

# How to Grow and Change

Ephesians 4:22-24

## 1. God Wants You to be Changing!

- The Ephesians had been richly blessed in Christ (ch. 1-3)
- They had Paul and Timothy as their pastors
- Yet, they were told to be growing and changing (Eph. 4:1, 13, 15, 17, 22-24; 5:1)... and you must too!
- Change is HARD, but can take place... because God's commands always assume God's enablement

Phil. 1:6 "For I am confident of this very thing that He who began a good work in you will complete (perfect) it until the day of Christ."

Phil. 2:13 "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

Phil. 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

- Therefore, there is great HOPE for those who WANT to change

## 2. God Wants You to be Changing to be More Like His Son

- Note carefully Eph. 4:1, 15, 24; 5:1 Live in light of whose I am
- Consider also Rom. 8:28-29 "...predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son"  
Col. 1:28 "...in order that we may present every man complete (perfect / mature / 'teleion') in Christ"
- We should be changing to be more and more like Christ in our thoughts, motives, and actions

## 3. God Wants You to be Changing to More Like His Son by PUTTING OFF the Old Man (4:22)

- Old man / old self = the HABITS of thinking and acting that your corrupt nature has adopted (2:3 "once conducted ourselves in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind..."). We are habituated to live for what we want.
- Lay aside / put off = to strip off, as in the case of old filthy clothes; it emphasizes personal RESPONSIBILITY for change
- Corrupt = spoiled; contaminated; rotten; perverted; evil
- Lust = 'epithumia' - a desire that is so strong it motivates behavior. The O.T. calls them 'idols of the heart' (Ezek. 14). Idol of the heart is often so close that we can't see it. (i.e. hand right in front of face keeps you from focusing)
- These lusts are DECEITFUL because they promise what they cannot deliver, for instance peace and joy (Heb. 3:12-13 "Beware...lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin")

#### **4. God Wants You to be Changing to be More Like His Son by Putting Off the Old Man and PUTTING ON the New Man (4:24)**

- Put On = as in the case of clean clothes; to adopt new ways of thinking and acting; emphasizes again personal responsibility for change.
- New man / new self = the habits of thinking and acting that emulate Christ.
- Righteousness, holiness, truth = Jesus Christ; the Word of God
- Adopt a lifestyle that is commandment-oriented

#### **5. God Wants You to be Changing to be More Like His Son by Putting Off the Old Man and Putting On the New Man as a Result of RENEWED THINKING (4:23)**

- The major battleground for lasting change is between the ears!
- 'Mind' in the Bible is synonymous with HEART and is to be viewed as the center of thought, understanding, belief, motives, actions
- RENEWED = to be rejuvenated; to be renovated - Always means DRASTIC change, and the flesh resists drastic change. Typically, we resist renovation but are wide open to remodeling (i.e. difference between renovating or remodeling a kitchen)
  - Remodel - is the old man made to look better. The Christian life has no place for remodeling.
  - Renovation - all the old out - then all new in place
- Spirit of the mind = attitude, overall flavor, that which gives the mind both its BENT and its material of thought; it does not refer to some superficial change of opinion on points of doctrine or practice.
- HABIT - Allows us to do things 1. automatically 2. unconsciously 3. skillfully 4. comfortably. By nature we are habituated toward sin. This must be replaced.
- Renewed thinking will lead to putting off the old man (dehabituation) and putting on the new man (rehabituation). You cannot simply BREAK a habit; you must REPLACE it.

Our goal (2 Cor. 5:9) is to have thinking patterns changed so drastically that we automatically, unconsciously, skillfully and comfortably act like Jesus in each situation.

**PUT OFF** v.22  
"Old Man"

**KEY** v.23  
**Renewed Mind**

**PUT ON** v.24  
"New Man"



#1 Characteristic of unsaved

- Feeling oriented
- Desire dominated
- Do whatever you want

#1 Characteristic of saved

- Commandment oriented
- Christ dominated
- Principled living

How do you move from being feeling oriented to commandment oriented? **Renewed mind**