



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Ephesians 4:17-24

“Putting on the New Man” – TRANSCRIPT

Let's bow together in a time of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the word of God, and we are particularly thankful for the portion that we are to look at because of the way in which speaks to our condition as Christians, and sets forth for us certain of the important principles that have to do with Christian living.

Enable us, Lord, to understand, and then to be responsive to the things that we read and hear.

Above all, may we truly be pleasing to Thee in our Christian lives, and may the image of God be renewed within us in such a way that we may be a true and useful reflection of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We commit all who are here to Thee, we pray that the many things that touch their lives about which they are concerned may find their solution in the possession of a heavenly Father who, as Paul has told us in the epistle, has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies, in our union with Jesus Christ.

Lord, now we pray that our minds may be clear, and our hearts may be responsive to the word of God.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Sermon] We’re turning to Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 17 through verse 24, and our subject is the putting on of the new man.

The Apostle’s theme so far, if we were looking for one theme, might be the one body truth. And in the opening three chapters he has set forth the doctrinal side of the one body truth, and now he is dealing with the ethical side of that truth.

He has spoken about, through the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, there has come into being one new man, composed of believers, both Jews and Gentiles. He has said in the third chapter that not only is there one new man, but the Gentiles now in this age are fellow heirs of the same body, and they are partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel. And the Apostle’s primary thrust in his ministry is to make known the Gospel of the Lord Jesus as it pertains to the Gentile blessing in the present day.

Paul’s method is to present the doctrine, and then the ethics. Christianity is more than theology. It’s more than ethics. It’s really an incorporation into Christ. But in this incorporation into Christ it’s necessary to consider our position, doctrinally, and then to consider the daily life that ought to flow ethically out of our relationship to the Lord.

Now the aim of the Apostle in this section that we are looking at is to inculcate a worthy walk. He says in verse 1 of chapter 4, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.” So he speaks about the fact that we who have named the name of Jesus Christ, who claim to have the righteousness of God; who claim to be accepted in to the Beloved One; who claim to be the possessors of eternal life; who claim to be priests of God; who claim to belong to the family of God – we ought to manifest a certain kind of life. And so, the Apostle exhorts his readers that they walk worthy of this calling into which they have been called. So the new community of the one body, or the church, naturally involves a new life. To put it very simply, we are to doff the new man and to don the new man.

Now when we turn to verse 17 through verse 24, having looked at the unity and the diversity that exists in the body of Christ, it may surprise some of us to see how the

Apostle lays stress upon the intellectual factor that is involved in the Christian life. In fact, the intellectual factor is the thing that the Apostle stresses here as he details the Christian life. Now we, as I’ve been saying so often through the years, have tended to listen too much to people who tell us that the intellectual factor is unimportant in Christianity. Now let me read verses 17 through 24 in which the Apostle begins to speak about the details of the Christian life, and I just want you to pay attention to the intellectual factors that the Apostle mentions and see what you think, what emphasis you think the Apostle places on the mind in the Christian life.

Now verse 17 through verse 24:

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them”—

(Now, I have modified the “through” of the Authorized Version because, in the Greek text, the preposition translated “through” here should have been translated “on account of”)

“On account of because of the blindness of their heart. Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former manner of life, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

I think anyone reading these verses must conclude that the Apostle has emphasized the intellectual factor in the Christian life.

Now he will talk about the life of the old man. And then he will talk, secondly, about the personal transformation that has taken place in verse 20 and 21. And then he will talk about the new man’s life, specifically in verse 22 and verse 24. So we look now at verse 17 through verse 19 and the connection, remember is with chapter 4 verse 1: “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the calling to which ye are called.” Then, in verse 17, “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.” You can see that in verse 1 he has spoken from the standpoint of the positive, whereas in verse 17 he says walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, he’s speaking of the life from the negative standpoint.

Now the features of the old life that the Apostle singles out for attention here are important, of course. He says “this I say therefore, and testify in the Lord,” and I guess I should make just this simple comment that when the Apostle says this I say and testify in the Lord, he says I’m testifying out of the authority of my relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. So, he’s speaking authoritatively: “that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.” So the fruitless, worthless thoughts in Paul’s thinking have characterized the old life.

