

## Ephesians – Week 12 – A Changed Walk – Bible Study Helps

**Title: A Changed Walk:** Living Out Your New Life in Christ

Sermon Summary:

This sermon from Ephesians 4:17-32 addresses the practical transformation that should characterize the Christian life. The sermon emphasizes that salvation is not merely about believing differently but walking differently in daily life. The message contrasts the walk of the lost world—characterized by vanity of mind, darkened understanding, and moral corruption—with the walk of believers who are called to renew their minds and put on the new man created in righteousness and holiness. The central theme is that Christians must intentionally and daily choose to live set apart from the world, putting off old sinful patterns and putting on Christ-like behavior. The sermon stresses that this transformation begins internally in the mind, which is described as the primary battlefield where spiritual victory or defeat occurs. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, believers are equipped to live victoriously, demonstrating kindness, forgiveness, and grace to others as God has shown to them through Christ.

Key Points:

- Christians are instructed to no longer live like lost people; salvation produces a changed walk and lifestyle
- The battle for Christian living is primarily fought in the mind; what enters the mind shapes and determines behavior
- Sin always progresses downward, starting internally with corrupted thinking before manifesting in external destructive behaviors
- The lost world is characterized by vanity of mind, darkened understanding, alienation from God, blindness of heart, numbness to sin, and unrestrained lust
- Christians must intentionally practice daily sanctification through three actions: put off the old man, renew the mind, and put on the new man
- Daily mind renewal through God's Word is essential; believers must present themselves as living sacrifices and avoid conforming to the world
- Practical Christian living involves replacing sinful behaviors with godly ones: truth instead of lying, controlled righteous anger, honest labor instead of stealing, edifying speech instead of corrupt communication
- The Holy Spirit is personally involved in believers' lives and is grieved when Christians sin
- Forgiveness should characterize Christians' relationships, forgiving others as God has forgiven them through Christ
- Modern technology, particularly smartphones, can be a significant tool for the enemy to capture minds and conform believers to the world rather than to Christ

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### Scripture Reference:

- Ephesians 4:1-32 (primary focus on verses 17-32)
- Romans 1:16-32
- Romans 12:1-2
- Deuteronomy 6:1-9
- Colossians 3
- 2 Corinthians 5
- Joshua 1:8
- Luke 6:45

### Stories:

- The pastor's personal testimony of encountering a close friend from college who remarked on how dramatically he had changed since becoming a Christian, illustrating the visible transformation that salvation produces
- Reference to a friend who attended AA meetings and became their spokesperson, but testified that it was Jesus Christ, not the program, who truly changed his life
- Illustration of Joshua leading the Israelites into the Promised Land as a parallel to how Jesus Christ leads believers into victorious Christian living, with the daily battle of driving out spiritual enemies
- The example of Jewish parents putting their children to bed each night with Deuteronomy 6, emphasizing the importance of saturating family life with God's Word
- Reference to Jesus cleansing the temple as an example of righteous anger without sin

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### Discipleship Questions

How does the concept of 'henceforth' challenge you to draw a line in the sand regarding living like a lost person versus living as a redeemed Christian?

In what ways has the smartphone or other technology replaced time that should be spent meditating on God's Word, and what practical steps can you take to reclaim that time?

The sermon describes sin as progressing from the vanity of the mind to external destructive behaviors. Can you identify areas in your own thought life where this progression might be beginning?

What does it mean to present your body as a living sacrifice daily, and how does this differ from simply trying harder to be a better Christian?

How can you practically 'put off the old man' and 'put on the new man' each morning, and what specific sins or habits need to be replaced with righteous behaviors?

The passage warns against grieving the Holy Spirit. What behaviors or attitudes in your life might be causing grief to the Holy Spirit who dwells within you?

How does understanding forgiveness as modeled by God ('even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you') change your willingness to forgive those who have hurt you?

What is the difference between righteous anger that does not sin and uncontrolled fleshly anger, and how can you discern between the two in your own life?

The sermon emphasizes that behavior begins in the mind. What specific practices can you implement to guard your mind and ensure it is being renewed by God's Word rather than conformed to the world?

How does the command to minister grace with your words challenge the way you speak to your family, coworkers, and fellow church members on a daily basis?

# Small Group Guide: A Changed Walk

## Ephesians 4:17-32

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### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** Share one area of your life where you've seen the most change since becoming a Christian. What made that transformation possible?

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### Sermon Overview

This message examines the dramatic contrast between the walk of the lost world and the walk of a born-again Christian. Paul instructs believers to intentionally renew their minds daily and live set apart to Jesus Christ, putting off the old man and putting on the new man created in righteousness and true holiness.

