

In Light of Our Spiritual Transformation...

March 12th & 13th, 2013

Ephesians 4:20-32

As Christians, we have a new nature that is being radically changed by the power of The Holy Spirit; yet we live in the midst of a constant struggle and sin is always an inch away. Praise God in Christ that we are able to be victorious as we are biblically trained in how a new life behaves in the midst of a lost world. As Paul continues to address the Ephesians, we remember the emphasis in verse 17 “*you must no longer walk as the gentiles do, in the futility of their minds*” and then as we focus on verses 20-21, Paul declares the sources of our spiritual transformation.

The sources of our spiritual transformation

“...*But that is not the way you learned Christ! – assuming that you have heard about Him and were thought in Him, as the truth is in Jesus,*”

- ❖ This expression of Paul, where he is assuming that they have already heard of Jesus, is not an expression of doubt but he implies confidence that Christ is the power working in their lives.
John 5:24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”
- ❖ Unlike the gentiles who haven’t received the grace, redemption, and the love of Jesus Christ, we are in Christ and in Him we are a new creation – the old has passed away, behold the new has come.
John 15:4 “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

The pursuit of our spiritual transformation

“...*put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life...*”

- ❖ As we receive the grace of Christ, we are called to abandon our former behavior understanding that it is corrupt through deceitful desires.
Romans 6:1-2 “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?”

“...*and to be renewed in the spirit of our minds...*”

- ❖ God has given us the ability to attain spiritual growth.
- ❖ It is necessary that we develop a strategy for the renewing of our minds according to His Word, His will and His design for our life.
Romans 12:1-2 “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

📖 Proverbs 4:20-27

“...*and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*”

- ❖ Paul uses the metaphor of clothing to describe the life change believers have experienced in Christ. As we are clothed with God, we exhibit His main attributes: righteousness and holiness.
- ❖ As we are challenged to put on the new self, this requires a determination on our part to constantly display the newness of life.

The guidelines of spiritual transformation

“Therefore, having put away falsehood let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.”

- ❖ This verse shows us that we are to live in transparency as members of the family of God.
- ❖ We have been adopted into the family of God and therefore the goal is to be united as members in the body of Christ. Every believer is to be accountable in order to stop the consequences of deception inside church.

“Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on you anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.”

- ❖ As we look at these verses, we see that we also are to walk in forgiveness.
- ❖ Paul’s command acknowledges that while believers are a new creation, they still may become angry at one another.
- ❖ Paul warns against anger and unforgiveness becoming an occasion for sin and an opportunity for the devil.
- ❖ It is possible that as we experience injustices and wrongdoing, we react in anger from a righteous motivation, however, God calls us to control our emotions and avoid the possibility of sinning by offending or hurting others.

Ephesians 4:31 “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.”

- ❖ When we are angry or offended, there is always a potential for bitterness that will in time poison us to the point of no remedy, therefore, resolving offenses is vital before they fester.

Hebrews 12:15 “See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no ‘root of bitterness’ springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;”

Ephesians 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

“Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.”

- ❖ Now Paul takes our focus away from us and exhorts us to be compassionate to others.
- ❖ Instead of acting in the old ways, where we try to get away with stealing from others, God calls us to labor in honesty so that we may have something to share with anyone in need.

Romans 13:9-10 “For the commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,’ and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

Ephesians 4:32

*“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”*