

Our Walk in Christ

November 4, 2012

Eph 4:17-24 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

The Gentiles walk:

Walk = (Gk. peripateō), "to conduct one's self, order one's behavior."

A. In the futility of their minds;

Futility = (Gk. mataios) that which is in vain, aimless, resultless, futile; signifies void of results, it marks the aimlessness of anything, the absence of useful aim or effort; it speaks of want of attainment.

When used of persons, implies not merely the absence of good, but the presence of evil. It refers to a perishable and decaying condition, separate from God, and pursuing false ends. (Vincent, Word studies in the New Testament)

Rom 1:21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (See also Rom. 1:21; 8:20; 1 Cor. 3:20; 15:14, 58; Eph. 5:6; Jas. 1:26; 2:20; 1 Pet. 1:18; 2 Pet. 2:18).

Aimless. They walked in the futility of their mind. Their life was empty, purposeless, and fruitless. There was great activity but no progress. They chased bubbles and shadows, and neglected the great realities of life. (Believer's Bible Commentary; MacDonald)

"Mind" is nous, not merely the intellectual faculty or understanding, but also the faculty for recognizing moral good and spiritual truth. Expositors say: "It is a description of the walk of the heathen world generally—a walk moving within the limits of intellectual and moral resultlessness, given over to things devoid of worth or reality." (Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament)

B. They are darkened in their understanding

Rom. 1:18-21 people live in darkness because they deliberately suppressed the truth.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

2 Co 4:3-4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Paul did not contend they had no knowledge. He contended the knowledge did no good in leading them to a lifestyle that pleased God. Without such a lifestyle, their minds did not function properly. (Holman New Testament Commentary)

C. They are excluded from the life of God

Excluded = Gk. *apallotrioo*: to alienate, estrange to be shut out from one's fellowship and intimacy: (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon). It is used three times in the New Testament Eph 4:18;

Eph 2:12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Col 1:21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds,

Jer. 2:5 Thus says the Lord, "What injustice did your fathers find in Me, That they went far from Me And walked after emptiness and became empty?"

D. Note

Paul explains the differences between the saved and the unsaved. To begin with, Christians think differently from unsaved people. Note the emphasis here on thinking: mind (Eph. 4:17, 23), understanding (Eph. 4:18), ignorance (Eph. 4:18), "learned Christ" (Eph. 4:20). Salvation begins with repentance, which is a change of mind. The whole outlook of a person changes when he trusts Christ, including his values, goals, and interpretation of life. What is wrong with the mind of the unsaved person? For one thing, his thinking is "vain" (futile). It leads to no substantial purpose. Since he does not know God, he cannot truly understand the world around him, nor can he understand himself. (The Bible Exposition Commentary; Wiersbe)

The Gentiles (unbelievers) walk this way because:

A. Of the ignorance in them

Ac 17:30 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, ..."

(See also Mk 9:32; Lk 9:45; Ac 3:17; 13:27; 17:23; Rom 2:4; 6:3; 7:1; 10:3; 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1; 14:38, 38; 2 Cor 1:8; 2:11; 6:9; 1 Thes 4:13; 1 Tim 1:13; Heb 5:2; 1 Pet 1:14; 2 Pe 2:12)

Their state of alienation from his life was because of the ignorance that is in them. Paul's view of knowledge and ignorance is largely determined by the Old Testament. To know God means to be in a close personal relationship with him. Knowledge has to do with an obedient and grateful response of the whole person, not simply intellectual assent. Likewise, 'ignorance' is a failure to be grateful and obedient. It describes someone's total stance, and this includes emotions, will, and action, not just one's mental response. Not to know the Lord is to ignore him, to say 'no' to his demands. Such ignorance is culpable. It is not an excuse for sin, though it is often understood this way in contemporary thought. The Gentiles' inability to understand the light of God's truth is no excuse for their broken relationship with him. Indeed, the additional words, '[the ignorance] that is in them', show that the responsibility is not finally due to external factors. The blame falls squarely on their shoulders. (from The Pillar New Testament)

B. Of the hardness of their heart

The word "blindness" is *pōrōsis*, "hardness." The word is formed from *pōros*, "hard skin or induration." It means literally "the covering with a callous." (From Wuest's Word Studies)

Literally "hardness," covered with a callus (Mk 3:5; Rom 11:25). The heart lost its capacity to feel, and they became insensible, indifferent, and unresponsive to all moral principles and practices. (from KJV Bible Commentary)

Mk 3:5 And after looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart,

Mk 6:52 for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

Mk 8:17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart?"

Ro 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in;

2 Co 3:12-14 Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not as Moses, who used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ.

