

**Ephesians**  
**Lesson #16, Chapter 4:17-24**

Read Chapter 4 verses 1-24 before beginning this lesson.

1. Paul phrases his opening comments in verse 17 in such a way that you know that what follows is very important to understand. What does he say that gives weight to his words?
2. What does he want us to make sure we do according to verse 17?
3. Since Paul is speaking to Gentile believers, what group does *Gentile* refer to as Paul uses it in verse 17? See also 1 Thess. 4:5.
4. What are the first 3 characteristics of how *those* Gentiles walk (verses 17-18)? Also see Rom. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:3.
5. Why do they walk that way (verse 18)?
6. What is the result of their ignorance and the hardness of their hearts (verse 19)?

7. Define *callous* (NIV *lost all sensitivity*; NKJV *being past feeling* [Strong's #524]).

John MacArthur, commenting on verses 17-19, writes: "That process characterizes every unbeliever. It is the direction that every ungodly person is headed, although some are further along than others. "Evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). That some people may not reach the extremes Paul mentions in Ephesians 4:17-19 is due only to the protective shield of God's common grace that He showers both on the righteous and the unrighteous (see Matt. 5:45) and to the preserving influence of the Holy Spirit (Job 34:14-15) and of the church (Matt. 5:13)."<sup>1</sup>

8. Paul began this section with an appeal for believers to no longer walk in their old ways before knowing Christ as Savior. Perhaps after studying the walk and thoughts of an unbeliever, you recognize that you still carry the vestiges of that old life with you. Do you find that you harden your heart against the alarms of your conscience so you can engage in a particular sin? Do you practice impurity in your mind or body? Do you find that there is a greedy eagerness in your soul to engage in a particular sin? *If so, repent and walk no longer like an unbeliever.* Ask God to change your thinking about those sins and to make your heart sensitive once again to the Holy Spirit's conviction. Ask God to help you apply what we will learn in verses 20-24. Before you move on to the next questions, take some time talk to the Lord about what we've just studied.
9. What contrast is being made in verse 20?
10. What are the marks of authentic salvation according to verses 20-21? See also 1 Jn. 5:20.
11. What is the first thing we have been taught in Him (verse 22)?

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<sup>1</sup>MacArthur, John. *Ephesians*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986. 172.

12. What observations can you make about the old self from verse 22? Now add Rom. 6:6 and Col. 3:9 to your observations about the old self.
  
13. Verse 23 outlines the next step in walking in Christ. What is it?
  
14. Define *renewed* (NIV *made new* [Strong's #365]).
  
15. How is this renewal accomplished? See 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; Col. 3:10; Titus 3:5.
  
16. The process of renewal begins at salvation when we are given a new heart that will long to do the will of God. Yet that process is not complete; God tells us to lay aside the old self and be renewed in the spirit of our minds. How are the patterns of thought affected? How do you change your thinking? See Ps. 119:11; Prov. 23:7; Rom. 12:2; Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:1-2; Heb. 4:12.
  
17. What is the next step to walking in Christ (verse 24)?
  
18. What observations can you make about your new self from verse 24? Now add Col. 3:10-14 to your observations about the new self.

19. If you find that there seems to be too much old self, too little renewal in your life, and not enough new self, what does that tell you? What are your options for changing that pattern?
  
20. What does every believer need to keep in mind during this process? See Gal. 2:20-21; 3:3; 5:25; Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 2:12-13.
  
21. Write down a way (or some of the ways) that you still walk in the manner of your former life. Now formulate a Scriptural plan to lay it aside.
  
22. What are some ways you can renew your mind and put on the new self? Try to be as specific and detailed as possible.

A hypocrite knows more than he is willing to do; but a true saint desires to do what he knows, and to know more that he may do more, and better.<sup>2</sup> ~Vavasor Powell

Take time to be holy.  
Speak oft with thy Lord; abide in Him always and feed on His Word.  
Make friends of God's children.  
Help those who are weak, forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.

Take time to be holy.  
The world rushes on; spend much time in secret with Jesus alone.  
By looking to Jesus,  
like Him thou shalt be; thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.

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<sup>2</sup>Powell, Vavasor. *A Puritan Golden Treasury*. Ed. I. D. E. Thomas. Carlisle, Pennsylvania: The Banner of Truth Trust. 52.

Take time to be holy.  
Let Him be thy guide, and run not before Him, whatever betide.  
In joy or in sorrow still follow thy Lord,  
and, looking to Jesus, still trust in His Word.

Take time to be holy.  
Be calm in thy soul — each thought and each motive beneath His control.  
Thus, led by His Spirit to fountains of love,  
thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Longstaff, William. “Take Time to Be Holy.” *The Celebration Hymnal*. Word Music/Integrity Music. 1997. 656.