **Getting rid of all bitterness.**
4. **Being kind.**
5. **Forgiving others.**

There are bitter people who claim not to be bitter, they may not even recognize it in their own life. Paul is helping us to self-diagnose. Do we find it easier to forgive and be kind, or move to judgment, unforgiveness, and anger?

- ♦ **Which of the above five things comes hardest to you?**
- ♦ **Which of them comes the most naturally?**
- ♦ **As a community, identify a personal focus from this list and pray for one another throughout the week.**

We have a duty as believers to extend forgiveness to others as we have received it, but we will only do that to the extent that we understand our own forgiveness. We have been offered grace *and* kindness, forgiveness *and* mercy, so we must also extend that to others.

- ♦ **What objections does your heart bring to ideas of forgiveness?**
- ♦ **Are there areas of your life where you don't feel "the right" to be forgiven?**
- ♦ **Why is trusting in Jesus' right to forgive us so important?**

In Christianity, God brings justice in dying for sin and offers salvation by grace. He loves His enemies and makes them His children, which is how Paul starts the next chapter: *Eph 5:1 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children...our justice is at the cross of Christ.*