



Ephesians

Part 34

Ephesians 4:20-32
Week of November 7, 2021

Before Connect Group

- Read Ephesians 4:20-32
 - Watch the sermon by going to <http://switzerlandcommunitychurch.org>
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But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4:20-32

Sermon Notes

You can know and have trust in your life in Christ if what comes from your mouth is truth. Yet, you should be concerned if what comes out of your mouth is falsehood.

Last week we spent our time in the previous text concerned with the renewing of the spirit if our minds in verse 23. If you remember, the imagery that was used to describe this act was the imagery of “putting off your old self” and “putting on your new self.”

The Imagery of Putting Off and Putting On Through Being Renewed In Your Mind

- This section from vs. 22-24 becomes the driving imagery that should remain in our minds through the rest of Ephesians.
- This is central to the life and function of the believer.
- Our lives are not built on our will. We cannot cause ourselves to think differently.
- When we were dead, we were unable to imagine life. What we thought was life, was only death presented morally or reasonably to us.
- Life comes from the gift of God in our salvation. Life comes through Jesus Christ alone.
- What we have been doing here in Ch. 4 is transitioning to this question of what do I do with my new life in Christ.
- This may be the transition that we as a Church most often get wrong.
- Whether it be by preaching or hearing, you can be the judge, it seems like so often we will only pay attention to the last half of Ephesians and come to the conclusion that we are to simply be better people. I call this **The Better Person Fallacy**
- The better person fallacy - It assumes that you have the power within you to do what is necessary to please God.
- However, the best version of you without the saving work of Christ is unable to please God.
- *Romans 8:5-8 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*
- Or, we only pay attention to the first part of this book.
- Then in our exceptional theology, we come to the conclusion that there is nothing for us to do. We are saved by Jesus, so we have the “freedom” to do whatever we want.
- *James 1:22-25 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.*
- The language that Paul uses here in this text 4:22-24 is a perfect caption of this necessary transition in our lives.
- The putting off of our old selves and the putting on of our new selves is all because of and in response to us “being renewed in the Spirit of our minds”
- We put off our old selves and put on our new selves only because of and in response to the powerful work of Christ in us.

Putting Away Falsehood and Speaking Truth

- The pattern set out here in verse 25 does not simply turn practical, but it grounds this transitional truth with a daily movement within us.
- This is a practical restatement of what Paul has said in 22-24.
- Falsehood/lying = old self; speaking truth = new self
- Pattern of “don’t do this”, the “do this instead”, followed by “because of this reason”
- However, all of what follows is a description of putting away falsehood and speaking truth.
- From moral personal battles, to the way we treat everyone else in our lives, will come to down this idea of putting away falsehood and speaking truth.
- If my claim is true, and these are overall pattern setting terms, then why would these be the ones chosen. Falsehood and truth. Because these two things become the most notable and simplest identifying feature of your regenerate living.
- You can know and have trust in your life in Christ if what comes from your mouth is truth. Yet, you should be concerned if what comes out of your mouth is falsehood.
- The first thing that we need to see in this text is how closely the lips are associated with the heart.
- For Paul in this argument, lying is associated with being consumed with your old self. Deceitful and corrupt.
- Speaking truth is to be renewed and putting on your new self... Represented by true righteousness and holiness.
- *1 Peter 3:10 For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit;*
- *Matthew 15:18-19 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.*
- God hates the one who lies. This seems like a strong statement. I think it is because we have turned lying into something small and insignificant. We even use the term “little white lie.”
- *Psalms 101:7 No one who practices deceit shall dwell in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue before my eyes.*
- *Proverbs 6:16-19 There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.*
- *Proverbs 12:22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who act faithfully are his delight.*
- *Revelation 21:5-8 And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”*
- It is impossible to be one who finds any comfort in lying and consider yourself renewed in your minds. It is not compatible with that of the “new self”.
- Falsehood/lying is the producer of Anger (26), those who steal (28), corrupt talk (29), grieving of the Holy Spirit (30), bitterness-wrath-anger-clamor-slander- all malice (31)
- Our temptation to lie is birthed from the deceitful desires of our old self.

- Our desire to be respected by others, our desire to be right and not wrong, our desire to hold power and fame, our desire to be greedy and manipulative.
- Truth as definitive of this new life.
- Truth is a loaded word.
- Read 4:21... "the truth is in Christ"
- It makes sense that the definition of those who are in the new man Christ has created would be defined as those living in truth.
- *John 4:23-24 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."*
- Speaking the truth.
- This truth that is within us is most indicated by what flows from our lips.
- It is an indicator first to us, then to others whether or not we are truly found in the life of Christ.
- It is significant that the most important thing in our lives is so easily revealed by something so simple as a truth or a lie.
- For we are members of one another.
- This is powerful. He says that the falsehood or truth we live with one another is indicative of our new self!
- Truth cannot live inside of you covered by lies on the outside. Truth is a complete surrender to the cross which allows you to speak truth to one another.
- To speak the Gospel boldly
- To call out sin in yourself
- To call out sin in a brother or sister
- The lies we tell are our chains, the truth is freedom.
- *John 8:31-32 So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

Connect Group Discussion Questions

- Why do people lie? What is appealing about bending the truth? What type of things are we looking to avoid by neglecting the truth and instead putting forth a falsehood?
- Being in Christ gives permission to hold the body of Christ up and speak truth to one another, including calling out the sin of others as we also are willing to call out our own sin. Why do you think Christians tend to avoid this conversation? Why should Christians absolutely be willing to walk with one another through one another's sin?
- What is truth? Where is the source of all things true? How does our new life in Christ reflect the authenticity of life in Christ? How does it reject the falsehood and false promises of life of the old self.
- How does the truth serve to set us free? How do falsehoods and lies entangle and ensnare us? How does Jesus Christ set us free?

Challenge For The Week

When we walk in the newness of life, we walk in the understanding that Jesus Christ is the source of our truth and we put to death the old person trapped in sin. We willfully stand in truth one another as we seek to pursue our relationship with Jesus Christ together as a part of the body of Christ.

- Who do you have in your life whom you regularly confess your sins to? If you do not have a discipleship relationship partner, this week, consider who you could ask about entering a discipleship relationship with each other to confess sins and wage war together.
- Our testimony of the truth is expressed in all areas of our life. When we stand in truth, we give witness to the Gospel with our actions as we proclaim the Gospel with our mouth. Who do you know who needs to hear the Gospel? Take them to coffee, lunch, or invite them over to dinner and share the Gospel with them.

