

Ephesians 4.25-32

Dressed for Success

Meeting w/ All ZGC Pastors this Week > SAD NEWS

One from Country in Asia noted for AMAZING Growth of Christian church

Few Decades ago claim that 25% Nation were CHRISTIANS

TODAY Many think it is 10% - Churches Closing, Declining, Struggling

Asked WHY? People do NOT SEE Good Example from Pastors, Christians

Big Churches BUILT – Theolog Seminaries TRAINING – Programs GOING

Followers DISTRACTED – More Excited by WORLD and MATERIALISM

SAME Story EVERYWHERE in World where Christianity is in DECLINE

Jesus: “They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful”

Mark 4.18,19

1. Get Ready

PICTURE Paul uses FITS all People that WEAR CLOTHES – Put On / Put Off

put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life... *put on* the new self, created after the likeness of God

Ephesians 4.22,24

CLOTHING WE WEAR DEPENDS ON ROLE WE WANT TO PERFORM

Work Clothes - Church Clothes - Wedding Dresses - Hospital Gowns

SOLDIER ON ACTIVE DUTY wears UNIFORM - OFF DUTY wears CIVIES

For Some of us GETTING READY for a DAY of SUCCESS is a PROCESS

Surprises > NOTHING CLEAN, IRONED, FITS, or is WARM ENOUGH!

DEBATE > Whether it takes MEN or WOMEN LONGER to Dress for Success!

Nothing worse than having to START OVER when Drool your Toothpaste

a. Stop Falsehood, Speak Truth

Context IMPORTANCE OF TRUTH / v. 21 "the truth that is in Jesus."

v. 25 put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor

CHRISTIANS HAVE REJECTED the LIES of the DEVIL - Father of Lies

Most of WORLD Follows LIES of the DEVIL

Man says "I am not going to LIE anymore I REALLY am GAY!"

I cannot LIE anymore I do NOT LOVE My Wife, Leave Her, Marry Another!

I cannot live this LIE Anymore – Quit my Lousy Job – Sign-up for WELFARE!

TRUTH is IN Jesus – He IS Truth – Doing Something, Saying Something

against GOD and HIS WORD > YOU ARE A LIAR!

WORLD OF CONFUSION "What is truth?" Pilate asked. John 18.38

...the first step in true knowledge is taken, when we reverently embrace the testimony which God has been pleased to give of himself... all correct knowledge of God, originates in obedience John Calvin

Say BELIEVE TRUTH in Jesus > Behave by Putting Off Falsehood / On Truth

DO All we CAN to PROMOTE TRUTH in CONDUCT & CONVERSATION

FALSEHOOD like VIRUS > SPREADS, DESTROYS, DISABLES

NOT JUST A MATTER OF NOT TELLING BALD FACED LIES

PROMOTE FALSEHOOD by EXAGGERATION - SILENCE at FALSEHOOD

It is more from carelessness about the truth than from intentional lying that there is so much falsehood in the world. Samuel Johnson

This Afternoon > WORKING in Beijing – Many Think ADVANCE by LYING

Son is Personal Assistant one of Richest Men in Central Asia

LOTS of People Around him – Most LIARS – Son TELLS his Boss TRUTH

Does Not Always LIKE IT – Sometimes gets in TROUBLE > INTEGRITY

Lots of PRESSURE to LIE in ACADEMIC World

PROFESSORS Buy DEGREES, STUDENTS buy ANSWERS to EXAMS
TERM Papers from INTERNET and RESEARCH Results Stolen from Others

PREACHERS who PREACH Someone Else's SERMONS

But TOO Bad they don't have that Someone's UNCTION from HOLY SPIRIT

DIRECTOR of Theol. Sem in KZ – Caught HALF Applicants

CHEATING on the ENTRANCE Exam – Looking Right at Them!!

SHOCKED when Walked Up and TORE EXAM Paper in Pieces > Pointed Door

All Church in Central Asia needed Leaders enter Seminary by LYING!

v. 25 let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members
one of another

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices
Colossians 3.9

A lie is a stab into the very vitals of the Body of Christ... There is no place in the
Christian ethic for the well-intentioned lie. John Mackay

"If the eye sees a serpent, does it deceive the foot? If the tongue tastes what is
bitter, does it deceive the stomach?"