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### Key Takeaways

1. **Christians are instructed to no longer live like lost people** - "Henceforth" means from this point forward, we draw a line in the sand.
  2. **The battle is in your mind** - Behavior begins in the mind; transformation starts internally before it manifests externally.
  3. **Sanctification requires intentional daily action** - "Put off" and "put on" are active commands requiring our participation with God's Spirit.
  4. **The smartphone reality** - Technology has replaced the Word of God in many Christian lives, conforming us to the world rather than renewing our minds.
  5. **We must replace old patterns with new ones** - It's not just stopping bad behavior; it's replacing it with Christ-like behavior.
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### Discussion Questions

#### Understanding the Walk of the Lost World (vv. 17-19)

1. **Read Ephesians 4:17-19.** What progression do you see in how sin affects a person's mind and heart?

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- Vanity of mind → Darkened understanding → Alienation from God → Blindness → Numbness → Lasciviousness
- 2. Why do you think Paul starts with the condition of the *mind* rather than outward behaviors?
- 3. The sermon mentioned people becoming "past feeling" (v. 19). Have you witnessed this in our culture? What are some examples?

### The Christian's New Identity (vv. 20-24)

4. **Read Ephesians 4:20-24.** What does it mean that "ye have not so learned Christ"? How is learning Christ different from learning religion or rules?
5. Discuss the three-step process outlined in verses 22-24:
  - **Put off** the old man
  - **Be renewed** in the spirit of your mind
  - **Put on** the new man

Which step do you find most challenging? Why?

6. The sermon emphasized that renewing your mind is the key middle step. What does daily mind renewal look like practically?

### The Battle for Your Mind

7. **Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9 and Romans 12:1-2.** How do these passages relate to the Ephesians text?
8. A strong point was made about smartphones replacing the Word of God in our lives. Be honest: How much time do you spend on your phone versus in God's Word daily?
  - When you sit in your house?
  - When you walk by the way?
  - When you lie down?
  - When you rise up?
9. What practical steps could you take this week to reduce screen time and increase time meditating on Scripture?

### Practical Living (vv. 25-32)

10. **Review the specific commands in verses 25-32.** Notice the pattern of putting off and putting on:
  - Put off lying → Put on truth-speaking
  - Put off stealing → Put on honest labor and generosity
  - Put off corrupt communication → Put on edifying speech
  - Put off bitterness, wrath, anger → Put on kindness, tenderheartedness, forgiveness

Which of these areas is God convicting you about right now?

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11. **Verse 26 says "Be ye angry, and sin not."** What's the difference between righteous anger and sinful anger? Share an example of each.
  12. **Verse 30 warns us not to grieve the Holy Spirit.** What does it mean that the Holy Spirit can be grieved? How does this truth affect your view of sin?
  13. **Verse 32 ends with "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."** Why does God use the "Jesus card" here? How should the forgiveness we've received affect how we treat others?
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### Personal Reflection Questions

*(Allow 3-5 minutes of silence for individual reflection)*

- What parts of the "old man" still appear regularly in your walk?
  - What fills your mind every day? Is it the world or the Word?
  - Does your speech build others up or destroy them?
  - Is there bitterness or unforgiveness you're holding onto?
  - Are you ministering grace with your words to those around you?
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### Practical Applications

#### **This Week's Challenge: Choose ONE action step**

**Option 1: The Morning Sacrifice** Each morning this week, before touching your phone, spend 15 minutes presenting your body as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1). Read Scripture, pray, and ask God to renew your mind for that day.

**Option 2: The Put Off/Put On Exercise** Identify one specific "old man" behavior God is convicting you about. Write down:

- What you need to PUT OFF
- What you need to PUT ON to replace it
- One practical step you'll take this week

**Option 3: The Screen Audit** Check your screen time report on your phone. Compare it to time spent in God's Word. Commit to making one specific change to increase Bible time and decrease screen time.

**Option 4: The Forgiveness Step** If the Holy Spirit brought someone to mind during verse 32, take a step toward reconciliation or forgiveness this week. Write them a note, make a call, or pray for them daily.

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**Option 5: The Speech Monitor** Before speaking this week, ask: "Will this minister grace to the hearer?" (v. 29). Keep a journal of times you succeeded and times you failed.

