

EPHESIANS: The Old Self and the New Ephesians 4:17-32

Putting off the old self and putting on the new

1. **“Watch your thoughts for they become words.
Watch your words for they become actions.
Watch your actions for they become habits.
Watch your habits for they become your character.
And watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.”** (Margaret Thatcher)
 2. **The Bible says: As a man thinks in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7)**
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I. OLD SELF: Conformed to a Corrupt World System (v.17-19)

A. A CORRUPT WORLD SYSTEM

1. **When Jesus called Satan the ruler of this world...** (John 12:31)
 - He meant the ruler of this corrupt world system and those trapped in it
2. **When John said: Do not love the world or the things of the world** (1 Jn. 2:15)
 - He meant the fallen world system organized in rebellion against God
3. **When Paul said: do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...** (Romans 12:2)
 - He meant, Don't let your mind be conformed to the lies of the world —
Let your mind be Transformed by the Truth of God's Word!

B. A CORRUPT WAY OF THINKING (v.17-18)

1. **The Bible describes the dark psychology of those who reject God...**
 - a) We see it described here — and it is not pretty...
2. **Futile in their thinking (v.17 NIV)**
 - a) The word for “futility” (mataiotēti) means empty and void of meaning or purpose.
 - b) So they try to fill the void with pleasure or power / Hedonism and Materialism
3. **Darkened in their understanding (v.18)**
 - a) They have no spiritual understanding because they rejected the truth
 - b) And when you reject the Truth—the only thing left is the lie (**Rom. 1:21-22; 25, 28**)
4. **Ignorance within them...**
 - a) This is more than just a lack of knowledge—it is a willful ignorance...
 - b) An Arrogant Ignorance against God by those who suppress the Truth (Rom 1:18)
 - c) “Professing to be wise they became fools” (Romans 1:22)
 - d) They Exchange the Truth of God for a Lie (Rom. 1:25)
 - e) So they could worship themselves rather than worship God
5. **Blindness of their heart (v.18)**
 - a) Satan feeds this self-delusion with lies to perpetuate spiritual darkness (**2 Cor 4:4**)
 - b) *“The best way to keep a prisoner from escaping is to make sure he never knows he is in prison.” – Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881)*

C. A CORRUPT WAY OF LIVING (v.19)

1. Hardness of Heart

- a) The way people think directly leads to the way they live
- b) But no matter how hard they try—the problem of moral guilt will not go away
- c) It continues to lacerate the conscience over and over and over
- d) until the conscience becomes calloused and numb.
- e) Unable to feel guilt or shame or love (**1 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:15**)

2. Unclean Heart

- a) When the Conscience becomes more and more Calloused and Numb, then the mind becomes more and more Depraved and Evil.
- b) The word translated Lewdness (NKJ) “sensuality” (NIV) (ἀσελγεια, aselgeia) is the strongest Greek word for depravity, indicating a total disregard for decency

3. Greedy Heart

- a) The Greek word pleonexia (v.19) Arrogant Greediness
- b) Insatiable lust to have things that are not lawful
- c) the spirit in which people are always ready to sacrifice others for their own desires.

D. THIS IS THE TRAP OF THIS CORRUPT WORLD SYSTEM

1. The Bible Talks about temptation as a snare or a trap

- a) The Greek word (skandalon) is translated ‘stumbling-block’,
- b) something set in a man’s path to trip him up,
- c) It also is translated as or ‘a snare’, ‘a bait’, ‘a lure’ to entice him astray to ruin him.

2. King Saul Fell into this trap... and King David, and King Solomon...

- a) You would have to have more wisdom than Solomon, more strength than Samson and more devotion than David to keep from falling for this trap!

3. A Corrupt World System of Darkness—ruled by the prince of darkness (Ephesians 2:2-3)

II. NEW SELF: Transformed a New Creation in Christ (v.20-32)

A. A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST

1. Only 1 person in history did not fall for this trap & Satan tried to tempt Him

- a) If your the Son of God then you can serve yourself (turn these stones to bread)
- b) If your the Son of God you can exalt yourself (cast yourself off pinnacle of Temple)
- c) If your the Son of God you can save yourself (a crown without the cross)

2. Jesus went to the Cross to save us from the power of darkness (Col 1:13)

3. To Replace this corrupt world system with a new creation (Eph. 2:1-8)

4. To make us a New Creation with a New Nature (2 Corinthians 5:17)

No Longer Dominated by Sin – But Set Free to be Led By the Spirit

- A NEW LIFE—in Christ. • A NEW HOPE—of eternal life
- A NEW NATURE—Led by the Spirt • A NEW FAMILY—the family of God
- • A NEW GUIDE—the Word of God

B. A NEW WAY OF THINKING (v.20–24)

1. PUT OFF YOUR OLD SELF: And Your Old Way of Thinking...

- a) The Old Man was crucified with Christ and Buried in Baptism (**Romans 6:4–6**)
- b) The New Man is Raised with Christ to New Life!

2. PUT ON YOUR NEW SELF: With a New Way of Thinking...

- a) The New Man: Renewed By God (**Col. 3:10**)
- b) The New Way of Thinking: Transformed by a Renewed Mind (**Romans 12:2**)

C. A NEW WAY OF LIVING (v.25–32)

1. Case in Point: LYING (v.25)

- a) Lying is a part of the Corrupt World System
- b) We Are a part of the New Creation! (Colossians 3:9–10)

2. Case in Point: ANGER (v.26-27)

- a) The Old Self allowed Anger to corrupt our heart
- b) The New Self can get angry but it does not live in the heart and corrupt our mind

3. Case in Point: STEALING (v.28)

- a) The Old Self was willing to steal and to justify it...
- b) The New Self refuses to steal and even works to help others in need!

4. Case in Point: CORRUPT COMMUNICATION (v.29)

- a) The Old Self didn't worry what came out of their mouth—they just let it fly
- b) The New Self wants to speak words of life to heal—not words of death that kill
- c) Knowing corrupt words come from a corrupt heart (**Matt 12:33–37**)

5. SUMMARY: (v.30-32)

- a) It Grieves the Holy Spirit when Christians live like the old man that was corrupted by this world system of darkness
- b) We Need to Put Away the Corrupt Thinking of the Old Self
- c) And Live the New Life that Jesus calls us to live.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. You no longer belong to this corrupt world system of darkness**
- 2. You are now children of light (**Ephesians 5:8**)**

“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matt 5:14, 16)