

## **The Book of Ephesians – Part 6**

### **Introduction:**

The first half of Chapter 4 dealt with the ministry gifts that God has given to the Body of Christ for the equipping and maturing of the saints.

The second half of Chapter 4 deals with our daily walk in this world.

Walking in the light of God encompasses every aspect of our lives. We should desire to walk and talk and act like Jesus.

It is a process of time and doesn't happen overnight but we should nevertheless endeavor to improve our walk with the Lord each and every day of our lives.

There should be a clear distinction between the life of a sinner and your life as a believer.

### **Walking in the Light (Ephesians 4:17-32)**

**<sup>17</sup> This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,**

- Remember that the book of Ephesians was written to Gentile believers. Paul is admonishing them not to walk as other Gentiles walk.
- He uses the word "therefore" to refer to the previous verse. Remember in verse 16 he summarizes his discussion of ministry gifts and makes it clear that we all have a vital place and function in the Body of Christ.

- He uses the word “henceforth” because he wants us to know that Christians are not to walk in the ways of the world anymore. When they do, it not only hurts the individual believer, it hurts the whole body.

**18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:**

- The word translated understanding is the Greek word *dianoia*. *Dia* means “through” and *noia* means “the mind”. Put them together and it means “through the mind”.
- The ability to let things go through the mind implies that you have the ability to understand things.
- Unbelievers have no ability to understand spiritual things because their understanding has been darkened by the sin that is in them.
- They are alienated or separated from God because they have not accepted Jesus, the author of life. Not accepting Jesus is referred to bluntly as ignorance.
- Sinners are ignorant because they continue to reject Jesus, who is the answer to all of their problems. All of this happens because of the blindness of their heart.
- Consider the following scriptures to help us understand how people allow their foolish heart to be darkened:

**John 1**

**<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.**

**<sup>7</sup> The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.**

**8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.**

**9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.**

### **Romans 1**

**18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;**

**19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.**

**20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:**

**21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**

- John 1:9 tells us that God has lightened the heart of *every* man that has come into the world.
- Romans 1:19 tells us that God has given every man an innate knowledge of his existence.
- Romans 1:20 tells us that the existence of God is made clear from the things that were made by him.
- These scriptures make it clear that a person allows their heart to be darkened when, in spite of the overwhelming evidence, they refuse to acknowledge and accept God, even when they know in their heart that he exists.

- Proverbs 14 and Proverbs 53 both declare the same thing, "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God."
- I believe they are fools for two major reasons: 1) There is overwhelming evidence in the creation to the contrary 2) In their heart of hearts; they know it is not true.

**<sup>19</sup> Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.**

- The phrase "past feeling" is a reference to the fact that they no longer respond to the prompting of the Holy Ghost.
- He is trying to convict them of their sin and lead them to Jesus. Instead, they have chosen to reject him and to pursue the desires of the flesh.
- Lasciviousness is sexual immorality and uncleanness is sexual impurity in the thought life.
- These things operate in their lives to the point that they become "greedy" and will do whatever is necessary to satisfy their fleshly appetites.

**<sup>20</sup> But ye have not so learned Christ;**

- We have something that the sinner does not have. We are born again and the Word of God has come alive in our hearts.
- We partake of the Word and learn to be more like Jesus.

**Colossians 2**

**<sup>6</sup> As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:**

- How did we receive Christ?

## **Romans 10**

**<sup>9</sup> That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**

**<sup>10</sup> For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

- We walk in him the same way we received him. We believe the Word of God in our hearts and we confess the Word of God with our mouths.

**<sup>21</sup> If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:**

- If he lives in you, you hear the voice of Jesus. If he lives in you, you have the mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:16) and he teaches you the truths of the Word of God.

**<sup>22</sup> That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;**

**<sup>23</sup> And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;**

- Here Paul exhorts believers to “put off” or discard the “conversation” or manner of life of the old man and to be renewed in “the spirit of your mind”.
- In other words, transform your minds by the Word of God (Romans 12:2).

