

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Glance back at the View of Ephesians

1. Paul's writing from prison
 - a. His style is typical - pouring theological truths out in a torrent
 - b. Came as a result of a busy ministry
 - (1) Traveling to many infant churches
 - (2) Addressing the problems of the growing church as a whole

2. The Ephesian epistle is somewhat of a quantum level summarizing this
 - a. Deep theological tract
 - b. Long thoughts, sometimes a poem in prose form
 - c. The result of prison, time to allow the Holy Spirit to form thoughts & formulate

3. Paul is building on theological truths in his prior epistles
 - a. Galations ==> our Christian standing
 - (1) Dead to sin by Christ's death & resurrection
 - (2) Salvation achieved only by acceptance of Christ & grace
 - (3) Believer becomes son of God
 - (4) Free from the bounds of the Law

 - b. Colossians ==> the complete sufficiency of Christ

 - c. Ephesians ==> Christian responsibilities
 - (1) All things gather together in Christ
 - (a) Christ will bring the world back into harmony within Himself

 - (2) Ch 1-3: The 7 UNITIES we have in Christ
 - (a) Body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, God

 - (3) Ch 4-6: The CHURCH'S PLACE in gaining that unity
 - (a) **THE THEME ==> Unity depends on INDIVIDUALS !**

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B. Relating stories

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1. Today's view of a person being able to change is cynical
 - a. Children's TV program
 - (1) Theme was that a mean witch was made loving by spraying with magic potion
 - (a) When potion wore off, she returned to being mean
 - b. Documentary on problems of the aging
 - (1) Sociologist said we shouldn't try to gild old folks who are crusty
 - (a) If they were bad when they were young, they will continue when old
2. The Bible teaches that God DOES change people - even when they resist
 - a. A true new-born believer receives a new nature = impossible to be the same
2 Cor 5.17
"Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come"
 - (1) The believer is transformed inwardly - attitudes, desires, motives
 - b. It SHOULD result in a change of life-style, as well
2 Pet 1.4
" 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. "
 - (1) But we also fight the continued presence of the sin nature remaining within
 - (2) It is imperative, therefore, that we exhort one another to live consistent with God's Word

II. THE EXPOSITION

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1. Principles for Leading a New Life

1. Overview - Keep your spiritual focus in the right place

a. [4.17-21] Caution - don't learn from the world

(1) Vs 18 "hardness" > *porosis* = stone harder than marble

(2) Vs 19 "with greediness" > *pleonexia* = irresistible desire to have what we have no right to possess

(3) There are corruptions all around you

(4) In order to do your part for the body, STAY SPIRITUALLY HEALTHY !

b. [4.20-21] Instead, learn from Jesus

2. Key principles

a. [4.22] Principle # 1: Leave corruption behind

"...put off your old self..."

(1) God has given us the power to be able to do this through Christ

Rom 6.6-7

" For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin, because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. "

(2) The reason for having to do this is that the old self is not trustworthy

"...which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires..." (vs 22)

(a) Such desires promise fulfillment, but fail to truly provide it

b. [4.23] Principle # 2: Renewing takes place in the mind

"...to be made new in the spirit of your mind..."

(1) Believers do not have the darkened minds of the unbeliever

(a) They are now able to discern what is & is not good spiritually

(b) Rom 12.2

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect"

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(2) Note it mentions the "spirit" of your mind

- (a) Gk word = pneuma { pnyoo'-mah}
 - i) Usually used for Holy Spirit
 - ii) Here used for "the spirit of" what motivates you
 - (1) Strong's *Enhanced Greek Lexicon*
"... the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of any one..."

(b) Believers must recognize that their attitudes have been changed, & act accordingly

(c) This includes recognizing that we depend on God to constantly rejuvenate our thinking to His way if we are to think His thoughts

c. [4.24] Key Principle # 3: Adopting Holy Behavior is Required

"...**put on** the new self..."

(1) This means of living is not natural to the world's approach

(a) Self-directed living = independence is the norm

(2) The new self put on must have a specific pattern

"...created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness"

(a) The new self shows God's character

(b) God's character in a believer leads to a righteous, holy life

d. Summarizing the 3 Key Principles

(1) Illustrated by a lesson from Jesus ==> [Matt 12.43-45]

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. 44 Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. 45 Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first."



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(a) Jesus is saying that you can't just take something evil out & expect to remain spiritual

(b) You must put something spiritual in its place to hold that ground against evil

(2) This advice illustrates the "put off" (vs 22) / "put on" (vs 24) principle that Paul is exhorting here !