John Chrysostom, c. 349 – 407, Archbishop of Constantinople

Body LOOKS OUT for its OWN INTERESTS > PROTECTS Itself

EYE is About to be PIERCED > HEAD Quickly TURNS the OTHER Way

HAND is BURNED by FIRE > ARM Quickly PULLS it AWAY

Brother or Sister is HURTING do you KEEP ON LYING, GOSSIPING?

Wonderful COMMUNITY in ZGC – Among Leaders, Small Groups, Ministries

BEST Way to KILL Our Community is NOT OBEY this PASSAGE

Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.
1 Timothy 5.19

Paul EAGER to PROTECT Church, by GUARDING the LIVES of ELDERS
I suggest we Apply this Here – Not JUST to ELDERS – but to EVERYONE!

DON'T Pass on RUMORS, GOSSIP, FALSEHOOD > Check it OUT!

Follow Matthew 18 > GO to Person and ASK > before Facebook their FAULTS

b. Resist the Devil, Control your Anger - Remove RAG > BAD TEMPER

vs. 26 Be angry and do not sin

Commentators > JESUS got ANGRY > SO, Anger is NOT A SIN...for HIM

Bit of STRETCH to Say WE Can have RIGHTEOUS Anger, LIKE JESUS!

IT IS Possible > Sometimes SINFUL to be PASSIVE in Face of INJUSTICE

Need to be MORE FEARLESS to STAND UP Against EVIL > Very TRUE

Point of TEXT > MOST of Time OUR ANGER is LACED with EVIL

v. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

Letter from Pastor > Taking up ARMS Against ISIS – Someone Needs To

Gov't is ORDAINED to Protect Citizens from EVIL and VIOLENCE

CHURCH > CLEAR Message of GOSPEL for ALL PEOPLES, incl. ISIS

“My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”
James 1.19,20

HANDLE ANGER like DANGEROUS Chemical - Wear Protective Clothing

Don't let it get Under your Skin or into your Eyes

ANGRY WE'VE been SLIGHTED or WRONGED - Our NAME IMPORTANT

LET THEM SLANDER US! - TRUTH WILL STAND - GOD IS OUR JUDGE
 NOT WORTH LETTING SINFUL ANGER GROW IN US

Jesus: "I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment"
 Matthew 5.22

EASY to Spot ANGRY Person who RAGES – Yells, Swings, Breaks Things
 Harder to See ANGRY Person who SEETHES – QUIETLY BOILING till Blow!
 BOTH are DANGEROUS and DEADLY and DEFY this Command of God

v. 27 do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil
 Devil MESSES with your ANGER but he Does NOT MAKE It! YOU DO!
 DEAL with ANGER QUICKLY - DO NOT LET IT FESTER and SWELL UP
 SOME XIANS MOVE TO NORTHERN SIBERIA - SUN NEVER SETS

END Mtgs in ANGER - FIGHTS at HOME - GO to BED MAD AT E/OTHER

v. 27 and do not give the devil a foothold. LOOKS FOR OPPORTUNITY
 DEVIL LOOKS FOR A HALF-OPEN DOOR – Crack in Window - SLIP INTO

Anger is a means of communicating what we care about – usually ourselves –
 and it is an attempt at punishment...It is a choice we make...what we react to and
 at what level the reaction will occur...We express anger only where it is safe, and
 virtually never to those we fear or highly respect...anger destroys the angry
 person – even physically – and the community. Janet Malone

NEVER Kick the BOSS – Just the DOG, or a FAMILY MEMBER!

c. Stop Stealing, Work and Give v. 28 Let the thief no longer steal...

