

## EPHESIANS 4:25-32

Paul ends the previous section with these words:

**Ephesians 4:24 (24)** *and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (ESV)*

We have learned that the *new self* is not the person that you become when you lose weight, when you workout, when you drop bad habits, when you keep New Year's Resolutions. No, the *new self* isn't someone you become because you try really hard to change. Contrary to popular wisdom and self-help books, you cannot make yourself new.

The *new self* is a new creation, one made by God Himself, through the work of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**2 Corinthians 5:16–19 (16)** *From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. (17) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (18) All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. (ESV)*

Vast portions of the Word of God are about God changing His people...

**Ezekiel 11:17–20 (17)** *Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.' (18) And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations. (19) And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, (20) that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. (ESV)*

It's from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

And there is the command to "put on" this *new self*.

You might be thinking "that sounds great, but how do I do that?"

And, just like always, Paul tells us what that looks like. This section of Ephesians comes on the coattails of this idea "I have told you to put on the new self, here are some practical ways to do just that."

1. In verse 25, Paul begins to tell us about what this *new self* looks like.
  - a. First, he uses the verb *put away*. When you think of putting something away, what do you think about?
  - b. Do you expect that Paul wants us to put this thing away so that we can get it back out sometime later?
  - c. What does he mean when he says "put away"?
  - d. What is the tense of the verb "put away" - past, present, or future?
  - e. What does that imply about Paul's assumptions about his readers?
2. Paul assumes we have already put away something.
  - a. What is it that we should have already put away?

- b. First, we are to speak something when we put this away.
  - i. Why are we to *speak*?
  - ii. What does this mean for you in your life, here and now?
- c. Second, we are to speak something specific
  - i. What are we to speak?
  - ii. In Paul's letters alone, he uses this word 45 times.
  - iii. Read the following
    - 1. Romans 1:180-23
    - 2. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8
    - 3. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-17
    - 4. 2 Timothy 2:15-25
  - iv. How important is this?
  - v. And John wrote much about this as well.
  - vi. Read the following
    - 1. John 4:21-24
    - 2. John 14:1-7
    - 3. John 17:14-19
  - vii. How does Jesus use this word?
  - viii. Why must we be told to leave something bad behind and replace it with something good?
- d. Third, we are told to speak this thing to a specific people
  - i. Who are these people?
  - ii. This word is used in a lot of different ways in the bible, sometimes it means strangers who are near, sometimes it means friends, sometimes family, sometimes something more.
    - 1. What does it mean here? (Explain why you think this)
- 3. The "therefore" in verse 25, is there to point back to "putting on the new self". Therefore, because we have put on the new self, we are to put away things. The first thing Paul tells us to *put away* is falsehood. And putting away falsehood necessarily involves *speaking the truth*, especially to other Christians.
- 4. But now Paul says something that may sound strange. You might expect Paul to say "don't be angry", but instead he says "be angry", but qualifies that emotion
  - a. Paul doesn't say "if you get angry, do not sin", he says "BE angry but do not sin". What's the difference?
  - b. What guard does Paul put around anger?
  - c. Why do you suppose Paul thinks it's OK to be angry, but it's not OK to sin in your anger?
  - d. What does sinning while you are angry look like?
  - e. Does the bible consider all anger sinful?
  - f. What do you suppose we are to be angry at?
- 5. Paul says this in a context
  - a. Given the context of putting on the new self and putting the old self to death, how do you think Paul expects us to not sin in our anger?
  - b. Do you suppose that Paul thinks it is possible to "be angry but do not sin?"
- 6. Read the following verses about anger
  - a. Jonah 4:9-11
  - b. 2 Corinthians 12:19-21
  - c. Colossians 3:5-11
  - d. James 1:19-21
  - e. 2 Peter 2:4-10

