

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 4:31

Message 77

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INTRO: We have considered a few brief verses on what the Christian is to put off and what he is to put on. These are things that get right down into our lives; putting off lying and putting on telling the truth; never letting anger turn into bitterness and not making room for the devil; putting off stealing and putting on working with our own hands; putting off corrupt communication out of our mouth and putting on speaking good things that lead to edification and imparting grace to the hearers; stopping grieving the Holy Spirit and starting to put off bitterness and anger and wrath and clamor and evil speaking and putting off all malice.

Well, we have one more matter of putting on although it is not put in those words. Verse 32, the last verse of this chapter and unit of Scripture is:

32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

What a change from the beginning of this unit of Scripture which starts in verse 17. Here is what the Ephesian believers recent past had been like. Paul says to them:

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Now not everyone is involved in sin to the same depth, but those are the general characteristics of the lost in heathen lands. Now people in any given society learn to live according to what is acceptable in that society. So we do not see in our own community the same depth of sinfulness one would see in a heathen society such as the Ephesians came out of. But to these

Ephesians Paul now further says:

20 But you have not so learned Christ,

21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Every person in a society like we are where we are heavily influenced by Biblical teaching, still has to be born again. In Iran believers can experience rape or death if it is discovered they are Christians. Husband and wife may say goodbye to each other in the morning not knowing of they will live through the day. Yet I read just this morning of an Iranian woman who wanted to move back to Iran because the lethargy of Christians here in Canada was more dangerous to her Christianity than living in Iran. So I ask, do Canadians still have to learn Christ? No matter where one is, one has to put off the old man and put on the new man. And this is done, as we have seen, by the renewing by the Holy Spirit with reference to the mind, or what the Bible calls the heart.

Well, with regard to our passage, all Christians need to put off and put on what Paul deals with in verses 25-31. We have most recently seen that believers are to stop grieving the Holy Spirit and let all bitterness and anger and clamor and evil speaking with all malice be put away from them. And now we will learn what is to replace that.

f. Regarding treatment of fellow believers

Before we begin this message let me just mention that I was asked a question about the previous message. The question was regarding Colossians 3:8 which says that we are to put off from ourselves all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and

filthy language out of your mouth. But here the command is in the active voice. We are to put them off. I had recommended that the voice in Ephesians was passive because we cannot remove bitterness with its fruits. It must be done to us.

The context of Colossians 3:8 puts the anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and filthy language out of the mouth in Colossians in the realm of anger that is wrong. According to John Gill it relates to their former sinful life in which they lived before they were saved. This is anger that which is not justifiable. We see this in the context from verse 5-8. That is also their former life is also what I connected Ephesians 4:31 to as well. In Ephesians Paul gives as first in the list, bitterness. However, in Ephesians Paul says, "Let all these be put off from you." That is passive.

But in Colossians now it says, "You yourselves are to put off..." and then it gives most of the list given in Ephesians except for bitterness. How do you put away bitterness, or anger, or wrath etc... actively? For anyone who has battled bitterness or anger, this is a very difficult question to answer. Do you just say, "I will not be bitter anymore? Or angry?" And I recommended in the previous message that the previous verse, Ephesians 4:30, is likely the answer to that. It says, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."

If we concentrate on not grieving the Holy Spirit, I believe through that the Lord will begin to put away all the things listed here. So the active way of putting all these off, is by learning to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit and heeding Him. In the passive sense, these things are put away from us through obeying the voice of the Spirit. Actively we put these away, not by concentrating on putting away bitterness etc... but by obeying the voice of the Holy Spirit. There may be a better explanation and I would

be glad for any other good explanations on how to deal with bitterness. This is a difficult matter to deal with.

Let me just give one illustration of the passive and active. Jesus said to Nicodemus one has to be born again. Now one cannot bear oneself again by oneself. It must be done to us. So how do we accomplish this? To be born again we must repent of our sins and put our trust in Christ. There we are actively doing what we must do to be born again. When we do that, God brings about the new birth.

Well, we now come to Ephesians 4:32 which says:

32 *And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*

We have several commands in this verse. This is what to put on after beginning to put off bitterness with all that goes with it and all other evil. Be kind to one another. Now why do we need to be instructed to be kind to one another? Is it not because it does not come naturally to us? Is it not because we fail here so often? So we must be instructed. We must be commanded.

