

# 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 25 – TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS – EPH. 4:24

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# Ephesians 4:20-24

- ▶ Ephesians 4:20 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.**

# If we are saved

- ▶ If we are saved we will not walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk. We will be distinct in our conduct, our speech, and our way of life. We will face trials and tribulations differently. We will suffer graciously and we will overcome boldly. We will have heard and been taught by Jesus. We will have put off the old man. We will be being renewed. And we will have put on the new man which is created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.

# True Righteousness and Holiness

- ▶ In working through this passage my attention was drawn to the last phrase in our text for this week. We have put on a new man which was “created in true righteousness and holiness.”
- ▶ What is true righteousness and holiness? The Bible speaks often of righteousness and of holiness. But what do these words mean? What does this phrase tell us about the life we live as we have put on the new man?
- ▶ The new man – who we are in Christ – is created in true righteousness and holiness. And while the phrase in English may not show it, the word “true” modifies both the righteousness and the holiness. So let us examine these terms.

# True Righteousness

- ▶ We would readily admit that there are people around us and possible even in our church that though they seem to be righteous, and they may think they are righteous, a close examination of the fruit their lives are bearing reveals that it is a righteousness built upon self. It is self-righteousness. It is not true righteousness. It is hypocritical. It is fake. It is arrogant, self esteem bolstering, pride of life righteousness. That is to say, it is not true righteousness at all!

# True Righteousness

- ▶ True righteousness is defined as “uprightness.” This term then is taken to mean at its heart that righteousness is the characteristic required of men by God. In other words, it is being in a state of rightness with God. We please Him, we are acceptable to Him, we are right with Him.
- ▶ Of course, the modifier “true” means just that – this is true righteousness. It is not fake. There is no deception. There is only real, living righteousness. The new creation that we are, the new man that we have put on in Christ is right with God. Not because of anything we have done but because of the righteousness of Christ that has been imputed to us.

# True Righteousness

- ▶ Christ pleased God. Christ obeyed, honored, loved, and exalted God. And because He kept the Law of God perfectly, He was righteous.
- ▶ He has given (imputed) that righteousness to us. We cannot be truly righteous on our own. The best we can do in our attempts to please Him (without Christ) is an unspeakable and vile pile of rags (Isaiah 64:6).
- ▶ But this new man, the new creation that we are in Christ, has had the righteousness of Christ imputed. We have credited to our account absolute faithful obedience to God!
- ▶ This is the basis then of our being reconciled to Him. The true righteousness that is imputed to us by Christ.

# True Holiness

- ▶ We also see that this new man is created in true holiness, that is, in a state of devout piety. Those are words we do not hear much these days.
- ▶ Devout of course means devoted. Piety, to be pious, is to meet a standard. So here we have a true state of devotion to meeting God's standard.
- ▶ What is His standard? Absolute holiness. He commands us to be holy as He is holy. This is not fake or hypocritical. It is not acting the part of a Puritan all the while using religious beliefs to advance self importance or feed fleshly appetites for the accolades and praise of men.



# True Holiness

- ▶ Who we are in Christ, from the very way that the new man is created, is absolutely devoted to being holy, to meeting God's standards of perfection.
- ▶ Can we do this on our own? Of course not. Once again this is a quality that must be given to us from outside of ourselves. On our own we cannot be holy. And we certainly could not ever hope to meet God's standards on our own. It must be Christ through us as we abide in Him.

# True Holiness

- ▶ A Christian then is a person who was lost and blind and is now found and can see.
- ▶ A Christian is a disciple of Jesus Christ who has repented and believed the gospel.
- ▶ A Christian is a new creation, created in a right relationship to God and meeting His standards.
- ▶ How can this be? It is the life and death of Christ on our behalf.

# Righteousness and Holiness

- ▶ In conclusion then I want to look briefly at three verses of Scripture today. These are the only three verses where the terms righteousness and holiness appear together in the same verse in the Scriptures.
- ▶ Of course the first we have already seen in Ephesians 4:24 where we see that we who are in Christ have been transformed and made new. And the new man that we are is created in right relationship to God, meeting His standards because of the imputed righteousness of Christ.

# Righteousness and Holiness

- ▶ The second verse is Luke 1:75.
- ▶ Luke 1:74 To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.
- ▶ Here in the first chapter of Luke we are reading the prophecy of Zacharias, John the Baptists father. In this prophecy he states that the Messiah is coming so that His people might serve God.
- ▶ This service is done without fear for perfect love casts out fear. And this service is done in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Because Christ has come, we are now able to serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness.

# Righteousness and Holiness

- ▶ The third verse is Romans 6:19 - I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.
- ▶ We learn that we have been freed from sin and are now slaves of righteousness. And it is said that we are slaves of righteousness for holiness. That is, where we once we ruled by sin, now we are ruled by righteousness so that we are able to be holy! And all of this flows as a free gift from God through the salvation provided us in Christ Jesus.

# Christ is All in All

- ▶ We see then that everything we are as a follower of Christ points us and others to Christ! There is no attention drawn to self for our accomplishments of good, righteousness, and holiness. Instead, we “let our light shine” before men by being righteous and being holy as Christ lives in us! We point people to Him.
- ▶ We cannot be right with God on our own. We cannot be holy on our own. So God has created us anew, transforming us from darkness to light, adopting us as sons and daughters, and through His Son making us right and pleasing to Him.

# Christ is All in All

- ▶ All of that to say this – the Christian life, if true, always points to Christ. A life of true righteousness and holiness does not draw attention to itself – it directs that attention to the Source of all righteousness and holiness – Jesus Christ our Lord.
- ▶ Are you a Christian? Then by definition, your life should point people to Christ.
- ▶ Next lesson: Speaking Truth – Ephesians 4:25