

L107 | Ephesians | "Walk Not in the Vanity of Your Mind" | Eph. 4:17-24

I. Intro/Review:

- Overview
 1. Eph. 1-3:21
 2. Eph. 4:1-16 (Eph. 4:1-5:17)
 3. Eph. 4:17-Eph. 6 (Eph. 5:18-6:24)

II. Preview:

1. The Classification of a Vain Walk
 1. Vanity of their mind
 2. The Cause of a Vain Walk
 1. Having the understanding darkened
 2. Being Alienated from the Life of God - through the ignorance that is in them
 3. Because of the blindness of their heart
 3. The Consequence of a Vain Walk
 1. Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness
 2. To work all uncleanness with greediness.
- Christless - empty
 - Darkness and light

III. Sermon:

**This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,
{Ephesians 4:17}**

1. The Classification of a Vain Walk

- **"This I say therefore"**
 1. In view of Eph. 1 prayer
 2. In view of Eph. 3 prayer
 3. In view of Eph. 4 the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ from Christ at the Father's right hand
- **"and testify in the Lord,"**
 - To call to witness before God and for Christ - "God is my record"
 - Paul testifying as one "in the Lord", communion and fellowship with the Lord, access to the mind of the Lord
 - 1 Cor. 7 example - "in the Lord" not a matter of inspired opinion or judgment
- **"that ye henceforth"**
 - In view of salvation and doctrine

- **"walk not as other Gentiles walk"**

- Conversation - Ps. 50:23
 - Eph. 2:3
 - Eph. 4:22 - "former conversation"
 - Php. 1:27, 3:20
 - Jas. 3:13, 1 Pet. 1:15, 18, 2:12, 3:16
 - 1 Pet. 4:3 - "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine..."

1. **"in vanity of their mind"**

- **Romans 1**

- "thoughts"
- "imagination"
- Romans 1:21 - glorified Him not as God
- Romans 1:25 - changed the truth of God into a lie
- Romans 1:28 - did not like to retain God in their knowledge...reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient
- Eph. 4:23 - renewed in the spirit of your mind

- **Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12:8** (book ends)

- **Isaiah 40:17-31** - "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."
- **Isaiah 45:19** - "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right."

- **Isaiah 59:1-21**

- **Psalms 39:5** - "Behold thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah."

- **:11** - "when thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah."

- **Psalms 62:9** - "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity."

- **Psalms 94:11** - "The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity."

- **Proverbs 30:8** - "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me."

- **2 Peter 2:18** - "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."

- **"vanity"** - a word used to describe something that cannot bring about its intended purpose
 - Contrast to "the Head"
 - Contrast to the One where "the eternal purpose" rests
 - Contrast seen in Eph. 2:1-3 to Eph. 2:4-6
 - Something in "their mind"
 - Eph. 2:1-3
 - John 3:16-21
 - Eze. 13:8 - "...spoken vanity, and seen lies"
 - Eze. 13:9 - "...prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies:"
 - Eze. 13:23 - "...see no more vanity, nor divine divinations:"
 - Eze. 21:29 - "...see vanity unto thee, while they divine a lie unto thee"
 - Eze. 22:28 - "...seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them"
 - Col. 2 - "philosophy, vain deceit"
 - That which produces the fruit of the Spirit without the Spirit, without the Word of God
 - Isaiah 47:13 - "multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee."
 - Daniel 2:2 - "Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams..."

**Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:
{Ephesians 4:18}**

2. The Cause of a Vain Walk

1. "Having the understanding darkened"

1. **Logic** - one walks in the vanity of their mind because their "understanding" darkened, its veiled, its covered
 - Pro. 4:19 - "The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble."
 - To what purpose?, to end?, for what?, why?
 - Two may look at a tree and to one it is a lovely sight, one to behold, but then forgotten, one that takes the breathe away but to perish with one's death - capture the moment and it flees as soon as you think you grasp it
 - The other, looks with understanding, and praises the Creator, seeks to know Him, learns of that which is greater than all trees is their Maker and see all things comprehended in Jesus Christ.

- One looks at a problem in the relationship and concludes it is the others fault, it is his/her parents fault, yes - may the world bend its knee to me that they are all my problem.
 - Yet, the other looks and says, "I am the problem - me and my sin and my selfishness that I am so unknowingly bent to. Ah but yes, others do offend, but I understand because I understand I am a sinner. Justice is they deserve eternal torment, oh but I do too! Love commended to me in Christ, love commended toward my offender in Christ, therefore love from me." - This is understanding - yet you will have none of it in the world - they are lousy, spiritual sick with themselves, never taking sides against themselves - what a sore travail, what a vanity of vanities! From head to foot they are in the dark, in their mind and therefore their walk.

2. **Define** - the way of thinking and feeling

- "mind" of v17 and now "understanding" nearly interchangeable
- "mind" in v17 more comprehensive, considers the whole
- "understanding" the way in which the "mind" works is darkened

3. **Contrast** - understanding

- Eph. 1:18 - "eyes of understanding enlightened"
- Col. 1:9 - "...spiritual understanding"
- Col. 2:1-3 - "...all riches of the full assurance of understanding"

4. **"darkened"**

- To cover - veiled
- Isa. 25:7 - "And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations."
 - Israel
 - Gentiles
- Gentiles
 - Acts 26:18 - "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - Rom. 1
 - 2 Cor. 4:1-4 - "...god of this world, blinds the minds of them that believe not"
- Israel
 - Matt. 4:12-16 (Isa. 9:1-2)
 - Jn. 1:1-5 (life, light of men), 6-14 (Life, light of men)
 - Jn. 8:12 - I am the light of the world
 - Jn 12:46
 - Matt. 6:23 - darkness be light, how great that darkness
 - 2 Cor. 3

5. They walk in the vanity of their mind, because their understanding although operational it operates in the dark.

2. "Being Alienated from the Life of God - through the ignorance that is in them"

1. Logic

- They walk in the vanity of their mind, because their understanding is darkened, their understanding is darkened because they are alienated from the life of God.
- If they had access to the life of God their understanding could be enlightened that they may walk in good works.

2. Define - alienated

- Be estranged, a non-participant, to shut off from intimacy and fellowship
- Eph. 2:12 - "being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"
- Eph. 4:18
- Col. 1:21 - "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled"
 - Eph. 2:1-3 - walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air

3. "ignorance" -

- Acts 17:30 - "the times of this ignorance..."
- 1 Pet. 1:14 - "...former lusts in your ignorance"
- Lack of knowledge
- Need of knowledge - the knowledge of the truth
 - Sin, self
 - Christ, righteousness
 - Flesh, Spirit
 - Law, Grace

3. "Because of the blindness of their heart"

1. Logic - They walk in the vanity of their mind because their understanding is covered with darkness, and their understanding is darkened because they don't know better and their heart (their love and affection for that which isn't the life of God) blinds them to the life of God!

2. Define - "blindness"

- Dulled perception - hardness, callous
- Mar. 3:5
- Matt. 15:14 - "...blind leaders of the blind..."
- Matt. 23:16, 17, 19, 24, 26 - "blind...guides"
- Jn. 9:1-41

Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

{Ephesians 4:19}

3. The Consequence of a Vain Walk

1. Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness
2. To work all uncleanness with greediness.

IV. Conclusion: