

Intro: Eph 4:17-24 Pg 828

Major turning point in Book of Ephesians

Remember when we started we used a visual to remind us of what Paul is communicating.

Live Worthy: Lit = Be of the same weight as

Balance of the book of Ephesians is all about practical living for Jesus

- Vs 1-2: Be like Jesus
- Vs 3- 6: Be connected with your new family
- Vs 7-3: Be trained to serve God
- Vs 14-5 Be mature
- Vs 16 Be busy serving God

Vs 17-24: **BE DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU USED TO BE!**

1. REMEMBER WHERE YOU CAME FROM.

Vs 17-19

Here Paul says, if your life is going to measure up you have to both remember the past and set your mind on leaving it behind!

- Paul's challenge: *Listen to me!*

Paul does something here in this verse that he only does a couple of times in the NT.

"I swear to before God!"

Insist: Lit: To go *"on the record"* and testify, usually under oath. Legal term to speak as a witness

We would say that he, "powers up!" He is VERY direct and VERY confrontational in the way that he speaks.

He only does that when something is important to him. Paul is saying, listen...to live ANY OTHER WAY is not Acceptable

- Paul's encouragement *Don't Live how you used to live*

There is a way to say "Stop it" grammatically: Paul doesn't use that

Instead he phrases it in such a way to say: Don't allow yourself to slip back into old bad habits!

That is a VERY important distinction, because the way he expresses himself reminds us...There is a PATTERN here that if we allow ourselves to start down the path we will end up in a place we NEVER wanted to be!

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| >Bad Thinking: | Futility: Lit = <i>Emptiness, without point or purpose</i> |
| >Bad Understanding: | Darkened: Lit = <i>Obscured, Darkened, Difficult to see through</i> |
| >Separated fm Life of God | Separated: Lit = <i>to be estranged, divided from, not participating with</i>
Ignorance: Lit = <i>to not know (not because you can't...don't WANT to know!)</i>
Rom 1:18: <i>Suppress the truth (to hold it down!)</i> |
| >Hardening of Hearts | Hardened: Lit = <i>callousness; medical term (become hard and insensitive)</i>
Mark 3:5 Jesus healing |
| >Losing all sensitivity | Losing: Lit = <i>to be past all feeling; to cease to feel pain</i> |
| >Give themselves over | Give: Lit = <i>to surrender yourself, to yield up, to give over to prison!</i>
To work in uncleanness! |
| >Always wanting MORE! | Wanting: Lit = <i>to desire or lust after more!</i>
<i>What once satisfied...no longer does...so you have to push limits, go further</i> |

Illus: I see this lived out over and over again in the life of men and women I work with every day!

Just this week I had 2 or 3 phone calls or meetings in which I was working with someone because they said

"I don't know what happened!!! I don't know HOW I ended up here! I never intended to be here, Never decided

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Drugs | Food and Weight |
| • Alcohol | Gambling |
| • Pornography and An Affair | Lying, not telling the truth |
| • Debt | |

Over the years I have had marriages, lives, homes, families all blown apart and destroyed because of this pattern.

Something starts very small...A *"One time Thing"* We know its not right, not good, not healthy, but we convince ourselves

And once it starts the pattern plays its way out...and ultimately you end up where you never intended

Paul is saying: Don't allow yourself to fall back into a bad pattern!

So, HOW DO WE AVOID DOING THAT? HOW DO WE PROTECT OURSELVES?

We have to stop it...before it ever stops!
Because sin is so pervasive, so powerful, the pull and the draw so strong...
That once it starts...Very Hard to STOP!

- VIDEO

2. REMEMBER WHAT YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE.

Vs 20-24

Starting in vs 20 Paul presents to us an ALTERNATIVE sequence!

After detailing for us the negative, he switches perspectives and does the same thing...but from a POSITIVE viewpoint!

If you want to know HOW to intervene...stop the negative...what you do is make the choice to start the positive pattern

- >Know Christ: Lit = *Learned Christ (not ABOUT Him) but having learned Him, (experientially, personally) Share Gospel*
- >Heard of Him: Lit = Started by simply hearing
Rom 10:14 “how can they believe without hearing!?”
Surely: *I know it is the case that you heard of Him, and were taught in Him better!!*
- >Taught in Him: Lit = *to be instructed in the truth, and that truth has content and produces outcome, change*
That truth is both found IN Jesus, and that truth IS Jesus
IN Him: We learn what He has to say about life and how to live
IS Him: I AM the way the truth and the life:
We learn to be LIKE Him...because what He teaches is truth, how He lived is truth
- >Put off the old self: Lit = *To take off, like a garment, or a habit, to remove soiled clothing*
What you used to be: That which he described in the first couple of verses
Corrupted: *Slowly wasting away, Shriveling, Degrading, Falling apart; worse and worse*
- >Be made new in attitude: Lit = *To reform, to renew, to renovate*
That you are in the process of being made new (by God)
Rom 12:1-2
Luke 6:45 “Good/evil abundance of heart”
- >Put on new self: Lit = *Put on a new garment,*
2 Cor 5:17

Applic: Paul is telling us:

1. Don't let yourself fall back into old ways of living that are morally corrupt
2. You may THINK you can toy with it, but once the dominos start falling...you may get a result you never wanted
3. It all starts with the mind...the heart...That is your front line of defense.
Hear the truth Sermon, Bible
Learn the truth! ABS, Small groups (GREAT NEW GROUPS STARTING IN JAN)
Allow your changed MIND...
Change your behavior
Take off the OLD thoughts and Behaviors and put on the NEW thoughts and behaviors

CONCL:

What about you? Are there some things that are old...dead...corrupt...that you need to get rid of?
Have you been telling yourself...it's ok...Its only one small problem...one small issue...
Stop it now...Before it grows into something that will eventually create more problems than you want

OAK TREE by my front door

Sidewalk
Leaves/Gutters
Shingles
Neighbor's trees
Grass

Years ago...it would have been so easy...

NOW

It is a major operation