Now I would not have noticed if I had not read commentaries, but the command 'to be' in the original has the idea of 'to become' kind and the rest of the things mentioned here. The original word indicates that. As in some of the other commands we are told to stop doing one thing and start doing another. Here we are told to let all bitterness with the rest to be put off from us, and the instruction "to become," gives the idea of to begin to do what this verse instructs us to.

The word translated *kind* is *chrestos*. It is used only 7 times in the NT and has been translated as kind 2, easy 1, better 1, goodness 1, good 1, gracious 1; for a total of 7 uses.

I find this word difficult to translate, but what is very clear is the stark contrast between this word and bitterness! But consider with me its uses elsewhere. This will give us some idea of its meaning. Jesus said in Matthew 11:30:

30 *"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

The idea of this word is of something good, or pleasant, or serviceable, or gracious.

Now listen to Luke 5:39:

39 *"And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.'"*

When it says the old is better we might say it is more pleasing.

Luke 6:35 says:

35 *"But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil."*

Romans 2:4 *Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?*

1 Corinthians 15:33 *Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."*

1 Peter 2:3 *if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

Chrestos is that which is useful, pleasant, easy, suitable, good, loving, benevolent and one of the best lexicons available says with regard to people it means, kind, loving or benevolent. 1 Corinthians 13 says that love suffers long and is kind.

Now it seems to me for some, kindness is their gift. For some of us, we have to work at it. One can work at it.

If this is not part of one's disposition, and it isn't for many of us, we have to work at it. We have to be commanded.

Then Paul says that Christians are to be tenderhearted one to another. The word is *eusplanknos*. We had this word in our 1 Peter Bible study a while ago. Now does anyone recall to what part of the body the emotions are attached according to what I have taught? It is the bowels. Put a person under a great deal of emotional stress and it wants to affect the bowels and it wants to cause ulcers.

Now the word for bowels is *splanknos*. Listen to a few Scriptures from the KJV which translates this word literally and correctly:

Philippians 1:8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Philemon 1:7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

1 John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

You clearly see the emotions in those references. In 1 John 3:17 they are called *bowels of compassion*. In Colossians 3:12 they are bowels of mercies. Now in our text it is not the word *splanknos*, but *eusplanknos*. The word *eu* attached to *splanknos* means well-boweled. In our misguided

understanding of the place of the emotions we connect the emotions to the heart and so it has been translated 'tenderhearted.' But in fact it is tender-boweled, or well-boweled.

So what is this *eusplanknos*? I think it means we will seek to not be stressful to one another. We will put others at ease as much as possible. We are concerned for their emotional well-being. We are tenderhearted towards them, putting them at ease and relaxed.

And last in our verse, we are to forgive one another. This is not the usual word for forgiveness. Here it is helpful to learn that there are two words translated to forgive in the NT. There is *aphieme*, which is the usual word for forgiveness of sins. The second word sometimes translated forgiveness is *charizomai*. That is the word of our text. In certain contexts it may be translated to forgive but that is not its usual meaning. However, in certain contexts it may be used to refer to forgiveness.

The word of our text, *charizomai*, is used 23 times in the NT and has been translated to forgive 11, give 6, freely give 2, deliver 2, grant 1, frankly forgive 1; for a total of 23. It is most informing that this word comes from the word 'grace'. Grace speaks of the means by which we get something, which is freely. If we get something by grace, it is free.

Now when I say that a word has been used a certain amount of times, I am referring to the KJV. For such searches I use the Strong's Concordance and it uses the KJV. It is one of the most useful tools every produced. And because the KJV is a literal translation, the word count of the Strong's concordance is much more accurate than many other versions. So let me use some verses in which this word occurs in the KJV. This will give you some idea of its use:

Ac 3:14 "But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked

for a murderer to be granted to you,

The word 'granted' is our word. It is that the people asked for a murderer to be freely given to them instead of Christ. They wanted Christ crucified. Acts 25:11:

11 *"For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar."*

Here Paul is under trial and he says that if he has committed things worthy of death, he did not object to dying. He should die. But if the things he had been accused of were not true no one might deliver, that is, freely give him to these who wanted to kill him.

