

# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## EPHESIANS CHAPTER 4:1-16 "Christian Unity"

### Lesson 5

In the first sixteen verses of Chapter 4, Paul exhorts Christians to live and use their gifts so that the church may fulfill God's plan and purpose - unity in Jesus Christ.

Paul begins Chapter 4 with the word **"therefore"** ("then" in NIV). This word is a clue to how all that follows relates to all that has come before.

#### DAY ONE

1. Read Ephesians 4:1-16 as a whole. What is the main subject of each of the following sections?

a. 4:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

b. 4:7-13 \_\_\_\_\_

c. 4:14-16 \_\_\_\_\_

2. What does Ephesians 4:1 lead you to expect in chapters 4-6?

3. Complete this chart for verses 1-3.

v.1-The What	v.2-The How	v.3-The Purpose

#### DAY TWO

Read Ephesians 4:2-3

1. With what four virtues (Ephesians 4:2) does Paul describe a life worthy of a child of God?

The **"calling"** that Paul refers to in verse 1 is simply that you have been chosen to be a child of God.

**EPHESIANS CHAPTER FOUR**  
verses 1-16

**"CHRISTIAN UNITY"**

Beginning with Chapter 4, Paul now explains the practical applications of the riches that have been given to us in Christ. In Chapters 1-3, the apostle has written about the extraordinary wealth and power available to us. You have seen that you are seated in the heavenly places in Christ. Now you will learn how to walk according to this knowledge. With great wealth comes great responsibility. As we study the next three chapters of Ephesians we can learn much about how to live the Christian life *today*. This is putting doctrine into practice.

The following chart will give you an overview of the Book of Ephesians:

OUR HERITAGE IN CHRIST			OUR LIFE IN CHRIST			
			<b>THEREFORE</b> →			
WORK OF GOD			WALK OF THE CHRISTIAN			
BLESSINGS IN CHRIST	SALVATION	KNOWLEGE AND STRENGTH	CHRISTIAN CONDUCT			
			CHURCH UNITY	DAILY WALK	DOMESTIC DUTY	CHRISTIAN ARMOUR
1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	4:17	5:21	6:10

**Humility** - (Greek-tapeinophrosure) a compound word that means to think or judge with lowliness (as in "lowliness of mind" in Philippians 2:3)

**Gentleness**-(Greek-parotes) - that which is mild spirited and self-controlled.

**Patience**-(Greek-makrothumia)-literally means long-tempered or "self-restraint in the face of provocation."

**Forbearing**-(Greek-anechomai) to hold oneself up against...  
ex. put up with, bear with, endure.

2. What do the following verses say about humility (*lowliness* KJV)?

Proverbs 22:4 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:3 \_\_\_\_\_

James 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

I Peter 5:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

3. a. Look up the following verses about gentleness (*meekness* KJV):

Galatians 5:23 \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:12 \_\_\_\_\_

b. How does humility produce meekness?

4. a. Look up the following verses about patience (*longsuffering* KJV):

Romans 12:12 \_\_\_\_\_

I Corinthians 13:4 \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:22 \_\_\_\_\_

b. How do humility and gentleness lead to patience?

5. What does this verse tell you about forbearance (*forbearing* KJV)?

Colossians 3:13 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. To further expand your understanding of Paul's teaching on humility, meekness, patience and forbearance read and meditate on I Corinthians 13:1-7.
7. When we walk in humility, meekness, patience and love, what will result? (Ephesians 4:3)

**Note:** In verse 3, Paul is emphasizing the *maintenance of unity* rather than the *achievement of unity*.

**PERSONAL:** In your own life, do you see the virtues of humility, etc.? What steps could you take to live a life more worthy of your calling?

What is your responsibility to bring unity to the body of Christ? What kinds of actions and attitudes should you avoid?

### **DAY THREE**

Read Ephesians 4:4-6

1. What are the 7 aspects of the unity which already exists among Christians?
2. What is the key repeated word in verses 4-6? How do these verses support the exhortation in Ephesians 4:3?