- f. Matthew 7:1-5
  - g. James 2:8-13
  - h. Mark 3:1-6
  - i. John 2:15-17
7. After Paul tells us to “be angry but do not sin”, he says “not let the sun go down on your anger”
    - a. What does this word picture make you think of?
    - b. How often do you take your anger to bed with you?
    - c. What does it do to you?
  8. If we don’t deal with our anger in a godly way, something horrible can happen
    - a. What is that horrible thing?
    - b. What could/does that look like practically?
    - c. Read the following
      - i. 1 Peter 5:6-11
      - ii. Matthew 4:1-11
      - iii. 2 Timothy 2:22-26
      - iv. 1 John 3:4-10
      - v. Revelation 2:8-11
    - d. Who is the devil?
      - i. 2 Corinthians 11:12-15
      - ii. John 13:21-27
      - iii. Luke 22:31-34
    - e. How can he get an opportunity? Why would letting the sun go down on your anger give him this opportunity?
    - f. But there is a great promise
      - i. Read Revelation 20:7-10
  9. In verse 28, Paul addresses a certain kind of person
    - a. What kind of person does he address?
    - b. Why do you suppose he mentions this sin specifically?
    - c. What does Paul instruct this person to do?
    - d. Read the following
      - i. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
      - ii. Luke 15:1-7
      - iii. Romans 8:5-11
    - e. Read Luke 15:11-32
    - f. What does verse 28 in addition to all of these passages show you about God’s character?
    - g. What is expected of us when we turn to God in repentance?
  10. In verse 29, Paul harkens back to verse 25
    - a. Reread verse 25
    - b. How do verses 25 and 29 relate?
    - c. Define *corruption*.
    - d. How does Paul tell us we should speak to one another?
    - e. What does Paul mean by *building up* here?
    - f. So, Paul tells us *what* we are supposed to do, *how* we are supposed to do it, and now tells us *why*. So, *why* does Paul tell us to talk that way?
    - g. Define *grace*
  11. In verse 30, Paul again tells us to *not do* something.

- a. What is the something we are not to do?
  - b. Define grieve
    - i. How have you heard this word used most often?
    - ii. How does Paul use that word here?
    - iii. In what ways can we Grieve the Holy Spirit?
      - 1. Genesis 6:5-8
      - 2. Psalm 78:35-43
      - 3. Isaiah 63:10
      - 4. 2 Corinthians 7:5-9
      - 5. 1 Peter 1:3-7
  - c. Who are we not to grieve?
  - d. Who is He and what does He do?
    - i. John 14:26
    - ii. 1 John 5:1-6
    - iii. John 14:25-26
    - iv. Ephesians 4:30
    - v. Galatians 5:16-25
  - e. What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit?
  - f. Why are we not to do that?
    - i. Recall Ephesians 1:20-22
    - ii. What has done to us by the Holy Spirit?
    - iii. Define *seal*. What does it mean to seal something?
    - iv. What does it mean to you that it is only by faith, not by any work you could ever possibly do or hope to do, that you are sealed by the Holy Spirit?
  - g. Define *redemption*
    - i. What do you think that Paul means by the phrase *day of redemption*?
12. In verse 31, Paul tells us a few more things that we should *put away*.
- a. Do you struggle with any of these things?
  - b. If so, what are you doing to put them away? What helps?
  - c. How are these things similar to other things Paul has told us to *put away*, even in this chapter?
13. Finally, in verse 32, Paul encourages us to behave in certain ways
- a. Are these things easy or hard for you?
  - b. How about forgiveness? Is that easy for you?
  - c. Why should Christians be forgiving people?
    - i. Romans 5:6-11
    - ii. 1 Corinthians 15:50-58
    - iii. Matthew 9:1-8
    - iv. Acts 26:12-18

Paul has given us a lot of truth in this chapter. He's gone from talking about unity in the body, to what we should and shouldn't do as people who claim the name of Jesus, to how we should and shouldn't live, to how we should treat others, to how we should look at sin in our own lives.

As you think about unity, as you think about yourselves, as you think of how you treat others, both inside and outside of the body, think of the way Jesus has treated you, with grace, mercy, compassion, forgiveness. And think of how He calls you to something better – repentance and righteousness – a “better” that is impossible without Him!