

Ephesians 4:17-19

EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 9-9-15

Context:

1. New Life in Christ (1:3-2:10)
2. The New Society (2:11-3:21)
3. **New Standards - unity and purity** (4:1-5:21)
4. New Relationships (5:21-6:24)

Describing the new standards which are expected of God's new society

Called to be "one" people, we must cultivate unity. Called to be a "holy" people, we must cultivate purity.

V. 17

Compare to v. 1

- V. 1 - "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called"
- V. 17 - "So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk"

"in the Lord" (NIV) - The _____ and _____ of the Lord Jesus himself

Gist: You must no longer live like the Gentiles do.

- In the manner the defines the typical Gentile way of life
- Gentile vs. Christian - fundamentally _____ to one another
- Doctrinal basis (4:17-24). Practical outworking (4:25-5:4)

The Pagan Life: Futility of the Mind (vv. 17-19)

5 phrases that describe the terrible _____ of evil:

- "because of the hardness of their heart"
- "being darkened in their understanding"
- "excluded (alienated) from the life of God"
- "having become callous"
- "given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness"

"because of the hardness of their heart"

- πωρωσιν (pōrōsin) - marble/bony formation of joints/petrification
- Of the heart =

"darkened in their understanding"

- A stubborn _____ leads to a dimness of _____
- Cf. Pharaoh in Exodus
 - Exodus 7:3-4: "...I will harden Pharaoh's heart..."
 - **But** before the first few plagues, Pharaoh *hardened his own heart* (Exodus 7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32)
- The _____ Gentile/human posture to God's truth is hardness which leads to blindness

“alienated from the life of God”

- Completely _____ from God.

“become callous”... “giving yourself over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness”

- “callous” = past _____ feeling, leading to the inability to exercise restraint
- Given over to impurity, uncleanness, filth.
- “Greediness” - a moral reality. Insatiable cravings/appetites/desires for that which is _____ the laws of God.

Sequence: hardness of heart > darkness of mind > deadness of soul > lost sensitivity > lost self-control

- Depravity as a result of deprivation
- Compare to Romans 1:18-32

Romans 1:18-32

Ephesians 4:17-19

Stage 1: Obstinacy

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| v. 18 - “Men...by their wickedness suppress the truth” | v. 18 - “Due to the hardness of their hearts” |
| v. 21 - “Although they knew God they did not honor him as God” | |
| v. 28 - “They did not see fit to acknowledge God” | |

Stage 2: Darkness

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| v. 21 - “They became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened” | v. 17 - “The futility of their minds” |
| v. 22 - “They became fools” | v. 18a - “They are darkened in their understanding” |
| v. 28 - “A base (depraved) mind” | v. 18b - “The ignorance that is in them” |

Stage 3: Death or Judgment

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| v. 24 - “Therefore God gave them up” | v. 18 - “They are...alienated from the life of God” |
| v. 26 - “For this reason God gave them up” | |
| v. 28 - “God gave them up” | |

Stage 4: Recklessness

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| God gave them up to... | v. 19 - “Having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness” |
| v. 24 - “Impurity” | |
| v. 26 - “Dishonorable passions” | |
| v. 27 - “Shameless acts” | |
| v. 28 - “Improper conduct” | |
| vv. 29-31 - “All manner of wickedness” | |