

Sermon Supplement

Ephesians 4:17-32 – *Dressing for the Occasion*

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

1. **Main Idea of the Passage:** For Gentile believers to live like unbelieving Gentiles is harmful and contradicts the unity of the newly created person in Christ, which is composed of both reconciled Jews and Gentiles. This behavior is part of the old and fallen creation. These new Christians were to understand that their union with Christ meant they had died to the old creation and its lifestyle and were part of a new creation and its lifestyle.
2. **Melodic Line of the Letter:** The two become one for His glory. God the Father, through God the Son, by the power and presence of God the Spirit, is making a multi-ethnic people for the purpose of His glory, based in his eternal plan, in this final age.

KEY WORDS/THEMES

1. **Walk** – how you behave or live your life; a key metaphor for a disciple throughout the Bible.
2. **Put off/put on** – used in the metaphorical sense of taking off and putting on clothing, here in Ephesians referring to the old self and the new self (see also, Col. 3:8-10; Rom. 13:14).
3. **Gracious speech vs. corrupt talk** – factual speech seasoned with grace and spoken out of love vs. vulgar, slanderous, contemptuous, abusive speech that makes light of what God takes seriously.

STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

1. The Marks of Two-ness (vv. 17-24)
 - a. Paul's authority (v. 17a)
 - b. Back to walk (vv. 17b-19)
 - i. Mark 1 - Futility (v. 17b)
 - ii. Mark 2 - Mind (v. 18)
 - iii. Mark 3 - Conscience (v. 19a)
 - iv. Mark 4 - Actions (v. 19b)
 - c. From high challenge to high grace (vv. 20-24)
 - i. Mark 5 - Falsehood
2. The Marks of One-ness (vv. 25-32)
 - a. Mark 1 - Truthfulness (v. 25)
 - b. Mark 2 - Righteous but limited anger (v. 26-27)
 - c. Mark 3 - Happy hard work (v. 28)
 - d. Mark 4 - Gracious speech (v. 29)
 - e. Mark 5 - Jesus himself (vv. 30-32)

GOSPEL CENTRALITY

God the Father has given us forgiveness through the person and work of His Son by the power of the Spirit. The marks of oneness are something that we already have, not something we need to manufacture. We just need to maintain them.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

- What desires of the “old self” (v. 22) seem to rear their ugly heads from time to time? What effect does this have on your relationships?
- What image(s) come to mind when you read “put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (v. 24)?
- Is there a false story about yourself or about others that sin, shame, and Satan have led you to believe, pulling you back into your “old self”? Take time to speak the truth in love to one another – telling each other a truer story.

RESPONDING IN PRAYER

- Thank God that He has offered us forgiveness through the person and work of His Son by the power of the Spirit.
- Pray that we would be able to maintain and walk in the marks of one-ness.
- Pray that our speech, in all its forms, would be seasoned with grace and spoken in love.
- Pray that we would be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving, toward our church family and the world.