CAMPING > Build FIRE at NIGHT > Then Allow Fire to BURN OUT as Sleep
 MORNING > Wanna Get WATER BOILED for First CUP of COFFEE
 Sometimes can STIR Powdery, Grey, EMBERS Small FIRE will Restart

Verses PAUL Stirs EMBERS of OUR PAST LIFE of SIN – Old Way of LIFE

SIN DIES HARD – Maybe COALS Deep Inside – STILL HOT, Ready to Flame

Paul SHINES Light of WORD & SPIRIT into HEARTS > PURGE & PURIFY

Exposes areas where WE ALL Live – Thoughts, Words, Emotions, Habits
STEALING? – Paul talking to NEWLY Converted Gentile Slaves in Ephesus?

Paul still Talking > 21st C Society of TAKERS – Even in the CHURCH Today

People claim ENTITLEMENT to Take what DOES NOT BELONG to Them!

Computer Programs – Media – Cook the Books, Employees Shoplift their Shops!

v. 28 ...but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

The thief is to become a philanthropist.

Andrew Lincoln

PRODUCERS – Not just CONSUMERS – in the KINGDOM of God

Becoming Christ to one's neighbor.

Martin Luther

What we do for THE LEAST we have REALLY DONE to THE LORD

Paul to Ephesians: "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20.35

d. Don't Tear Down, Build Up

v. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths...

Corrupting > FOUL, ROTTEN, SPOILED, PUTRID > like SMELLY FISH!

TINY Tongue can do WORLD of DAMAGE > MOUNTAINS of PAIN!

Sometimes WORST Offenders are STRONGEST Christians – They think they R

FREE in Jesus to SPEAK Harshly STRONGLY – Forgiven so FLAUNT IT!

We should not think that God is just a persnickety and prudish old grandmother who gasps and frowns about the syllables that come out of our mouths. How strange it would be to think that God is up in heaven concerned to see if our lips, tongues, and larynxes pump out any puffs of air that offend him. It is not the words themselves but rather their journey that more concerns God. Bryan Chapell

v. 29 ...but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

“Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”
Proverbs 12.18

NOT JUST A QUESTION OF TRUTH - IS IT EDIFYING?
WILL IT DO SOMEONE GOOD FOR ME TO SAY THIS?

This Summer shared in Church Home Meeting in USA

Members all Came in Arms Full – Bottles, Cans, Cases – Beer, Wine, Hard Stuff
BEFORE Said Hello Me & Dayna: Popping Corks, Pulling Tabs, Filling Glasses

Got UP While we Shared > Keep FILLING Up their GLASSES

Not OBSERVE Drunkenness > Hard to See any HOLINESS

Test Not just Whether you can GET AWAY with it? > Does it HONOR God?

...a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit
Isaiah 61.3

v. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God

HIS HOLINESS IS OFFENDED / HIS LOVE IS GRIEVED / INGRATITUDE

WORD OF HOLY SPIRIT CONTAINS BOTH PROMISE AND THREAT

THREAT - to those who don't want to obey - HE KNOWS YOUR WORDS

“I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every
careless word they have spoken.”
Matthew 12.36

e. Forgive, Because we Cannot Forget

WRONG IDEA – OFFENDER Must Apologize before you have to FORGIVE

You MUST Forgive because GOD Tells you TO!

Heavenly Father – Tells you FORGIVE, for YOUR OWN GOOD!

NOT AS MANY PEOPLE DIE FROM WHAT THEY EAT

AS DIE FROM WHAT IS EATING THEM

v. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice = TOTAL EXTRACTION >> ALL OF IT!!

PUT OFF All that TOXIC EMOTION, AND PUT ON...

v. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Jesus is BOTH OUR EXAMPLE AND OUR STANDARD

love your enemies, do good to them...Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, *because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked*
Luke 6.35

Jesus DIED for ENEMIES – Extended FORGIVENESS before they had FAITH

Why v. 30 Speaks of HOLY SPIRIT > We CANNOT do this in OWN Strength

FORGIVENESS and FILLING of HS Go Together – DOUBLE Blessing of God

HOW MANY Years have WE WASTED ON GRUDGES & BITTERNESS

Commonly Hear > FORGIVE and FORGET >> If Really Hurts, HARD to DO!

For Me > Forgive because I CANNOT FORGET!

