

BUT YOU: No Longer Walking Like the World

Ephesians 4:17-24 (NKJV)

Key Thoughts

1. **Testimony with authority:** Paul does not merely suggest; he testifies in the Lord. The command to walk differently carries Christ's own authority, not one man's opinion.
2. **Futility is not stupidity:** The unbelieving mind can be brilliant yet unable to reach its God-given purpose, like a bomber with four engines and no propellers.
3. **A processing problem, not an information problem:** Darkened understanding draws wrong conclusions from the same evidence, and the callused heart can no longer feel the damage sin causes.
4. **Christ is the curriculum:** Believers have not added Jesus to a list of beliefs; they have learned Christ Himself, and He breaks the old worldview entirely.
5. **Put off, be renewed, put on:** The old man comes off like a rotting garment, the mind is continuously renewed by the Spirit, and the new man is created to God's specifications in true righteousness and holiness.

Discussion Questions

1. Read Ephesians 4:17. Paul "testifies in the Lord" rather than offering advice. How does knowing this command carries Christ's authority change the way we respond to it?
2. "Futility" describes a mind that is powerful yet cannot reach its purpose. Where do you see impressive but futile thinking in our culture today?
3. Read Romans 1:20. Verse 18 describes a processing problem, not an information problem. How can two people see the same evidence and reach opposite conclusions about God?
4. Paul's word for "blindness" pictures a callus. How does repeated sin deaden moral feeling over time? Where have you noticed a callus forming in your own heart?
5. The Ephesians lived in a blend-everything culture, yet they "learned Christ." Where are Christians today tempted to blend the faith with ideas that do not fit it?
6. Personal: Put off, be renewed, put on. Which of the three needs the most attention in your life right now, and what one concrete step will you take this week?

Applications

1. **Name it to remove it:** Identify one "old man" habit of thought or conduct by name this week, confess it, and purposefully put it off.
2. **Partner in renewal:** Set a daily rhythm of Scripture and prayer, even ten minutes, inviting the Holy Spirit to continuously renew your mind.
3. **Put on the new:** Choose one deliberate act of genuine righteousness or holiness this week that reflects the new man, and do it before next Sunday.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that we are not what we once were. Forgive us for the times we drift back into old, futile ways of thinking and walking. Soften every callus that sin has formed on our hearts. Thank You for Jesus, who is Himself the truth we have learned. By Your Spirit, help us put off the old man, renew our minds day by day, and put on the new man created according to You in true righteousness and holiness. Make our walk match our calling, for Your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.