The life of all of us who have come to be called Christians have once had with our old friends were characterized by fruitless, worthless thoughts. Even when we were thinking things that were highly intellectual, according to the world’s standards, from the standpoint of Scripture they are fruitless, worthless thoughts. The Apostle describes our life before our conversion as a walk in the emptiness and vanity of our minds. I know when I look back on my life, the many worthless, fruitless thoughts that passed through

my mind until I reached the age of twenty-five and came to be a Christian, are certainly remarkable.

I have a first cousin who has been the president and chairman of the board of one of the large corporations of the United States. A corporation listed on the New York Stock Exchange, a man of unusual intelligence and personal appeal. But what tremendous powers have been wasted in the life of this man to this point, because his thoughts have been largely of the textile business, and of the things that have to do with that type of activity. Fruitless, worthless thoughts. That’s one characteristic of the old man.

Now the Apostle goes on to say, “Having the understanding darkened.” Every sinner is a mental lunatic in the truth of God. In fact, that is one of the proofs of divine inspiration, that the Apostle may speak about people who are not Christians in this way and actually it be true. Their understanding is darkened.

Now, not concerning the things of this world. It is true, I think, probably without question, that we understand a great deal more about our modern world than the ancients understood about the modern world. But so far as the world of God is concerned, so far as the spiritual world is concerned, the true spiritual world, there probably has been rarely, a generation that understood so little about it, considered as a generation over the face of the earth that understood so little about it.

We’re a generation that does not understand the things of God. Malcolm Muggeridge, who has been famous for many years, even before he made a profession of faith in Christ, for saying unusual and striking things, has said that when the history of our time is written, instead of historians concluding that the men of our age were like gods, they will conclude that they were men like apes, and this will be no complement to the apes [laughter].

But it is true. So far as the world of the spiritual is concerned, the true spiritual, there probably has never been an age more ignorant than our age. It is characterized by the darkening of the understanding.

But the Apostle does not stop at that point. He says, “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life God”—let me reserve that for discussion, because the Apostle says “alienated from the life of God on account of the ignorance that is in them, and that because of the blindness of their heart.” Now if you’ll look at those expressions you’ll see the order in which the Apostle is thinking. He’s saying, first of all, that hardness of heart leads to ignorance which in turn leads to alienation. So he begins with hardness of heart being the base or cause of the alienation.

Now I’d like to discuss the word for a moment, translated blindness in the Authorized Version in verse 18, the blindness of their heart, because it is a word that may be translated in certain contexts by blindness, and in other contexts by hardness. It really is a word that is related to the Greek word for a callous. It was a medical term that was used for a callous on a joint, that is, a hardening of the skin on a joint. So it is an expression that suggests a callousness. And in certain contexts, the stress rests on the hardness of the heart. But in other contexts, stress rests upon the blindness, because this word can also mean that.

Commentators vary and differ over it. Some commentators on the Greek text take the Apostle to mean blindness of their heart, as it is translated here. Still others take it to mean hardness of heart. It’s very difficult to be absolutely sure of its meaning, but I think that probably what the Apostle has in mind here – and I say think, because I’m not certain – is willful obtuseness, or stubbornness, and therefore, hardness of heart. I think that’s what he has in mind: hardness of heart.

Now if it’s blindness, the force is not affected a great deal, blindness of heart being a kind of moral obtuseness because it’s blindness of the heart. So the Apostle is speaking of a willful kind of stubbornness with respect to the truth that is characteristic of men who

do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. Characteristic of the Pagans, or as the Apostle says, characteristic of the Gentiles, for they are looked at as Pagans here.

Imagine a man hearing a magnificent symphony of Beethoven and saying, “Why, I’d give more for Yankee Doodle Dandy than for a thousand symphonies of Beethoven!” We would say, “Why?” Probably because he’s a man who cannot appreciate the finer music of a man like Beethoven. That’s the way we respond to spiritual things. You can always tell a man’s spiritual responsiveness by how he responds to the Bible. If he finds the Bible difficult, foolish, stupid, well that’s not a comment on the Bible, that’s a comment on his own condition, always.

Now the Apostle says that fundamentally men are hardened with respect to the truth. They are blind also, the Apostle says that plainly in 1 Corinthians 2: “The natural man receiveth not the spiritual things of God, they are foolish to him; neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned.” So, he is both blind, and he is hardened. He is, as the result of the fall, the recipient of a willful obtuseness, and that’s the way he responds to truth. As a result of that, he has ignorance. And as a result of that, he is alienated from the life of God. He does not possess the life of God.