3. What is the significance of each of the seven phrases as they are used in Ephesians 4:4-6?
  - a. **one body** (Colossians 3:15)
  - b. **one Spirit** (I Corinthians 12:3)
  - c. **one hope of your calling** (I John 3:2-3)
  - d. **one Lord** (I Corinthians 8:6)
  - e. **one faith** (Jude 3)
  - f. **one baptism** (Galatians 3:27)
  - g. **one God and Father of all** (I Corinthians 8:6)

*Observe the references to the 3 persons of the Trinity as mentioned above.*

#### **DAY FOUR**

Read Ephesians 4:7-10

In these verses, Paul explains how spiritual gifts bring unity to the body of Christ.

1. Read Ephesians 4:7. What is this grace? (Also see Ephesians 4:12)
2. What is the main phrase of the quotation from Psalm 68:18.

**"Ascended"**-In Ephesians 4:8, Paul quotes Psalm 68:18 to explain how Christ's ascension enabled Him to give spiritual gifts to His followers. The psalm exalts God as a conqueror returning to His capitol in triumph distributing the spoils.

**"Descended"**-(Eph.4:9)  
Some believe this means that Christ descended to the underworld to preach to those who had died before His coming. Others think it means that Christ descended by living on earth as a human and dying as a human.  
(Compare with Philippians 2:8)

3. To further understand Ephesians 4:8-10, look up the following verses about the ascension and descension of Christ:  
**John 3:13, John 20:17, Acts 1:9-11**

#### **DAY FIVE**

Read Ephesians 4:11-13

The four kinds of leaders Christ raised up to establish His church were apostles, prophets, evangelists, and teachers. (Also read I Corinthians 12:28)

**Apostle**-"one who is sent"-a small group of men whom the church recognized as having special authority from God to clarify the policy and teaching of the body. (See Eph. 2:20)

**Prophets**-refers to those in the early church recognized as having the spiritual gifts of speaking new revelations from God and foretelling the future. (See Acts 11:27-28, Acts 21:9-11)

**Evangelists**-those missionaries who travelled widely preaching the Gospel to new regions in order to win others to personal faith in Christ. (See Acts 21:8)

**Pastors/Teachers**-the twin gifts of shepherding God's people and speaking forth His Word to them. He was a local overseer of a church, also called a bishop.

1. What is the purpose behind this diversity of gifts?  
(verse 12)

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

**edify** (verse 12)-to build up (Also see I Corinthians 14:26)

2. What are the three goals of ministry or service to the body of Christ? (verse 13) Write them in your own words.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL:** What equipping for "works of service" do you think you must need right now? How can you seek it?

3. What is the difference between the unity which we are to keep (Ephesians 4:3-7) and the unity for which we are to **strive** (Ephesians 4:13-16)? How is the first to be guarded and the second to become a reality?

### **DAY SIX**

Read Ephesians 4:14-16

1. What illustration does Paul use to describe spiritual immaturity in Ephesians 4:14? What effect do you think spiritual immaturity has on the body of Christ as a whole?

2. What picture is given of Christian maturity? (Ephesians 4:15-16) How is our spiritual maturity so important to the body of Christ?

3. What does it mean to "speak the truth in love"? (Ephesians 4:15)
  
4. What will "speaking the truth in love" cause you to do? (Ephesians 4:15)
  
5. Rewrite Ephesians 4:16 in your own words.

**PERSONAL:** To what extent are you participating in the work of your church to bring everyone in it to spiritual maturity?

*Listen carefully to a piece of music played by a symphony orchestra.  
Notice the importance of proper participation by each instrument  
in order to produce harmony and beauty. Consider  
your own function in the Christian fellowship.  
Are you playing your part properly?*



# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## EPHESIANS 4:17-24 "Off With the Old/On With the New"

### Lesson 6

Our study of the first sixteen verses of chapter 4 revealed God's plan for the believers to walk in **unity**. This week we will begin our examination of a second characteristic of the walk of the Christian - **holiness**. In Ephesians 4:17-24, Paul shows us the difference between the "old man" (unsaved) and the "new man" (Christian) - who is re-created in Christ Jesus.

#### Introduction:

Overview of two men: the "old" and the "new".

