

What do you think it means for a Christian to put off his or her old self and to put on the new self? Who has the responsibility of doing this? Why should a Christian do this? How can we put off our old self? How can we put on the new self? Suggest practical steps (vv. 20-24). For each step, assess where you are at using a scale of 1 to 10. During prayer time, pray for God to help each person in the cell group in the process of putting off his or her old self and putting on the new self.

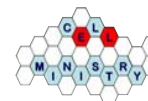
SUMMARY

- a. Don't live like the unsaved with their futile thinking.
- b. Get your mind in order and make honest assessments of society and yourself.
- c. Be a Christ-learner ever renewing your mind.
- d. Die continually to self and its desires.
- e. Put on Christ along with His truth and love.

Ephesians

Week 8

[Cell-group Discussion]



Ephesians 4 : 17 - 24

The Old Life of Futility

In the first part of Chapter 4, Paul stressed the importance of living in unity in the Church. He next turned to the importance of living in holiness. The Bible was written to be obeyed, and not simply studied.

In v. 17, Paul insisted that Christians are not to live as the Gentiles do. Why do you think Paul insisted on this?

Paul attributes the lifestyle of unbelievers to the hardness of their hearts (v. 18). How is hardness of heart expressed in a person's thinking and lifestyle? (vv. 17-19)

What do you think Christians must do so that our thinking will not remain futile and our understanding remain darkened? (see Rom. 12:2)

In v. 19, Paul speaks of unbelievers giving themselves over to sensuality. Christians can also give ourselves over to sensuality because God did not take away our freedom to choose the way we think and live when we became Christians. Below is listed some of the ways in which the sinful nature tends to use the bodily senses and normal desires to master us:

Food; Sex; Work; Money; Recreation; Education; Beauty; Appearance; Sports; Other's Approval; Materialism; Television; Entertainment;

Others ??

Check the areas in which you struggle.

Ask God for help to strike a balance in your life.

Knowing Christ and the New Man

In contrast to unsaved Gentiles, Christians' minds are no longer dark, they are no longer aliens from God, and their hearts are no longer hard and impure. They did not learn to follow Christ by the natural mental processes that customarily lead to the degradation of unsaved Gentiles. They learned to follow Christ as His disciples from the Gospel. Usually we learn subjects, not persons; but the Christian's choicest lesson-book is his lovable Lord (v. 20). The Ephesian believers had received teaching about Christ and had learned to live in the sphere of His will.

What incentive did Paul give for Christians to live for Christ i.e. to live in the sphere of His will? (v. 21). Rate on a scale from 1 to 10 how important this incentive is for you to live for Christ.