Now one of the things the Bible says about us when we have come to faith in Jesus Christ, is we become partakers of the divine nature. We become partakers of spiritual life. We have the presence of the Holy Spirit. We have the Lord Jesus Christ through the Spirit as our guide, through all of the hours and minutes of our days: “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” All the days of every day, and every part of the day, is the force of the text there. So these are things that we have when we have the Lord Jesus Christ. We are not alienated from the life of God.

But if we do not have the Lord Jesus Christ, we’re alienated from the life of God. We do not have the life of God. We do not have, as Peter says, the divine nature. We have not been made partakers of the divine nature.

So, the Apostle has looked at this with the intellectual factor in mind. Man is morally obtuse, he’s blinded, he has spiritual ignorance as a result of that. He’s alienated from God, he walks in the vanity of his mind. His mind is darkened. His heart is stubborn towards God. To use the terms of theology: man is totally depraved. That’s what total depravity means.

Now he says in verse 19 in the first clause, “Who being past feeling.” That word also has to do with something like a callous, too – to be calloused. Being past feeling. Louis T. Talbot, in his commentary on Ephesians, said that while he was living in Australia he spent a holiday in the sheep country, and he heard that heifers were to be branded, and he wanted to see the procedure. He said the heifers were first bound to the ground, and then a red hot figure was placed on the body of each animal. The noise and the faces of each animal still come to mind, he said, groaning and rolling their eyes in pain. And after the brand had been placed, they were freed and they ran away licking their wounds.

But he said had you gone back three weeks later, and had you taken a knife and cut on the place where they had been branded, those heifers would not have felt the pain. Because the heat so paralyzed the nerves in that part of the body that they were past feeling. And he says that’s something of what Paul is talking about here: “Being past feeling, they’ve given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness.” So, past feeling.

Pain is the alarm bell of danger. So when you put your hand near a fire, your hand becomes hot and finally painful, and you withdraw your hand. But you know spiritually, after a time, it is possible for you to become so dull of heart spiritually that when the Gospel is preached and the power of the Holy Spirit, you don’t feel anything, spiritually. You are so past feeling spiritually that divine retribution has set in and you cannot respond because you would not respond. That, the Bible makes very plain, as the teaching of the word of God.

Now when he says we are past feeling, we Gentiles, and we’ve given ourselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness, it’s doubtful that anything is more applicable to our society today. We feed on the diet of newspapers, novels, magazines, the theaters, all of these things that pander to various lusts that we have. Some sexual, some intellectual lusts, and some other types of lusts, and the result is that we gain the whole world and in the process we lose our souls. I guess almost all of us are in process of graduating from the university of TV, and that is the kind of life that we see manifested in our existence.

So, the Apostle says, notice, there is hardness of heart that comes from ignorance, it leads to alienation, and we become calloused, and the result is a full manifestation of our unspirituality in licentiousness, a kind of moral chaos that flows out of the individual who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. This is total depravity.

Now it is not total depravity in the sense that we are as bad as we can be. We are proving that we are not as bad as we can be because tomorrow our society is worse than it is today, as a general rule. And the chances are that individuals are worse tomorrow than they are today. So we’re not as bad as we can be. When we say that man is totally depraved, we mean that all of their faculties are touched by sin: their mind, their wills, their emotions. Those features that make up their faculties, they’re all twisted and warped by sin. They’re even capable of certain thoughts that even the world approves of as benevolent thoughts, very good thoughts. But all parts of them are touched by sin; that’s what total depravity means.

It also means, and this is extremely important, it means that a man cannot, of himself, please God. It means that a man cannot, of himself, turn to the Lord. A man cannot, of himself, believe. If he could, of himself, believe, if he could, of himself, turn to the Lord, he could do the greatest thing of all. And thus, he would not be, as the Apostle says, ignorant, alienated, blinded, hardened, because he would have that capacity. So the

Bible speaks of total depravity in the sense of total inability to respond to the things of God.

This afternoon I ran across a quotation which I had typed out, from Martin Luther, but had not looked at in a long time. It was in the New International Version, one of the copies of it that I have, I used it to mark a place in it, and I saw it. And this is a quotation from Luther in which he said,

“If the devil is God, it is right to worship him. If an ass flies, then an ass has wings. If free choice exists, grace is nothing.”