[Sheet of put off's / put on's ??]

B. Paul now gives real-life examples of these "put off / put on" pairings

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[Note the "put off" paired with the "put on" in each area]

1. [4.25] Truthfulness

a. Again, verse specifically says to "...put off..."

(1) If the believer is going to lay aside control by the "old man", then such sins as lying must also be laid aside

- (a) Harms spiritual growth
- (b) Bad testimony, harms glorifying God to others

b. The "put off" is paired with a "put on" ==> speak truthfully

- (1) Raises it above the level of "thou shalt not" !
- (2) Means to conform your words to reality
- (3) Refers back to 4.16

"...the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. "

- (a) It's hard to do this work together when there is deceit among us

c. The reference to "neighbor" in 4.25 is global, not just in church

- (1) Gk = plesion { play-see'-on}
 - (a) Jews meant any other Hebrew
 - (b) Christ meant any other with whom we deal

2. [4.26-27] Self-Control

a. This is paraphrase of Ps 4.4==> " In your anger do not sin..."

(1) But, it is possible to be angry OVER sin, e.g. Jesus in the Temple

b. How does the devil typically make hay on us over this ?

(1) We don't settle the problem early, even if the compromise is not what we really want

(2) Satan nags/goads us into other sins, like hatred, cursing

(a) Uses the original problem as a spring board

i) the "opportunity" = Gk *top'-os* "a place"

(3) Special caution to believers !!

(a) Satan can intensify RIGHTEOUS anger to become sin, itself

i) Roast preacher over something that really was originally wrong

(4) Satan loves this because then sin has control over us

(a) Anger is controlling the believer

(b) Believer must control anger

c. Anger contrast examples:

(1) Typically **wrong** anger: Over a wrong done to oneself ==> selfish

(2) Typically **right** anger: Slander of God's Name, Word, or righteous principles

d. Antidote to allowing anger to have control

(1) vs 26: "... Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry..."

(a) At the end of the day...

i) Commit to God everything that has made us angry

ii) Forget about it

(1) God's **character** is to be just

(2) God has said He will avenge all wrongs

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3. [4.28] Honesty

a. Ex 20.15

"Thou shalt not steal"

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b. This is another exhortation to now become something else

- (1) "He who has been stealing ..." = "the stealing one" Gk
- (2) This was happening at all levels of society
- (3) The command is to stop being like this

c. The positive "put on" is then given

(1) Put honorable work in place of dishonorable work

- (a) It's work either way
- (b) Look how hard con men, robbers, etc work to be thieves

(2) "...but must labor (work)..."

- (a) Note the word "labor/work"
- (b) Gk kopiao { kop-ee-ah'-o} ==> toilsome, wearisome
 - i) Keeps one out of trouble
 - ii) Gives one satisfaction

(c) "...with his own hands..."

- i) Don't live off the fruits of someone else's labor

(d) "...that he may have something to share with those in need. "

- i) He must have something "good" Gk agathos { ag-ath-os'} = "beneficial"
- ii) Motive = provide for the disadvantaged, after family's needs

d. Perfect example of the transformed life

- (1) Someone who no longer takes from others
- (2) Works hard to provide for others in need

4. [4.29-30] Proper Speech

a. The contrast

(1) "unwholesome" > sapos { sap-ros'}

- (a) Rotten, putrified, corrupted, no longer fit for use (cursing et al)
- (b) Of poor quality, worthless (empty, valueless words)

VS.

(2) agathos { ag-ath-os' } = "good" or "beneficial" (as before)

- (a) "...what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen"

(3) Jesus said our language reflects what is in our heart

Matt 15.18-19

"... But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts..."

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b. Objectives of the "put on"

(1) "...what is helpful for building others up according to their needs..."

- (a) Watch for needs & say what the Spirit prompts you to that is of worth
- (b) Avoid saying empty, worthless things, criticisms

(2) "...that it may benefit those who listen"

- (a) Minister grace to the hearers
- (b) Be spiritually beneficial

c. Added incentive to pure speech (vs 30)

(1) Any sin grieves the Holy Spirit

(2) Here, grieving is tied to improper speech

- (a) Would what you say be rightly classified as a "fruit of the Spirit" ?
- (b) Or is it as is in James 3.10-12

" Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. 11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? 12 My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. "

(3) Note how serious this grieving is

- (a) vs 30 "...with whom you were sealed..."
- (b) A seal is the SIGN of the owner to all who approach the property
- (c) What testimony is given if others hear improper speech, & then note Who's seal is on us ???!

a. Note the negative side of the list > "put off" (vs 31)

