

Chosen By Grace For Grace

Long Beach Alliance Church • February 1, 2015 • Pastor Chris Lankford

***Be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.
~Ephesians 4:32 (ESV)***

1) Authentic Christianity Renews The Church To Authentically Reveal Jesus

- A) In a passionate appeal for unity among all those who are part of Christ's Church (Ephesians 4:1-16), the Apostle Paul faithfully (cf. 3:8-10; Acts 13:47-48) calls all those who had come to Christ from non-Jewish backgrounds (the "Gentile" nations – Ephesians 4:17-19) from the "old self" to the "new self" (4:20-24).
- B) This "new self" is marked by complete identity in Christ (4:20), an instantaneous destruction of our "old self" (Ephesians 2:8-9; cf. Titus 3:3-7) and the instantaneous creation of a "new self" (Ephesians 2:10) which progressively renews the "inner being" or "spirit of your minds" – the 'spiritual soul' of a person (4:23).
- C) The result of this "new creation" (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17) is a new life of peace with God (Ephesians 2:13-17) through a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ (1:5; cf. Galatians 4:4-7). Progressive change into "the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (4:24) comes through relationship with Jesus Christ.
- D) Like a significant friendship, a valued mentor, marriage, or having a child; we mature spiritually from a selfishly oriented life (4:25-29 – falsehood, anger, stealing, destructive communication, see also 4:14, 17-19) to a life of increasing Christ-likeness in our character and actions (4:25-29 – honesty, patience, generosity, grace-filled communication, see also 4:12-13, 15-16, 23-24).

2) Giving The Holy Spirit Grief

- A) When our "new selves" conform to "old self" stuff (detailed in 4:17-19, 25-29), it seriously offends (distresses, frustrates, troubles) the Holy Spirit (4:30). This is different than "quench the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19-20), which is more focused on muzzling prophecy. Grieving the Spirit comes from self-direction, anesthetizing our troubles or difficulties in seemingly sensible ways which are not spiritual and exclude the Holy Spirit.
- B) The Holy Spirit is positioned against the devil (4:27), contrasting our assurance of being "sealed" (1:13-14, the "guarantee of our inheritance") with actions opposed to redemption by Christ (1:7-10). The Spirit is provided as a "deposit" (NIV) – a term used in the ancient world for a "down payment." The "new self" is "sealed" by the Spirit, and has begun to taste the life of a future world God promises to His people.
- C) When we conform to our "old self," we grieve the Holy Spirit because we act in opposition to our identity "in Christ." It makes sense that our new identity (4:24) requires putting off our old identity (4:22). The spiritually infected and dying heart (4:31) is transplanted with a spiritually healthy and alive heart (4:32).

3) Saved By Grace To Give Grace

- A) As an incredible capstone to faithfully living out our identity in Christ for the Gospel (4:1), we are provided with the ultimate expression of our union with Christ in "forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you" (4:32). Our old selves are undeservedly forgiven (saved by grace) with a purpose of forgiving others who are likewise undeserving (giving grace). Both believers (4:32) and unbelievers are included (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)!



Growth Group Guide

“chosen by grace for grace”

ephesians 4:30-32

february 1-6, 2015

Ice Breaker!

Recall a time when you were forgiven for something.
How did that affect your relationship with that person?

Looking Up!

In these three verses we see the Trinity expressed clearly.
Write down the role of each as expressed in these verses.

What is meant by ‘grieving the Holy Spirit?’ List some ways we may have caused the Holy Spirit to grieve.

Leaning In!

Why should we do what Paul says in Ephesians 4:31-32? What is the benefit for the body of Christ?
What is the benefit for those outside the body of Christ?

What is the outcome or result of our becoming a “new creation?”

Stepping Out!

Spend some time meditating on the idea of “saved by grace to give grace.” In your own words, what does that mean? What can it look like as we try to reach those within our influence who do not know Christ?

How can authentic Christianity authentically reveal Jesus?

Respond!

In light of what God has done for us through Christ, how can we cultivate an attitude of forgiveness in response to others who may have hurt us?

This Week In Action & In Prayer!

Pray for those who may have hurt you in the past.
Ask God to give you compassion and forgiveness for them.
Pray that God would show you new ways to
“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