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### Accountability Questions for Next Week

1. Did you complete your chosen action step?
  2. What did God teach you through it?
  3. Where did you struggle?
  4. What evidence of the "new man" did you see in your life this week?
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### Memory Verse

**Ephesians 4:22-24** - "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

### Closing Prayer Focus

- Pray for renewed minds in your group
- Pray for victory over specific "old man" behaviors
- Pray for the Holy Spirit's help to live as new creations
- Pray for those who may not know Christ as Savior

### Leader Notes

- **Be vulnerable:** Share your own struggles with putting off the old man and putting on the new.
  - **Create safety:** This is heavy conviction material. Make sure the group feels safe to be honest.
  - **Avoid legalism:** Emphasize that this is about surrender to Christ, not trying harder in the flesh.
  - **Follow up:** Check in with group members during the week about their action steps.
  - **Be sensitive:** If someone shares about deep bitterness or unforgiveness, offer to pray with them after the meeting.
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*"But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." - Ephesians 4:20-21*

## 5-Day Devotional: A Changed Walk

### Day 1: The Battle for Your Mind

**Reading:** Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:17-19

**Devotional:** The Christian life begins and ends with the mind. Paul warns us that the lost world walks in the vanity of their minds—spiritually empty, darkened in understanding, and alienated from God. Sin doesn't just affect behavior; it corrupts our thinking, reasoning, and judgment until we become numb to its consequences. The progression is terrifying: vanity leads to darkness, darkness to hardness, hardness to numbness, and numbness to unrestrained sin. But you have not so learned Christ! Your salvation demands a different trajectory. Every day, the devil fights for your mind through countless distractions and influences. Every day, God calls you to present your body as a living sacrifice and be transformed by the renewing of your mind. The battle is real, but victory is possible when you intentionally fill your mind with God's Word rather than the world's poison.

### Day 2: Put Off, Renew, Put On

**Reading:** Ephesians 4:20-24; Colossians 3:1-10

**Devotional:** Sanctification isn't passive—it requires intentional action. God gives us a three-step pattern: put off the old man, be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man. You cannot simply stop sinful behavior; you must replace it with righteousness. This isn't about trying harder in your flesh; it's about surrendering more completely to Christ. When you got saved, God gave you a new nature—you don't have to sin anymore. But your flesh still wants to, so you must daily choose to crucify those desires. Like Joshua leading Israel into the Promised Land to drive out enemies, Jesus leads you into victorious living. But you must cooperate. Start each day by presenting yourself to God, asking Him to cleanse your mind with His Word, and consciously choosing to walk in the new life He's given you. The old man destroys; the new man in Christ builds up and brings glory to God.

### Day 3: The Power of God's Word

**Reading:** Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:9-16

**Devotional:** God's plan for victorious living centers on His Word saturating every aspect of your life. He commanded Israel to love Him completely and to keep His words in their hearts, teaching them diligently to their children, talking about them at home and on the road, when lying down and rising up. The Word of God was to be everywhere—on their hands, foreheads, doorposts, and gates. Why such emphasis? Because what fills your mind shapes your walk. Today, the enemy has found a powerful substitute—devices that capture our attention from morning until night, conforming us to the world rather than transforming us by God's truth. The smartphone has replaced Bible meditation in many Christian lives. We must reclaim our minds

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for Christ. Biblical meditation means more than reading—it's absorbing God's Word, thinking about it throughout the day, and letting it cleanse and renew your thoughts. When you prioritize God's Word, He transforms you from the inside out.

### **Day 4: Practical Righteousness in Daily Life**

**Reading:** Ephesians 4:25-32; James 3:1-12

**Devotional:** Christianity isn't merely believing differently—it's walking differently. Paul gives us practical commands that expose where the old man still lurks: Stop lying and speak truth. Control your anger and don't let it become sin. Stop stealing and work honestly to help others. Eliminate corrupt speech and build others up instead. Let go of bitterness, wrath, and malice. Notice the pattern: put off the negative, replace it with the positive. This isn't optional—it's obedience to God. Your speech reveals what's in your heart. Does your communication minister grace to hearers, or does it wound and destroy? Are you tender-hearted and forgiving, or harboring grudges? These aren't superficial matters; they affect your relationships and grieve the Holy Spirit who lives within you. The Holy Spirit isn't just a force—He's a person sealed within you until redemption. When you sin, you hurt Him. Today, ask God to show you where the old man still appears in your walk, and surrender those areas to His transforming power.

### **Day 5: Forgiveness Like Christ**

**Reading:** Matthew 6:9-15; Luke 6:27-36; Ephesians 4:32

**Devotional:** The ultimate test of a changed walk is forgiveness. God commands us to forgive one another even as He, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. Consider what God has done for you—while you were yet a sinner, Christ died for you. He forgave an unpayable debt and continues to show you mercy daily. Now He asks you to treat others the same way. Jesus taught us to pray, "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone indebted to us." Our forgiveness of others flows from our experience of God's forgiveness. Christ even commands us to love our enemies, do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back, because God is kind to the unthankful and evil. This seems impossible in the flesh—and it is. But you're not called to do this in your strength. Let go of your life. Surrender to Christ. Allow the Holy Spirit to produce in you what you cannot manufacture yourself. When you release bitterness and extend grace, you reflect the character of God and experience the freedom of a changed walk.