So, bound up in our doctrine of total depravity is total inability to respond to the truth of God. Therefore, the doctrine of free will is in opposition to the truth of the grace of God.

That’s why, over and over again in the Chapel, in all of our teaching, we try to stress the fact that man does not have a free will. If he could of his own free will turn to the Lord, then he would have the ability to do the thing that pleases God. Whereas the Bible says, “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” It’s so plain.

It’s amazing we have to repeat it over and over again. You know why? Because so many people are past feeling. So many people are as Paul says here, walking in the vanity of their minds. So many, as Paul says, have had their understanding darkened. So many do not understand because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the moral obtuseness of their heart. We don’t like to be told that we cannot turn to the Lord, and we must be the recipients of divine grace in order to respond. We don’t like to be told that. We like to be able to have just a little bit of credit ourselves.

We don’t say that. We don’t say that. We say, “No, I believe in salvation by grace (I just believe I can, of my own free will, turn to the Lord),” not realizing you’re contradicting yourself when you say that.

Now last week I made mention of people who believe in three point Calvinism. That’s impossible. If it is true that men are totally depraved, they cannot turn to the Lord. If they cannot turn to the Lord, then the doctrine of election that is biblical must be unconditional election. It must be election based on God’s determination out of his good pleasure to save certain people.

If it is conditional upon our faith, then we can do something, and we’re not totally depraved. If efficacious grace is taught in the Scriptures, by that it is meant that the Holy Spirit so works in us that he brings us to faith. But if men can of themselves turn to the Lord, then there is no need for efficacious grace, because we can of ourselves turn to the Lord.

And then, of course, if election is unconditional, based upon what God has determined to do, because we are totally depraved and cannot ourselves turn to the Lord, then it would be another contradiction for the Father to elect a certain people, and the Son of God to die for a different group of people, and the Holy Spirit bring to the people that the Father elected to faith in Christ, we would have the Father working toward one purpose, the Son working toward a different purpose, and the Holy Spirit working toward the Father’s purpose, and that’s because two out of the three would work for that one purpose and that purpose would be accomplished, and Jesus Christ’s purpose that he should die that all might be saved would be frustrated. So we would have the persons of the Trinity working at cross-purposes, and we would also have a frustrated deity.

So how can you believe in three point Calvinism? If men are totally depraved, then you must believe in the bondage of the will. Total depravity. Unconditional election. Definite atonement. Efficacious grace. And the perseverance of the saints. They all move together as one doctrine.

Now the facts are, of course, some people say those things, and the truth is they don’t usually believe in the first: total depravity. That’s the problem. If they believed in total depravity as the Bible teaches it, as Paul teaches it, then they would stand with the

rest of us in the Pauline teaching. The Apostle says in Romans chapter 7 and verse 8, the carnal mind, or the mind of the flesh, is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God. Neither can be. *Can* be; C-A-N B-E. Neither, indeed, can be! Do we get it? Do we get it? Neither indeed can be.

Paul said, “But ye are not in the flesh, ye Christians are not in the flesh, if so be – that’s the Spirit of God – in you. But I skipped the eighth verse. He said, “So then, they that are in the flesh cannot – C-A-N-N-O-T – they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Does faith please God? Of course, without faith, it’s impossible to please God. With faith, he’s very pleased. If they that are in the flesh cannot please God, they cannot believe while they’re in the flesh. Is any doctrine plainer than that? None.

That is plain teaching. So what do we need? We need a work of God. That’s what we need. And that’s what we are the objects of: the work of God. Even when we say we are a three-point Calvinist. If you’ve truly believed in Jesus Christ, your mind’s confused, you have a – what did Dr. Clark used to say – you have a Charlie-horse between the ears, but, nevertheless, you’re with us. Because most of us, at one time or another, have held a lot of inconsistent things in our minds at the same time and no doubt still do. I, not excepted.

But, coming back to Ephesians. What Paul is talking about is total depravity. He’s saying, we walked in the vanity of our minds, the emptiness of our minds. We had our understandings darkened. We were ignorant. We had moral obtuseness. We were morally stubborn. Hardened of heart, and the result was we were alienated from the life of God. We were so past feeling, that we gave ourselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness. That kind of chaotic life, out of which flowed all kinds of evil.

