



Sunday, February 4, 2018
Pastor Don Denyes

Introduction to Ephesians 4:17-24

Each of us, as Christians, has a lot in common with other Christians. In fact, we share more similarities than any other bond that could join people together. We share a common union in Christ, which transforms us from living like the world into living like He does—loving God and loving others. This reality can be difficult to realize in day-to-day life as we spend large amounts of time with people at work or with family at home.

Nevertheless, as Christians, we all share the same calling—to walk in a manner worthy of our calling as Christians. This means that at a fundamental level, the way we think and act ought to be more akin to our fellow Christians than to any other group of people. Other groups of people are joined by their common interests, but still think differently one to another. Christians are joined by their common thinking: unlearning our old ways and learning Christ. And as we learn Christ, we will not only have a better appreciation for Him as our Lord and Savior, but we will also have a greater appreciation for one another as His people.

Context

The term “walk” is used several times in the book of Ephesians (2:2; 2:10; 3:8; 3:15; 4:1; 4:17). By using the term “walk,” Paul is indicating that life is not stagnate, but rather is always moving in one direction or another. He recognizes that the church in Ephesus has come (moved) from being pagans who were dead in sin to being Christians who are saved by grace, but he also knows that the tendencies that are developed over a lifetime of sinning do not immediately go away. That is why in this section and in the chapters that follow, Paul will explain what it means to live this new life in Christ in detail—both in general principles as well as specific instructions for households.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

“Watch Your Walk”

Comparing Walks

Eph. 4.17 no longer live as the Gentiles do

Eph. 4.1 live a life worthy of your calling

Degeneration: unworthy walk

- 1 Hardening of the heart
- 2 Darkened understanding
- 3 Ignorance within them
- 4 Alienation from God
- 5 Futile thinking
- 6 Lose all sensitivity
- 7 Give themselves over to impurity

Conversion: learn Christ

Subject – learned Christ

Teacher – Heard Him and taught by Him

Classroom – Truth is in Jesus

Transformation: worthy walk

- 1 Put off your old self... being corrupted
- 2 Put on your new self... created to be like God

Discuss

- 1) Is it easy or difficult for you to change something about yourself? Why do you think that is?

- 2) In the course of your life as a Christian, what has been the most significant thing you have had to “put off” in order to be more like Christ?

- 3) When it comes to “learning Christ,” what is the most significant thing you have learned in the past few months?

- 4) The language Paul uses in this passage to describe how non-Christians live is largely cognitive (futile thinking, darkened understanding, ignorance). This description could characterize non-Christians from any place or time. What are some key ideas in our culture today that demonstrate what Paul is talking about?

- 5) When you speak to others about the Christian life, do you describe it in a similar way to what Paul says here (i.e. putting off, putting on) or do you use different language? What has been most helpful?