

Ephesians Bible Study

Lesson 14 / Ephesians 4:17-24

Building the Body of Christ by Embracing Spiritual Growth

Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you through this week's lesson.

Think about it.

As we continue in chapter 4, it is important to remember that Paul's passion for the believers' spiritual growth was largely grounded in his passion for true unity to be displayed in the church. (Eph. 3:19-22, 4:3) As a review, why is Christ-centered relational unity so important to the church's witness? (John 17:20-23) _____

How have you been tempted to view your spiritual growth, or lack thereof, as merely an individual thing? Why is this wrong? (Rom. 14:13-19, Mark 9:42-50) _____

How can these truths bring comfort in your battle against sin? _____

Read Ephesians 4:1-16. Familiarize yourself with the context of our verses for the week, then read verses 17-24.

1. As Paul continues his discussion on unity in the body, he feels compelled to give a warning. What is the warning he gives in verse 17? _____

2. Define what the word futility means by using a Bible dictionary or regular dictionary. _____

3. Notice the emphasis that Paul puts on the mind.
The godless Gentiles walk in the _____ of their minds (vs 17).
They are darkened in their _____ (vs 18).
They are alienated from the life of God because of the _____ that is in them, due to their hardness of _____. (vs 18)
4. What is the consequence of their fallen mental state (vs 19)? _____

5. While it is easy to put “these Gentiles” into another category of fallen humanity, Paul is actually just further emphasizing the nature of the old self. (Eph. 2:1-5) In what ways do you see your old self still influencing you to walk in futility? (Col. 3:5-10, I Cor. 4:10-15) Be specific. _____

6. In verses 20-22, Paul gives a reminder of the true way of Christ. According to verse 22, the true way of Christ teaches us to put off our _____.
7. Thinking back to when you first heard the Gospel, what role did repentance play in the message you heard? (Acts 3:18-19) Did you understand that the Lord Jesus Christ was calling you to leave your old life behind, and if so how did that flesh out in real life after you were saved? _____

8. Paul’s reminder that the true way of Christ is a life of self-denial reflects Jesus’s own words in Luke 14:25-33. How can these truths strengthen the genuine believer’s resolve to follow the Lord, rather than lead him into condemnation? _____

9. Some would think Jesus is being a killjoy when he calls his followers to a life of self-denial. Why is this idea utterly false? How is this actually a loving command? Use Scripture to support your answer. _____

10. In verse 22 Paul again describes the nature of the old self. What in the nature of the desires that govern the old self? _____
11. How does recognizing our fleshly desires as deceitful help us to long more deeply for the renewing power of the Word? See John 10:10, Prov. 13:6,15, Psalm 119:103-104 _____

12. In verse 24 Paul essentially commands the believers to walk in the new divine life they have been given. According to this verse, what qualities characterize the new self?

13. This putting off and putting on process Paul describes is a lifelong process. Elisabeth Elliot puts it this way, *"One does not surrender a life in an instant. That which is lifelong can only be surrendered in a lifetime...Maturity is the accomplishment of years, and I can only surrender to the will of God as I know what the will of God is."* In what areas do you see the Lord wanting to mature your faith? _____

How are you doing with submitting to His will in these areas? _____

14. Write out a prayer of gratitude to the Lord for the new life He has given you. Praise Him for how He is growing your faith and pray for a heart that truly seeks to surrender to His will. _____