But, something happened! And the Apostle states in verse 20, “But ye (ye believers; he’s talking about the Gentiles) have not so learned Christ if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.” You have not so

learned Christ – here is Christian moral education the Apostle is talking about here. Talk about Christian education; this is it. Christian education is learning Christ. Ye have not so learned Christ.

Now, notice the Apostle speaks of the content of the preaching: it’s Christ. Ye have not so learned *Christ*. When we preach, we preach *Christ*. Now of course, when we say we preach Christ we do not mean that we therefore do not preach doctrine about Christ, because we cannot know who Christ is if we do not preach truths about him.

When we learn, go to university or college or high school, we usually learn subjects. You say, what are you talking this semester? Well, I’m taking English. I’m taking Latin. I’m taking accounting. I’m taking philosophy. I’m taking sewing, or whatever it is. Usually we learn subjects. Sometimes we learn persons, to some extent. We say, I’m taking Shakespeare. But when we talk about Christian things, we talk about a personal curriculum in which Christ is the whole curriculum. Ye have not so learned Christ. He’s the teacher. He’s the textbook, as well.

I always think of the Emmaus Road, when the Lord Jesus was walking with those disciples. And remember, he began to open up the Scriptures to them, and all day long he expounded the word to them. They were utterly enthralled, so enthralled that when they got through they said, “Did not our hearts burn within us?” He was the preacher, he was the text, he was the sermon. Everything was Christ. Ye have not so learned Christ!

Now, the details are given in verse 21: “If so be that ye have heard him.” Incidentally, these people had not actually heard Jesus Christ. When Paul says “heard him” he means heard those sermons and messages and perhaps read letters from the Apostles about him, but in reading about him, the Holy Spirit was so vital and active in teaching them that they actually were hearing him, just as you today.

You may sit down in your study and begin to read the Bible, and the Holy Spirit, as he teaches you the word of God, it’s really Christ teaching you through the Spirit, and you may actually have the sense of the Lord Jesus Christ’s presence as your teacher right

there with you. That’s why you come to know him. You can be with him on the boat in the Sea of Galilee in the storm. You can be with him as he taught the multitudes. You can be with him as he talked to Peter or as he talked to John. You can be with him on the Mount of Transfiguration. You can be with him, and thus, hear him, so he says. If so be that ye have heard him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.

So, learning him has ethical consequences. By learning him, we learn to live. And so the Apostle goes on to speak in the last three verses of the content of this truth that is in Jesus. He says, “As the truth is in Jesus.” Now, don’t think that by the way the Apostle means that all truth is in Christ in the sense that all truth may be found in Christ. But what he does mean is that all truth, if it is truth, will ultimately be related to Christ. True psychology, if there is true psychology, will be psychology that is harmonious with the doctrine of Christ. Philosophy, if it is true philosophy, will be philosophy that is related to the doctrine of Christ. Mathematics, biology, whatever it may be, it only true insofar as it forms part of the truth given by the triune God in divine revelation and is ultimately to be linked together in one harmonious unified whole: the truth.

One of the great failures of philosophers is that they’ve severed the connection with divine truth. One of the great failures of psychologists is that they’ve severed the connection between true psychology and the truth of holy Scripture. That’s one of the greatest of the errors with Christian psychologists as well. And the result has been, psychology is held in one compartment, and Christian truth is held in another compartment, and they are never fully integrated into this magnificent treatment of the truth found in the writings of an apostle like the Apostle Paul.

As the truth is in Jesus. Well, what is it? Here’s the content of it. First of all, “That ye put off concerning the former manner of life, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” Now, I don’t have time to talk about this, but I suggest to you that that is not rendered quite accurately. The Apostle, in my opinion, is probably speaking in indirect discourse, and therefore we should render this in the light of the parallel in

Colossians chapter 3 and verse 9 and 10: “That ye have put off concerning the former manner of life, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” The truth in Jesus is that we believers have put off the old man.

What is the old man? Well, the old man is our connection with Adam. We all were in Adam, and all die in Adam. But when the Gospel came to us in our blindness and hardness of heart and obtuseness and also in the bondage of our wills, and through the Holy Spirit we were enabled to make a decision of the will for Christ, we were severed in our connection with the old man and related to the new man, about which Paul has spoken in chapter 2.