**<sup>24</sup> And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.**

**<sup>25</sup> Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.**

- Here Paul tells us to “put on” the new man who has been designed and created just like God. Use him to “put away” lying and other manifestations of the old man.
- Notice it is our responsibility to do these things. We are told to “put off” and to “put on” based on what has happened in our lives.
- We have been born again, filled with the Spirit and have been given the ability to understand and apply the Word of God. God has given us the tools.
- We have to make a conscious decision to allow them to operate in our lives.

**<sup>26</sup> Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:**

**<sup>27</sup> Neither give place to the devil.**

- Now while I never think it’s a good idea to hold onto anger, against fellow believers and fellow humans that is, I actually think these verses are talking about something else.
- We are, as believers, authorized to hate the devil and his kingdom.
- In fact, I believe these verses encourage us to hate the devil and his crew with a fervent hatred, and the sin, and the lies, and the death and destruction that they are ultimately responsible for in this world.

- The word translated place is the Greek word *topos* which means “ground”. Don’t give any ground to the devil.
- Once you have conquered certain territories in your life, don’t give them back to the devil. Fight to keep your victories over Satan.
- Stay out of sin and don’t give the devil occasion to operate in your life. Consider this example from the life of David when he was confronted by Nathan concerning his sin with Bathsheba.

## **II Samuel 12**

**<sup>13</sup> And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.**

**<sup>14</sup> Howbeit, because *by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD* to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.**

**<sup>28</sup> Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.**

- Again, we see the theme of these passages is to walk in the light of God. If you were a thief before you came to the Lord, change occupations and put your hands to the work of the Lord.

**<sup>29</sup> Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.**

- Corrupt communication tears down. It pulls other people down and it corrupts your soul. If you used bad language

before you were born again, change the way you speak. Also if what you have to say does not edify or lift other people up, don't say it.

## **Colossians 4**

**<sup>6</sup> Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man.**

**<sup>30</sup> And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.**

- Corrupt communication is sin and sin grieves the Holy Spirit. When you grieve the Holy Spirit, you prevent him from working in your life and in the lives of others.

**<sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:**

- This verse reminds us that one of the main ways we can grieve the Holy Spirit is to allow anger and wrath to give way to evil speaking or words of judgment against others.
- The word clamour refers to actual physical fighting or hitting others. If you think about it, when you resort to physical violence, you have judged the person and you have passed sentence as well. Your sentence is that they should suffer pain, dealt by you, for their deeds.
- Let me make one thing clear. The Bible does not condemn self defense or even physical violence against others under certain conditions.
- If an intruder comes into your house, God expects you to do whatever is necessary to protect those under your care.

## **John 18**

**<sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.**

- Also, the Bible makes it clear that legitimate governments are authorized by God to dispense wrath toward evil doers both nationally and internationally. For example, law officers or policemen are authorized to use force against evil doers to help maintain order in our nation. In the same way, members of the military are authorized to use force against evil nations or organizations who would do our country harm.

## **Romans 13**

**<sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:**

**<sup>4</sup> For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.**

**<sup>32</sup> And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.**

- Tenderhearted is from the Greek word *eusplagnos*. *Eu* means "good" and *splagnos* means "bowels or guts". Put them together and you get "good bowels" or "good guts".
- Many times in the Old Testament, the Bible speaks of "bowels of compassion". This was an expression that referred to a compassion that rose up from deep within a person's inner man.

- When Jesus ministered on the earth he was often “moved with compassion” in the same way.
- This deep seated compassion allowed him to forgive the sins and to heal the bodies of the people around him. He even forgave those who tortured him and put him to death.
- When others sin against you, be mindful of the fact that God has already forgiven you your sins, and be quick to forgive.
- Let the deep seated compassion of God rise up from within you so that others will see the love of God in you.

### **Summary:**

In these last sixteen verses of chapter 4, Paul encourages the Gentiles at Ephesus not to live the way they used to.

He makes it clear that once they are born again, Christians need to walk in the light of God.

When we walk habitually in this light, we can learn to walk and talk and act just like Jesus.