1. Read Ephesians 4:17-24 and give a title to this paragraph.
2. In your own words, identify the main idea of the following verses.
  - a. 4:17,18
  - b. 4:19
  - c. 4:20,21
  - d. 4:22-24a
  - e. 4:24

**FIRST DAY:** Read Ephesians 4:17,18.

In these verses Paul first delivers a charge to the believers at Ephesus and then describes the **nature** of the old man, who leads his life apart from Christ.

To live a new life different from the old is necessary for every Christian. The change from the old life to the new would be particularly dramatic in those who had come out of the pagan practices during Paul's time.

1. In verse 17, what is Paul's solemn command to the believers?
  - a. On whose divine authority does Paul appeal to them?

**Vanity** means that which is empty, useless, futile. Pagan thinking is useless.

**Gentiles**- is the Greek word ethne, which means nations, people, heathen or pagan. It can either refer to an ethnic group of non-Jews or of people who do not know God. (I Thess. 4:5).

2. How is the unsaved Gentiles' mind described in verses 17 and 18 (KJV)?

a. What does it mean to walk in the "vanity" or "futility" of mind? (Refer to dictionary for "futility". See notes on "vanity".

b. What does II Peter 2:18 say about this?

c. Give a current example of walking in "vanity or "futility of mind.

Emptiness, meaninglessness is the final result of all life apart from God. Because life is purposeless and meaningless without Him, people who do not know Him struggle to find fulfillment in pleasure, success, education, wealth, work. . .whatever. The book of Ecclesiastes describes the finest this world has to offer and yet, apart from God, all of it proves to be empty and meaningless.

3. In your own words, write out Ephesians 4:18, which describes the Gentiles' relationship to God.

a. How do the following verses describe a darkened understanding?

(1). Matthew 6:23

(2). Romans 1:21

(3.) II Corinthians 4:3,4

b. What is one result of being ignorant of God's commands? I Peter 1:14 (also see TLB).

c. Alienation from God results in:

(1.) Genesis 2:17 (spiritual).

(2.) Matthew 15:8

(3.) Ephesians 2:12

d. What does the diagnosis, "hardness of heart" mean? Hebrews 3:12.

(1.) What does Hebrews 3:13 say is the cause of "hardness of heart"?

**Hardness of Heart**- also translated as blindness of heart. This term used to refer to the callus that forms around a broken bone - a callus which is harder than the bone itself. It also refers to a loss of sensation.

- (2.) List the two reactions of Jesus to hardness of hearts in Matt. 3:5:
- (3.) How has a hard heart presented conflicts or struggles for you?

Reflect back on the "moment in time" when the Holy Spirit softened your hard heart. . .and the Precious Saviour came in. Praise Him for His mercy and grace in your life.

**SECOND DAY:** Read Ephesians 4:19.

We now look at the "**practice**", or behavior, of the "old man" - apart from Christ.

**Lasciviousness or Licentiousness** - a definition could be "unblushing obscenity". It usually means sexual obscenity; unbridled lust, filthy, wanton violence; outrageous conduct of any kind.

1. Describe the behavior and response of people who are totally lacking in moral and spiritual attitudes (spiritual insensibility.)

a. How do the following scriptures describe them?

(1.) Ephesians 4:19

(2.) Romans 1:29-31

(3.) Acts 28:27  
(modern language - "heart is calloused")

(4.) II Cor. 12:21b

(5.) I Tim. 4:2

2. When an individual gives themselves over to lasciviousness (see note), what does God sometimes do?

a. Psalms 81:12

b. Romans 1:24, 26, 28

c. II Thessalonians 2:10, 11, 12

When man rejects the true Source of wisdom, his hard heart enslaves him and he is "past feeling", because he has become the victim of the bondage of sin.

3. To have a clear picture of the "old man", who lives apart from God, compare Ephesians 4:17-19 with Romans 1:21-25 and I Peter 4:3. What points are emphasized in each of these sections?

EPHESIANS 4:17-19	ROMANS 1:21-25	I PETER 4:3

**THIRD DAY:** Read Ephesians 4:20,21.

The "learned in Christ" become the **renewed** man.

1. Paul used the phrase, "so learned Christ" (KJV) in verse 20. How is it possible to be learned in Christ and yet not be saved?

a. How does one "learn Christ"? Answer with the following scriptures?

