

### **Eph 4:17-19 Walk Like Jesus, Not Like the World**

Now that Paul has urged us to grow together in expressing love toward one another, he now tells us how: in walking as Jesus walked, in looking to His example of how to live life, and conducting ourselves as He did, making our behaviors, thoughts and attitudes conform to Him, emulating the example that we have from Him.

#### **Walk in Holiness (4:17–32)**

Ephesians urges us to walk as Jesus walked. Eph 4:1 **Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,** We're entreated to walk in love, in Eph 5:2 **and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God [b]as a fragrant aroma** to walk as Children of the light in Eph 5:8, to walk in wisdom in Eph 5:15-17 saying **15 So then, be careful how you walk, not as unwise people but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.** So we make decisions that further the purposes of God, serving the Kingdom, making the most of our time here on Earth, because it's limited, and our witness is needed in this evil world. And that will ensure that we don't walk in futility any longer, but walk worthy of the Lord who has bought us.

**This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord.**--Paul wants us to pay attention, letting us know that his words have the power and authority of one who speaks in the Lord, that these are Jesus' instructions to them through the Holy Spirit, and out through Christ's servant Paul.

**that you no longer walk just as the Gentiles also walk.**--Since he tells them to "no longer," walk like those who don't know God, then the implication is at least that the Ephesians at one time did walk as the Gentile sinners around them, doing the same things that they do, and also is meant to encourage them that when they do feel tempted to go back to their old ways, or when they succumb to temptation, that they remember the example of Jesus and repent. We also are encouraged to walk by the Spirit, not by the flesh.

#### **in the futility of their minds.**

Paul describes the walk, the character of sinful man as walking in the futility of their minds. The word *mataiotes* ματαιότης has the meaning of "futility" or "emptiness" that characterizes our own ideas on the reality of things. 1 Cor 15:17 Paul emphasizes the centrality of Christ's resurrection by saying that if Christ hasn't been raised then their faith in Him was pointless, since God would not have attested that He accepted Jesus' sacrifice for our sins on the cross, and therefore their faith could not achieve its goal of atonement with God, forgiveness of sin, justification and eternal life, and they would still be in their sins, and under the wrath of God. And here, Paul is describing the futility of mind that curses unbelievers. Paul gives a pretty good summary of this in Romans 3:10-12 10 as it is written: **"There is no righteous person, not even one; There is no one who understands, There is no one who seeks out God; 12 They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, There is not even one."** Human beings are disposed to evil and futility in their dispositions and attitudes, and therefore our plans and purposes, all that we resolve to do in the flesh, without God can only result in more evil, and come to nothing, and worse than nothing, can leave us more and more guilty before God. A good description of this is in Romans 1:28-31.

#### **their reasoning process being darkened.**

The minds of those who practice sin become futile and their reasoning processes become more and more darkened. Just as in Romans 1:21, **"their senseless heart was darkened."** Their ability to perceive the truth becomes less and less acute, because they are wandering further and further away from the source of light, God.

#### **being alienated from the life of God**

As they wander farther and farther from God, they get more and more committed to a life away from God. And they find that their conscience just doesn't bother them anymore when they commit sins,

their conscience being seared, as with a hot iron. They find that they just don't have room in their lives for God, or for His people, and find themselves more and more "excluded" or "alienated" from God.

**because of the ignorance that is in them.**

The lack of perception and ignorance of unbelievers is astounding. This is not innocent ignorance. Rom 1:18–23 **18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them...** Paul describes the degradation of mankind, making it very clear that human beings have rejected the manifest knowledge of God through creation, and thus, refused to glorify or thank God. As a result their reasoning processes became purposeless and their senseless heart became darkened. Their wisdom was foolishness as they exchanged God's incorruptible glory for corruptible idolatry. This is deliberate refusal of God and his will.

**due to the hardness of their hearts.** Because of the continual rejection of God, they have become blind, and their minds and hearts have grown hard as stone, God provides evidence, but we must choose to believe. And hardening our heart against God is a dangerous thing, and if one keeps it up, then God will confirm their decision. John 12:37-40 **37 But though He had performed so many signs in their sight, they still were not believing in Him. 38 This happened so that the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke would be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" 39 For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, 40 "He has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart, so that they will not see with their eyes and understand with their heart, and be converted, and so I will not heal them."** If we refuse to let the working of God soften our hearts, and continue to come before Him in humility and love and respect for what He has done for us, and acknowledgement of Him as Lord God, worthy of praise and honor and glory, then we can become hardened too. Jesus held them responsible for the witness that they have seen, as He holds us all responsible for taking to heart what He has done in our lives. So, don't allow this pattern of unbelief and indifference to what God wants to do in your life take hold.

**who, having become callous.**-- to cease to feel pain, become callous, insensitive--there is no indication that the unbelievers regretted their wicked ways. Rather, it shows that hardness of heart toward God and his will and alienation from the life of God have caused them to become insensitive or calloused to God and his ways. It reflects their moral apathy, given over.

**have given themselves over to indecency.**—They have given themselves over, handed themselves over to immorality, because of their refusal to accept his revelation from heaven. There are two stages: (1) people exercise their perversion of free will and give themselves over to sin, and (2) God's response is then to give them over to the sin which will continue to enslave them. They give themselves over to that false-freedom that really enslaves--"licentiousness, undue freedom, freedom with no boundaries," referring to sensual appetites. Indecency has the idea of "licentiousness, undue freedom, freedom with no boundaries, no shame.

**for the practice of every kind of impurity**—The word practice here means occupation, or pastime, just as we say a doctor or lawyer practices—it means dedicating themselves to moral impurity, uncleanness, foulness, as a practice, as a habit of life, a defilement of the personality, tainting every sphere of life."

**with greediness.** This has the ide of "I want more." It conveys the idea of "covetousness, greediness,"<sup>2</sup> doing things for one's own advantage. In classical times it meant an arrogant greediness', the spirit which tries to take advantage of its fellow men. In Col 3:5 it is identified as idolatry. When one covets a particular thing, that becomes the center of his or her life and is worshiped in place of the creator (Rom 1:23, 25). The reason Christians are not to be covetous is because they must believe that God supplies their needs and that they have no need for what God has given to someone else. Selfishness is in direct contrast to Christ who gave himself over for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God (Eph 5:2). It is love of self in contrast to love of others and of God.