

Eph 4:21-22 The Truth of a Changed Life

Last week, Paul described how the Ephesians, and we used to conduct ourselves, as sinners, just like all the rest, in futility of mind, doing just what we wanted to, unable to see that it was useless and vanity. But God in His Grace called us and drew us through the power of the Holy Spirit, and we understood our great need for salvation from that sinful, fruitless life, and into newness of life.

But you have not so learned Christ.” You have not learned what you know about Christ in this way. In other words, Paul is saying, I’ve taught you better than to believe that you can have Christ within you, and just live whatever way that you want! The word here is used to mean that not only to we learn about Christ, but that we learn Christ Himself. Factual learning is insufficient, that we are to receive Him, and get to know Him personally. It is the Will of God that we continually “learn” Christ. In his introductory prayer for the Ephesians, it was for knowledge of God in Christ. Eph 1:17-20 **17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the boundless greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,** We know who God is through the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. And, it is because of Him that we have hope for eternity. John 17:3 **This is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.** When people speak of “knowing” Jesus, they refer to having a relationship with Him, not just knowing about Him. 1 John 5:20 **“We know . . . that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true”** (1 John 5:20).

The Bible is clear that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. The essence of this doctrine is found in Ephesians 2:8–9: **“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast”** (ESV). Faith, given as a gift by God, is what saves us. Ephesians 2:10, But after we are saved, our lives serve the purposes of God: **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.** Although many teaching easy-believism have sincere hearts, they can very easily give the impression to unrepentant sinners that they are saved, and this is very dangerous. Also, there are many false teachers that teach this, because it is popular. But Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14 **13 “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is constricted that leads to life, and there are few who find it.** The kind of easy-believism that is sometime taught ignores all the Biblical teaching about repentance, turning away from sin and living our lives for Jesus. It severs the biblical ties between faith and the results of that faith in having a changed life, a new Life in Christ. It ignores the sanctification process that occurs as we walk with Jesus, our sanctification. And it leaves many with a false sense of security in their salvation, when really, if their lives have not changed, then they probably had a merely emotional experience, and haven’t believed on Jesus, really made Jesus their Lord and Savior, putting their eternity in His hands. That’s why it is so dangerous.

Repentance is a change of mind from an embrace of sin and a rejection of Christ to a rejection of sin and an embrace of Christ. See Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38; 3:18,etc.

“inasmuch as you heard about him. Paul knew that they had heard a lot about Jesus, because he had previously instructed the Ephesian Church about Him for 2-3 years. Since Paul hadn’t been present in Ephesus for five or six years, he’s gently reminding them of what they had been taught when he was there. Their “hearing about Jesus” was through the preaching of the gospel by Paul and by other preachers and teachers. Paul had made sure that they’d heard the truth, and now he’s reminding them to remember it.

and were taught in him. Not only had they heard about Christ but they were also taught in accordance with who He really is. They weren't taught man's ideas about who Jesus is, but who God has revealed Him to be in the scriptures, and who the apostles knew Him to be from living life with Him for 3 1/2 years, and who the Holy Spirit revealed Him to be. And knowledge of Jesus occurs not only at conversion but also through daily growth by increased knowledge of Him through our walk with Him by the Spirit, and in learning more about Him through the ministry of others, and in studying God's Word.

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The truth in Jesus is that true salvation will result in New Life in Christ. That Jesus calls us to live a life of sincerity and integrity in Him, in moral truth (holiness) laying aside the old person we used to be. And just as the truth is in Jesus, then when we follow Him for real, we understand that there's no way that we could possibly stay the same as we were. Jesus accepted us just as we were when we first got to know Him, but He loves us too much to leave us that way without transforming our lives. Each moment, we have the choice to follow Jesus in walking by the Spirit, or follow our own flesh into living like we used to live. This inner conflict is described well in Romans 7, which concludes in verses 21 and following: **21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. 22 For I joyfully agree with the law of God in the inner person, 23 but I see a different law in the parts of my body waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin, the law which is in my body's parts. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.** Romans 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.** So, the truth that Paul is trying to convey here is over and against the claims of easy believism, and expresses the need to be diligent in how we conduct our lives, and walk with Jesus with intention and the will to follow Him with the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Paul spent all of that time describing the unregenerate gentiles (unbelievers), and the filthiness of their lifestyle, so that we would know that there's nothing about their way of life that should describe us, and that if anyone tells us that we can know Christ, and live that way, then they are trying to deceive us. We read in 1st John 2:4-6 **3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; 5 but whoever follows His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: 6 the one who says that he remains in Him ought, himself also, walk just as He walked.**

Jesus is the embodiment of truth, and following after Him will combat any self-deception that we have, if we're willing to allow the Holy Spirit to change us! Truth is found in the person of Jesus, who is the Christ: He is Himself the truth (John 14:6): hence we can be said to 'learn Him'." Jesus is **The Way, the Truth, and the Life**, He is the express image of the Father (Col 1:15) and his life was the one perfect life which fully demonstrated the indispensable practical aspects of total truth."—that we must live holy lives.