

Ephesians: New Life

Ephesians 4: 17-32 (NASB 1995)

Big Idea Statement of Passage: "Since you are worthy, walk worthy by putting on the New Man that mirrors Christ"

- I. To earnestly appropriate this new Christlike man, we must comprehend the extensive corruption of the old
- II. To earnestly appropriate the new Christlike man (walk worthy), it's clear we must start from the inside out.

Questions for Thought and Discussion:

1) Compare Ephesians 4:17-22 and compare this passage with Romans 1:20-32. You can also include Ephesians 2:1-3. Do you notice a progression in these passages and if so, where does it start exactly and where does it end up? What does Paul say about the natural mind of the unbeliever (*whom he refers to as Gentiles*)? You may also look at I Corinthians 2:14,15 and Romans 3:9-18. How do these verses influence how you would converse with a non-Christian? What role does prayer play in your conversation? How do you go about approaching someone who cannot appraise spiritual things and who may hate or be antagonistic to everything you believe and stand for? What did Paul do in Acts 17 with the Greek philosophers? What was Paul's ultimate focus in talking with lost people?

2) Can you generally expect favor from the unbelieving world when you talk about the gospel of Christ? Jesus indicated if the world hated Him, it would hate us; for a slave is not greater than his master (John 15:18-25). As the world (*America, the West and Asia*) becomes more anti-God, how would Paul expect us to act amidst this evil, hate, anger, slander and clamour? Re-read Ephesians 4:23-32 and reflect on the pastor's teaching today. How does a "New Man" act amidst such evil? Can you describe the "New Man" and contrast it to the "Old Man" in one's character and life? If Christians lived out these characteristics, how do you think it will impact the unbelievers around you? How would it impact your co-workers, your family members and your neighbors?

3) By the exhortations in Ephesians 4:17-32, Paul clearly indicates a believer can live like a non-believing Gentile in his or her character instead of Christ. Otherwise he would not have a string of commands in this passage v.25-32 nor instruct them to not live like Gentiles in their thinking patterns in v.17-23. We are to put on the "new man" and not return to the old manner of thinking and acting. Question: Obviously, none of us as believers want to end up this way in our lives. However, if we are honest with ourselves, all of us do in some form or another (*depending on stresses or trials we encounter in life*) and make everyone else miserable around us, in our families, at work and in church! Discuss further, based on the passage and sermon, how the pastor indicated we are to root out these sinful patterns in our lives. What did the pastor mean by "protection systems" we have built in our lives that prevent biblical maturity and perfect love? What did he mean by "demandingness" in how we relate to others and God Himself? What example did he give and how does this apply to your life now, where you are spiritually? What did the pastor say about these matters of the heart, where our sin patterns lie? How often we act spiritual and righteous, but underneath we still have hidden

anger, resentments, keep a record of wrongs (*grudge holding*) and manipulate others to get what we want (*instead of trusting God; it is a control issue as we usurp God's place*). What are the areas where you fall short in your inner mind and heart and hope to do better in 2023? How would you go about seeing change happen where you often fail?

4) When we are angry at others, rarely is it righteous anger. Normally it is because "our rights" were stepped on (*self-focus*) or we are controlling and did not get our way (*we play God with people*). Re-read the characteristics that proceed out of the heart. What are the areas that trigger your anger and resentment when you encounter this in other people's lives (*believers in the church or non-believers*)? How will you conquer this sin or these sin patterns in how you respond to others (*acting sinfully against you*)? When you have righteous anger (*rare.....you nor I are Jesus!*), how does Paul say we are to deal with it? Do you do that with real righteous anger? Why or why not?

5) What does "*putting on the New Man*" look like for you in 2023? Be more specific. If CBC all did this together as a group, how would it change the fellowship life of the church? How would it change your marriage if only one of you put on the "New Man"? How would it impact your other family relationships?

6) Prayerfully spend some time before class is over to pray over everything discussed (*break up in groups of two and pray for 5 minutes for each other*).