When Paul was sailing as a prisoner to Rome, they ran into a storm at sea. And an angel stood by him at night, and Acts 27:24 says:

Ac 27:24 *"saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'*

The word translated 'granted' is our word. God had freely given to Paul all those who sailed with him. That is, they would be saved from the storm. Now listen to Romans 8:32. Paul writes:

Ro 8:32 *He (i.e., God) who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

That is a most literal translation of this word. Now this word can be used by metonymy for forgiveness. That is because when anyone forgives another it can only be done freely. In 1 Corinthians 5 Paul had exhorted the Corinthians to excommunicate a man living in sin in their church. They did this and later this man repented. When this man repented, the Corinthians did not want to take

him back and Paul wrote again and said this in 2 Corinthians 2:6-7:

6 *This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man,*

7 *so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive (or we might say, you ought to grace) and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.*

Now I think Paul used the word *charizomai* here instead of to forgive because he wanted them to understand that they must freely grant forgiveness to this man. Then in verse 10 he said:

10 *Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ,*

Each time in this verse it is the word *charizomai*. Whenever this word is used, something is graced to another. This word is used to show that forgiveness has been given freely.

Now I think in our text in Ephesians 4:32, the word *charizomai* speaks of forgiving one another. Now that brings us to the controversial subject of forgiveness. There is a teaching that all wrongs must be forgiven unconditionally. I believe that this teaching along with the teachings of unconditional love, unconditional eternal security and unconditional grace have helped bring the Church to the present lukewarm state.

Now let me just say that I do not believe that a lukewarm church is one that is lackadaisical, spiritually uncaring, or carnal. I see the lukewarm church as one that gives lip service to Christianity, but the majority of them are not even born again. They are professing Christians.

Turn to Revelation 3. This chapter speaks of the lukewarm church. I believe it pictures the last of the

seven church stages in the Church age. Here is what the Lord says to this church in verses 20-22:

20 *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

21 *"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.*

22 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."'"*

I see this church as speaking of the state of the Church in the last part of the Church age. And I believe these present unconditional teachings are helping to lead the Church fully into this age of lukewarmness. For those who may listen to these messages on sermonaudio.com, let me recommend our messages: *Forgiveness: will that be One Goat or Two?* The highest holy day of Israel's holy days is Yom Kippur. It is the Day of Atonement. It is when the sins of the nation were forgiven and it required two goats, not one. Unconditional forgiveness only requires one.

True forgiveness requires repentance before it can be extended, and repentance requires confession. Now I want us to notice most carefully in our text that it says that we are to freely grace others the way God freely graced us. I believe it speaks of forgiveness and we ask, how does God forgive us? What I can assure you of is that God's forgiveness is not unconditional. If it was, universal salvation would also be true. God requires repentance. So how can we then forgive unconditionally if we are to forgive the way God forgives?

Let me mention this once more. John the Baptist's message can be reduced to the command, "Repent!" (Matt. 3:1-2). The first thing Jesus preached was

repentance (Matt. 4:17). Among the last things Jesus said was this: After His resurrection He was walking along the road to Emmaus with some disciples who did not recognize Him. This was after He was resurrected. And Luke 24:45-47 says this:

45 *And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.*

46 *Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,*

47 *"and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

The first thing the Apostle Peter preached was repentance. In that first great sermon he preached the people said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said:

38 *Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

The Apostle Paul said in Acts 17:30:

30 *"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,*

When Paul left Asia he called the elders together and Acts 20:17-21 says this:

17 *From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.*

18 *And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you,*

19 *"serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and*

trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

20 *"how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,*

21 *"testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

There we have seen the importance of repentance. Now we want to see how it relates to forgiveness. In Luke 17 Jesus said in verse 3-5:

3 *Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.*

4 *And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.*

Now I believe that the Scriptures teach confession of sin. Repentance includes confession. 1 John 1:9 says:

9 *If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

The word, 'to confess' is *homologeō*. It means *to say the same thing*. When we confess we say the same thing as we did. That is we name our sin. Like this: I lied to you. I said I did this or that, but I didn't. Would you forgive me? Would you send my sin away?

