

Walking Lessons

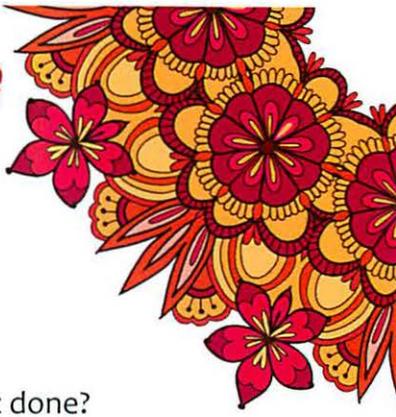
Long Beach Alliance Church • January 18, 2015 • Elder John Carriveau

Ephesians 4:17-24

1. Where we are in Ephesians.
 - a. 2nd half; Application section; “How shall we then live” portion
 - b. From v. 17 the Apostle gets VERY practical.
2. Walking Lessons
 - a. We don’t have to guess at the central point of this section.
 - i. V. 17: three modes of emphasis
 - b. “Don’t walk as the Gentiles do...Does that mean walk like the Jews?”
 - i. No, he is going to describe a new way that renews and transforms.
 - c. Let’s break this down: What does it mean here “to walk”?
 - i. Paul is not referring to the mechanics of walking, but each act involved - first: the desire; then: the decision; finally: the doing.
 - ii. The apostle then qualifies how the Gentiles walk: “...in the futility of their minds.”
 1. Solomon and Paul speak of this futility in Eccl. 1:7-8 & Rom. 8:20-21
 2. Back in Ephesians 4:17 the apostle attributes the futility in the *Gentile’s way of life to an errant intellectual process*, and in v. 18 to darkened understanding.
 - a. This futility stems from conscious and willful decisions that the Gentiles make. These decisions and beliefs add up to a darkened understanding and a life of futility.
 3. Furthermore, they are alienated, or separated from the life of God.
 4. “But wait!” Paul says this all stems from ignorance.
 - a. Does this mean it is excusable? Roman 1:19-23:
 - iii. V. 19 further describes what a hardened heart is, and does.
3. In v. 20 Paul practically shouts how antithetical and incompatible this “Gentile” lifestyle is with the truth revealed in Christ.
 - a. This is why Paul is so adamant: “You must no longer walk as the Gentiles do.”
 - i. He was speaking to the those in the church. He was explaining to them, and to us the danger that repeated and willful giving into sin presents. It can cause the heart to harden and the mind to darken.
 - ii. We become Christ-like when we pursue a daily intimate personal relationship with the Savior that produces greater holiness as a sort of by-product. For, how can two walk together unless they are agreed?
 - iii. But, in addition, vv. 20-24 tells us that in the process of walking with Christ He teaches each of us the truth that there are responsibilities that the Lord has entrusted us with, namely: “...to put off your old self”, and “...to put on the new self.” vv. 20-24
4. Putting off and putting on: Marie Antoinette
 - a. That sounds all cute and poetic, put off, put on, but HOW do we do that? What does that mean?
 - i. That is what most of the rest of the book of Ephesians is about up through 6:20.
 - ii. Here is how this works:
 1. Because we who have trusted in Jesus have been given new and living spirits, and because most importantly, the Holy Spirit of God has come to live within us, the instructions in the Word of God don’t become a heavy burden we have to carry, rather they becomes like fuel that feeds and empowers our new self. This is an example of the power of God’s Word – living and active. The renewal of our mind empowers the newness of our walk.
 - iii. Next week Chris is going to teach us the first four things we need to know.



Growth Group Guide



**“walking lessons”
ephesians 4:17-24
january 18-23, 2015**

Ice Breaker!

What is something you’ve always wanted to do, but have not done?

Looking Up!

Read Ephesians 4:17-24. What does it mean to “learn Christ” versus learn ‘about Christ?’

How does one “learn Christ?”

Leaning In!

What does it mean to “put on the new self” which is in the likeness of God (vs. 24)?

How does one put on this new self? What is the impact on Christ’s church if we all put on this new self?

Stepping Out!

In light of this passage, how are we to relate to one another? How are we to relate to those outside the church?

Respond!

Group Evangelism -- have you ever thought about it? What ways can our group serve Long Beach as Jesus’ representatives?

This Week!

Focus on making a commitment to be active for Christ this week!

This Week I’ll Pray For...

