

Walk Worthy

of the calling with which you were called.
Ephesians 4:1-5:21

PART TWO – WALK IN TRUTH – EPH. 4:17-32

LESSON 19 – YOU HAVE NOT SO LEARNED CHRIST – EPH. 4:20

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Ephesians 4:17-24

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ 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.

But if...

- ▶ Those who are lost and without Christ walk “in the futility of their mind, 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; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” But if we are saved, if we know Jesus, if we have repented of our sin and believed on Jesus, then we have not learned to walk this way!

You Have Not So Learned Christ

- ▶ This is a fascinating phrase, and before we see how Paul qualifies it in verse 21, I want to take the time today to meditate on this truth. We have not so learned Christ. We have learned differently. Differently than what? Let us consider the evidence and fruit we have finished studying as it pertains to the life of the lost man and let us see how we have learned something different if we have learned from Christ.

Futility

- ▶ Futility
- ▶ Before Christ our minds were futile. We were lost – not knowing where to go or even how to get there! But now we have purpose. And this is not some purpose driven drivel. No! We have real purpose. Jesus is our Lord and Savior and we are learning how to walk in victory over sin, but even beyond that we have a new goal, a new reason for living a deliberate life of godliness. Now we do all that we do for the glory of God. Eating, drinking, living, playing, relating, whatever we do we do it for God's glory. He is our priority where before self was the priority.

Darkened Understanding

- ▶ Darkened Understanding
- ▶ Before Christ we could not discern. Our minds were in a constant state of spiritual darkness groping for truth and meaning. Now we have been indwelt by the Holy Spirit – God Himself lives in us! He has sealed us for the day of redemption and in the meantime He gives us the ability to discern, to hear, understand, and obey His Word and His will. In Christ we have learned that we are free from the darkness and are able to walk in the light.

Alienated

- ▶ Alienated
- ▶ Before Christ we were alienated from the life of God. We were doomed as children of wrath. Now we have been made partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:3-4), we have been given eternal life, we have been adopted and are able to call God Father. We are no longer aliens and strangers, we are co-heirs with Christ and will one day rule with Him! We who were afar off have been brought near by His blood. We are held in His hands, indeed engraved upon His palms (Isaiah 49:16). Why engraved? We cannot be dropped, shaken loose, washed off, or otherwise released! We are in His hands for good and forever.

Ignorant

- ▶ Ignorant
- ▶ Before Christ we were ignorant of the truth. We were quite unteachable too. Now we have been enlightened. The Word has been illumined by the Spirit. We have been given the ability to understand the Word of God. We are teachable. The Word teaches us and instructs us even when we sleep (Ps 16:7). Where once we were unable to grasp eternal truth, now we are motivated to lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven as we see things from God's own perspective.

Blind

- ▶ Blind
- ▶ Before Christ we were blind. Our hearts were hard, cold, and dead. But though we once were blind now we can see. Somebody should write a song! We can see. We have been given new hearts. We were darkness and now are light in the Lord. Things make sense. We are growing and maturing and we are seeing more and more of God's handiwork in the world around us. And we long to see Him!!

Past Feeling

- ▶ Past Feeling
- ▶ Before Christ we were seared, our consciences were burned out, we were past feeling. Now we have fresh consciences! We can see the difference between right and wrong. We FEEL more than we ever have. The Spirit bears witness with our Spirit that we are children of God. Remember when you were first converted? Everything was new and fresh. Everyday should be that way for the believer as we grow in grace and walk by faith!

Given to Uncleaness

- ▶ Given to Lewdness, Uncleaness, and Greediness
- ▶ Before Christ we were ruled by our passions, by our fleshly sinful desires. Now we are free! We are able to say no to sin. We can withstand temptation. We are no longer tossed about by the whims of our fallen flesh. Now in Christ we are clean, pure, holy, and free from selfishness. We are motivated to give to each other and to care for the Body of Christ. Our lives which were once centered on self are now centered on Christ. He is our all in all and everything this world has to offer we count but loss for knowing Christ.

The Way It Should Be

- ▶ At least this is the way it should be. If indeed we have not so learned Christ, then we should be radically different than the lost around us – and different from what we were before Christ saved us.
- ▶ There are other ramifications of this phrase though that we must pause to consider. This means that any church and any person – believer or not – who is teaching people how to be selfish, lewd, greedy, or leading them into ignorance instead of the truth – these people are not being taught about Jesus. Now let's think about this carefully.

Learning Christ

- ▶ If we have learned Christ then we have learned the opposite of futile, ignorant self fulfillment and greed. But so many “churches” are using fleshly lusts, appeals to pride, entertainment, sensual excitement, greedy motives for self pleasure and fulfillment, and worldly methods and programs in order to try to reach people with the gospel!
- ▶ But here we have been told that we have not so learned Christ. Learning from Christ, and knowing Christ NEVER appeals to the flesh, to base instincts, to pride, to self esteem, or to our lusts! And yet here is the bulk of church “growth” methodology. Make lost people comfortable, accepting, and open to the truth of the gospel and the Person of Christ.

The World Hates Jesus

- ▶ NEWS FLASH – the world HATES Christ! Christ means death to self. Christ means the end of being ruled by lust and sin. Christ means the end of all that we are in our flesh. And frankly, the lost man does not want to be denied!
- ▶ Any church that teaches people to be worldly, or that fails to confront worldliness, is not teaching people the truth in Christ. Any church that embraces worldly business and marketing methods for church growth has yet to realize that we have not so learned Christ. Any church that confuses the Body for a business, the congregation for a country club, the gospel for a means of gain, or the Christian life for a cake walk has not so learned Christ!

Comparing Fruit

- ▶ Compare the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh found in Galatians 5 and ask this question – what are your learning when the church gathers for worship? If the results are not found in the Spiritual Fruit column, then you are not being taught the Word of God. It really is that simple.
- ▶ In Christ we are a new creation. If we are new, then we will act like we are new. And if we are not acting like we are new, then sadly, we have not learned Christ or the gospel.
- ▶ Next Week: Heard and Taught – Ephesians 4:20-21