So, we have put off the old man, and so, naturally, all those things that are the products, ethically, of the old man are to be put off. Further, Paul says, and that you are being renewed. That’s a present tense. The other is an aorist tense, looking at the past. This is one looking at the present. You are being taught that you are being renewed in the spirit of your mind.

What is he talking about when he says “being renewed?” Well in the first place, it’s something done by God. It’s passive. In other words, it’s not something we of ourselves do. For man is saved by grace, and he’s sanctified by grace, too. So we are the objects of the constant ministry of the Holy Spirit in sanctification. Isn’t that a great doctrine? Two people smiled. Two...three...two, three more people smiled. [Laughter] I don’t know whether you’re smiling at the truth or because I said that. Still, only two that I really know seem to be happy over the fact that you are the object of the constant activity of the Holy Spirit who does not cease his activity. But he will not be frustrated. He will bring you to likeness to Jesus Christ.

Some of you are going to put up the struggle of your lives. That’s what it’ll be, the struggle of your lives. And finally he will overcome, and you’ll be like Christ someday. But that ministry is going on. You’re being renewed, in spite of yourselves. You’re being renewed, the Apostle says, in the spirit of your mind.

How are we constantly being renewed in the spirit of our minds? Well, Paul said in Romans 12, remember, that we are not to be conformed to this world but we’re to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. What he means is that through the truth of God he is doing that. That’s why the Bible is so important. We cannot expect to be sanctified apart from holy Scripture. You can get on your knees and pray, come over here, down here, and get down on your knees and pray on through the night – you’ll still be the same old person tomorrow, if you’re not praying in the light of the truths found in the word of God. It’s by the word of God that people are sanctified.

So, by the renewing of our minds – the mind feeding upon the word of God – and finally Paul says in verse 24, the truth in Jesus is that we have put off the old man, being renewed, and that we have put on the new man, which after God has created in righteousness and true holiness. So we put on the new man. We’ve been made one with Jesus Christ. We’ve been taken out of our relationship to the old Adam. We’ve been placed in the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. We are in Christ. And having become in him, all of the things that characterized the old life are to be put off. The things that characterize the new life are to be the garments that we wear from now on. So, we doff the clothes of the old man, we don the clothes of the new man. Paul in Colossians gives us the details of it.

Notice the last statement of verse 24: “which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” or righteousness and holiness of the truth. Now you remember when God was created in the Garden of Eden, he was created in the image of God. He lost that image of God. It was warped. It was corrupted. He still possesses the image, but it’s a corrupt image. The work of the Holy Spirit is to restore that relationship. Colossians gives us some further details. But here, we put on the new man which after God, according to God, is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

That’s kind of a manward and Godward thing, isn’t it? Righteousness toward men. Holiness of the truth toward God. So really, what Paul is saying is, that we have a new

creation, plus a new mind, through the Holy Spirit and the word of God, and that leads to Christian holiness.

Let me close with just a warning, and a question. A continued rejection of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ may lead to this state of being past feeling. In the Book of Proverbs, the writer of the Proverbs speaks of individuals who are often reprovved and ultimately cannot finally respond to the truth.

Let me ask you this question: have you learned Christ? Are you in the process of learning Christ? We learn of persons historically, for example, we learn in books of Julius Caesar. And we can say, “I know about Julius Caesar.” And we can learn by hearsay and by study. In our day, most of us lived during the Presidency of Dwight Eisenhower, or if not Eisenhower, John Kennedy. And we can say yes, I know something about John Kennedy and I know something about Dwight Eisenhower. I know by hearsay or by study. But then, you only know about them. But with Jesus Christ, it’s possible for us to know about him through personal contact, so that we don’t have to say, “I know about Christ.” We can say, “I know Christ. I know him.”

By the presence of the Holy Spirit, through the word of God, we may truly come to know him. Dwight Eisenhower’s dead. Julius Caesar’s dead. John F. Kennedy is dead. Jesus Christ is alive, and we can know him. That’s why the Holy Spirit has been given us, so that we would have no handicap over the apostles themselves, who were able to know him personally. In fact, even better, because Peter could only know him as he was in his physical presence. We have the marvelous privilege of having our Lord with us all the time.

May God help us to respond to the Christian way of living, and thus truly learn Christ. Shall we close in a word of prayer?

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these marvelous truths in the Epistle to the Ephesians. O God, may we not lose the opportunity to know him.

We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.