FORGIVENESS is LIFE-STYLE, Constant Activity, Daily Process of PRAYER

If REMEMBER then RETURN to the CROSS > Drop BURDEN there AGAIN!

2. Got Right

6 Chapters Ephesians > 2 VITAL Truths > God's Salvation AND Our Service
Chs. 1 – 3 What GOD has DONE for Us // 4 – 6 What WE must DO for GOD

True Christianity holds BOTH DELIGHTS of Gospel & DEMANDS of Gospel
Challenge to US > Walk our Talk / Believe and Behave / Lips & Lives for Jesus

a. Finished Work – Ephesians we are NOW SAVED, SECURE in Christ

v. 25 we are members one of another

v. 29 that it may give grace to those who hear

v. 30 the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption

v. 32 as God in Christ forgave you

For by grace you have been saved through faith. Ephesians 2.8

Explain and practice the difference between Justification and Sanctification.

Justification	Sanctification
I am Saved!	I am being Saved!
Something to Believe	Something to Do
Objective Fact	Subjective Feelings
Released from Sin's Penalty	Being Released from Sin's Power
Change in my Legal Status	Change in my Lifestyle
A Possession	A Progression
What God does for me	What God does in me
Imputed Righteousness	Imparted Righteousness
Put in His Church	Protection for your church
Enlisted into His Service	Endure until you see Him
Christ dying for my sins on cross	Christ at work in me by Holy Spirit

Can be SAVED even if ANGRY, CUSSING, BITTER Believer

SAD & SILLY Believer who NEEDS to be FILLED With the Holy Spirit

He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 2 Corinthians 5.15

b. Foundation to Walk On

Paul refers to Zechariah 8 – Prophetic Picture of God’s coming “City of Truth”

Thus says the LORD: I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain... Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets... Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace; do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the LORD.” Zechariah 8.3-17

NOT All the Way There Yet – Jerusalem CITY of FIGHTING & FEAR Today!
 JESUS building NEW CITY - People from ALL NATIONS – FOLLOW Him
 See FIRSTFRUITS – Early RAYS of RISING SUN > CHURCH of Jesus today

CALLED into HIS City of Truth > Fellowship of Righteous BELIEVERS

COMMAND to WALK in TRUTH and OBEDIENCE of GOSPEL

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2.10

walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called Ephesians 4.1

you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do Ephesians 4.17

walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us Ephesians 5.2

REASON we Put Off EVIL & PUT ON Jesus > ADVANCE CITY of Truth...

REDEEMED Thieves Work for v. 28 something to share with anyone in need

REPENTANT FOUL MOUTH Speaks v. 29 such as is good for building up

Putting ON Jesus Truth – Showing JESUS to World, Power of Holy Spirit
 Walking in Power of Spirit > SIGN you are Citizen of Another World

v. 30 the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption

Man became a Friend and Colleague in Ministry in 1980's
 ARCHDEACON OF VURRA - Respected leader of Church of Uganda
 Coming from SIMPLE REFORMED Church, Not sure what is Archdeacon

Told me > In 1970's CALLED BY PRESIDENT OF UGANDA
 WANTED TO MARRY HIS DAUGHTER

What do you say when Idi Amin wants to marry your daughter?
 ESPECIALLY WHEN SHE WOULD BE HIS FOURTH WIFE?

With much regret he sent her off with prayers and love
 COUPLE Yrs LATER AMIN sent ARCHDEACON'S DAUGHTER BACK
 BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN - RETURNED IN COFFIN
 Amin's Soldier FORBID Family Opening Coffin > TERRIBLE ACCIDENT??

My Friend Secretly OPENED COFFIN – TERRIBLE SHOCK
 Beautiful Daughter been CUT INTO MANY PIECES by Amin SELF

FATHER HAD BROKEN HEART BUT A PURE HEART
 AS HE TOLD ME THE STORY HE SAID "I must forgive and forget"
 Look Forward to See my Friend and his Daughter in that CITY OF TRUTH
 HAVE YOU Found the TRUTH in Jesus? Are you FOLLOWING Him?

Ephesians 4.²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil.²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.