(1) 6 words & attitudes which cause division

- (a) "Bitterness" = irritable state of mind
- (b) "rage" = outbursts of anger, showing inner bitterness
- (c) "anger" = permanent resentment
- (d) "clamor"
 - i) krauge { krow-gay'}
 - ii) a crying, outcry, clamour
- (e) "slander" (blasphemia), evil speaking
- (f) "malice"
 - i) kakia { kak-ee'-ah}
 - ii) malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure
wickedness, depravity, wickedness that is not
ashamed to break laws

b. Note the positive "put on"

(1) Balanced by 3 positive commands that promote unity (vs 32)

- (a) "be kind" ==> chrestos { khrase-tos'}
- i) "what is suitable or fitting to a need"

- (b) "be tender-hearted" ==> eusplagchnos { yoo'-splangkh-nos}
- i) "inner emotions of affection"
- ii) "tenderhearted" in KJV & NAS, "compassionate" in NIV
- iii) Exude empathy for others

- (c) "forgiving" ==> charizomai { khar-id'-zom-ahee}
- i) "to give freely" or "to give graciously as a favor"

- (d) These can properly be called "abilities to facilitate"

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(2) What is the reason for adopting these attitudes & actions ??

(a) vs 32 "...just as in Christ God forgave you"

- i) We noted previously that God forgave us "graciously"
- ii) Just as we received His forgiveness without condition, so we should adopt these attitudes toward others
- iii) So, we must allow Him to develop these "abilities to facilitate" in us out of gratitude for God's forgiveness

(b) Through Christ, God is...

- i) **Kind** ==> Eph 2.7
"...in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus."
- ii) **Compassionate** ==> Mk 1.41
"Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man"
- iii) **Gracious** ==> Rom 8.32
"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all —how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"

6. [5.1-2] Love

a. A primary command is given in 5.1

- (1) mimetes { mim-ay-tace' } ==> to be an imitator of God
(a) Dictionary .com

1. to follow or endeavor to follow as a model or example:

2. to mimic; impersonate

- (2) The vs 2 "and" should be "therefore" to indicate what we should do to be an imitator

b. The primary attitude/action is to love

(1) Follows right after Paul's highlighting of forgiveness

- (a) Forgiveness comes out of love from one to another
(b) Forgiveness leads to love by the one forgiven toward the one forgiving
(c) Col 3.12-14 shows how love leads to many Christian virtues

12 "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity."

- (2) [5.2] We are to be living continuously in love, as demonstrated by Christ

- (a) God is the perfect example of love
i) Christ sacrificing His life for those He loves

c. The sacrificial aspect of Christ's love is emphasized by OT imagery

(1) Note Christ was both an offering & a sacrifice = completeness

- (a) He offered Himself to the Father's will, & for atonement
(b) He sacrificed Himself as a complete act to fulfill this

(2) God accepted it as "...fragrant..."

- (a) euodia { yoo-o-dee'-ah } = an odour of acquiescence, satisfaction
(3) God is similarly pleased when we display sacrificial love to others

7. [5.3-5] Purity

a. The 1st 3 vices mentioned are self-centered, **the opposite of self-sacrificing love** (5.3)

(1) Sexual immorality

- (a) porneia { por-ni'-ah}
- (b) illicit sexual intercourse
 - adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals etc.
 - sexual intercourse with close relatives; Lev. 18
 - sexual intercourse with a divorced man or woman; Mk. 10:11,12

(2) Impurity

- (a) akatharsia { ak-ath-ar-see'-ah}
- (b) uncleanness: in a moral sense, the impurity of lustful, luxurious, profligate living
 - i) of impure motives

(3) Greed

- (a) pleonexia { pleh-on-ex-ee'-ah}
- (b) greedy desire to have more, covetousness, avarice

(4) Note that there shouldn't "... be even a hint of ..." these vices

- (a) "...because these are improper for God's holy people."

b. Followed by 3 improprieties in speech, **which often harm others** (5.4)

(1) Obscenity

- (a) aischrotes { ahee-skhrot'-ace}
- (b) "shameless talk and conduct", filthiness

(2) Foolish talk

- (a) morologia { mo-rol-og-ee'-ah}
- (b) "stupid words", usually leading to wickedness

(3) Coarse joking

- (a) eutrapelia { yoo-trap-el-ee'-ah}
- (b) scurrility, ribaldry, low jesting, worldly wit (smooth, vs. obscenity)

c. The desirable attitude instead is **thanksgiving** for others

- (1) God considers sins of the mind equal to sins of action
- (2) The antidote is to occupy the mind with thanksgiving

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d. (vs 5.5) The warning for those who practice such sins

(1) The key for understanding this is in "...such a man is an **idolater**..."