The Gentiles practice every kind of impurity with greediness because:

A. They have become calloused

Calloused = Gk. apalgeo; signifies "to cease to feel pain for" (apo, "from," algeo, "to feel pain"); hence, to be callous, "past feeling," insensible to honor and shame, (from Vine's Expository Dictionary)

the verb means to cease from feeling pain. Hence to be apathetic. (from Vincent) M

They were past feeling, insensible to moral and spiritual impressions and to the appeal of truth. Conscience is not functioning, and there is no hatred of sin and no love for Christ. (from KJV Bible Commentary)

B. They have given themselves over to sensuality

1. **given themselves over to** = Gk. parédookan; The verb means, first, to give, or hand over to another. So, to surrender a city or a person, often with the accompanying notion of treachery. (from Word Studies In the New Testament; Vincent)

Rom 1:24-28 homosexuality is the result of a depraved mind; a society that protects homosexuality has become depraved!

Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

2. **sensuality** = Gk. aselgeia; unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence: (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon)

It is used 10 times in the New Testament in the following references Mark 7:22; Rom 13:13; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 5:19; Eph 4:19; 1 Pet 4:3; 2 Pet 2:2, 7, 18; Jude 4.

You did not learn Christ in this way.

The phrase 'to learn a person' appears nowhere else in the Greek Bible, and to date it has not been traced in any prebiblical Greek document. (from The Pillar New Testament Commentary)

He did not say "learned about Christ," because it is possible to learn about Christ and never be saved. To "learn Christ" means to have a personal relationship to Christ so that you get to know Him better each day. I can learn about Sir Winston Churchill because I own many of his books and can secure books about his life. But I can never learn him because he is dead. Jesus Christ is alive! Therefore, I can "learn Christ" through a personal fellowship with Him. (from Wiersbe; The Bible Exposition Commentary)

Paul taught Christ.

Acts 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

1 Cor 1:23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness,

1 Cor 15:12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

2 Cor 1:19 For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not yes and no, but is yes in Him.

2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

2 Cor 11:4 For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

Phil 1:15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will;

Eph 4:21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him,

Col 2:6-7 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.

'if indeed' - does not express doubt, but implies confidence and certainty

'you heard of him', - draws attention to the initial response to Christ, ...

'you were taught in him', - picks up the point of ongoing instruction.
(from The Pillar New Testament Commentary)

Eph 4:21... just as truth is in Jesus,

Jesus is the measuring rod for truth, all truth is in Jesus.

Jn 1:17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

Jn 8:31-32 Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. "

Col 1:15-17 And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Jesus is used rather than Christ: the historical rather than the official name. The life of Christianity consists in believing fellowship with the historic Jesus, who is the Christ of prophecy. (from Vincent; Word Studies in the New Testament)

He not only teaches the truth; He is truth incarnate (John 14:6). (from Believer's Bible Commentary)

1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Eph 4:22 that, in reference to your former (before Christ) manner of life, (sins) you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,

A. lay aside the old self

use only three times in the New Testament (Rom 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9)

Ro 13:12 let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Heb 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Ephesians 4:22–24 is a summary of Romans 5–8, where Paul explained the believer's identification with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection. He also dealt with this in Ephesians 2:4–6, as well as in Colossians 3. As Christians, we have not simply changed our minds. We have totally changed our citizenship. We belong to God's "new creation" in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), and therefore, the ideas and desires of the old creation no longer should control our lives. (from Wiersbe; The Bible Exposition Commentary)

1. We lay aside the old self by faith

Gal 2:20 sin no longer has power over me through faith in Christ

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

Rom 6:1-6 faith in our baptism

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; (Col 2:11-13)

Ro 6:11 I am dead to sin

Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Gal 5:24 my flesh has been crucified with its passions and desires

Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Gal 6:14 I have been crucified to the desires of this world

But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Col 3:3-9 I consider myself to be dead to sin and alive to God

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

2. The old nature is in a continuous downward spiral of corruption – “which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,”

The verb is passive, which is being corrupted, and marks the progressive condition of corruption which characterizes “the old man.” (from Vincent; Word Studies In the New Testament)

but it is a process of corruption (worse and worse). (from Robertson; Word Pictures In the New Testament)

B. Put on the new self

Ro 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

2 Co 5:17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Col 3:10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him

Gal 3:26-28 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

1. The new nature is in the likeness of God.

“which (new nature) in the likeness of God;”

Rom 8:29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

Col 3:10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—

2 Cor 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

2. The new nature has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

- My nature is righteous

1 Cor 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,

2 Cor 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

(See also Rom 1:17; 3:21-22; 4:3-13; 4:22; 5:17-21; 10:3-10; Gal 2:21; 3:6, 11; Phil 3:9; Heb 10:38; Jas. 2:23; 1 Pt 2:24)

- My nature is holy
2 Tim 1:9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

Heb 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;

(see also Rom 11:15-16; Eph 1:3-5; 2:21-22; 5:27; Col 1:22; 3:12; 1 Pt 1:15; 2:5, 9)

- Note from KJV Bible Commentary
Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. This is not the reformation or renovation of the old man; this is the product of the new birth and results in a new creation. The new man is created after God and in the family likeness of God. The brand new man is known by the Christlikeness exhibited day by day in living out the new life. Righteousness refers to his new conduct toward his fellowmen. Holiness refers to his new conduct towards God. These two are the essential qualities and the evidence of the new man in Christ.

C. and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, Eph 4:23

Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

2 Co 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Tit 3:5-6 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

Jas 1:21-25 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.