Now I want us to notice that our text says that we are to freely grace one another as God freely graced us. If we are correct in saying that it speaks of forgiveness here, the reason is likely that he is stressing that this is done freely. Then it says we are to forgive as God forgive us. So most naturally we must ask, "How did God forgive us?" Well, beyond all question He

required repentance before He forgives. To do otherwise would be unjust and He is not unjust. So we have a condition for forgiveness. Furthermore, the Apostle John says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Confession is included in repentance.

Now there are two common arguments against saying that forgiveness requires repentance first. First, it is said that I must always forgive regardless of whether the other person repents or not. So I usually ask, "Is he or she forgiven now that you have forgiven?" And the answer is, "No, but I have forgiven already." That seems illogical to me.

Second, I am sometimes told, "God requires repentance first, that is true. But I am not God. I must forgive as soon as the wrong takes place." Then I say, "So you can do something God can't do. God can't forgive unless repentance takes place. He is just, and to forgive without repentance would be unjust. But I can and must forgive even if there is no repentance?" But our text most plainly says that we are to forgive as God forgave us. That leaves only one question: How did God forgive us? Well, it was after we repented. When we forgive a sin and repentance has not taken place, the facts are that that sin is not forgiven, which most clearly means true forgiveness has not taken place.

Now let me mention one of the things I hear that I feel is quite harmful. Someone will repent and say, "I did thus and such. It is wrong. Would you forgive me?" And the person is told, "Oh, I forgave you already." Well, in that case there was no need to repent or confess.

Another common thing I hear is, "If you don't forgive, you will become bitter." Let me say first, that there are many things we need to learn to forbear. We don't have to make an issue of every little things. Forbearance is not forgiveness. In many

issues it is in order to forbear. It is being gracious. It is being kind.

But if sin takes place by one believer against another we have clear instruction on what to do. In Matthew 18 Jesus instructed that the one who is sinned against is to bring it to the other. If he doesn't repent, he is to take another Christian and try again. Now he has a witness. If he still does not repent, the Church is to excommunicate that person. If one practices unconditional forgiveness, this Scripture will be ignored, as it almost always is.

Then sometimes things take place between believers that are not fixable, possibly because the other person is in another church or not a member in one's church or for other reasons. I think that sometimes that issue should be brought to the attention of the other church.

There was a case in our community years ago. A certain young man who had a girlfriend, was unfaithful with another young lady. This young ladies parents attended our church and I learned about this situation. Shortly thereafter I heard this young man was planning to get baptized in a local church. I called the pastor and he said he did not think they could enter that situation. So I said, "Well, then I will be at the baptism."

After he had given that some thought he did approach the young person, who in turn came to me. So we called a meeting and the young lady, the young man and the parents were there. Well, repentance took place and it was fully resolved.

But there are cases where that is not possible. Now here is what I recommend in cases where one cannot deal with the case for some real reason. I go to Romans 12. Turn there. Although I believe this speaks about the believer's relationship with unbelievers, I think that when one has a case with another believer that cannot be resolved,

one may apply this to such cases. We begin in verse 17:

- 17 *Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.*
- 18 *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*
- 19 *Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.*
- 20 *Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."*
- 21 *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Now as I view this passage, it refers to being wronged by an unbeliever. But it says, "Repay no one evil for evil." So it is evident that evil has been done against another. When that takes place from a believer, and it cannot be dealt with, then I believe this is how to stay away from bitterness. There are many such cases.

In such cases I recommend that to keep from becoming bitter, one should use the instructions of this passage. The instruction here is first to never take revenge. Why? Is it because revenge is wrong? No! The word revenge means 'out of justice'. No one wants justice more than God. And because we humans are prone to go wrong in vengeance, the Lord says, "'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." God says, "I will repay." God will take care of all wrongs, whether they be ours or another's. Of one thing we can rest assured, all wrong will be justly dealt with some day, and God Himself will do it. It is a good reminder that that holds true for us as well as all others.

Now some people who have committed a wrong try to gain favor with the one or one's they have wronged by

'loving them'. Oh they try to be ever so nice. And if it works, they are happy and they will never deal with their sin. Their efforts skip repentance and try to gain favor by doing good. When I have done wrong and try to gain favor with the other person by doing good, that is as inappropriate as a pearl in a swine's snout. The instruction to overcome evil with good speaks to the one who is wronged, not the wrongdoer.