(a) = eidololatre { i-do-lol-at'-race } , a worshipper of false gods

(2) Those people who practice such sins are not part of God's kingdom

(a) 1 Cor 6.9-10

9 "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,

10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God."

(3) (vs 6-7) These warnings should not be taken idly

(a) They are not "empty", void of content

(b) Believers should have nothing to do with them

C. Walking as God's Children

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1. Walking in the Light [vs 7-14 deal with church discipline]

a. Don't become involved with evildoers (5.7)

(1) Don't become partners with evildoers

- (a) Don't be a "joint partaker"
- (b) Believer is joint partaker of God's love
- (c) Evildoers are joint partakers of God's wrath

(2) Why not ? (5.8a) Believers are no longer in the darkness

- (a) They are changed persons, sources of light
- (b) Therefore, they must live according to what sheds spiritual light

(3) How does a believer know how to walk in the light ?

- (a) (vs 10) Believer must find out what pleases the Lord & do it
Col 1.10

"10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,"

- (b) "trying to learn" = dokimazo { dok-im-ad'-zo }

- i) to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), as metals
- ii) Therefore, we are to try things out by experience & learn what pleases the Lord

b. Don't become involved with evildoers' works (5.11)

- (1) They are "unfruitful" deeds = they benefit no one

- (2) Not only avoid being involved in them, but expose them !

- (a) Believers expose these deeds because of the spiritual light they shed

- (b) CAUTION - The deeds mentioned here must be those of believers

- i) Because believers cannot shed light on the misdeeds of unbelievers - only God can

- ii) (1 Cor 5.12-13)

"What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13 God will judge those outside. 'Expel the wicked man from among you.' "

(3) (5.13-14) Light shows up the evil works

- (a) Such a believer is to wake up & recognize his errors

- (b) The light of believers living in the light will help do this

- (c) Jesus will show His approval

"...Christ will shine on you"

2. Walking in Wisdom

a. (5.15) The charge

- (1) "Be careful..." ==> pay attention
 - (a) akribos { ak-ree-boce' } ==> exactly, accurately, diligently
- (2) "...how you live..." ==> watch the details, mechanics, appearances
- (3) live "...as wise..."
- (4) How do we do this ?
 - (a) (vs 16) make the most of every opportunity/time

b. How does a believer meet the challenge ?

(1) (vs 17) Find out what God's will is in all matters possible

- (a) Back to the previous points about determining this by testing & trying, watching for God's approval (don't violate Word !)

(2) Make a decision as to what power will control you (vs 18)

(a) Getting drunk on wine is used as a negative example

- i) It is very powerful, taking self control away
 - (1) "debauchery" = asotia { as-o-tee'-ah }
= an abandoned, dissolute life

(b) The positive example is to be controlled by the Spirit

i) The Spirit is the Agent of the filling

Gal 5.16

"So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature"

ii) Christ is the Content of the filling

Col 3.15

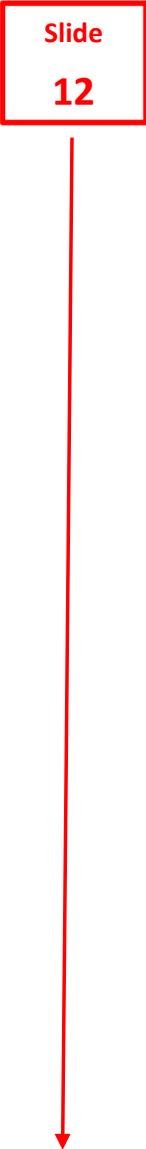
" Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...."

- (c) As the Spirit is allowed to control the believer, He will manifest the fruits of the Spirit ==> Christ's character = wisdom

- i) The verb tense implies a constant filling, not just once

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D. Evidences of God's power controlling us (5.19-21)

1. Paul gives four results of being filled with the Spirit

a. # 1 - Communicating *with each other* by... (= church music)

- (1) Psalms - psalms sung with stringed instruments
- (2) Hymns - praises to God and of God composed by Christians
- (3) Spiritual songs - general praise & expression from the human spirit

b. # 2 - Communication *with the Lord* by singing and making melody

- (1) Note - "...in your heart to the Lord" = *individual*

c. # 3 - Thanking God continually for all things

d. # 4 - Submit to one another

- (1) Willingly serve others
- (2) Don't try to dominate others

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