(1.) Matthew 11:29a

(2.) John 6:44-45

(3.) John 14:26

(4.) I Corinthians 2:12

2. How does God ask us to respond to Jesus in Matthew 17:5b.

3. What did Jesus tell us about Himself in John 14:6?

a. Why must we study God's Word, the Bible, to become "learned in" the words of Jesus?  
John 6:63.

b. What are Paul's instructions to us about the words of Jesus in Colossians 3:16?

4. Many people can learn moral values and ethical principles from Jesus, but the Christian can "take in" Christ Himself - in their personal fellowship with Him. Take some time right now and praise Him for His truth. Record what He is revealing to you about Himself and His work in your life at this moment.

**FOURTH DAY:** Read Ephesians 4:22, 23, 24.

The Christian who has been renewed in Jesus Christ can "**put off**" the grave clothes and "**put on**" the grace clothes. Selah.

1. Since these Gentiles to whom Paul is writing have become Christians, what does Paul tell them to "put off"? Ephesians 4:22.

a. What do these verses say about the way the Christian should live?

(1.) Colossians 3:9

(2.) Hebrews 12:1

(3.) I Peter 2:11

2. According to I John 2:6 (KJV), how should the "new man" in Christ now walk?
  - a. What is the "key" word in this verse (KJV) that shows the believer how to walk in this manner?
  - b. Explain how this "key" word empowers the believer in his walk. John 15:4, 5, 7.
3. Write out Paul's command to the Christian in Ephesians 4:23.
4. As your mind is being renewed what is happening to your thought patterns?
5. What do the following verses say about our renewed minds?
  - a. John 17:17
  - b. Romans 8:6b
  - c. I Corinthians 2:16b
  - d. Hebrews 8:10
6. From the description of the old man and the new man in Ephesians 4:22 and 24, how do the following scriptures enhance your understanding?
  - a. "put off . . . the old man" - Romans 6:6.
  - b. "be renewed in the spirit of your mind" - Romans 12:1, 2.
  - c. "put on. . .the new man" - Colossians 3:10; Romans 13:14.

**FIFTH DAY:** Re-read Ephesians 4:24.

Now we will examine the garments of the "new man".

1. Who made the "old man" into the "new man"? (verse 24).

- a. In your own words, record what these verses say about the "new man's" garments of righteousness and holiness.

(1.) Righteousness

(a.) II Corinthians 5:21

(b.) Philippians 3:9

*Christians, saints of God,  
pray that the dew of heaven  
may fall on earth's dry thirsty ground,  
and that righteousness may cover the earth  
as the waters cover the sea.*

(2.) Holiness

(a.) Ephesians 5:27

(b.) Colossians 1:22

2. What does God promise to those who walk righteously and strive to live holy lives?  
I Corinthians 9:25; James 1:12.
3. What command does the Lord give to us as we await the promised prize? Revelation 3:11.

*"Holy, Holy, Holy  
Lord God Almighty  
Who was and Who is and  
Who is to come"!*

*Revelation 1:4*

**SIXTH DAY:** In summary, review Ephesians 4:17-24.

1. From verses 17-19 of Chapter 4, list seven characteristics of the ungodly life.
- a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.

f.

g.

2. In verses 22-24, Paul summarizes what the Ephesians had been taught about their walk with Christ. In the following chart, write the three things the Ephesians were taught to do, and how you could put each into practice.

What the Ephesians were taught	How I can put it into practice
verse 22	
verse 23	
verse 24	

**Challenge:** Contrast the two men Paul describes in Ephesians 4:22 & 24, using Titus 1:15 & 16 and Philippians 4:1,4-9 on the chart below.

OLD MAN	NEW MAN
mind conscience	
behavior	
works	

3. What part of this lesson ministered the most to your "new man" in Christ Jesus?
  - a. How will this truth be applied in your life?
  
4. What scripture did the Lord burn into your heart from this study?
  - a. Share how this ministered to you, or how you will apply it in your life.

*Put on the new man. . .  
 and be constantly renewed in  
 the Spirit of your mind -  
 having a fresh mental and  
 spiritual attitude"*  
 (Amp Bible) Ephesians 4:23