Now I want us to consider one other part of our verse. It says:

32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Notice first what it does not say. It does not say, "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another just as God forgave you." No. It says we are to grace or forgive one another just as God forgave us 'in Christ.' Now you see, God cannot just unconditionally forgive anyone. Why not? Because He would cease to be just and thus cease to be good and thus cease to be the one true God put forth in the Bible.

You see, these words "in Christ" give us a very important aspect to forgiveness. The phrase 'in Christ' occurs 10 times in Ephesians. Consider this. God said to Adam, "The day you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you will die." The penalty for sin is spiritual death. Spiritual death results in physical death. The only thing that justly satisfies sin is if I die for it. But that death does not pay for my sin. It satisfies God's wrath because after that death is eternal death. God's wrath is satisfied if I am forever separated from Him. In our day, we are in need of a new look at the wrath of God.

But, and that is a big 'but'. Let us find that 'but' in Ephesians 2. We begin at verse 1. It says:

1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

2 *in which you once walked according to the course of this
world, according to the prince of the power of
the air, the spirit who now works in the sons
of disobedience,*

3 *among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts
of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the
flesh and of the mind, and were by nature
children of wrath, just as the others.*

4 *But God...*

Oh what huge trouble we were in, because of the way we had
lived. And by this we became the children of
wrath, just like everybody else. But God... Now
let's read on in verse 4:

4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with
which He loved us,*

5 *even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together
with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

6 *and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the
heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*

7 *that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches
of His grace in His kindness toward us in
Christ Jesus.*

Now how did He make us alive in Christ? He did so on the basis
of the sinner's repentance and faith in Christ.
You see, we are justified, which means we are
declared to be righteous, because we came to be
'in Christ' through repentance from our sins
and our faith in Him. Our faith is now imputed
to us for righteousness. The book of Romans
lays this out so very clearly. It is 'in
Christ'. If God forgave us without our
repentance and faith in Christ He would be
unjust.

To understand forgiveness as being unconditional is a huge
biblical error. It also leads to unbiblical
practices. The Church today suffers from such

teachings. We do not deal with sin in churches because of such teachings.

Now let me ask you, who paid the bigger price in order that we might be freely forgiven, God or Christ? You will remember Christ's suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane. You will recall His sweat coming out in blood drops because of the extreme torment of spirit and anguish of soul. You will recall His trials and the cries for Pilate to release a wicked murderer to them instead of Christ. You will recall the cries of, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!" And I ask you, who paid the bigger price God the Father or God the Son?

Consider now the Father. He had one Son. He had only one Son. And He gave His Son a cup to drink, knowing that if He drank this cup, He, God would have to turn His back on His only Son and let wicked, sinful man do to Him as he wished. What that wish would be He also knew. But He knew if His Son went through this, in the end, He God, would be able to forgive wicked sinners their sins and through Christ He would be able to make them righteous. And He said, "It is worth it."

I ask you, what price did God the Father pay those three hours when His Son begged Him if there was not some other way? What price did He pay when He turned His back on His Son and darkness blanketed the earth for three hours? What price did He pay when, after much cruel mocking and scourging, sinful man nailed His Son to the cross? What price did He pay when His Son was identified with criminals when He hung naked between two of them?

With that in mind, listen now as I read our verse again:

32 *And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*

Just as God, in Christ! Oh, how we might wish forgiveness could be unconditional, but it can't be. Justice

demands otherwise. But oh the rich salvation after justice has been served!

CONCL: So let me conclude by summing up the unit of Scripture we have been in. Chapter 4 begins the practical section of the book. Verses 1-16 are the first unit. The command was for Christians to walk worthy of their calling. The Christian's walk is to be equal to the name Christian, little Christ. What a calling!

The second unit, the one we just completed has this overriding command: Do not walk like other Gentiles walk! Do not walk like the unsaved! So look at how other Gentiles walk. We'll read verses 17-19:

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

That is their walk before they got saved. Paul now tells them that they have not learned Christ like that and tells them what they are to walk like now. We have this in verses 20-24:

20 But you have not so learned Christ,

21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Paul then tells them what of their old life they should put off and what they should replace it with. So we have verses 25-32:

25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.

26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,

27 nor give place to the devil.

28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.